

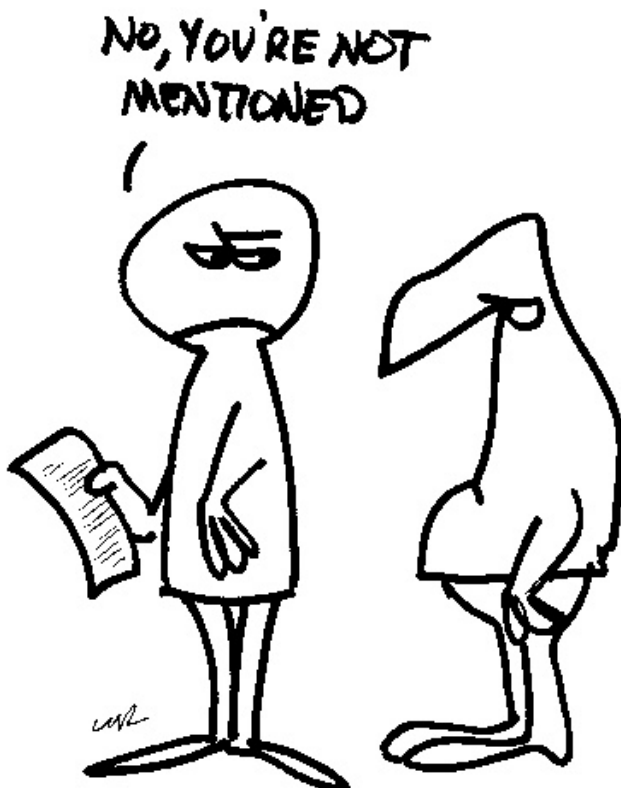
VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

SNAFFU Picks Site for 10/14 Meeting!

After some online discussion, more than a few missed signals and, I suspect, some hurt feelings, SNAFFU has accepted Ron & Linda Bushyager's incredibly generous offer to host the entire club at a fully comped dinner at the Sunrise Café in the ultra trendy Palms Hotel/Casino.

The fun — and this is certainly a golden opportunity at zero cost — starts at 8:00 PM. Fans will meet at the Sunrise Café — and being a couple minutes early probably won't make you less popular with the folks who'd otherwise be waiting for you.

All meals and non-alcoholic beverages are



Vegas Fan Events This Week

Here's What's Happening

LV Futurists Meeting
Friday (10/14) 6:00 PM

SNAFFU Meeting
Friday (10/14) 8:00 PM

Las Vegrants Meeting
Saturday (10/15) 7:30 PM

VSFA Sunday Social
Sunday (10/16) 2:00 PM

SNAPS Deadline
Sunday (10/16) 6:00 PM

Check out the Calendar and preview stories

covered. Tips and booze are extra. Please RSVP to Linda (LindaBushyager@aol.com), SNAFFU had to abandon its customary venue, Border's Bookstore, due to renovations at the shop. The club is also considering whether to reunite its two separate wings at a centrally located place, hopefully one more conducive to fanac than a circle of chairs in the middle of a store.

SNAPS Deadline Is This Sunday!

Official Editor Joyce Katz is back in firm

Inside Story Law of the Sandbox

What could be a more fitting metaphor for the Las Vegas fan community than a big sandbox like we all remember from kindergarten? We've certainly got more than our share of sand — and some folks seemingly haven't learned how to play well with others.

I've recently read several off-key comments emanating from the Vegas Science Fiction Association (VSFA) to the effect that they are about to host the VSFA Halloween Party and that they plan to hold it every year.

Let me correct a few facts: First, the party is the Las Vegas Fandom Halloween Party. Second VSFA is not the sponsor any more than SNAFFU is the sponsor of the Las Vegas Fandom Christmas Party or Las Vegrants is the sponsor of the New Years Eve Gala. All three events are backed by the United Fans of Vegas — an informal association that represents the *entire* Vegas fan community. In the final analysis, the parties are held in trust for *all* of us by the hosts — James Willey (Las Vegas Fandom Halloween Party), James & Kathryn Daugherty (Las Vegas Fandom Christmas Party) and Joyce & Arnie Katz (Las Vegas Fandom New Year's Eve Gala). Whether any, some or all of these hosts repeat next year depends not on the whim of any club, but rather on a combination of the hosts' desire to continue and Vegas Fandom's feelings about whether they should continue.

It is always well to remember the Law of the Sandbox. Those who feel they can ignore everyone else, make their own rules and conduct themselves without regard to the others in the sandbox soon find that they are alone, isolated and rubbing sand out of their eyes. — Arnie

control of SNAPS (Southern Nevada Amateur Press Society) — I have the whip marks to prove it — and the group is rocketing toward its seventh distribution. The deadline is Sunday (10/16) evening, so many fans, including the OE and the editor of *VFW*, are busily writing so they can add their SNAPSzines to the ones already received from Charles Fuller and Laurie Kunkel.

SNAPS is a local, monthly apa (amateur press association). It's completely digital so it's also completely free (unless you run off a hard copy of the distribution for your collection.)

