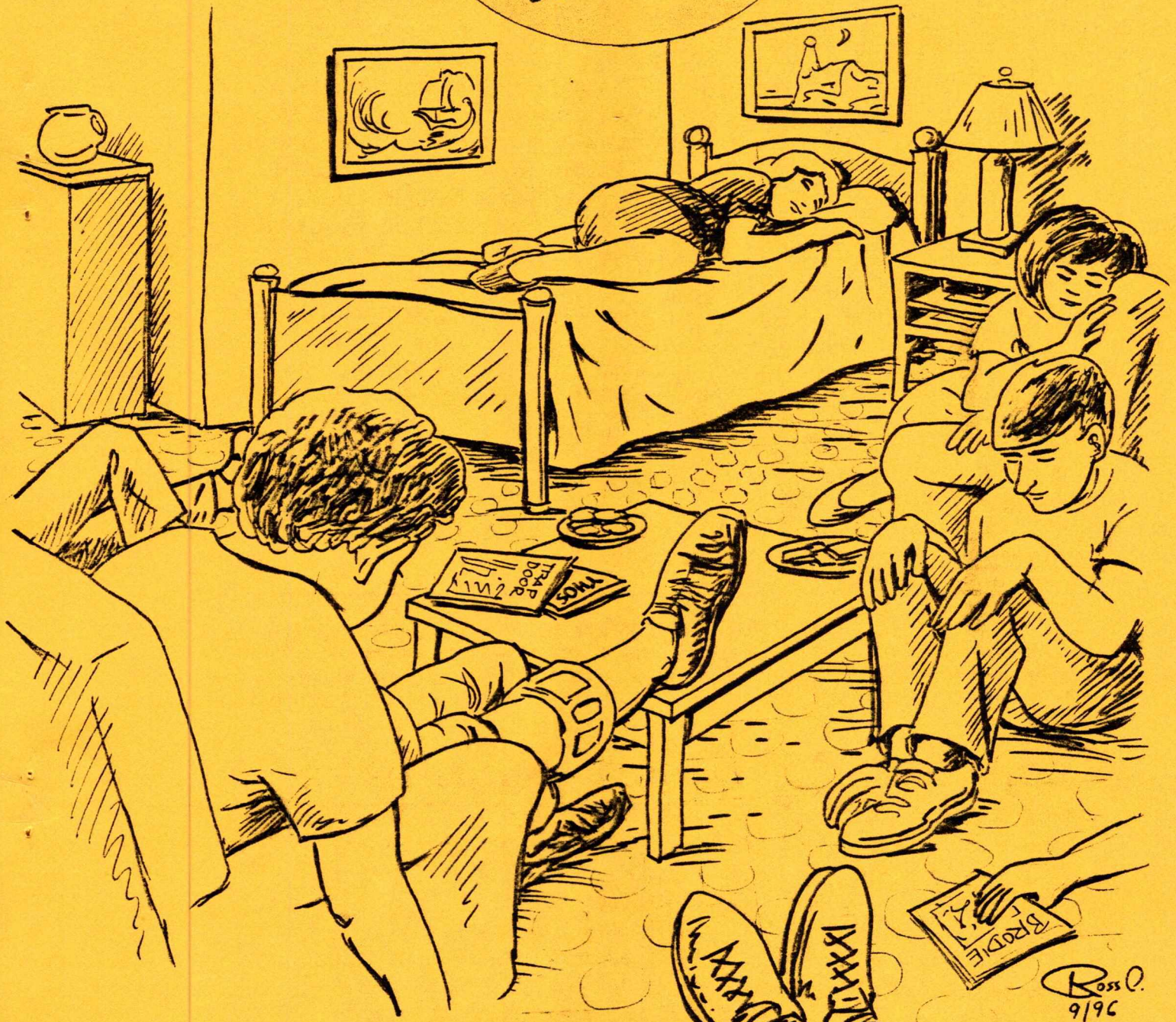
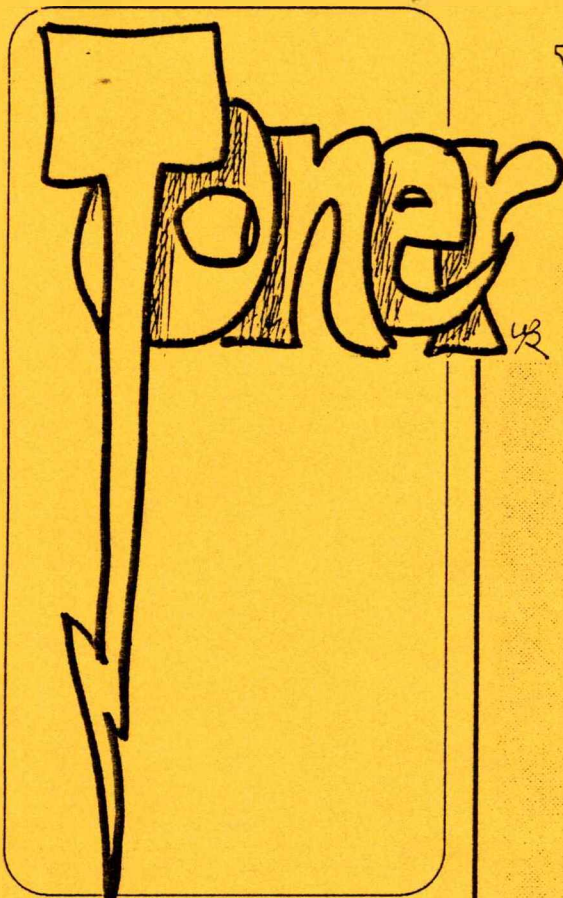


