

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Vegas Fan Events

SNAFFU Dinner Meeting
Friday (6/23) 6:30 PM

SNAPS June Distribution Deadline
Sunday (6/25)

GayBiLesTrans SF Club Meeting
Monday (6/26) 7:30 PM

Vegrants Wester-Noncon Open Party
Saturday (7/1) 7:30 PM

*Check out the Calendar
and preview stories*

Vegrants Host Wester-Noncon Party!

While some Vegas fans will be enjoying the Westercon over the July 4th weekend, Las Vegrants invites all of Vegas Fandom to come to an Open Party on Saturday, July 1. The event, largest of the year so far in Glitter City, will be held at the Launch Pad, home of Arnie & Joyce Katz, starting at 7:30 PM and going as late as stamina permits. (Non-Vegrants who need directions or just want to let us know they're coming can call Joyce and me at: 648-5677.)

In a celebration that mixes joy and sadness, we'll bid farewell to long-time Vegas fans Bill & Laurie Kunkel, who are moving to Michigan, and mark my 60th birthday.

There'll be food, drink, chatter and lots of other fun stuff, too. You don't have to bring anything, though donations of food and beverages are always

gratefully accepted. (Don't know what to bring? Ask Joyce (joyceworley1@cox.net).

The living room and dining room are designated as non-smoking zones for the comfort of those who don't enjoy contemporary combustibles. There are both indoor and outdoor areas for those who wish to light up.

Tell your fan friends — this should be the biggest LV fan event of the year so far — and it'll be all the better if you're there.

SNAFFU Gets a New Home!

Linda Bushyager's intensive search for a new venue for the SNAFFU discussion meeting has already borne fruit. After investigating numerous places, Linda turned up several possible locations. Linda and

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Inside Story Going Like Sixty!

The next Vegrants meeting... er, Giant Open Party — they are essentially indistinguishable — is July 1. Besides being a farewell bash for Bill & Laurie Kunkel, Wester-Noncon '06 (as we are calling it) will also celebrate my 60th birthday.

When I was a neofan, I don't think very many fans had actually lived to that age. Even the great pioneers of Fandom like Ackerman and Tucker started so young that they were still a good deal younger than I am as I write this. Some of us kids, as we rode back from an ESFA meeting even speculated about whether one could still have the stamina to fan at such an advanced age.

Ironically, the advent of birthday number Sixty sees me unusually busy on both the professional and fannish fronts. Thanks in large measure to Potshot's recommendation, I've signed on to teach two courses at UNLV in the fall — Careers in Electronic Gaming and Introduction to Electronic Game Design. I'm ghostwriting a novel — good money and a nice way to practice for doing one under my own name in the indefinite future — and editing another book on a freelance basis. ProWrestlingDaily.com, the website I edit (and partially own), is finally, *finally*, *finally* in position to generate income after tripling its traffic during first-half 2006. Fannish poker players may want to check out the top banner on the site for a free tournament that TitanPoker/Casino Partners is running.

Fannishly, I'm doing a fanzine you may have seen, but I'm also working on the new editions of *The Trufan's Advisor* and *The Fannish Worry Book*. The former is going to Joyce for proofreading this weekend and the latter is going to be only a couple of days behind. I'm trying to get both distributed in time for my natal day (7/2). The next couple of weeks will bring the final (for now) *Implications* and another Vegrants oneshot. I have a zine due for SNAPS (the electronic apa) due this coming weekend. Oh, and I'm running for OE of the group.

So if you want the evidence of your own eyes that there's still some life in the Kingfish yet... come to the Giant Open Party at the Launch Pad on July 1. — Arnie

Vegas Fandom Weekly #78, Volume 2 Number 25, June 17, 2006, 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), David Gordon (Futurists liaison), Alan White (arty fella), Bill Mills (technical advisor) and Joyce Katz (proofreading and So Much More).

Reporters this issue: Linda Bushyager and Joyce Katz

Art/Photo Credits: Ross Chamberlain (1), ATom (7), all else by Bill Rotsler.

Columnists This Issue: Me, Myself and I.

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU site and at efanzines.com. No members of amateur event planning fandom were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

Member: fwa

Supporter: AFAL

Believer: United Fans of Vegas

They Shall Return! Katzenjammer

In 1919 and 1920, millions of American died of the same disease. The Influenza epidemic struck so hard that many public establishments closed, because it was too dangerous for people to be in the same space with too many strangers.

Today, millions of people still get the disease, but damn few experience anything more than a week or two of miserable symptoms. We don't have to sit at least one seat away from the nearest person in the movie theater, which also makes it much easier to grope in the dark.



Forest J Ackerman spoke at the World Horror Con in

This is the classic life history of a disease. It starts as epidemic, progresses to pandemic and then becomes chronic at a lower level of intensity. It happened with Influenza.

And now, I believe, it has happened with Gafia. Time was, Gafia was the certain fate of every fan (with the possible exception of Forrest J Ackerman, who vowed to die with his fingers on the letters "s-t-f.")

Gafia was a gradual process during the period in which the disease was epidemic in Fandom. Neofans came in one door, stayed for a variable number of years, and then drifted out the exit.

Then, in 1964, Gafia suddenly became a pandemic. Bill Donaho's attack on Walter Breen, embodied in *The Great Breen Boondoggle*, hit Fandom like the meteor that struck in Antarctica and killed off the dinosaurs. Donaho's campaign against Breen had roughly the same affect on Fanzine Fandom: genzines folded and fans Gafiated.

Fandom changed so abruptly that it created an unprecedented break in fanhistory. Everything before the Boondoggle has an antediluvian quality. Fans like Dean Grennell, Elmer Perdue and Bob Leman, outstanding writers and publishers,

are little known to those who entered Fandom after the mid-1960's.

It was well known and understood, in the 1930-1960 period, that sooner or later the desire to Get Away even before that desire had a proper name. ("Gafia" used to mean immersing oneself in Fandom and "getting away from," Mundania.)

Back in those days, there was an absolute and chilling finality about Gafia. It didn't mean putting Fandom on the back burner during exams and a trip to the Lake of the Woods; when Gafia struck, it was total and permanent.

I'll never forget one of the many nights I spent at rich brown's New York apartment that he then shared with Mike McInerney, reading fanzines and asking question. After reading the heart-rending *Ex-Inchmery Fan Diary*, I asked him about the author Vincent Clarke. "You won't see him again," rich assured me.

He gave me that answer a number of times and it certainly seemed true in every case. Once a fan

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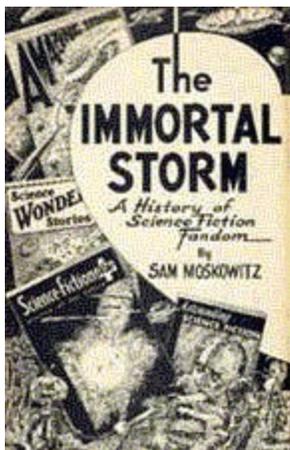
entered what Walt Willis and Bob Shaw so poetically called “the Glades of Gafia” in *The Enchanted Duplicator* he was Gone for Good. All fans could do is mourn the Gafiates in the manner of Orthodox Jews sitting *shivah* for excommunicated family members.

The reasons for Gafiation were many and varied, but some motifs cropped up again and again. Some of the most notable are:

- A major life change, such as college, a move to a new city, marriage and service in the armed forces were just some of the life milestones that often resulted in the person stepping away from Fandom. Such major disruptions often cause a re-ordering of priorities, especially in the young people who once predominated in Fandom. What seemed so important in high school can quickly become just a happy memory of youth.
- Feuding can sour a fan on the hobby. Small feuds Gafiate fans in ones and twos, while large donnybrooks such as the Breen Boondoggle and the Bergeron Wars send droves fleeing toward the exits.
- Personal disappointment may also lead to Gafia. Every fan enters the Microcosm with hopes, desires and preconceptions. Reality doesn't always satisfy our expectations or deliver what it seemed to promise and the same is true of Fandom. An unhappy love affair, a lost con bid, an unsuccessful fanzine or simple lack of egoboo



Rich brown (Dr. Gafia) as he looked several gafiations ago.



can all be enough to undermine that Trufannish Spirit.

- Creativity burn-out can signal the onset of Gafia in some fans. It's the fan version of writer's block, though it may reach into all phases of someone's fanac. Some fans have hung around for years after they misplaced their ability to contribute anything, but those who build their fanlife based on their ability to write, draw or edit may feel empty when they cannot do so. Gafia looks like a way to make the pain stop.
- Doing or saying something monumentally embarrassing or downright stupid may cause Gafia, but only in rare cases. The fans most apt to perpetrate such gaffes are also the most likely to be oblivious to the fact that they have disgraced themselves. It is a rare fugghead, indeed, who knows that he or she is one.

In 1976, Gafia struck my happy fannish home. For reasons that I have repeatedly chewed over in print, conversation and my own mind, Joyce and I succumbed to Gafia. Over night, two people who had fanned for a combined 23 years became ex-fans.