An apa is a sort of fanzine trading group. Each participant sends in a contribution and receives a

distribution that contains a copy of all of that month's contributions. It makes less work for the OE if you submit your SNAPS fanzine as a .PDF, but Microsoft Publisher (*.PUB) is very nearly as good. If you are not skilled in the art of fanzine preparation, Joyce and I are here to assist. We can take a Microsoft Word, Microsoft Notebook or any Text (*.TXT) and turn it into a simple (but attractive) SNAPS publication.

SNAPS, started last April, is specifically designed for the Las Vegas fan community. It's a way for us all to have some fun together and try

Continued page 7

Vegas Fandom Weekly #48, Bloctober 14, 2005, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (PMB 152, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

Special Thanks to Roxanne Gibbs (many things), Bill Burns (posting), Mindy Hutchings (posting) and Joyce Katz (proofreading).

Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Michael Bernstein, Chris Garcia, Laurie Kunkel and Joyce Katz

Art/Photo Credits: Alan White (8, 12), Lee Hoffman (4, 6), Bill "Potshot" Kunkel (11), Bill Rotsler (all other cartoons)

Columnists This Issue: Shelby Vick

VFW is free by request — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU and VSFA sites as well as at efanzines.com. No kind-hearted Insurgents were harmed during the production of this fanzine.

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

Medium & Message

Katzenjammer

*Longer term is a different matter. I am probably the last generation to whom the postal fanzine as physical artifact has any special resonance. There are still young fen out there - taking your definition of people who want to do something beyond just watching, reading and listening to the primary SF/F content - but they are using websites, blogs and e-mail discussion lists instead of fanzeens (whether dead tree or electronic). But that's OK. As long as people feel called to share their experiences in a fannish way, there will be *a* fandom. I'm sure that there were those who bemoaned parchment as the death of cave painting fandom. — From a letter by Peter Sullivan*

Peter Sullivan was second to Bob Tucker in saying, “40 Weeks... that’s not too many!” He therefore waited in the WAHF’s while Bob became the subject of an “Inside Story” piece. Now Peter, who is surely the most outstanding addition to British Fandom this year, has earned a whole “Katzenjammer.” What’s next? Perhaps being Tuckerized in a novel... maybe even by Tucker.

What singled him out is all that pessimistic, wet-eyed nostalgia for dear old, soon-to-be-dead-old, fanzine fandom. While some British fans have seemingly dedicated their fanlives to pessimism, I would like to see our Golden Neofan in a sunnier frame of mind. Not just because I’d like him to be happy and write more articles for *VFW* and *Implications*, but because I sincerely believe that there will be fanzine fans 50 years hence who will be telling the legends of Peter Sullivan to their neofen.

One of the things that distinguish Fanzine Fandom from Mundane Ayjay is that the message has always counted more in fanzines than the medium. Though you can cite exceptions, Mundane Amateur Journalism has declined dramatically from the early 20th Century, because they allowed the medium to become a higher priority than what they communicated.

Most of the early major fanzines like *The Time Traveler* and *Fantasy Magazine* were similar to Mundane Ayjay titles in that they were done with hand-set type and then printed on small offset presses.

There came a time, in the mid-1930’s, when circumstances combined to wipe out those impeccably printed fanzines. It was like the death of the Dinosaurs, only telescoped into a matter of months.

At first, it looked like fanzines would cease to exist. Then fans discovered the humble hectograph. It looked like a pan of jelly, stained hands a hideous purple and could do no more than 50 copies, but fans put aside their dreams of fabulous printed fanzines and embraced hekto.

The Mundane amateur press associations (apas) reacted completely differently when the number of small press owners began to decline precipitously. They clung to the old medium like grim death — and all too soon a lot of Mundane Ayjay zines began to look like elegantly printed holiday cards. They held tight to the medium and they saw their version of the amateur publishing hobby go into long-term decline.

Eventually, fans found the mimeograph. The cost per printed page was microscopic, even teenaged fans could scrape together the cash for a low-end machine and the device let fanzines bust through the 50-copy ceiling.

Yet the mimeograph passed out of fashion, supplies and repairs became difficult and Fanzine Fandom could no longer rely on its time-tested workhorse.

Did Fanzine Fandom fold up shop? No, they went to the shop and had the folks who owned the copiers duplicate and collate their fanzines. Once again, Fanzine Fandom showed that it could distinguish between the appearance of things and the essence of things.

DTP fanzine preparation and copier/compu-printer repro elevated the quality of the entire fanzine field. Fanzines have never looked as good or had as few typos as the ones published today.

Yet like every other medium, the DTP/copier system has limitations. The cost of professional duplication and collating, plus the enormous cost of postage, has pushed doing a fanzine beyond the means of many fans.

And so Fanzine Fandom finds itself moving to a new medium, the digiverse. The cost becomes negligible, the value of sweat equity is restored and sending out a fanzine has never been easier. Some fans read ‘em online and some fans print ‘em out, but electronic fanzines are the linear descendant of the ones done on letter press, hekto, mimeo and copier. And so are websites like Trufen.net and Fanac.org.