Wild Heirs



Toner - Day 3:
The Hilarity Continues



Wild Heirs 17

Vague Rants (Some of Us) 3

Sercon Navigation (Tom Springer) 7

Straight Up (Marcy Waldie) 10

Unwound (Ken Forman) 12

Command Performance (Aileen Forman) 14

Dither (Ross Chamberlain) 16

Bent Lance (Bill Rotsler) 18

Jest Jivin' (Cathi Wilson) 19

Blue Jaunt (Joyce Katz) 22

Zonked (Ben Wilson) 24

Katzenjammer (Arnie Katz) 29

Heiritage Reprint

(edited by Robert Lichtman) 32

Have Bag, Will Travel - Part One

(Martin Tudor) 39

Have Bag, Will Travel - Part Two

(Martin Tudor) 45

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I AM A PROFESSIONAL
FILLER. DO NOT TRY
THIS AT HOME. —



Arnie Katz

"I've got an idea," I said to Joyce, Tom and Tammy a couple of days before Toner. "Why don't we make the next Wild Heirs a Toner Memories issue?"

They all liked it, and Wild Heirs #17 took its first steps toward what you just took out of the envelope. Everything derives from Toner in some way. For example, our Elmer Perdue reprint was Lichtman's main reading, and the Roscoe manifesto is from Geri Sullivan's shtick in the Toner opening. My faan fiction piece? Well... It's true that I got the idea about a month ago, but it wasn't until I conferred with Bill Rotsler at Toner that I decided to actually write it.

My greatest fear about Toner, before the fact, was our high expectations for it. Nothing crushes spontaneity like worry about potential Great Fannish Significance. Tom Springer, whether you call him chairman or ring-leader, brushed aside the expectation like so many cobwebs. His jovial, if weary, stewardship got the nearly 50 attendees to put aside pre-conception and let it happen naturally.

Ben Wilson's contribution only began with the home-made wine described in his new column. And it is

VAGUE

The Editors Jam
— a Little Bit

RANTS

SO THIS
IS TONER?

WHAT DID YOU
EXPECT? CAN-
CAN GIRLS IN
DITTO BIKINI?

THEY DON'T
WANT TO
COME TO
SILVERSON
EITHER

Impossible to say enough about the food Tammy Funk and Cathi Wilson prepared. Their bountiful and delicious cuisine helped give Toner its unique character and make it more than just a scaled-down ersatz Corflu.

Tom Springer

Zooooom!
Whooosh!
Vrooom!

And then Toner was gone, leaving a black smear of ash and the lingering smell of Woody's dried up chill to coat your olfactoryes. Six days later, Wednesday morning, and I'm dropping Perry Middlemass off at the Southwest terminal and circling back home for another two hours rest before heading off to work. After four hours at work I woke up from a nap and cruised over to the Katzes where the remnants of Toner preside. Richard Brandt and Michelle Lyons, Martin and Helena Tudor, Karl Kreder (who may be back), Ron Pehr and Raven, Ken Forman, Ben Wilson, Arnie and Joyce and Tammy and myself. Amazingly we create enough noise among the 13 of us to drown out the phone. Bunch of loudmouths.