We flew high and far away from Fandom, carved colorful professional careers and moved across the country from Brooklyn to Las Vegas.

I knew the pattern.

I knew the prognosis.

I knew they'd never hear from me (or Joyce) again.

And yet, in 1989, Fandom reached out one slender tentacle, one tendril, and just as suddenly as we Gafiated, we were actifans again! Within six months of my first re-connection with Fandom, I was producing the monthly *Folly*, revving up Las Vegas Fandom and attending Corflu in LA.

Truthfully, I was damned impressed with the extraordinary fact of my own return. No less a fan-historian than Harry Warner assured me that no fan had ever been away so long and then returned to produce such a quantity of fanac.

It took a little while to discover that he was wrong. Not only had Vincent Clarke, that guy I was never going to hear from again, came back stronger than ever, but so had Art Widner and Robert Lichtman. While the Sage hadn't been absent quite as long as I had, Widner had returned to Fandom after approximately 35 years and Clarke after more than 20.

Although I was more involved with new fans than returnees in the 1990's, I couldn't help noticing that Gafiates were quietly re-suming their positions in Fandom. I'd see a once-familiar name reappear, feel a rush of happiness and go back to whatever I was doing.

The trickle became a torrent after the turn of the millennium when the Internet began to make Core Fandom a lot more accessible to former participants. From David Burton to Earl Kemp, from John Purcell to Dick Lupoff, more and more former fans are returning to the fold. Not all of them have become highly active, but a surprising number have started fanning at or above their former peak.

Once we said that Gafia was permanent. The conventional wisdom was: No one comes back.

Now, in 2006, it's impossible to escape the diametrically opposite conclusion:

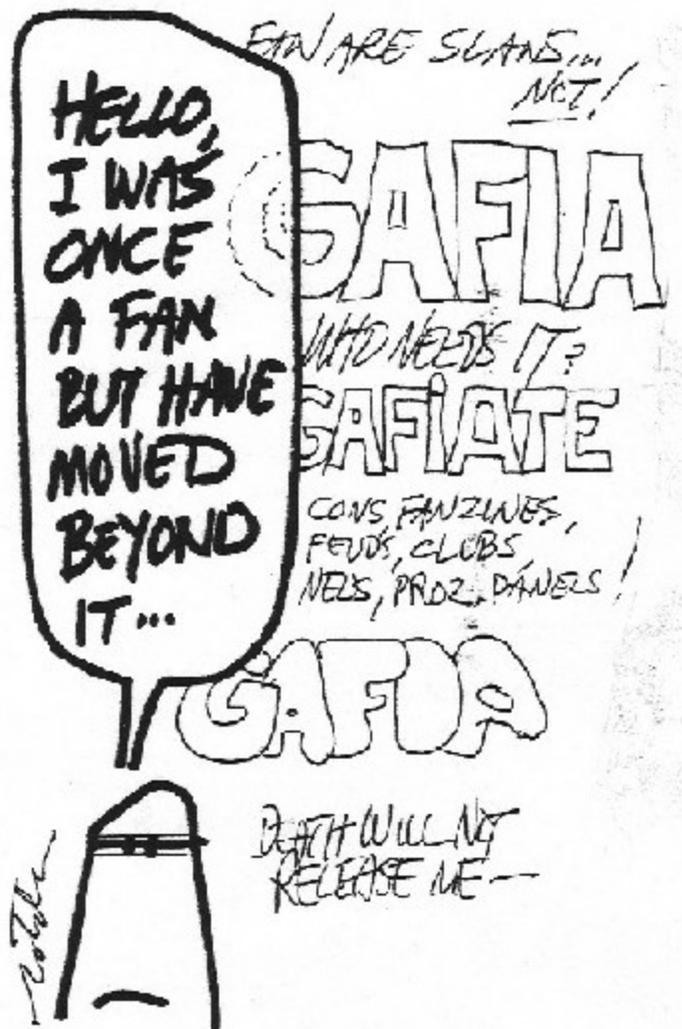
Everybody Comes Back.

The long, final sleep of Gafia has become a catnap.

Clearly, Gafia has gone from epidemic to pandemic (the Boondoggle and the Bergeron Wars triggered many gafiations) to a milder form of the disease that everyone has but which is lethal to few or none. I've heard newer fans call a week out with a cold "Gafia," which is a strong indication that this once-fatal disease is but a shadow of its former self.

Why do people come back to Fandom? There'll be a lot of theories, so here are some possible factors to stir the pot:

- **Nostalgia.** Looking back, a lot of folks see



their days in Fandom as among their best youthful memories.

- **Longing for old friends.** An active fan usually makes a lot of fannish friends. Gafia tends to disrupt those relationships and many would probably like to have some or all of them back again.
- **Increase in spare time.** Many older fans who return have seen their children grow up and/or may be in a less exciting phase of their careers. Suddenly, there's more time for fun – and Fandom has always rated well in that department.
- **Rebellion against conformity.** Living a

happy life in Mundania generally means some adjustments for Core Fandomites. Sometimes, it's nice to chuck the masks and mannerisms and just be yourself.

- **Creative impulses.** One of the great things about fan-literary activity is that it gives people a rare opportunity to do it all their way. After 20 or 30 years of being a cog in some gigantic creative endeavor, it's tremendously liberating to do your own fanzine, website or write just what you want for someone's else's zine or site.
- **Electronic Fandom.** Computers and the Internet have turned Core Fandom into an extremely economical hobby. People looking towards retirement can hardly miss the fact that it's very inexpensive to be a fan these days.

Whatever the reasons, the ultimate result is the same: Everyone comes back.

In fact, this trend is intensifying. More former fans returned to activity in 2005 than in the five previous years combined and 2006 is already well on its way to a new record.

And I can see the future just as clearly as if it was printed right there in the Bible Code....

As the ex-Gafiates returned in ever greater numbers, the phenomenon became impossible to ignore. Talk raged on the web sites, in the fanzines and via the listservs that mushrooms to accommodate Core Fandom's swelling population. Everyone had a theory; some of Fandom's Deep Thinkers had two or three of them.

Cities like San Francisco, home to many Gafiated and semi-Gafiated fans, fairly percolated with renewed fannish life. It nearly overwhelmed those BArea fans who hadn't Gafiated – or who had returned before the mass de-Gafiations.

The population explosion made it a brand new fan community. Suddenly, there were more fanzines coming out of the BArea than most fans had time to read and a lot of them weren't pub-

lished by Chris Garcia, odd as that may seem.

Richard A. Lupoff and Robert Lichtman met clandestinely at a Carl's Junior in San Rafael to discuss the phenomenon.

"Pat starting a biweekly fanzine is about the last thing I expected," Dick told Robert.

"I just locced the third issue," Robert replied. "Nice fanzine."

"Of course it is!" said Dick. "It's just a surprise after all these years."

"You're surprised?" Robert replied. "After years of happily ignoring Fandom and its manifestations, Carol has founded an apa, started a local fan club and I'm sure you noticed her column in Pat's fanzine."

"And the one in *Vegas Fandom Weekly* is pretty impressive, too," Dick added.

"Well, at least we've proven it," said Robert.

"Proven what, Robert?" asked Dick.

"We've proven that individual weight gain is not the best way to make Core Fandom bigger!"

"Yes," said Dick, "and while we were talking, I sold a book about it, so it's all good."

Close observation and analysis of the recently de-Gafiated revealed some illuminating consistencies. For one thing, the more involved the person had been during their first tour of Fandom, the more likely it was for them to come back and the higher level of activity they were apt to pursue after their return.



Yet it was really just a matter of degree. Some returned sooner, others returned later. Some became publishing giants, while others contributed as listserv posters and letterhacks.

The common denominator remained: They All Came Back.

And then will come the day when every former fan, every man and woman who had been active in Fanzine Fandom or its modern descendant Core Fandom, had returned to the hobby.

Problems like Fandom's aging demographic and fears about perpetuation of this branch of the hobby will vanish as if they'd never existed. It will be like a Dick Pelletier article about the future, except that it will really happen.

Those who need to look for a dark cloud in front of every silver lining will have to be satisfied with fretting over whether there are too *many* fans. These negativists may whine that there are too many fanzines to read them all, too many fannish web sites to visit, too many cool little fannish cons to attend, too many informal invitational fan clubs to join. The worst grumps might even be willing to let their displeasure lead them into Gafia – except that no one will ever truly Gafiate any more.

Mostly though, fans will look at the changed landscape of Core Fandom with awe and delight. FAPA will have a waitlist of 40 and be getting ready to raise membership to an even 100 to accommodate the demand. Corflu Thirty Is Not the End will set up for 150 fans and draw 300 and fanzine editors will have a field day sorting through all the contributions sent to them by revived fans.

And when every fan has returned from the Glades of Gafia, Fandom will hold its collective breath, waiting for whatever might come next.

It will be the end of an ordinary day. Tired and somewhat depleted from a long day of vital endeavor, you come through the door and greet your spouse. "What's new in Fandom?" you will ask.