Sure fanzines may mutate as the medium changes, as they have every time the medium changed, but there’s no reason to think it still won’t be an extension of our very own Fanzine Fandom. It’s no coincidence that the three most

active fanzine publishers — Chris Garcia (28 years old), me (59 years old) and Earl Kemp (70-something) — are among those fanzine fans who have most completely embraced the digital fanzine medium. And most importantly, all three are producing fanzines that are rich in fannish context and as authentically by, for and of Fanzine Fandom as *Void*, *Innuendo* and *Hyphen*.

So weep no more, proud neofan. The future is so bright I’ve got to wear shades. — Arnie



The Fannish Way

Arnie examines Fandom's central concept.

One of the keys to understanding Fandom is summed up in the phrase “the fannish way.” (Sometimes, we say, “The Trufannish Way,” but the added confusion with the fan philosophy of Trufannishness just makes it harder to understand.) A lot of newer local fans seem confused about what we mean.

A fundamental change in the topography of Fandom causes a lot of the bewilderment. At one time, the border between Fandom and Mundane was more clearly marked. If you performed fanac and acknowledged your membership in the subculture of Fandom, you were a fan. If you didn't do those things, you were a Mundane or, at most, an SF enthusiast.

That's how it was from 1930 (the founding of Fandom) to roughly 1965 (the Burroughs-, *Trek*- and Tolkein-spawned population boom). There were 200-800 (depending on the decade) fans and a billion-plus Mundanes.

There are now approximately 25,000 people (All Known Fandom) who engage in some form of fanac — writing to listservs, publishing fanzines, running cons and clubs, filking and so forth — and a million (Mega-Fandom) who do something that takes them beyond the primary source material.

The terms “fan” and “Fandom” are overused and misused so relentlessly that they barely retain a shred of meaning. The 80 million Americans who like some form of science fiction or fantasy think they're “fan,” too. The girl who comes to a con-

vention to get blitzed and see how many strangers she can blow thinks she's a fan, too.

Yet words *do* have meanings. “Fan” and “Fandom” have very specific ones in our hobby, just as “fanzine,” “sercon” and “fugghead” do. That these words also exist in the mainstream English vocabulary with different definitions is not relevant to way way we fans use them.

The guy who watches *Star Trek Voyager* to ogle Seven of Nine's chest and Andy Hooper can call themselves fans — it's still a marginally free country — but only Seattle Fandom's Pride and Joy is legitimately a fan in the specialized meaning of the word *within Fandom itself*.

“Are you a fan?” is no longer a yes/no question. A great many people occupy places on the spectrum between Mundane and Fandom and all of them can claim to be fans with some justice.

Today, the world of Fandom consists of a series of concentric circles, each orders of magnitude larger than the ones they enclose. Mundania surrounds Mega-Fandom as it once enveloped Classic Fandom.

One of the factors that determines where an individual fits between Classic Fandom and Mundania is their degree of adherence to the ethics, aesthetics and mores of Fandom. It is that set of values that ultimately spells the difference between someone being fannish or mundane.

Without those values, Science Fiction Fandom doesn't actually qualify as a ‘Fandom’ at all! It would be more properly termed an Interest Group.

That's what it is for the majority of fringe-fans (members of Mega-Fandom).

Those folks for whom it is an Inter-



"ZAP, YOU'RE A FAN!"

TELL ME ABOUT
WHEN FIRST
FANDOM RULED
THE EARTH.



est Group are as entitled to that form of pastime as are we who want a Fandom. I wouldn't dream of disturbing their fun, but I have no intention of seeing my brand of fun swallowed up by theirs.

For me, and for others like me, what makes it Fandom is its unique alternative social structure that offers an alternative to the standards of mainstream society. I am very conversant with the Wide World and have played its games and negotiated its treacherous waters with some success, but those are not the standards by which I want to conduct my life.

I became a fan precisely because Fandom offered an environment in which a person like me could thrive and be happy. I would not willingly surrender those values, because then I would be right back in mainstream society, not a very congenial place for folks like me

The Fannish Way is neither a set of rules nor "required" procedures. It is the social contract that established Fandom in the first place. The Fannish Way is an approach to dealing with other fans within the context of Fandom.

Let's look at three important enets of this approach to fannish living:

Fandom Is a Meritocracy. We should esteem our fellow fans for what they do, not who they are or how much money they have accumulated. Fandom has forgotten this one more than once to its detriment, as when VJ Bowen won a TAFF election contrived for her benefit only to loot the

treasury, space her duties as administrator and, effectively, quit Fandom.

A corollary is that, no matter how big you talk or how much energy you expend, it is what you produce that ultimately determines your "status" in Fandom.

A Fan in Need Is a Fan, Indeed. Part of "The Fannish Way" I to recognize that we are all connected and that we must help the members of our tribe who may not be in a positin to fully help themselves. You show me a fan who is up against it ad I will show you a hundred fans eady to help with time, money or whatever else is needed.

Fandom Is a Hobby, Not a Competition. Mainstream society is about striving, about getting, about pushing to the head of the line . From the first, fans have shown much more

interest in cooperating for mutual benefit than in undercutting each other. This is expressed in numerous ways such as the sharing of mailing lists and the avoidance of scheduling conflicts among conventions and local events. That's why Corflu does not have a bidding system. It's needless competition.