I'm still riding a Toner high. Whoa, Marcy Waldie just walked through the door, that makes fourteen refugees of the purple black dust. The bursts of laughter signal high spirits and with some seven steaming Bulgarian pizzas of assorted makes on the way I see quiet bloat time in our future. More food.

They always said, "If you feed them, they will come." And they did.

"I'll call your bluff, Brandt!" Arnie shouts from over my shoulder. Another challenge has been made. Richard scurries off to Ross's office and already, over my own, I

can hear Richard's tap-tapping on the keyboard as he creates his first assault against the wrath that is Arnie.

Laurie Kunkel

Toner seems to have dragged lots of long-lost Vegas fen from their caves—including yours truly. Trying to put together a fanzine, after writing the vast majority of the day is pretty tough, but I've started an article Bill asked me to write. Who knows — maybe there will be another zine from Spyglass soon.

I know I've missed the fun of fannish writing...

Cathi Wilson

The crowd at the kick-off party was amazing.

There was such an interesting mix of fen at Arnie and Joyce's, it was hard to keep them all straight.

Ben and I had the pleasure of having Martin and Helena Tudor as our house guests Thursday night. After traveling for about twenty-five hours, they were quite gracious and accepted our invitation to dinner. We had a chance to get to know each other and compare governmental quirks.

Tammy Funk

Like Cathi and Ben, Tom and I also had some excellent houseguests at both ends of Toner. Perry Middlemass stayed for a night, along with Christina Lake for one or two more. I had a long



real conreports, are saying, "Midnight on the third day of a partycon... where else would they be *but* the Chorp Dimenston?"

Granted that things sometimes get out of hand at such times, both **Joyce** and I were reasonably well connected to the prevailing view of reality at this time. Because she wasn't her normal, robust self, Joyce needed more sleep and rest than usual, and I tended to keep her company. Thus we were still spry as neos at their first con.

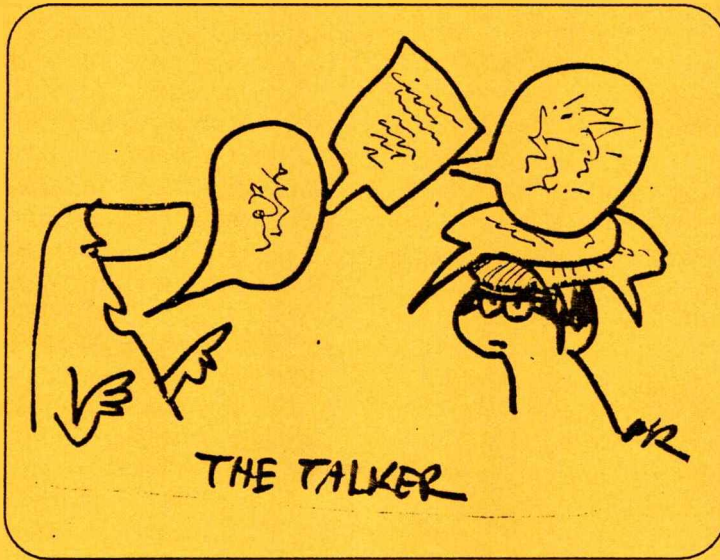
We sat there, contemplating the infinite, as she gathered her strength for another foray to the uproarious consulate down the hall.

That's when it started. "I wish Tom were here," Joyce said. Like several other lively local groups of the past, the Vegrants enjoy each other's company enough to hang out together at cons.

I was on the point of reminding Joyce that Tom had lots of responsibilities, complicated by the flare-up of his bursitis. That's when I heard the knock at the door.

It was Tom.

He'd finally hobbled over to a comfortable chair when I observed that it would be nice to have Ben



there, too, so I could give them a carload of egoboo for their feats of the weekend.

Again, the knock at the door. "Hi," said Ben as he walked in and took a seat on one of the couches.

If you know Ben, you'll guess that he almost immediately voiced the wish that Cathi were there to enjoy the company.

The words were barely out of his mouth when we heard another knock.