"We got a fanzine," says your Significant Other.

"Great, I'll look at it later," you respond.

"You might want to look at it now," your help-



mate suggests.

"Why?" you inquire.

"Well, it's *Hyphen*."

"Great!" you say. "Is it the one I bought from Robert Lichtman – or is this the one we got in that eBay auction?"

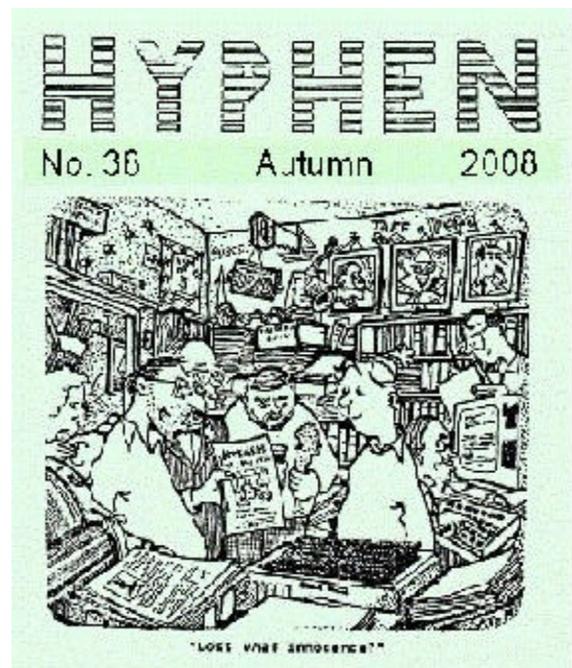
"It's a new issue," comes the simple and stunning reply.

"A new issue?"

"Yes," says your Better Half. "I didn't realize it at first, because I was also looking through the envelop of artwork that Rotsler sent – he said it was in case you were starting to run low – and the letter from Burbee."

They all comes back.

Everybody. — Arnie



Las Vegrants Big Time Fun!

Though a small group that stayed late was in the forecast for the June 3rd meeting of Las Vegrants, the actual event came out the opposite way. A fairly large crowd of fans, 16 in all, came early and went home earlier than usual.

My fan-day started a lot earlier on Saturday afternoon. Bringing some sunshine in what was proving to be a very frustrating day in other respects. After two days of computer trouble (Thursday and Friday) that blew VFW's deadline, I ran smack into an Internet problem when I tried to work on Pro Wrestling Daily, the web site I run, beginning at about 4 AM.

So the arrival of a smiling Lori Forbes early in the afternoon was a welcome respite. She achieved her goal of filling all the existing shelves with SNAFFU Library books and more. Jolie La-Chance came by during the afternoon, as Lori toiled in the 105-degree heat of the garage. Joyce dispensed SNAFFU funds given to her for the purpose by President Michael Bernstein, so that Jolie could buy the rest of the needed shelving to fill out the wooden frames we scavenged from Borders book store. (The shelves are slightly too long so Jolie, a carpenter by profession, will whittle them down to size in the next week or so.)

James Taylor and Teresa Cochran were the first to arrive specifically for the meeting. It was still about an hour to the unofficial official starting time, but I am always glad to see them and their early arrival always has a very positive effect on my mood.

I teased Tee just a little

about the way Certain Fans showered her with torrents of egoboo on the Trufen listserv over the preceding week. Teresa is worthy of almost any amount of praise, but a couple of the male fans got a trifle overheated. She took the mild ribbing with good grace and I don't think she is the type of person likely to suffer from a swelled head or swollen ego.

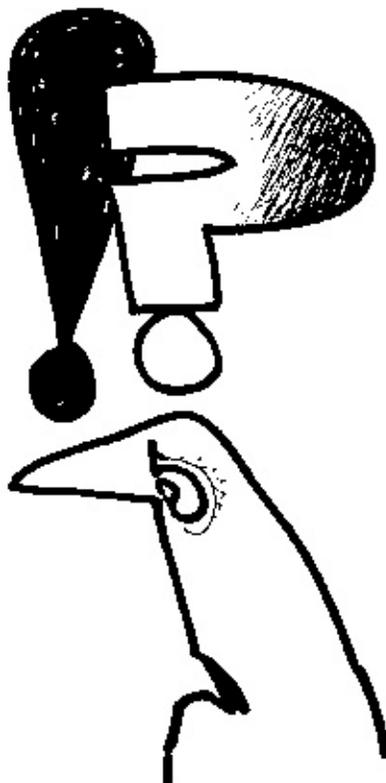
Next came a pleasant surprise: the third appearance by JoHn Hardin in as many weeks. The Vegrants have missed hi a lot since the move to Kingman. I doubt he'll keep up that kind of schedule for long, but it's really a boost for the group to have him coming around often again.

Surprise followed surprise when John DeChancie arrived shortly after JoHn. He's staying in Pahrump to work on the *Lady Magdalene* movie. He described the behind-the-scenes effort, including the huge trailers for cast and other important personages. The drive from Pahrump clearly had John at the edge of sleep, but I was really touched by the fact that he made the effort to spend an evening with his Vegrant buddies when he might well have opted for a few extra hours of sleep.

Ron & Linda

Bushyager, making a rare and welcome visit to the Launch Pad, and Merric & Luba Anderson came through the doorway as John DeC wound up his account of independent moviemaking. I hope that when John gets a little breather he'll write this all up for *VFW*. Merric and Luba brought us a coffee maker and freshly ground beans to use with it. "We'll keep it stocked,"

Merric promised. (Joyce doesn't drink coffee often and I don't drink it at all, but there



are quite a few other fans who'll benefit mightily from the Andersons' generosity.)

With a little prodding from me, Linda amplified something she'd told me in an email: one of the people at the last Social had complained that they weren't going to read *VFW* because it had "too much stuff about Fandom" and not enough about Las Vegas.

It hurts to hear that someone doesn't enjoy *Vegas Fandom Weekly*, because I put a piece of my heart in every issue. Still, I understand that you can't please everyone. The tenor of the comment was a clue to its originator, but I was relieved when Linda identified the person as a semi-fan known for extreme negativity. I very much want fans to enjoy *VFW*; nonfans are essentially irrelevant to it.

As Joyce tried to cajole John DeC into donating a complete set of his books to the SNAFFU Library, the rest of us discreetly averted our attention to a casual discussion of how Las Vegas turned out to be, at least statistically, the most overweight city in the United States. There are over 100,000 women working in gentlemen's clubs in town and probably another 50,000 who work in the entertainment and/or sex trades, so that's a lot of people who are at or below average in weight for their size. I guess the poundage on those really enormous folks you see away from the Strip more than balances the eye candy.

I'm not sure how the topic got started, com-

mon for a Vegrants meeting, but Luba and I got into a discussion about assimilation and national identity. She said that, though a lot of Americans think of her as Russian, a lot of Russians still harbor anti-Semitism that makes them mentally separate those of Jewish heritage from the rest of their countrymen.

She told me about an art show where she was showing some of her fine fantasy work. A couple browsing her display had a conversation in which they decided that she was not "Russian-Russian" but rather "Russian-Jewish" and, accordingly, backed away from her paintings.

Someone mentioned the HBO series *Big Love*, which drew unexpectedly heated comments from Linda. She declared herself opposed to polygamy and to the show she felt "glorifies" it. She pointed out some of the abuses found in today's fundamentalist Mormon communities. After ascertaining that she'd never seen an episode, I explained that every single objection she has to the practice is incorporated into the storylines.

Most folks departed around midnight, though James, Teresa, JoHn, Joyce and I kept the fanac flag waving until about 1 AM.

Gracing the meeting with their presence were: **Ross Chamberlain**, Lori Forbes, Alan & DeDee White, Teresa Cochran, James Taylor, Ayesha Ashley, JoHn Hardin, Su Williams, John DeChancie, Linda & Ron Bushyager, Merric & Luba Anderson, Joyce Katz and me — Arnie

Next Meeting

The next Vegrants Meeting, scheduled for Saturday, July 1, will be a boisterous revel with a definite tinge of sadness. The meeting, which is open to *all Vegas fans*, is the 2006 Wester Noncon. At the same time, it is also going to be the chance of the Las Vegas fan community to say goodbye to a couple that has done a mountain of activity over the years, because Bill & Laurie Kunkel will leave for their new home in Michigan later that week. It's also my 60th birthday.

There'll be plenty of fannish chatter, tons of terrific food, a variety of audio entertainments and, very possibly, the promised "Summer Fun" oneshot. You don't have to bring anything — especially not birthday presents — though donations of food and drink are grateful received. Want to bring something and don't know what? Ask Joyce.

The Vegrants invite everyone to come and share the fun. If you are not a Vegrant, it'd be nice if you let Joyce (joyceworley1@cox.net) know you plan to attend, but that's just a courtesy; if you get a last-minute notion to attend the summer's biggest Vegas fan event, come right on over to the Launch Pad, any time after 7:30.

Why a Fan?