No one *has* to follow The Fannish Way.

Clearly, it is a path marked out for the uncommon few rather than the throngs. Those folks in Mega-Fandom (or even All Known Fandom) aren't the same as non-fans, but they aren't quite the same as classic fans, either.

Those who don't want to practice The Fannish Way must be careful about enjoying its benefits. The Fannish Way, as a social contract, has a mutuality that others are wise to respect. If you don't treat fans in The Fannish Way, it's likely that they will soon stop extending similar courtesy to you

Some fans don't enter into that social contract, but the wise ones don't look to suck up vast amounts of fannish hospitality. Being a fan is a privilege; those who abuse that privilege risk not getting treated like fellow fans.

Part of the reason I'm in Fandom is that I love The Fannish Way. That's why I encouraging those who take substantial part in Fandom to embrace it as well. It is the thing that most completely sets Fandom apart from the Mundane.

— Arnie

NOW & Again Confessions of an Insurance Salesman

Surprise, surprise – I'm back!

(Well, let's be honest; I did this right after the first one. How else can I possibly do it? I'm not like Arnie; I can't turn out tons of brilliance day-by-day, week after week.)

Let me bring everybody, as they say, up to speed. I am retired – for the second time. In my mid-fifties, I retired from Met Life; they had a plan where, if you were my age and had been with them as long as I had, you could take early retirement.

I should mention, by the way (because it has a connection in an upcoming column) that the key to my success in life insurance was the telephone. The only amazing thing about that is that I fought it! Good friend of mine, who also worked for Met, kept after me. "You can't beat the telephone for prospecting," he kept telling me. I even read articles in insurance magazines about it. But I didn't like the telephone. We had one at home, but I stayed away from it unless I was the only one home when it rang.

Finally, when I had run out of excuses and sales were down, I took a high school directory which contained names and addresses and phone numbers of students, and started calling their parents. Told myself, "Don't stop until you've made fifty calls. Fifty!" So there we were, me and the phone and the directory. Eventually, I started dialing. Determined!

The first call was murder, but I finished it – and learned an opening. The second call was easier. The third, I made an appointment. After that. . .

In a few weeks, my manager asked me to do a class on telephone prospecting. (Little did I know the day would come when I would be a full-fledged telemarketer!)

Well, back to early retirement.

To me retirement is not a

great idea. However, my speciality in life insurance was – well – life insurance! In particular, financial planning. . . and that planning included planning for retirement. What's that old saw: Do as I say, not as I do!

To begin with, have something to do when you retire. Thousands of people die each year within a year of taking retirement – because they have nothing to do! They had figured retirement was a long vacation, where they could hunt, fish, play golf – whatever they enjoyed. Only to find that you can't live your life for nothing but fun! In my case, I intended to get back into writing when I retired; had even been doing some writing while in the insurance business.

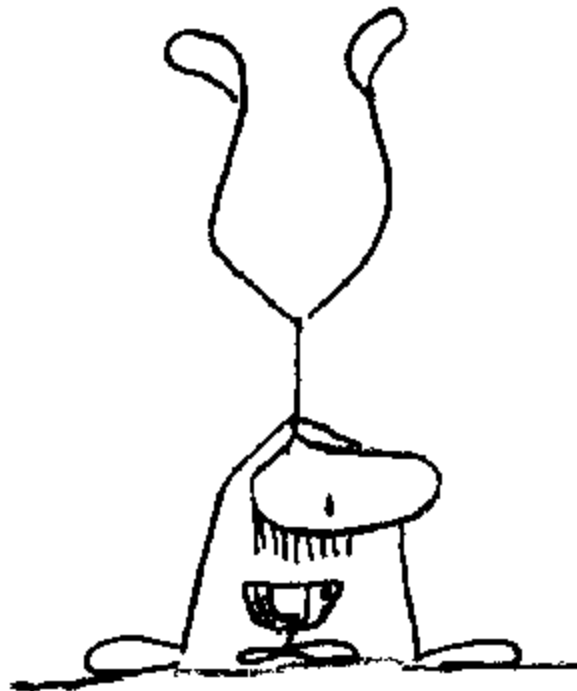
Then – things changed.

Met Life got into the casualty field (auto insurance, homeowners, etc) and I figured that was great; lots of my clients had needs for casualty insurance. So I took the necessary courses, got all my licenses. . .and then, after a few months, they announce that selling casualty insurance was a *necessity* and we had a quota to meet if we wanted to stay with Met!

It didn't take me long to realize that early (and

unplanned!) retirement had its benefits!

Now, I know lots of you are saying, "That's insurance companies for you! Can't rely on them." And: "First duty of an insurance company is to get out of paying!" Well, Met Life had been a good company and they really worked for their policyowners. In fact, the



weekly policies (which had been their mainstay in the old days) were actually declared Fully Paid Up in, as I recall, the late '70s or early '80s! (Of course, there was a benefit for the company, as well; up to that point, 'Industrial Representative' was a salesman category in Met. They were responsible for collecting weekly premiums and received a renewal commission for doing that – even tho, by that time, most of the weekly premiums was paid by the year and, generally, mailed in! By paying up all weekly policies, no more renewal commissions were paid.)

