

Virtual Tucker Hotel



It's Westernercon Weekend in TVFL...

Issue Eleven

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>

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VTH is primarily an electronic fanzine, available on <http://www.efanzines.com>. Paper copies of this fanzine do exist, however, and will be available for the fannish usual. In any case, e-mails and letters of comment are, of course, welcome.

Thanks to: Bill Mills ("FanLounge"), without whom The Virtual Fan Lounge wouldn't exist. Also to Arnie Katz for hosting another edition of The Wasted Hour this coming weekend.

Member fwa. Startling Press Production number 280. Today is Thursday 3rd July, 2008.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

It was a fairly low-key weekend in The Virtual Fan Lounge last weekend:

- There was the regular Southern Fandom Classic chat session on the Saturday.
- And, on the Sunday, a re-broadcast of The Wasted Hour – the fourth episode of Arnie Katz's "The Wasted Hour," his 30-minute fannish programme.

By contrast, this coming weekend, there are several events already scheduled:

- Thursday 3rd (that's today) and Friday 4th July – possibly some Westercon 61 coverage by TFVN roving reporters Bill and Roxanne Mills. Various times throughout the day and evening.
- Saturday 5th July – The Wasted Hour – the fifth episode of Arnie Katz's 30 minute fannish programme.

Joining the Lounge

To use the chat-room, just go to <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/the-virtual-fan-lounge>. On the left hand side of the page is the live video feed – replaced by a slide show when there isn't anything happening. On the right is the actual chat-room. You can see what everyone else is typing in the top window, and add your own contribution in the smaller box

at the bottom.

You will be assigned an initial user name in the format "ustreamer-12345." If you'd rather change this – to your real name, livejournal name, or whatever – you can do this by clicking the "Sign Up" link at the top to register for free. Some people have been slightly put off by the amount of information that the registration form asks for, which I can empathise with. But registration is entirely optional – you can simply stay as "ustreamer-12345" if you prefer.

Video Library

As well as the live events, The Virtual Fan Lounge is beginning to build up a library of recorded material available for viewing. The clips are listed under the main viewscreen – just click to select.

No new videos have been added this week, but all the existing videos are still available. Also, if you have problems with the streaming video, most of the videos are also available at our alternative/back-up site, The Fan Video Network, which is available at the web address <http://TFVN.renebooks.com/video/fanvid-1.html>.

Art Credits

Front cover: appropriated from the Westercon 61 web site, <http://www.westercon61.org>. Think of it as either fair use or free advertising...

Schedule for this weekend

Westercon 61 Thursday

Possibly some Westercon 61 coverage by TFVN roving reporters Bill and Roxanne Mills. Various times throughout the day and evening. (In case it's not obvious, the reason we're being a bit vague about this is because until Bill and Roxie get to the hotel, we can't be sure what connectivity they'll have. And when. And where.)

- Thursday 3rd July, various times.

Westercon 61 Friday

Possibly some more Westercon 61 coverage by TFVN roving reporters Bill and Roxanne Mills. Various times throughout the day and evening.

- Friday 4th July, various times.

The Wasted Hour 5

The fifth edition of The Wasted Hour – 30 fannish minutes with host Arnie Katz and guests for fannish chat and fannish fun. **Note the change in start time**, he said in big, bold letters.

- Saturday 5th July, 7.00 pm PDT (Pacific Daylight Time)
- Saturday 5th July, 10.00 pm EDT (Eastern Daylight Time)
- Sunday 6th July, 2.00 am UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time)
- Sunday 6th July, 3.00 pm BST (British Summer Time)
- Sunday 6th July, 10.00 am WAST (Western Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 6th July, 12.00 noon EAST (Eastern Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 6th July, 2.00 pm NZST (New Zealand Standard Time)

Southern Fandom Classic chat-room session

Dean Sweatman and other members of the Southern Fandom Classic group will be holding their regular chat session in the Virtual Fan Lounge, and invite other interested fans from around the world to join them on Saturday 12th July. This is the new, regular time for this event, every 2nd & 4th Saturday.

- Saturday 12th July, 1.00 pm PDT (Pacific Daylight Time)
- Saturday 12th July, 4.00 pm EDT (Eastern Daylight Time)
- Saturday 12th July, 8.00 pm UTC (Co-ordinated Universal Time)
- Saturday 12th July, 9.00 pm BST (British Summer Time)
- Sunday 13th July, 4.00 am WAST (Western Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 13th July, 6.00 am EAST (Eastern Australian Standard Time)
- Sunday 12th July, 8.00 am NZST (New Zealand Standard Time)

And More?

Other ad-hoc events may be added around this 'core' schedule – see future issues of Virtual Tucker Hotel for more details. And, of course, the chat-room itself is open 24/7.

The Wasted Hour, 21st June

(This is a partial transcript of the fourth show in the series. For a longer version, see the video on the website.)

Arnie Katz started the show by floating another fannish idea he had come up with – The First Bank of Fandom. Before anyone could get the wrong idea, he emphasised that this had nothing to do with money – as most fans didn't have much in the way of money anyway. Instead, The First Bank of Fandom would act as an egoboo bank. It was not uncommon for fans to receive a lot of egoboo all at once – say, for work done at a convention. However, a lot of this egoboo would actually be wasted, as there was a limit to the amount of egoboo a fan could absorb all at once. The idea behind The First Bank of Fandom was that wise fans could store excess egoboo when they were flush. When the day came that they needed some egoboo, or felt that they hadn't received the egoboo they deserved for something, they could withdraw some of their saved egoboo from The First Bank of Fandom. The bank would even pay interest on your egoboo – you might get an extra “Attaboy!” back on whatever you had invested in the first place.