I got up and went to the door. I opened it wide Cathi!

Tom observed the Wilsons cuddling on the couch and said that he wished Tammy was there, too. Knock.

Tammy. Who *else* would it be?

Personally, I thought it was one *hell* of a run of coincidences, I said nothing to the others, afraid they'd laugh — and afraid to break the spell.

We talked about fanzines, mentioned the recent **Crawdaddy** and someone wished Paul and Cindy Lee would've come to Toner as originally planned.

When I heard the knock, I knew who was at the door even as I walked across the suite's main room to the door. I found myself wishing for Robert Lichtman's wise counsels in the face of the fannish supernatural.

Sure enough, it was Paul Williams and Cindy Lee Berryhill. Accompanying them was Robert Lichtman.

I wasn't the only one who'd noticed the pile up of arrivals-on-demand. Once everyone got settled again, all we could talk about was the Wish Party.

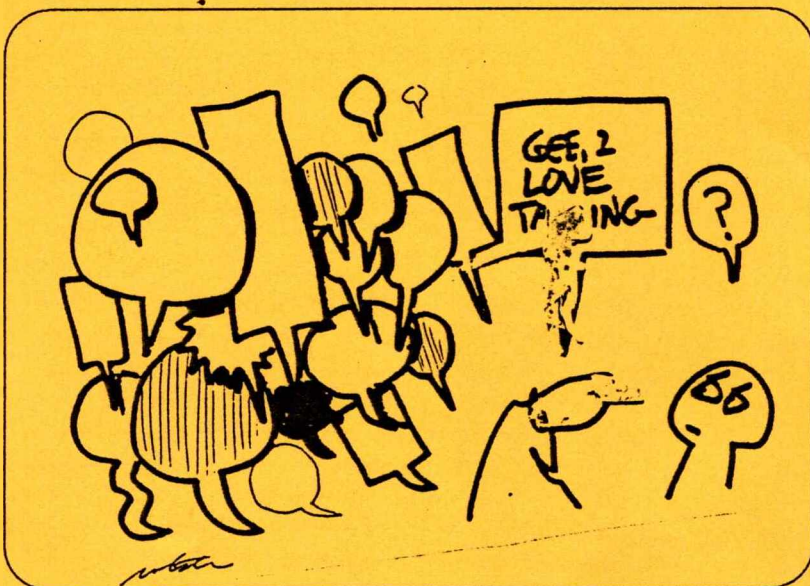
Perhaps to change the subject, Paul asked what we thought of the TAFF delegate and expressed a wish to meet him.

We waited for the knock.

The wait lasted about 10 seconds.

In came Martin and Helena Tudor with bonus guest Christina Lake. (I concede that she proved so popular at Toner that any one of the others may've silently wished her into the room.)

We all looked at each other. The Wish



Party had become almost too good a thing. If Himself materialized at our door, it would confirm that we had departed the known world and ventured into a faan fiction universe from which we might never return.

As a trufannish chairman should, Tom seized the moment to confront the Unknown. "I wish Willis was here!" Tom declared in a strong voice that had just the shadow of a quaver.

We waited for the knock that might seal our eternal doom.

That's when Walter intervened and restored balance to the fanzine universe. The psychic pull emanating from so many fans must have been for-

midable. It is a monument to his fortitude that, even in his still-frail post-operative condition, he repelled our unbidden psychic emanation and stayed put in Northern Ireland.

The knock never came.

We all exhaled.

"It's over," I said, brushing away the wisps of smoke so I could see those whom Willis had delivered from: endless wandering in a faan fictional never-never land. "We have escaped the Chorp Dimension and returned to the world of the relatively mundane."