And insurance companies (your big ones, at least) had something in common with religion. Yeah, that's what I said; 'with religion'. Y'see, in both cases (religion and insurance) lotsa money is spent At The Top (head churches, home offices) on Appearance.

Look at the great architecture and art in the Vatican, and look at the expensive stuff in Met's home office. (It was in the Empire State Building when I worked there; guess it still is.) Aside from really luxurious offices for the bigwigs, there was one room – a holdover from Way Back When – where the walls were lined in gold leaf! (No one could explain to me how this benefitted policyowners.)

A CONNECTED "ASIDE"

Connected both thru sf and life insurance

In my later years with Met Life, someone pub-

lished a story that was interesting, but that came to what I, as an insurance salesman, thot was a very erroneous conclusion. The premise was that a box had been developed that could tell you when you were going to die. The boxes were arranged with coin-operated gadgets and sat around like telephone booths. The author stated that, knowing when they were going to die, people would stop buying life insurance and just make plans and live accordingly.

Huh-uh!

I guarantee such boxes would gather more dust than coins. While it would be quite practical, you'll find people would rather go thru life uninformed. They don't want to think about dying! Otherwise more wills would be written, more trusts set up, more savings and investment plans would be established – and stuck to! You find out all this when dealing with financial planning.

There *is* a connection between my insurance career and fandom. There were trips I won, and there were schools I was sent to. One trip was to New Orleans. . .where I couldn't find Harry B Moore. One school was in New York, and I met rich brown, Ted White, and a bunch of other fans that rich got together. One school was in Orlando, and Joe Siclari happened to be in town.

— Shelby Vick

NEXT: Confessions of a Telemarketeer!

Continued from page 2

our hands at written communication without feeling like we're auditioning for the great and famous of Fandom.

Not only are the distributions highly entraining, but if you contribute something to SNAPS this month, the next distribution will have comments by other Vegas fans responding to what you've said. These multi-pathed discussions can be every bit as interesting and involving as the rambles and articles.

Some fans are a little daunted by their first fan-

zine — and we've already had several make their debuts in SNAPS. Some possible subjects include a short autobiography, the story of how you found

Fandom, your reaction to something you've seen, read or heard or just about anything that's on your mind. It's fun to share your thoughts with friends — and it's a chance to partici-

pate in one of the most popular Vegas fan activities.

Vegrants Ready for Gala 10/15 Meeting!

One or two guests and some returning mem-





Alan White shows a different side of his artistic ability in this cover for *Knarkley Knews*.

SNAFFU is now checking into other possible dates.

Alan White Gets Great Medical News

DeDee White's smile almost melted the telephone receiver when she called with the news that Alan has gotten wonderful news from the surgeon who performed his prostate cancer surgery.

According to the post-operative tests, Alan is cancer free! He will definitely not need chemotherapy, radiation or any other type of specific regimen.

Known to his friends as a stoic, Alan has kept up his positive attitude through some harrowing post-operative miseries that sent him back to the hospital twice. What a joy to see such a nice guy, and terrific fan friend, come through this whole frightening experience unscathed.

Kunkels Fight the Phone-y War!

Bill & Laurie Kunkel lost phone service for nearly five days due to a decidedly un-merry mix-up by Vegas' cable service provider, Cox Communications. The cable outage rendered the couple's Vonnage internet telephone hook-up non-functional.

The story is a bit too complicated for me to explain here (or understand fully when I heard it), but it boils down to the fact that a piece of Cox equipment failed during some recent bad weather and the cable company was molasses slow in getting anything done about it. Naturally, they were tangling with the wrong couple and soon many experts became involved in the situation. The Kunkels pay extra for a commercial account that promises repairs within two hours, so of course it took nearly five days.

bers are likely to appear at the October 15 meeting of Las Vegrants, but it's almost impossible to say what'll happen when the invitational fan club converges on the Launch Pad for its regular "third Saturday" meeting.

"Circumstances have caused us to have a lot of "open meetings" in the last few months, so it'll be nice to have a slightly smaller one for a change," said Joyce Katz.

VSFA Restores Sunday Socials For November & December!

VSFA president Rebecca Hardin, in an email to Roxanne Gibbs has announced that due to some complaints, there will be Socials in November and December. Her statement came in response to Roxanne's attempt to clear the third Sunday in November for a SNAFFU-sponsored function. Rather than conflict with an "open event,"

Heard Around Vegas Fandom...

Marc Cram didn't make the last Vegrants meeting due to some minor surgery, but he hopes to make his eagerly awaited return at the next meeting of the invitation fanzine fan club...

Congratulations to Bill & Larue Kunkel on the acquisition of a new cat even if they didn't take one of the seven or 23 that Joyce has collected

outside our back door. The new feline in resident is named Typo... Merric Anderson's job continues to make him scarce around Glitter City. He is currently in the midst of a business trip that will keep him away from home and friends until Bloctober 19.