I knew that the June 9 SNAFFU Discussion Meeting would be a little different even before Joyce and I got to Borders book store. I just didn't know how different, both good and bad, it was going to be.

The first difference was the way we got to the meeting. Although fans were kind enough to offer transportation help, Joyce decided that this should be her first attempt to drive at night since her recent cataract surgery. It seemed like a good first step, since it would still be light during the trip to the venue – and the book store was really pretty close to the Launch Pad.

Arriving about a half-hour early, we trekked to the area supposedly reserved for the club and found Ron & Linda Bushyager sitting there, waiting for the rest of local Fandom to catch up. There were few chairs in the area and most of them were occupied by customers who showed little indication of surrendering their seats to a bunch of sci-fi geeks.

Linda was browsing some books about Italy and enjoying the memories of the Bushyagers' recent visit there. She commented incredulously

Why 'Why a Fan?'?

An important part of each SNAFFU Discussion Meeting is the designated topic. It's generally the centerpiece of the whole evening.

Joyce Katz, as meeting director, announces next month's subject at the end of each meeting. The topic goes around the circle so that everyone participates and no one hogs the spotlight.

The topic for June was aimed at getting members to discuss the things that make them fans. In honor of Earl Kemp's marvelous survey anthology of over four decades ago, she phrased the question: "Why a Fan?"

Sprinkled through the report are "Why a Fan?" boxes. Each presents the gist of the viewpoint each fan expressed at the meeting, based on a digital recording.

I've put the comments into "first person" to make them readable, but they are my attempt to capture the essence of what was said and should not be taken as exact quotes. This is an experiment. If there are mistakes in interpretation, I will gladly take the blame.

about people who live in the shadow of a volcano that is overdue to blow, pointing out that quite a few have moved to Pompeii itself!

Mention of unsatisfactory venues led to the four of us kicking around the on-going problem that SNAFFU has had finding a decent place to meet now that Borders no longer has a club area. I reported a chance encounter with Lori Forbes at UNLV on Thursday and passed along an update on the status of our application for a meeting room at the university. (It isn't dead, but it isn't moving forward very rapidly, either.)

Teresa Cochran and James Taylor joined the group, throwing us into a standing room only

Why a Fan?

It's a really nice bonus to have a pool from which to draw friends I grew up in Israel and one of the things my mom did was to make sure I knew how to read in English. I loved reading and dove into Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew and Tom Swift Jr. I was pretty lucky, because there was an English-language used book store in the town where I lived. The owner was even a fan of science fiction.

For my 13th birthday, my aunt and uncle gave me a round-trip ticket to visit them in San Francisco. I met my cousin Oz, who handed me a copy of *The Caves of Steel*. When I returned to Israel, I dove into the science fiction stuff – Heinlein, Asimov, Clark – you name it.

There weren't many science fiction fans in Israel, so I didn't have anyone to talk to about it. After I moved back to the States in 1992, my cousin introduced me to a different aspect of Fandom; he took me to a convention, Sillycon '92.

I was there for the whole weekend and nobody was there except people I could talk to. And for the first time in a very, very long time, I felt certain guards coming down: not having to watch what I say. Not having to worry that something I said was going to be too outrageous. Not having to worry if people were going to get the jokes I made. That was what hooked me on Fandom.

Michael Bernstein

Why a Fan?

My childhood was Hell — and reading science fiction was my escape. I continued to escape with science fiction as an adult. I like fantasy, because it puts you in someone else's world. I wasn't a fan, though, until I went to SNAFFU meetings. One of my friends had a crush on Ken Forman, so we joined. After the next meeting, we went out for pizza with the fans. They were a wonderful group. I drove Michael home and he used the best pick-up line I'd ever heard: "Would you like to see my library?"

I didn't believe him. I didn't know Michael. I stayed until 2 or 3 AM and left with a shopping bag full of books, loaned along with a reading list!

At one particular SNAFFU meeting, I noticed that Ken Forman was absorbed in something he was reading. When I asked, Ken told me they were fanzines. Then he put them in recommended order and gave them to me.

I stayed up all night reading them.

When Michael took me to a con, I went to the fan lounge and I couldn't afford them all, so I picked one that had an article by Linda Bushyager, whom I'd recently met, about Moshe Feder. Actually knowing Linda led to the realization that there were a lot of people in Fandom that were like me, so I got more involved.

I don't usually write, but I definitely read.

Roxanne Gibbs

situation. The manager of Borders' café came by to tell us that we couldn't have any more chairs, even though we already didn't have enough for the six fans.

Teresa and I talked about Buck Rogers. Teresa was surprised to learn that there was an actual Buck Rogers novel, *Armageddon 2419 A.D.* that had been published shortly after the comic strip became a hint. Tee was skeptical about the book, fearing that it would be a comic without pictures, but I assured her it was a reasonably serious attempt to write an adventure novel — and that it was a classic of "Yellow Peril" racist fiction in which Buck fights against the devilish Han.

The next big difference was the arrival, with president Michael Bernstein, of Roxanne Gibbs. Terrible health has kept her away from SNAFFU for well over six months. Even though she is still using an oxygen tank, she seemed in much better health than in any time in recent memory. It would be a wonderful thing if she could resume her place

as an active participant on the local scene.

Fans kept arriving and several went to scavenge more chairs. The café was almost empty, so that became the source of extra seats. And those chairs became the spark that touched off a really acrimonious, nasty confrontation between several club members and the guy who'd prohibited us from taking additional chairs.

The Borders guy kept saying that we couldn't have more chairs because they were needed by café customers. Those arguing the matter pointed out that they, too, were customers and that it was more important to seat actual patrons than potential (and currently non-existent) ones.

Things got really nasty and I found myself simply trying to get other SNAFFU members to calm down. I also whispered to Michael that, since it was clear that the club was the store's bottom priority, if that, at Borders, it might be a good idea to end the bickering, sacrifice the meeting and leave as a group to show how we felt.

Why a Fan?

I loved science fiction from the moment that my fifth grade school teacher read *Arena* to us aloud. It was the first real science fiction story I ever heard, so I went to the library, looking for other stories like that.

I loved science fiction. My mother would say, "Why are you reading that stuff?" "She always told me that I was crazy for reading only that stuff.

I was an outcast.

So I constantly read science fiction.

When I was in college, I started a club after finding Suzle Thompkins and then a woman told me about a convention, where there would be hundreds of people who liked SF!

So we went to the con — me, Suzle and another friend — and we met people who were just like us, who read science fiction.

Linda Bushyager

Why a Fan?

There are really two questions: How did I become a fan and why am I still a fan? I was always a reader and discovered something that was *like* Fandom before I actually found Fandom. At the computer center, we were all social misfits and had to learn to deal with each other.

Connie Faddis, whom I met at the computer center, happened to bring a number of fanzines. She was studying them so she could offer them her fan art. I found out about these larger-than-life people who actually think. That's one of the things I like about fans.

I went to a fan meeting chaired by Linda and Suzle and visited the local slanshack. One thing led to another and I went to a Philcon with a group of people.

As much as I enjoy fans, the main reason I'm still in Fandom is probably Linda. I'm a passive fan; Linda is the active fan, especially compared to me.

Ron Bushyager

The only good thing about this poisonous hullo-labadoo is that it rekindled members' interest in finding a better place to meet. The club has needed to move for some time, but it seemed like it took this mess to put some fire into the hunt for a new home. I was particularly pleased when Michael appointed Linda to search Vegas for a good venue. She may not find one, but it won't be for lack of a strong effort.

When the cafe manager went off to consult his superior by phone, the talk about a new venue took precedence over the start of the meeting. Someone mentioned a possible location, only to be told that it was already in use every Friday night, by a chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous. I suggested that, if the club really got desperate, we could treat the current tenants to an Open Bar, a suggestion that several fans liked. I nominated two of our most attractive female members, Jolie LaChance and Bridget Westerman, to be B-girls in case our Open Bar meets resistance. (No, we would never do this. Well, not unless we don't find a new meeting place by next month.)

It took a little while for things to settle down,

but Michael finally convened the meeting about 8:15. Immediately, a spontaneous discussion of the SNAFFU library broke out. The group gave Lori Forbes some justly earned egoboo for pushing forward with the shelving and Jolie filled in everyone about the newly purchased shelves. Mindful of the recent spate of teen vandalism in my neighborhood, I asked Jolie to look into the possibility of covering the large glass window in the back door to the garage, which she'll do next Thursday.

Michael brought up the question of a Librarian, something I thought had already been settled. After saying that there'd only been one volunteer, he asked if anyone else wanted to be Librarian. No one did, but for some reason he seemed very tentative about the whole business. The club jumped the rails and acclaimed James Taylor as the club's new Librarian.

Later in the meeting, James talked about some of the procedures he has in mind for the Library when it is ready to open for business. The Library days and hours are still to be determined, but it'll probably average about one afternoon or evening a week. Roxanne volunteered to bake cookies for the

Why a Fan?