Drain, we all dispersed to our rooms and late night avocations.ooo

TOM SERCON TOM NAVIGATION

Insanity Conceived

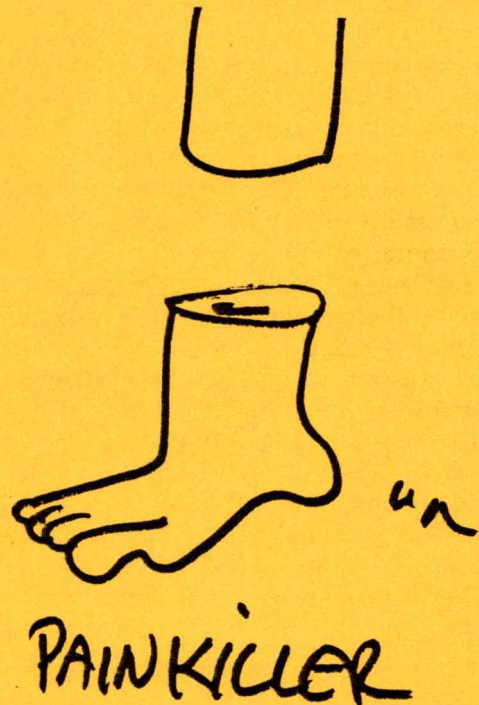
I sit at the computer waiting for it all to come rushing back in order of time and events, but the memory flow sloshing through my cerebellum is an incomprehensible stream of people, places and words, all revolving around Toner. Verily, a great idea. Certainly not a new one, but I knew it would work. The not-so-new idea was to parallel (we never follow) Precursor of last year and toss off another pre-worldcon relaxicon for all the adventuring fanzine fans who journey every year in pious fannish t-shirts to declare their faith and respect to Roscoe, Ghu, and Fandom, too (and to partake in one helluva party).

During its inception, many smoke signals were passed back and forth between Vegrants, communicating in the cloudy and high-minded way that we do (when we aren't reaching for a lighter). Conversations were held, glorious ideas were revealed with rapturous joy, marveled over with

great enthusiasm, and once held up to the harsh and critical looking glass that is reality, carefully and quietly discarded. This, or course, didn't stop us, foolish fans that we are. No, we continued meeting and discussing, talking and conversing, sharing great big ideas and feeling like great big fans. It was good fun. Big fun.

Living in Las Vegas, that's almost required.

It was quickly decided. I spoke loudest about the idea and was pronounced Ringleader on the spot. As my co-editor would say, "It's all in the charisma." Quick to assume command and even quicker to realize I'd need a lot of help, I looked to Ben to act as my Right-Hand Man. Young, fleet,



strong, stoned. . . he accepted my invitation to potential reputation-ruining disaster and joined me as my partner. Together we would hold Toner, Ben and I. Tom and Ben. We would walk the social tightrope that is party-throwing and create a swirl of smoky, boozy fun that would croggle even the most dull-minded fans. Together we would make Big Names for ourselves and create Big Reputations fans would talk about for decades to come. (Many would argue that clinical study is not a form of egoboo, but they'd be wrong.)

Four fun-filled days of debauchery. What could be better? Four fun-filled days of debauchery with fanzine fans, that's what. Which is what we'd need if Toner was going to have the resounding note of success Ben and I had imagined. Inside bacover advertisements began to appear in Wild Heirs, proclaiming to one and all that we had picked the weekend before the LAcon to celebrate our first five years of Vegas fanning. Vegas fanning? Yeah, that was Arnie's idea, the five-year anniversary thing. Make them feel, if not obligated, at least invited. Good sneaky advice. But there was more. . .

"This is more than a party," Arnie said one night.

"Yeah," Joyce added. "Fanzine fans are gonna want things to do."

"They're gonna drink, smoke, eat, and sleep," I told them.

"No, Tom, you don't understand. We're talking about fanzine fans," Arnie explained. "They're going to want to do stuff."

"What sort of stuff?" Ben asked.

"Fan stuff," Joyce answered.



"Humph," I humphed.

Ben reached for the pipe. "I think we should smoke about this."

We all nodded agreement, perilously close to miring ourselves in the muck of convention thinking.

"This isn't a convention," I reminded our little group of brainfarts. "It's a party."

"A fannish 'arty," Ben reminded me around the pipe in his mouth.

"I hate to say it Tom, but you're going to need some programming," Arnie told me, point blank. My back stiffened.

"Fannish programming," Joyce supplied before I could open my mouth to protest.

Ben blew a jet cloud and passed me the pipe.

"Fun fannish programming," he added.

Before I could even have a puff it was decided. Programming, by Ghu; the last thing I wanted was a convention! I needed to think. I needed to think great big thoughts that would save my party. I also needed a smoke. Where's a lighter? I looked around, spying the mauve plastic tool on the arm of the couch. As I reached for it, my fingers leading the way and ready to grasp, the great big thought I'd been thinking about the programming for the party that wasn't a convention slipped through the curvy canyons of my brain. Phuff! It slipped away like a buttered banana peel. Lost to the ether. Brainfart.