ChatBack: The VFW Letter Column

The letter column continues to heat up nicely so I'd better make way for the writers.

First up is a fan whose spellchecker re-named me "Arena Katz"...

Mark Plummer

I thought I'd send a brief comment on VFW#46 now because I'm sure it's only a matter of time before Arena Katz fanzines become so frequent that they actually need date *and* time stamps so we can keep them all in order. And also to show you I am awake and reading, and indeed refusing to rise to what sounds like a call for efanzine apartheid in 'Katzenjammer': 'I'm not going to recommend any fanzines that are not available in electronic form. I have a great nostalgia for those mimeographed fanzines, but we digital publishers have got to stick together.' Hmm...

I think Hank Luttrell is right about Bea Mahaffey, who seems to have been at least an established fan before she started working for Ray Palmer. *All Our Yesterdays* says of the '49 Convention, 'Palmer described plans for *Other Worlds*. He advanced them during the con by hiring an assistant editor he found there, Bea Mahaffey.'

Then, in *A Wealth of Fable* he says, 'The Cincinnati Fantasy Group ... had lost some of its size after 1949 because [amongst other departures] Bea Mahaffey migrated to Chicago to take a job with *Other Worlds*'. The only caveat, I suppose, is that it's all conditional on the extent to which you think Warner's a reliable source on this kind of thing.

Arnie: *I love hard copy fanzines. They are much easier to read while in the bathroom than the digital kind, especially if one does not have a laptop computer I think the future of Fanzine Fandom lies in going forward to new media*

and that the faster we get through the transitional period, the better. Right now, we are betwixt and between. I hate the fact that the fan I most revere, Ted White has probably not read even one issue of VFW. I want us all to be together, but that won't happen by going back to the downward spiral of print-based publishing.

*Thanks for the great info on Bea Mahaffey. My original point was intended to be that she was not a major fan or well known around Fandom until Palmer brought her to Chicago to work on *Other Worlds*.*

A great fan evokes the essence of another BNF of timeless worth...

Shelby Vick

What? A column AND a LoC???

...Okay, okay; I'll do it! Particularly after Lloyd Penney chimes in about the old A&P! First Real Live Job I had -- and, besides, the salary they paid me enabled me to go to New Orleans in 1951 and help Lee Hoffman out-hoax Bob Tucker!

Anyway, it's good to know the A&P is still thriving in Canada. I understand there are even still some in the US, as well. --Oh, and Lloyd -- there was a puffin sleeping on the lazyletter in my first column.

47, as is the VFW tradition, was really thriving with fanac. And, yeah, an ORGANIZED fan just, well, just doesn't get it! True fanac is a good representation of Go With The Flow. Dunno if LeeH really started it, but I do know she touched something deep and strong in fandom when she started



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many references to Pogo. Not sf at all, but -- for a while! -- Pogo ruled fandom. "Who sawed Courtney's boat?"

I go Pogo!

Arnie: As I look back at the broad and varied history of Fandom, my mind goes to the 1958-1962 period that just preceded my entry into Fandom, but my heart goes to the early 1950s. You were there and I am judging only from fanzines and oral history, but I don't think Fandom was ever sweeter than it was for the actifans of that period.

There's nothing wrong with being an organized fan, though I grant it is rather rare, but it's over-organization of clubs and associations that

OH, AND WHAT ARE
YOU SUPPOSED TO BE?



chafes my Insurgent spirit. I believe in fans working together, but I am most comfortable when rules and organization are kept to the minimum needed for the project.

One of Vegas Fandom Weekly's stalwart letterhacks speculates on the meeting of Katz and Garcia...

Eric Mayer

Well, just after I grabbed The Drink Tank off efanazines I got VFW. I kind of thought you and Chris would publish an hourly zine from Vegas while he was there. I understand he may give up the steel cage zine publishing death match you and he have been conducting to write a novel.

I see only a limited segment of fandom these days. I read Truefen.net and quite a few fanzines from eFanzines but that's about it. So my observations may not be accurate for fandom as a whole, but it sure does seem to me like the fan population is aging, if not downright aged. It's a little shocking how many of the names I see were active in fandom when I got involved in 1972.

It wouldn't bother me if every fan was over seventy, which looks to be where we're headed, but the trend doesn't bode well for the survival of fandom. When most of your newcomers are re-

turnees who've been gone for thirty years...well, how many times can you leave and return thirty years later? Clearly that recruitment pool is going to dry up.

I'm really not in a position to judge but I wonder how many middle aged folks are coming into fandom for the first time? It seems to me like most are returnees, but I may be wrong.

Where do people find out about fanzines today? I read the old Clubhouse column in -- refresh my failing memory -- was it Fantastic? Either that or Amazing. (OK. See how lazy I am. Not even Googling for the answer...) Now I think electronic zines may yet save sf fanzine fandom because people can discover them on the internet.

Of course reading is increasingly being derided, as you point out, as is intelligence generally -- the powers that be want and need nerds stupid enough to be led around and fleeced -- but

even so, amongst millions of young people there are some here or there who might see an ezine and think, wow, how cool.