I took my first step toward Fandom shortly after I shot out of my mom's womb. They named me "Arnold," which was a kiss of death pre Swartzenegger and even Palmer. The only "Arnold" was that nerdy guy who sold Chunky.

People become fans, because there are needs that Fandom can meet, different needs for different people. We're not always aware of the actual needs that are being met. I know that for me, by the time I was a teenager, I was a thorough pariah, completely alienated. I knew that though I could handle mainstream society, but I also knew that there had to be an alternative to the crassly commercial, bigger-is-better, self-aggrandizing, cut-your-neighbor's-throat mentality.

I read science fiction as part of my teenage rebellion. My friend from up the street, Lenny Bailes was also a rebel. So we rebelled together, published a fanzine and found Fandom.

I'm a fan because I think Fandom has been very helpful to me. It allowed me to stop being a self-doubting introvert.

Fandom is, in a sense, my family and, I guess you could say it's my religion. Bob Tucker and Charles Burbee feel more like my ancestors than a lot of Europeans I never met or knew.

There are a lot of fans I don't especially like, because they don't seem to be in sympathy with my alienated world-view, but I believe in the community of Core Fandom.

Fortunately, there are enough of us to keep it interesting.

Arnie Katz

Why a Fan?

It was a combination of boredom and curiosity. I'd just moved to California and was on my own for the first time. When I started running out of things to do, I decided to go find that science fiction group I'd heard about in North Hollywood. That was pretty much the end of me.

I immediately felt like I fit in. Nobody thought twice about the addition of another person in their midst and I just started doing things in Fandom.

There was no doubt about it; I belonged in Fandom

James Taylor

first Library Day in September.

In that discussion, Jolie and Teresa both volunteered to be Assistant Librarians, even though there is no special Green Room in which Librarians will be able to swill free drinks, gorge on goodies not available to Library patrons and hobnob with any stray pros who wander in from the Vegas heat.

Several fans thought the Library needs someone to make sure the books come back and the fines get paid – an enforcer, a “leg-breaker” in local parlance. For some reason, this unleashed a spontaneous demonstration to draft David Gordon for the position.

Honest, folks, he's a very nice man.

When it finally came down to an actual poll, the groups expressed a choice of Lynn McGiboney. His main qualifications were thought to be that he carries a gun and wasn't present at the meeting to protest his appointment.

Non-SNAFFU members will be able to use the library for an annual fee of \$25. Since the annual SNAFFU dues are only \$20, the club may pick up a few extra members.

That reminded me to mention another election of interest to members: the vote for the new SNAPS Official Editor. Eager to democratize the apa – and maybe get out from under the work – current OE Joyce Katz put a call for election in the 13th Distribution. The actual vote will begin with the 14th Distribution, which is supposed to come out on June 28. I'm going to run and so, I think, is

Teresa Cochran. Anyone who has had a contribution in SNAPS is eligible to vote.

Also coming up for vote at the same time is a resolution to open participation in SNAPS to fans around the country. Most SNAPSters at the meeting expressed support for widening the focus, but we'll see whether that holds true once the votes are tabulated.

Linda described the next SNAFFood Dinner, which is scheduled for the Emperor's Garden, a Chinese restaurant, on June 23rd and lamented that only two fans had RSVP'd. (She identified the

Why a Fan?

I first heard about fanzines when I was 13 years old. I wrote even then and I was overjoyed at the idea that I could be published in a little magazine and that I would have a built-in audience that loved me.

Though I wanted it so badly, it took me more than 10 years to find Fandom. I hunted, but I didn't know where to go.

That's what took me into Fandom; the desire to publish, the desire to have an audience read it..

Joyce Katz

couple as Joyce and me.) That state of affairs didn't last long as almost everyone at the meeting signed up for what promises to be another highly successful event under Linda's guidance.

The August SNAFFood Dinner will be on August 18 instead of the following week, due to the Worldcon. Far from being a bad thing, this will give those who visit Las Vegas Fandom the week before LACon IV an exceptionally pleasant fan-nish event. Joyce and I jumped right in and proclaimed the next night, August 19, a Special Vegants Open Party to honor TAFF winner Bridget Bradshaw.

It now looks like we'll get a number of visitors during the weekend and I hope all of them will take up the invitation to attend both of these events.

Joyce called upon James & Kathryn Daugherty to talk about

Why a Fan?

I was a geeky girl growing up and I remember buying my first science fiction book at a book fair and since then I haven't been able to get enough. Other girls in my class were reading *Sweet Valley High* books and the Babysitters Club.

I tried. I got through the first half of one page. I went to the book store and picked up the *Zork* “Pick Your Own adventure” book.

Bridget Westerman

Why a Fan?

I think of most fans are erudite, iconoclastic misfits with a bizarre notion of reality. I fit right in.

The literature is the beginning of this, but as has been pointed out, fans are the last remnants of intellectualism. I got into running conventions.

To me, it's very exciting to see an empty convention hall and watching them bring in the first signs and balloons and stuff. I find designing programming for fans very exciting. And enjoyable.

James Daugherty

their bid to hold a Westercon in Las Vegas. As I listened to their plans, I couldn't think of a single thing to say that wouldn't have been inflammatory. Since the club had had enough acrimony for one evening, I let it roll over me in silence.

The Daugherty's are hoping for volunteers for the convention grunt work. I fear they may be disappointed in the lack of desire to sweat for a con that didn't consult any of us about the character of

Linda Bushyager brought an intriguing NASA report to fans' attention. It concerns the discovery of what it believed to be an infant solar system, Beta Pectoris. One of the salient points is that it appears that it has an abundance of carbon and could eventually be home to carbon-based life-forms.

After I reported on fan news, including the release of a number of fine fanzines, David Gordon

asked me if I would offer recommendations for prospective Hugo voters in the fan categories. I expected that I wasn't planning to vote, generally ignored the fan Hugos as unrepresentative and wasn't eager to recommend votes to anyone else. I added that I wasn't

Why a Fan?

I'm not allowed to use the "F" (for "Friends.") I'm so new I really don't yet know why I am a fan. The reason that I like science fiction is that it makes you use your imagination. It's all about possibilities.

Honestly, I'm not sure I'm a fan yet, but I'm starting to feel the itch. Maybe what makes people fans is that they write as well as read.

Jolie LaChance

a convention planned for our home town. I'll enjoy seeing all of you who come, if they win the bid. (With the \$159/a night room rates they've got, Phoenix is going to look good to a lot of fans.)

Lori Forbes gave what Joyce called "The Drama Report," presenting an outline of the Sci-Fi Channel schedule for this summer. The mention of Extreme Championship Wrestling led Joyce to ask me for an explanation of how this particular show landed on this channel. I'll save you the rerun from *VFW #77*. The most interesting of the books mentioned in Joyce's report was *Bradbury Speaks*, an autobiography.

sure there should be fan Hugos at all, since the Hugos are supposed to be given for achievement in the professional science fiction and fantasy field. I'd like to see all the fan (and semi-pro) Hugos abolished and let Core Fandom vote for fan-literary and artistic productions in the annual FAAn Achievement Awards,

Joyce announced the pre-Worldcon visit of Bridget Bradshaw and explained TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) to some of the newer SNAFFU members. I pointed out that this will be the first fan fund visitor since the 1990's, except for the Bruce Gillespie Bring Bruce Bayside Fund).

Why a Fan?

There is always a niche in Fandom for each of us. There's a niche for the readers, there's a niche for the writers and a niche for someone like me who went to a con and was delighted to find people who do costumes.

Every year, James and I go to SMOFcon – the Secret Masters of Fandom con. There'll be 150 there and I'll know at least 140 of them. That's what I like about Fandom.

I like the sense of community, the family. I really love the fact that I know all these people and whether I like them or not, they're family. You have to work with some people you dislike intensely when you run a big convention. You know you have to get along with some people to accomplish your goal, so you do.

Most of us tend to be a little bit introverted, but Fandom helps us learn and grow. It helps us to relate better to people and know them better and work around these things when in a normal setting, we might be tempted to sit back and not say or do anything.

Kathryn Daugherty

Why a Fan?

I love the richness of imagination and intellect. Fans don't think I'm weird for being intelligent.

Some important personal things have happened in the last year or so, including being part of Vegas Fandom and reaching out to other people outside Vegas Fandom as well.

It wonderful to be around like-minded people who always seem to understand each other..

Teresa Cochran

Teresa Cochran presented her monthly science report, which focused on the discovery of a huge impact crater in Antarctica. Scientists postulate that this meteor may have been the event that triggers the extinction of the dinosaurs. It was also probably the event that caused Australia to break off from the original one-continent.

Joyce mentioned that she is currently re-reading the 1940's anthology *Boris Karloff's Tales of Terror* and enjoying it immensely. She also noticed that the book is printed on thinner-than-usual paper, a wartime economy, and lamented that her copy is close to disintegrating.

I mentioned that this wasn't the only factor that affects publications from that era. Paper drives encouraged people to recycle their books, newspapers and magazines, with the result that those things are often a good deal rarer than might otherwise be expected.