I could only hope mine wasn't the first, and puffed great big clouds in the hopes of disguising my failed genius. They either didn't notice or were numb to the many electrons charging around my gray matter. It's not like sparks go off shooting out my ears, and if they had, whoever had the pipe at the time would lean forward expectantly, eyes crossed on the bowl. I inhaled a mighty lungful and passed on the brass tool.

"Maybe some sort of roundtable discussions," Arnie suggested while fidgeting with the contraption.

"Like at Corflu Nashville," Joyce supplied.

Ben sat up. "We could have some fanzine readings!"

"Ooooooh," we marveled together. Heads nodded in enthusiastic agreement. Before we could laud our comrade, Arnie brought us back to reality.

"Could I get a light?" he asked. I tried another great big thought, but Joyce thrust forward the lighter, turned its wheel, and fire appeared. While Arnie puffed a cloud we sat back collectively and thought about what we'd been talking about. Fanzine readings, and a couple round table discussions. Yeah, we could do that. It wasn't going

to be so bad. Thanks to Joyce we knew what to do.

For we are the blessed. We've been chosen and schooled by the Vegrant's High Priestess in the way of the Hosting Fan. She passed on to us her wisdom and knowledge, ancient lore passed down through the Numbered Fandoms, arcanum known only to a few. By lecture and example she guided us down the path, pointing out the important stuff with austere confidence. Is she not the High Priestess?

"The way to a fan's heart is through the stomach," she advised us one Saturday afternoon as we sprawled about the Katz estate before another Snaffu Social.

"Shouldn't it be a little higher up, through the chest?" Ben asked.

Wisely (because she's the High Priestess) she ignored him and glided into the kitchen. "Come, slow one, let me show you," she beckoned with one elegantly crooked finger.

Ben got to his feet and clumped into her laboratory. Despite her lack of the plural I jumped to and followed Ben. In what she called her kitchen, with her pots and pans and electric heating elements, she showed us the way. Soon food was sizzling and sauces were simmering and the tummy-tickling waftings of her labors proved her point.

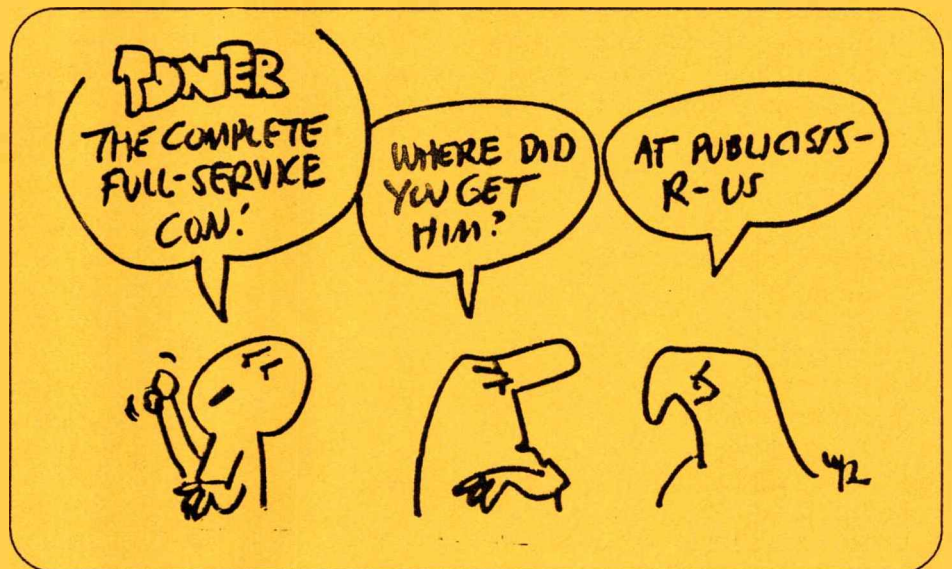
"Listen carefully, your women probably know it, but you do not," she advised us. "Food is the way to a fan's heart. With food you may control and manipulate," she said, waving a spatula around for emphasis. Food will keep them happy, keep them slow and sluggish, making them more manageable, more pliable. With food you will fulfill their desires, forestall their questions, and give them something to do."