Arnie also gave a mention to various fannish artifacts available for sale on CafePress, at <http://www.cafepress.com/themillszoo/> This included a Core Fandom button (“Fannish to the Core”) which Arnie confessed he was especially fond of, as he'd come up with the slogan. There were also items related to the Vegrants and to Corflu Silver, including hats and even a pillow.

After a short break, Arnie introduced his first guest, who proved to be Joyce Katz. Building on a theme from the last programme, Arnie asked about recruiting new fans. Joyce felt that this was a waste of time – or, even worse, actually a bad idea. “Who needs all these strangers, anyway?” she asked. Arnie asked “Weren't you one of those strangers at one time?” Joyce confessed that this was true, but noted that most new fans didn't last – 99 out of 100 were never seen again after their first introduction to fandom.

Arnie explained his theory that the model that

Core Fandom should use to promote itself was similar in principle to what he had been told happened in the red light district in Amsterdam. Core Fandom should show what it had in the window, and then leave it to the new fan to decide whether they liked what they saw, and enter negotiations. But the key thing was for Core Fandom to portray itself as what it was, so there were no surprises the other side of the curtain.

Joyce noted that public SF clubs had an important role in making the general class of science fiction readers aware of fandom, and providing a route into fandom for the 1% or so who were interested. Core Fandom then just had to provide a loving hand to guide them in. In Las Vegas, the SNAFFU club was linked to the public library, and this helped to ensure that there was a steady stream of newcomers. However, many of these would vanish after a few – or even one – meetings.

But some would “stick” and become new members of Core Fandom. Arnie gave the example of Teresa Cochran, who had been voted Best New Fan in the 2007 FAAn Awards – although he noted (in a tone of disapproval?) that she wasn't present at this week's Vegrants Meeting, as she had a prior commitment at a piano tuners' convention.

Arnie felt that the key factor in attracting new fans was visibility, and the internet was the key to that these days. Almost having usurped the sf clubs as the main filter into fandom. It was no longer necessary to work just through the clubs. Instead, Core Fandom could make its case directly, on internet media like the various mailing lists, or Bill Burns' invaluable efanazines.com web site.

The process of bringing people into fandom was two-fold – initially recruiting them, and then encouraging them to indulge in meaningful fanac of their own. Joyce agreed that, whilst sf clubs still had a role to play in urban areas like Las Vegas, the internet was probably more important as a recruitment tool for more isolated fans.

After a short break, Arnie noted that the Vegrants Meeting taking place in the next room wasn't the only fannish activity taking place that weekend. Curt Phillips had been

hosting a fannish house party. On the phone, Curt confirmed that there had been 20 fans in attendance, all of whom seemed to have had a good time, gathering in the Bob Tucker Memorial Gazebo in Curt's garden. The party had pulled together a new issue of the Southern Fandom Confederation's fanzine. But mostly it had been an excuse for fans to do what they do best – talk to each other about fandom. Arnie asked if the turnout had been bigger than expected. Curt confirmed this, and noted with fear that some attendees had already started talking about a “Curtcon II.”

Curt also noted that he had several special guests turn up, including Murray Moore from Canada, who had won the prize for coming the furthest distance. It had been a good mix of people from Core Fandom and Southern Fandom.

Arnie noted that it was natural to talk about British Fandom or Australian Fandom as separate groups, but with links to Core Fandom. Was it appropriate to consider Southern Fandom in the same way, as a linked but separate group from mainstream Core Fandom? Curt noted that one of the party attendees - “Ted White. Not sure you've ever heard of him?” - had already had much conversation about this very topic at the party with people like Warren Buff. There hadn't really been a resolution, more an agreement to disagree on the matter. Which was pretty much where Ted and Curt had ended up in similar discussions over the years.

Ted came on the phone and explained that his

objection to Southern Fandom as a concept was strictly philosophical, not personal. Southern Fandom, as a label, had to him the implications of the confederate traditions from his youth and childhood. Arnie noted that he had met one or two “bigots” in Southern Fandom, but that this was true in Core Fandom too. Ted agreed, but noted that his concern was with the need to identify Southern Fandom as a regional entity. The rest of Core Fandom didn't really feel the need to have regional identities in the same way.

However, Ted claimed to be pretty much talked out on the issue, and diverted the conversation by asking Arnie for any news of Vegas fandom. Arnie noted that John Hardin had moved back to Las Vegas, and was in the next room at the Vegants Meeting as he spoke. (The other attendees appeared too shy to come in and see us.)

D. Gary Grady confirmed that it had been a great party at Curt's, but was winding down now, as it was 11.30 p.m. Arnie acknowledged some of the problems that different time zones caused The Virtual Fan Lounge, and explained this was part of the reason behind starting regular re-broadcasts of The Wasted Hour. The re-broadcasts would hopefully prove to be easier for fans to the east of Las Vegas to get involved in. Especially for Brits, for whom the live show-time worked out as 4 a.m.!

(The final segment of this show included a panel discussion of The Virtual Fan Lounge. See the video on the website for full details.)