A potluck fundraiser, suggested by Lori as a possible fundraising activity, sounded like a good enough idea. Joyce suggested that we also consider an ice cream Social. Michael and Roxanne expressed interest in hosting it. Details when they are decided.

Michael talked knowledgeably about Café Press, an outfit that helps groups sell logo merchandise. As I already knew from my days with CollectingChannel.com, Café Press merchandise is fairly expensive and the club would do much better to create and

sell its own tee-shirt. I doubt many non-members really want a SNAFFU tee-shirt and I'm not sure anyone is in the market for SNAFFU mugs, tote bags and underoos.

Making this one of the club's larger discussion meeting sin some time were: Michael Bernstein, Roxanne Gibbs, Lori Forbes, David Gordon, Ron & Linda Bushyager, Teresa Cochran, James Taylor, Jolie LaChance, Bridget Westerman, Joyce Katz and me...

-- Arnie

Next Meeting

The next SNAFFU Discussion meeting looks toward the past of science fiction and fantasy — and the future of the club..There'll be some changes...

The Discussion meetings will be on a new day (Sunday, July 23), a new time (1:30 -3:00 PM) and at a new location. (The Public Library at Flamingo and Maryland). The new location is guaranteed Twit Free.

Actually, SNAFFU has probably met as often on Sunday as on Friday. That was the day during the early years of the club, right up to the decision to meet in book stores.

The Topic for this landmark meeting: Who do you think is the most important science fiction writer — and why?

Why a Fan?

I can't tell you why I'm a fan, because I'm not really sure. I don't have that itch to write. In fact, I dread it, but everyone is so encouraging.

Fandom is a great arena for conversation. Fans seem to be a little more intelligent, a little more curious, so it's more fun to have conversations with them. You can't have a conversation on some of those taboo subjects — like sex, religion and politics — without someone hating you. Fans are usually more ready to simply agree to disagree instead of screaming at you. That makes Fandom a relatively safe haven for opinions.

You can express yourself more freely in Fandom, which is one of the best reasons I can think of to be a fan.

Lori Forbes

Continued from p 1

Joyce Katz worked together to secure the one that seemed the best and made final arrangements on Wednesday (6/21) for the club to meet at the Public Library at Flamingo and Maryland.

It's the same venue United Fans of Vegas used for the Las Vegas Fantasy & Science Fiction Day last year. There is plenty of room for expansion and we could certainly host speakers in such a setting. Restaurants in the area include several mid-priced eateries that will be ideal for after-meeting meals.

As a result of the move, SNAFFU will also return to its Sunday afternoon meeting day. For now, the sessions will start at 1:30 PM, though the club hopes to secure a later time when that slot comes free down the road.

Discussion meetings will now be on the fourth Sunday of the month, starting with the July 24th meeting, the first to be held at the Library.

The SNAFFood dinner meetings will be moved to the second Friday of the month, though the August one will be on Friday, 8/18, to entertain pre-Worldcon visitors (as well as the rest of us...)

SNAFFU Names James Taylor Librarian!

James Taylor will be the Head Librarian of the mammoth SNAFFU fantasy and science fiction library, when it opens for lending in a couple of months. Club President Michael Bernstein responded to a groundswell of enthusiasm by putting aside his normal caution and proclaiming Taylor the fan in charge at the June discussion meeting. (*An extreme complete report of this meeting starts on page 10.*)

James plans to canvas the membership for ideas and develop policies for the library that will make it accessible and reasonably convenient, while at the same time safeguarding the valuable collection.

Vegas Fans Prepare for Pre-Worldcon Weekend!

There'll be a couple of major events in Las Vegas the weekend before the worldcon with an eye towards attracting fans on their way to LACon IV.

SNAFFood, SNAFFU's monthly excursion into fine dining, will be held at Ghandi, a much-respected, though not ultra-expensive Indian restaurant on Friday, August 18, at 7:00 PM.

Saturday is an Open Party hosted by the Vegnants at the Launch Pad. It'll be a typical, informal Vegnants meeting — plenty of chatter, lots of food and invariably some surprises.

Among those already planning to come to Vegas for a fun weekend are TAFF winner Bridget Bradshaw

and Hope Leibowitz. If this sounds good to you, you can contact Joyce (joyceworley1@cox.net) for more information about both events.

SNAPS Deadline Is 6/25 Election Begins!

This coming Sunday (June 25) is the deadline for sending contributions to the June Distribution of SNAPS, the local electronic apa. Knowing Official Editor Joyce Katz moderately well, you've probably got until about Wednesday to write something for inclusion in this month's bundle.

SNAPS — Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society — is an electronic fanzine trading club modeled on the amateur press associations that have existed in Fandom for almost 70 years.

Participants write and/or draw something they'd like their friends in SNAPS to see, turn it into an electronic file — *Acrobat*, *Microsoft Publisher* and *Microsoft Word* all work fine (and other arrangements can be made if necessary) — and send it to Joyce (joyceworley1@cox.net).

The OE assembles an *Acrobat* file with all the submitted pages into a SNAPS Distribution. She then emails it to everyone who contributed and posts it on www.snaffu.org as a free download for the rest of Las Vegas Fandom.

There are no dues or minimum activity requirements and the cost of electronic publishing is zero once you have appropriate software. And if you need help or have questions, Joyce is always available to assist and provide information.

A lot of Las Vegas fans have had their first fanzine experiences in SNAPS and discovered how much fun it is to share your thoughts, opinions and fancies with your friends in written form — and then get back comments from them in the very next Distribution!

SNAPS will hold its first election for Official Editor beginning in the June Distribution. At present, it appears that I will be running against Teresa Cochran. Since I've already written about how much I admire her and that I think of her as my fannish daughter, I guess I can't stoop to the customary mud-slinging tactics that have worked so well in the past. I will muddle through somehow.)

Current SNAPS participants will also vote on whether to enlarge the group into a Fandom-wide electronic apa.

SNAFFood Dinner Is Friday!

Emperor's Garden (4215 Spring Mountain Rd.) is the restaurant for the June SNAFFood dinner meeting. Fans, at least the ones who've RSVP'd to Linda

Bushyager, will congregate at the Szechwan restaurant at 7:30 on Friday, June 23.

Note that this is the last dinner in the current series scheduled for the fourth Friday. That spot will now belong to the Discussion meetings. The SNAFFood dinners will be on the second Friday of the month, except in August, when it will be on the third Friday in line with pre-Worldcon festivities in town.

Heard Around Fandom...

Teresa Cochran has a new email address: fox692003@yahoo.com. She is currently packing to move to a new residence in Las Vegas. I'm hoping that Tee herself will write this up in time for next issue, so I won't steal her thunder here...

Bill & Laurie Kunkel will be making the long drive to Michigan on "July 8 or 9," according to the soon-to-uproot. They're looking forward to having a chance to say "goodbye" to everyone on Saturday, July 1, at the Vegnants Open Party...

David Burton has published a new issue of *Pixel*, the third since he gave up the well-liked *Catchpenny Gazette*. If anything, the new title is better than the old with some outstanding material, including an article by Ted White. It's available as a free download at Bill Burns' efanzines.com.

Not to be out-done, *VFW* stalwart John Purcell has posted new issues of *both* of his fanzines at efanzines.com. So when you go to get David's fanzine, you can pick up John's, too. They're among the very best fanzines.

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column!

The accent's on quality this week, which is another way of saying that the wrestling article scared off too many of you. Please come back. Meanwhile, let's revel in a trio of outstanding letters.

And first into the arena is the best loccer of them all, based on his FAAN Awards success...

Robert Lichtman

I was sorry to read of all your and Joyce's problems (health, computer and neighborhood invasion) at the end of *VFW* No. 77, and hope that they remain in the past so your weekly schedule can be resumed and you won't have to think of another title for your sterling fanzine. I'm also wondering if your version of Microsoft Publisher has gone wonky on you, because what else could explain the *one-word* continuation of your write-up of SNAPS and the OE election Joyce has called from page 1 to page 15 (where at first I didn't notice "job" floating on its own below that cover scan

of the latest mailing)—especially given that there was an enormous amount of open space between the bottom of your text and the top of the Rotsler cartoon below it. Or did this happen when the Publisher file got converted to a PDF?

It's probably a function of the difference in our ages—and I was stunned over your announcement that your sixtieth birthday is coming up early next month, since despite plenty of in-person evidence and decades of activity to the contrary I always think of you as a youngfan—but the first science fiction I remember encountering was the "Space Patrol" radio show, since in my life television was just arriving around the time I heard that show and didn't enter my life up close and personal until 1954. I was going to my friends' houses well before that to view their giant 7- and 9-inch sets, but my parents (read: "my father") were concerned that TV would turn out to be a short-lived fad and they'd be stuck with an expensive and suddenly useless appliance. I do recall seeing the Tom Corbett TV show, but I was listening to ol' Tom on the radio before then. (And shifting genres, I always liked the radio version of "Gunsmoke" better than the later TV one.) A few years later I was reading the EC *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy* at the newsstand, and from there I discovered SF books at the library.