She pointed her greasy food-tool toward the couch. "Go now and contemplate. We will talk of this later with your women." Stomach's growling, we did as she ordered, retreating to the couch to assuage our hunger with potato chips, chocolate-chip cookies, and a sympathetic Arnie who passed us the pipe. We were hers to command.

And so the Master Plan was made clear. Inundate them with food. Bury them in it. When they open their yaps to complain about something, stuff them full with cookies. Ah, it could not fail.

A tested and time-honored method. We would succeed where other fans had failed, for Tammy and Cathi could cook. Oh baby, could they cook! Everywhere they turned they would find food, see food, breathe food. We decided to keep a large bucket and some mops around in case someone exploded. Those were the chances we were willing to take.

Like a large drunken fan, the idea of Toner took awhile to get going. We had menus to plan, arti-



cles to pick, programs to, er, program. Yes, we had lots of stuff to do. Too much stuff. This, sadly enough, didn't discourage Ben and me from our mad plan. Erroneously believing in the backs of our minds that our women would stop us. Silly men. Silly fans.

When queried, Cathi and Tammy responded delightfully to the challenge. Eight soups? Hors d'oeuvres for forty? Hotwings, meatballs, pasta salad, deviled eggs, Mexican layer dip, ham asparagus roll-ups, cookies and sweets, a vegetable tray, cold cuts and sandwich fixings for everyone? No problem! Willingly they followed us down into our self-made hell. (Now, in the aftermath of Toner, Cathi and Tammy have been secreted away to a private psychological clinic for further study. Experts say they're beyond treatment.)

Two whiz-bangs, a golly-gee, and several joints later, we had a tentative menu. We were intent on doing Joyce proud. Trouble is, we never stopped to think about what we were planning to do. Actually, that's what saved us. If we'd taken the time to stop and consider what we were planning, it's likely one of us would have come to our sens-

es. Three regrettable but necessary murders later would find the impromptu snuff film on its way to an underground middleman who arranges such things. Luxuriating on some sandy Barbados beach drinking an ice cool pina colada, the sole, sane, surviving member of our party would lean back, scrunching toes in the sand and wonder, "What's new in fandom?"

As you can see, there's no sand between my toes.

Plenty of it between my ears, but not my toes.

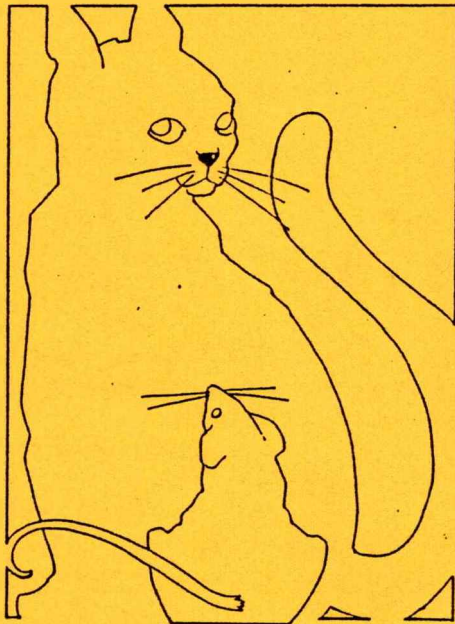
A flyer was written, something like "Come to Toner!" Oh yes, it was a piece of work, that flyer. Told the date and times, the convention hotel, how

much it was going to cost, room rates, and a stupid little ramble by me (much like this one) about what we were going to be doing for four days holed up in some downtown casino in Las Vegas. On the second flyer I accidentally moved the date to July instead of August. I wondered, once Arnie pointed out my typo, who would show in July. Turned out the only fan visitation was Mike McInerny. He brought a small stack of zines to contribute to the Toner auction. I took Mike's visit as a sign. I knew on some mystical level, despite my own publicity, that if we held it, they would come. Unlike in all those science fiction books we've read, no one came more than once. oooo

Unexpected Guests

"Joyce, the kittens are here," someone announced at the Toner kick-off party.

"Marcy, get some turkey!" Joyce shouted.



On that beautiful, clear, warm Las Vegas summer night, the guests were relaxed and congenial. Some found their heart's desire cooling off in the pool, while others heated things up in the spa. Small groups dotted the back yard. Others found the kitchen or living room more comfortable. But wherever they lighted, folks found their perfect place to get acquainted or to make up for the interim between visits.