So perhaps somebody might give some thought to "advertising" the existence of efanazines on non-fan sites. I'm not sure where would be appropriate. Somebody probably does.

Maybe when Chris Garcia is elected mayor of San Jose he can declare fanzines the official city pastime.

Arnie: Strangely enough, the subject of doing a oneshot never came up. We'll have to keep the idea in mind for his next visit, which I hope will be soon. He was a terrific guest who bore our various compromises with hospitality with unfailing good humor.

Welcome back to Chatback one of Fandom's very best letterhacks, the Sage of Glen Ellen (ret.)

Potshot's Cartoon Theater



Robert Lichtman

Thanks for this latest. Just egoscanned it and was pleased to find my name mentioned, something that's become more rare given my failure to LoC VFW recently.

In Arnie's comments accompanying ShelVy's letter he wondered how many copies of *confusion* were circulated Back When. I asked this of Shelby myself back in 2004, and he told me about sixty. No wonder, I replied, they're so goddamn' hard to find. (LeeH's circulation with *Quandry* was, as I recall, at least twice that.) The issues I have that I'll eventually send him copies of were in a fanzine/small press sale that Lloyd Currey was having at the end of 2003. My jaw dropped when I saw them and I bought 'em immediately.

Off to Seattle tomorrow morning, so probably won't be in touch. I owe both of you letters and will get to them upon my return.

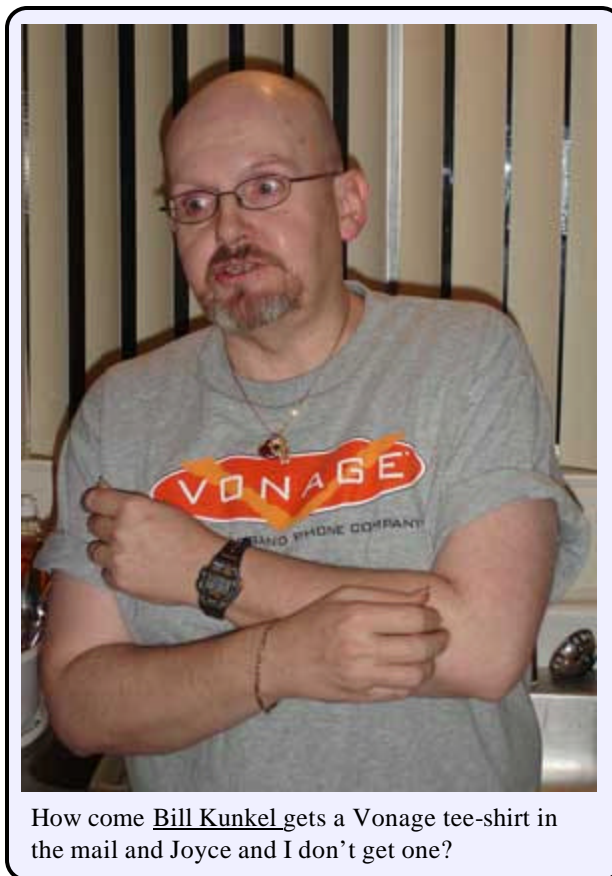
Arnie: Although it may hurt the value of those fanzines you bought, I'd sure like to see one or more fans bend some effort to putting Quandry online as .PDFs. As we move fully into the electronic era of Fandom, I want to bring as many of our treasures with us as possible.

VFW mentions him so frequently, so it's probably time to let the fan speak for himself...

Chris Garcia

Another great Vegas Fandom Weekly, especially since I'm all over it!

The death of fandom has been called several times. The Breen Situation was the first time, then Topic A, and then recently we've had people saying that fanzines are about to die due to the influence of the eZines and that will kill it off. I'm not of that opinion, but I understand why people have



How come [Bill Kunkel](#) gets a Vonage tee-shirt in the mail and Joyce and I don't get one?

it. The great change is the loss of the Teen Genius. I wish they'd come back, and there are lots of teen 'fans' but not in fanzine fandom.

When I was called a 'Young Fan' at the age of 30, I rather knew that things were changing. But, with people living longer, we still have legends around to keep us kids going. Earl and Marty. One mustn't forget that ShelVy is doing great work. There are some of the fans of two or three generations ago that are still producing great work. That's rare in almost any field.

You know, in that picture in Stairway to

Hell, I look like a hobbit. It's almost uncanny.

Ah, the Futurists are having a great topic on the 14th. I love hearing talks about renewable energy, and Nevada is far ahead of the Golden State when it comes to Solar and Wind Power, and a serious discussion at a con on the topic, even with top scientists in the field, usually ends up being a discussion of how the business world will never let it happen.

Speak of the Devil and he comes for Breakfast! ShelVy with a fine little column. I can't wait to hear The Confessions of an Insurance Salesman, since I'm sure it'll be an interesting read. Read Planetary Tales, folks! It's a lot of Pulp-y fun!

Actually, Jack Avery, Myself and Jean Martin are now the Troika putting out SF/SF. We're a mighty force ready to explode!

It's wonderful that VFW's letter column gets better all the time. I'm seeing names like Dave Burton (who's never written me an LoC!) and ShelVy and two of my regulars, Lloyd and Pete. Then you have Dick Lupoff now and again and so many others it's not even funny.