In your review of the "strange position" of TV programming in the first part of the '50s concerning the low-rent shows and old movies the stations broadcast in order to save money in program acquisition, you didn't mention one staple I used to watch in mesmerized awe back then. That was "roller derby," consisting of a group of women skating at high speed around a track in some undisclosed location. Perhaps it didn't exist on stations in the New York market? It was definitely a regular thing in Los Angeles. But then, so was wrestling. And like you, I wasn't particularly interested in wrestling until Gorgeous George came on the scene. I didn't know until now, though, that he wore a wig. I always thought his hair style was the inspiration for Jerry Lee Lewis's locks later. Notice how I've commented on your article on the current state of wrestling without actually saying anything on that aspect of it. I don't object to it, of course, but I was amused by your noting in the "Editorial Plea" that "this is the first time in 78 issues of *VFW*" that you've succumbed to writing about what I know to be one of your favorite Other Fandoms. I take this to mean that you won't do it again for the next eleven issues.

I loved the chiding tone of Mark's article. Perhaps a quick one-off fund is in order so you can attend that 60th anniversary gathering commemorating the first London pub meeting at the "legendary White Horse."

I couldn't help but notice that although there were half a dozen photographs accompanying your "Welcome Home, John DeChancie!" article, *none* of them included that nice Mr. DeChancie himself. Knowing your penchant for faan fiction, I immediately wondered if this account is a cleverly wrought example of same. Quickly discounting that possibility, I add that it made for enjoyable reading.

Thanks for a good presentation of my "How I Found Fandom." I'd like to note that this was written for the "spoken" oneshot on this subject Bill Mills and you were working on—and when is that going to be available?—when I discovered it wasn't feasible for me to do it in audio form. Without that information, it's a bit out of the blue. It's also a story I've told before in various forms and in a number of venues. It is part of a long tradition, though, that's been memorialized a number of times in special fanzines. The first of those was Earl Kemp's *Why Is A Fan?*, which was published back in 1961. Earl circulated a questionnaire to nearly 100 fans and got back responses from 73 of them. There were five questions for gathering statistical data: "In your family, are you an only child (or first born)?" "Do you feel that this has any bearing on your being a fan?" "Are you a second-generation fan (was there a retrograde reaction)?" "At what age did you enter the fantasy world (and with what)?" and "At what age did you enter fandom (and how)?" And there were five more, the answers to which generated the essays that filled the volume: "Why do you stay in fandom?" "What do you get out of fandom?" "How long do you expect to stay in fandom?" "What does fandom mean to you?" and "Why do fans gafiate, and are these reasons sufficient to make you gafiate?"

Fast forward forty years and there's another volume covering fans' discovery of fandom. It's *Contact!*, published by Dick and Leah Smith in conjunction with the 2001 Ditto convention. At 100 pages it's half again as large as *Why Is A Fan?*. And their method of gathering information was different. As they wrote in the introduction: "We didn't send out a survey—we merely circulated a call for contributions which included, basically, two questions: How did you find fandom? And what did you think of it at the time?" They received 72 responses, which are published in the order in which the respondents discovered fandom—starting in 1929 with Forrest J Ackerman and concluding in 1984 with Lisa C. Freitag.

I had the opportunity to contribute to both of these compilations—I received Earl's questionnaire and was aware of Dick and Leah's call for contributions—but failed to do so in both cases. So I'm happy to have my story in print in *VFW*. And as for these two collec-

tions, it seems to me high time they were both available on-line in PDF form, containing as they do some really fascinating stories about how people discovered fandom. I think they would be of particular interest to today's newer fans, which brings me back to Vegas and your current crop.

Linda Bushyager's account of the SNAFFU dinner at the Levant made for mouthwatering reading, but I'm baffled in my attempts to deconstruct the penultimate sentence of her account of the VSFA Sunday Social at the Blue Ox Tavern. She writes, "The Sunday Social is held on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Blue Ox from 2 to 4 mothered are no dues and anyone can attend." Huh!?

I agree with you, Arnie, that it would be a Good Thing if Kingman, Arizona fandom would get together. I think JoHn and Earl would be an interesting combination, fannishly speaking. I can imagine a joint venture even now: *eI c/w Rant c/w Nine Lines Each*.

We have in common that we both "first encountered Don [Anderson] in SAPS" and that neither of us has ever met him. I have a leg up in one regard—that Don's in SAPS along with me for many years and we entertain each other on a regular basis in the quarterly mailings. We've also been exchanging the commemorative state quarters. He sends me the ones from the Philadelphia mint and I reciprocate with the Denver issues. Our respective albums are filling up, and if we both manage to last through the end of 2008 we can complete our collections.

I hadn't really noticed, like John Purcell, that "the dead-tree fanzines I've been getting recently don't seem to mention" efanzines. I don't know why that is, but I'd agree that anyone who's interested in fanzines *must* check out that site frequently since so much good material by such a wide range of participants is appearing there.

Arnie: It has only recently occurred to me – which is why you're the Sage and I'm just the Kingfish – that any desire to "relax" into a biweekly schedule is automatically thwarted by the fanzine's title. I guess if I want to go into such a semi-vacation, I'll need to find a new meaning for the "VFW" acronym. Until I do, I'm stuck with the weekly schedule and you're all stuck with me sticking this into your email queue.

Truthfully, I have to sometimes remind myself that I am not that youngfan any more. Of course, my increasingly creaky joints make it easier to remember early in the morning and late at night. Well, it would, if my mind wasn't also going.

I was an avid listener and viewer of Space Patrol, but it wasn't available in the New York City market as early as it was on the West Coast. The program was on

a regional network and distribution didn't expand to the entire ABC hook-up until a little later. On the other hand, the presence of an owned-and-operated station in the DuMont network in NYC gave me the chance to enjoy *Captain Video*.

The first episode of "ECW on Sci-Fi" had at least one item of possible interest to fans. A growling man referred to derisively as a *Zombie* by both announcers, shambled to the ring. He was soon joined by *Sandman*, who immediately beat him senseless with a cane to win the match. I guess that was ECW's salute to *Science Fiction*.

As you can tell from this issue, I'm exceptionally fond of Earl Kemp's "Why A Fan?" and wish he would either consider doing a new edition or give permission for others to do so. A new set of responses, some 40 years after the original survey, might be illuminating and would surely be entertaining.

I also watched *Roller Derby*. New York was one of the only East Coast hotbeds of the pseudo-sport, so local stations as well as the networks aired it. Sadly, RD has not made the same transition from grimy to glitzy as easily as pro wrestling. They've tried several revivals, but none of them took. The worst, in the 1980's, added features like a moat with live alligators that made the simple ersatz contest seem ridiculous. It didn't help that they renamed every skater in the league, giving each an allegedly colorful nickname, the same week.

The foul-up in Linda's sentence was Arnie-induced. She has forgiven me. (The proofreader had actually corrected it to "2-4 PM. There are no dues....")

The *Comeback Kid* continues to flourish in *Chat-Back* with another entertaining and insightful letter of comment..

John Purcell

After a week and half of truly obscenely bizarre events, I am finally back to loccing and working on my fanzine(s). Let's just leave it at that for now since I'm "telling all!" in the 8th installment of *and furthermore*. In fact, maybe this loc will help both of us soothe our frayed nerves.

Sorry to hear of the computer snafu - not SNAFFU - that put *VFW* in a holding pattern. At least you've got the beastie back in operation again. Back in the day, our mimeos used to get temperamental, too, causing many a faned to yank handfulls of hair out of their heads, so this is really nothing new, just a sign of the times and further proof that modern-day fanzines have their own set of technological problems. Same shit, different repro medium.

Wrestling on the SciFi Channel is truly warped

programming. My wife and I were quite astonished by SciFi Channel's decision to air the more grisly and horror-oriented episodes of *Law and Order:SVU*, but we figured that sort of made sense considering the subject matter. Pro Wrestling is more of a stretch here; if anything, this is out-and-out fantasy. If the SciFi Channel is after sports, I suggest they carry *Rollergirls* and the two movie versions of *Rollerball*; I prefer the James Caan version, since you ask.

At about the same time I was getting into reading *That Crazy Buck Rogers Stuff*, I would always watch the AWA broadcasts on Saturday morning on WTCN-TV 11 up in Mipple-Stipple. Verne Gagne was my hero, but my favorite wrestlers were *The Crusher* and *Dick the Bruiser*. As much as I enjoyed the stodgy, scientific, "clean" matches, when things got really goofy with a mess of wrestlers going at it full bore all at the same time (with only one puny referee stuck in the middle of the madness), *that's* when the show got really entertaining. The fans ate it up, and so did the television audience. It wasn't long before this kind of weirdness became a regular feature on the broadcasts. Once in a great while there were women wrestlers, like the *Fabulous Moolah*, but my all-time favorite nuttiness was when the midget wrestlers - especially the midget tag-team matches - came on. Dang, those little fellers could fly! Literally. Totally gonzo fun. Does anybody know if there are still midget wrestlers knocking about? Or has our Politically Correct culture removed this sporting entertainment from the airwaves?

I enjoyed Mark Plummer's loc-cum-arkle. Cool idea: a loc con report. Works for me. And your little response was cute. Personally, if I ever stepped into a Tardis occupied by *The Doctor* and his "very young blonde friend *Rose*," I'd push the Doctor out, slam the door, and go back a mere thirty years in time. Hmm... Me at 22 with a young, svelte blonde...

Is this "How I Found Fandom" feature becoming a regular item herein? If so, keep it going. I am enjoying the reminiscences of fandom's graybeards for the historical and personal perspectives of their initial encounters. I actually didn't know *Robert Lichtman* went back that far in fandom; for years I've been under the impression he only started in the late 50s. Oh, well. Thank you for sharing, Robert.

Chris Garcia: I will gladly run that fanzine lounge arkle in my zine. It would make sense since I'm putting together my proposal for the fanzine room at *Aggiecon 38* next March. (*) How often does your head explode, *Chris*? Mine does this once a week it seems. But then it falls back in place and I feel much better again.

Robert Lichtman: I remember *The Farm* very well. Never been there, but correct me if I'm wrong, but you

must have been there with Andy Offutt and company. See you at next year's Corflu Lone Star

Arnie's response to my loc: You are too kind, sir! I guess 33 years in and out of fandom will give a person some kind of rational perspective on what it means to be a fan. And I agree; when Ted and Dan put out their Pong poll results in '83, I was quite appreciative of their nod. Definitely a compliment, and I gratefully thank them in retrospect.

Another fine issue, kind sir. Kindly keep me on the mailing list.

Arnie: I think Sci I Channel might gain more respect and credibility if it showed more respect for the field it allegedly covers. That means not only that "ECW on Sci-Fi" is out of place, but so is all that pseudo-scientific supernatural crap,

Midgets were once a popular feature of many wrestling cards, but the audience for that kind of sideshow stuff has virtually disappeared in the US. Mexico still has its "Mini," but attempts to brig them to the US have failed. On the other hand, the women are a lot more popular – and a lot better looking. The two things are not unrelated.

Ted White

Once again I find myself with nothing to do here at Beta Court Reporting, so I'm availing myself of the

opportunity to write you a LoC. I blinked, and you put out five more issues of VFW.

Back in VFW #73, Robert Lichtman says he never heard of Keith Kato. That gave me pause, but then I realized that I probably saw the most of Keith during Robert's fafiation -- the '70s and early '80s. Keith is an Asian American fan who lives in the LA area and used to be known -- and perhaps still is -- for the large pots of chili he makes and serves up at his Worldcon room parties. I think maybe Jerry Jacks initially introduced me to Keith, and his parties were definitely among the treats I used to enjoy when I was still attending Worldcons regularly, and even getting to most Westercons. (I haven't been to a Westercon since Jerry died in 1986.)

In that same issue you, Arnie, say that the original usage of "fakefan" was derogatory. Really? I never heard it used in that way, as a put-down, and I've certainly never used it myself in that way -- in reference to Hal Hughes, Bill Kunkel, or anyone else. I can see where the term could be thought of as derogatory, but....

Then Rich Dengrove says "Ted White supports Randy Byers' Traditional Fandom as opposed to Core Fandom." I did? I thought I'd mocked it, with a reference to moldy figs (an old traditional jazz reference). Maybe I was too subtle.

In #74 you have a long eulogy of sorts for Brian

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

SNAFFU:

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

VSFA:

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

GayLesBiTrans SF Club

Joshua Andrews
Email: andrews1701@gmail.com
Phone: 759-9303

Las Vegas Fan Events Calendar

GayLesBiTrans SF Club Gathering Monday, June 26 7:30 PM

This alternative lifestyles group meets on the fourth Monday of the month at The Center (953 East Sahara Ave., Suite B-25).

VSFA Monthly Meeting July 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 Wester-Noncon '06 (Open Party) July 1 7:30 PM

The informal invitational Core Fandom club meets on the first and third Saturdays of the month at the Launch Pad, the home of Arnie & Joyce Katz. This time they invite all Vegas fans to come and enjoy the 2006 Vegas NonCon, honor the departing Bill & Laurie Kunkel and celebrate Arnie's 60th birthday.

First Friday Video Group July 7 6:00 PM

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

Second Sunday Movie Screening July 9 6:00 PM

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

SNAFFU Discussion Meeting July 13 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: Who's the greatest SF author of all time — and why?

Las Vegrants Meeting July 15 7:30 PM

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

Sunday Social July 16 2 PM

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

SNAPS Deadline Sunday, July 23

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

Burley, and I was stunned by your recitation of his activities in support of the 1969 Columbus Worldcon bid coupled with your description of him as not malicious. It's hardly worth plumbing the depths of this topic at this time, but I regarded Brian's activities as highly malicious. He had, after all, decided in a drunken stupor (his typical state in those years) that I was the Evil Force behind St. Louis's competing bid, and that I must be smeared and my credit destroyed with faked photos of me and a prostitute. And he drunkenly revealed this plan to fans in St. Louis, who told me about it. Just a little fannish kidding around?

Art Widner asked about the Chorp Dimension. As you know, rich brown is not currently available to add his wisdom on this topic, but I can tell you that the

phrase originated in SAPS in the (early) '50s, and that I associate it mostly with Karen Anderson, although I don't know if she coined it. (Lee Jacobs might have coined it; he was responsible for a lot of the best fannishness in that era and apa.)

In #75 you published a photo of myself, Frank Lunney, and others sitting at a table. This was in the Japanese restaurant located in the Corflu hotel, where we had the Sunday banquet. In a small break with tradition, we had the banquet in the restaurant and then adjourned to the program room for the after-banquet business (GoH presentation, FWA, Faan Awards, site selection).

I don't want to steal from my Corflu report, but the Toronto Corflu was not as small as the Panama City

Corflu (which had around 20 attendees), and typical Corflu attendance is not 110 or so. I'd say typical Corflus average 60 to 75 attendees, with a few getting over 100. Those latter Corflus are held in cities with a large fan population -- Vegas, San Francisco/Bay Area, and Seattle.

Frankly, my enjoyment of a Corflu is not dependent on its size, but on the opportunity to see many of my oldest and best friends in fandom. And every Corflu has had unique virtues as well. Both Corflu Sunsplash and Corflu Ganja were very enjoyable, despite their small attendance.

John Purcell remarked on the fact that Dan Steffan and I had named him one of the Best New Fans of the year in 1983, when he'd been active for ten years by then. I don't recall doing that, but I suspect what really happened is that John was named in that year's PONG Poll, which Dan and I conducted for a year or two after folding PONG (which ran 40 issues in 1980, 1981 and 1982).

PONG was a frequently published fanzine (biweekly for its first year, triweekly for its second), back when that meant a lot more work than it does now for you and Chris Garcia -- we had to physically pub our issues and mail them out -- and it appeared in an era of annually published genzines (some things never change). Our idea was to try to pump up the energy level of fandom with a much more frequent zine, published on a regular basis.

Alas, our effort did not result in other frequently published fanzines, as we'd hoped, but it did help re-bridge the Atlantic Gulf and it connected us with then-current (post-Ratfan) UK fandom. That was exciting. I'd gotten a few of the British fanzines of the '70s, but knew nothing about Ratfandom or its stars, like Pickersgill, Kettle, Charnock, et al. Learning what I'd missed, and reading back issues of fanzines like STOP BREAKING DOWN and SEAMONSTERS, was al-

most like rediscovering fandom for me. It was like reading old copies of *Masque* when I was a neofan.

Pursuing that same subject, in 1985 I went to London for Rob Hansen's marriage to Avedon Carol, and I stayed with (now-gafiated) Phil Palmer. Phil introduced me to transplanted (to London) Scots fan Jimmy Robertson, and Cretinfandom. The Cretins were Glasgow fans, a tight circle of local fans who reinvented fannishness on their own -- and were startled to realize later that it already existed. They put out fanzines like *Indian Scout*, in which material was not bylined because readers were assumed to know (from style or context) who the authors were. Cretinzines had a very small circulation -- under 50, for the most part.

Phil had a nearly complete file of Cretinzines, and when we got back from visiting with Jimmy, he handed that file to me. I stayed up past dawn reading them. Great stuff! Yet another opportunity to "rediscover" another nook in fandom. (And I had a great time partying with the Cretins the next year at Mexican 2.)

Arnie: The original meaning of "fakefan" was someone who was a fan but wasn't much into science fiction. This was an insult often hurled at fans with a more fannish bent. For example, Ackerman frequently called Laney a fakefan -- see the relevant section of Ah, Sweet Idiocy! -- and I remember Rotsler saying that it was something he heard during his early years in Fandom. (It's ironic that he later wrote science fiction, isn't it?)

Please Write...

Your letters and contributions are the fuel that powers *VFW*. I hope to hear from many of you before next Friday's issue.

See you all then!

— Arnie Katz

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