YOU'RE HOGGING ALL THE LETTER-HACKS!



Not at all fair!

Arnie: It certainly wasn't part of my agenda when I started VFW, but the fanzine is become at least partly a fairly lively letterzine. It seems to be a good place for fans to have their say without the tremendous traffic of a listserv. I like this a lot and encourage fans to join in whenever the spirit moves.

Our favorite British neo talks about cast artists. Does anyone else remember the Plaster Casters?

Peter Sullivan

Re: The Greying of Fandom. I think it's only to be expected that fanzeen fandom would have rebounded. Firstly, there's the age-old principle (held dear by stock market trackers) that "even dead cats bounce." More practically, the baby-boomer generation who were the teenage and tweenage (to borrow a hobbitism) fen of the 1960s are now approaching retirement age. They have more time to produce a fanzeen now than they have had at any time since their youth. And, now that producing a fanzeen is as simple as "Print to PDF" and e-mailing to Bill Burns, they have the capability. I confidently predict a continuing steady trickle of returnees (or "ShelbyVickites") over the next 10-15 years.

Longer term is a different matter. I am probably the last generation to whom the postal fanzeen as physical artifact has any special resonance. There are still young fen out there - taking your

definition of people who want to do something beyond just watching, reading and listening to the primary SF/F content - but they are using websites, blogs and e-mail discussion lists instead of fanzeens (whether dead tree or electronic).

But that's OK. As long as people feel called to share their experiences in a fannish way, there will be *a* fandom. I'm sure that there were those who bemoaned parchment as the death of cave painting fandom.

And yes, 99% of the material on fan websites, blogs and e-mail lists is naff. But, looking at the mote in God's eye, fanzeen fandom has had its share of crudzeens too. And whereas previously the ability to reach an audience was constrained by access to mimeography (or at least hektography), the ease of web publishing means that both the 99% and the 1% need not be "mute inglorious Miltons." As long as we can filter out the 99%, and focus on the 1%.

Joelle Barnes can be reassured that, with a group of people as diverse as Las Vegas fans, it's perfectly easy to be one of the less eccentric members of the group, but still pretty unconventional in mundane terms. An acapella version of Stairway to Heaven sounds as if she's got the unconventional part off pat, at least. Was this inspired by the (in)famous Rolf Harris version, which he allegedly did directly from the sheet music, never having heard the song before?

Kudos to Ross Chamberlain and the other cast artists whose work is now featuring on a leg near you. But I guess that this is the sort of situation you and Joyce must really miss Bill. A plaster cast without a Rotsler illo especially commissioned for it is a bit like a Minchella's ice cream without 'monkey's blood,' or a Vegas casino without the line of blue-rinse ladies on the slots. Even if all the other essential elements are there, it somehow feels incomplete.

Both Lloyd Penney and Shelby Vick might be interested to know (if they don't already) that Puffin Books is/was the children's section of the famous Penguin Books imprint. When I was a child, I think I was even a member of the Puffin Club for a while, but my true insurgent principles (actually, I think it was more lack of interest) meant that I didn't re-join.

Las Vegas Fan Event Calendar

SNAFFU October 14 8:00 PM

This formal SF club meets the second and fourth Friday's of each month. Renovations at the usual location have caused a switch to a special dinner at the Sunrise Café at The Palms Casino.

LV Futurists October 14 6:00 PM

Dr. Robert Boehm is the special guest at this "early start" meeting at Borders Bookstore (2190 Rainbow).

Las Vegrants Meeting Bloctober 15 7:30 PM

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

VSFA Sunday Social October 16 2:00 PM

VSFA continues the highly successful series of Sunday meetings, though the venue is now the Blue Ox (5825 Sahara @ Dunesville). There is no official subject this time, but the talk is always first class.

SNAFFU Movie Outing: *Serenity* October 22 11:00 AM

Lunch, a movie outing and ice cream for dessert — what could be better on a pre-holiday Saturday? You can join fans at the Red Robin at Galleria Mall at 11 AM for lunch, or catch up with them at Sunset staion's Regal Cinemas at 12:45 PM.

SNAFFU Meeting October 28 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 the East Side

Las Vegrants Meeting November 5 7:30 PM

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

VSFA 'First Monday' Meeting November 7 7:00 PM

Club business and socializing are the main features when one of Las Vegas' busiest fan groups gets together at the Clark Count Library (1 block East of Maryland, corner of Escondido & Flamingo Road).

Vegas Music Circle November 12 2:00 PM

All fans are invited to make music or just listen at the Launch Pad. The session starts at 2:00 PM.

Arnie: Fandom has always been a filter, though the lowering of "entrance requirements" has made All Known Fandom very unreliable in this regard. Fanzine Fandom has now, apparently, developed an ability to attract and then extract some very good new fans through the Internet.

We Also Heard From: rich brown, Peter Sullivan, Lloyd Penney, Joelle Barnes, John Dechancie,

I Hate Long Good-Byes

... so this one will be brief,
Bye for now!

— Arnie Katz

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... and a *ton* of news.