The two uninvited guests, referred to as Kitty and Kitty, provided a pleasant aside.

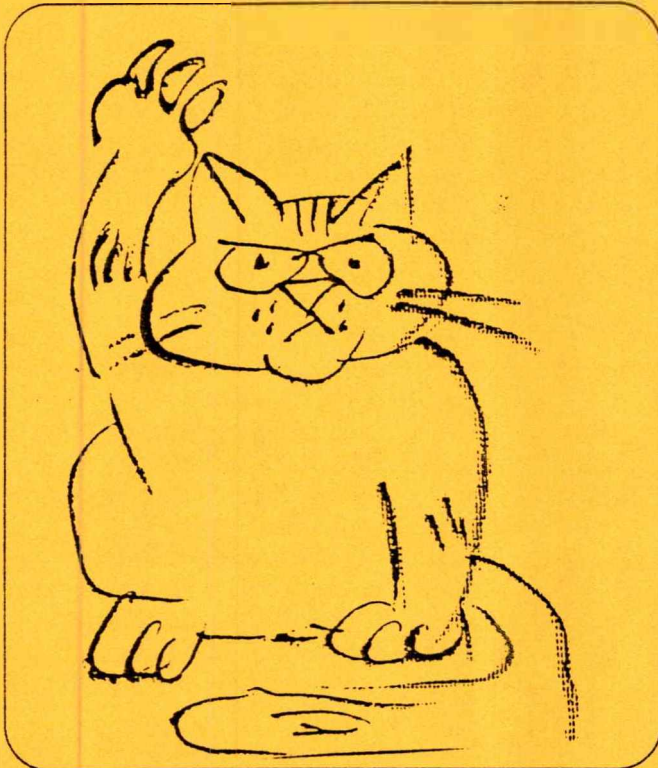
I don't know when or how Joyce's fancy for felines originated. Perhaps it was during her childhood while growing up in rural Missouri.

Dogs may keep two- and four-legged pests away, but cats take care of the rest. Whether they're protecting a farm, ranch, house, condo or trailer, cats keep abodes free of crawly critters. In addition to serving a useful purpose, cats can be fun to be around. So, I can envision little Joyce Worley romping with kitties on the lush rolling hills of the "Show Me" state.

The Toner kittens actually made their debut the week prior at the monthly social. I had gone to my car to get my swim suit and was just about to re-enter the house when a healthy, small, light beige furry thing appeared at my feet.

Trailing behind this scout at a safe distance and under cover of the canna lillies next to the front door was a tiger kitten of

MARCY STRAIGHT UP



similar size.

Knowing that Joyce had nurtured strays and had just plain given in to cats that had a home, I asked, "Joyce, are the two kittens at the front door 'regulars?'"

"No," she said in amazement and darted to the door. After a glimpse, she became a woman with a mission; the Mother Teresa of Toner Hall. She ran to the dining table and grabbed a piece of turkey lunchmeat, flew back outside, gently separated it into kitty sized bites, carefully stepped back inside and watched with other fans from the dining room window. The silver-beige kitten scarfed all of it down before the tiger knew what was going on.

Now Joyce has had over a year and a half to train me on the care and feeding of visiting "kitties", as she calls even the oldest ones. Since I have a cat at home, plus two "outsiders" from somewhere in the neighborhood, it didn't

take me long to catch on. I knew that the healthy tiger had to eat, too, or it would die. After repeated trips between the dining table and the starving strays, I was finally satisfied that both babies would make it through the night. Meanwhile, Joyce figured that the turkey needed a chaser and marched outside with a *huge* bowl of milk.

"Joyce, they'll drown in that," I said.

"Well, I saw that the mother is here, and she needs milk."

I was stunned to see the two kittens drink the bowl almost dry before mom got her turn.

It was obvious from the excellent condition of the animals that they had a home and were cared for. They were just scoping the action and hoping to cash in, which they did. After the meal, mom took off, satisfied that the kids were in good hands, while the kids loafed on the front stoop.

At Toner, Joyce had the milk out by the driveway before I arrived with the turkey. Guests stood outside with her watching the silver-beige vie for attention while the tiger chased imaginary thingles in the grass.

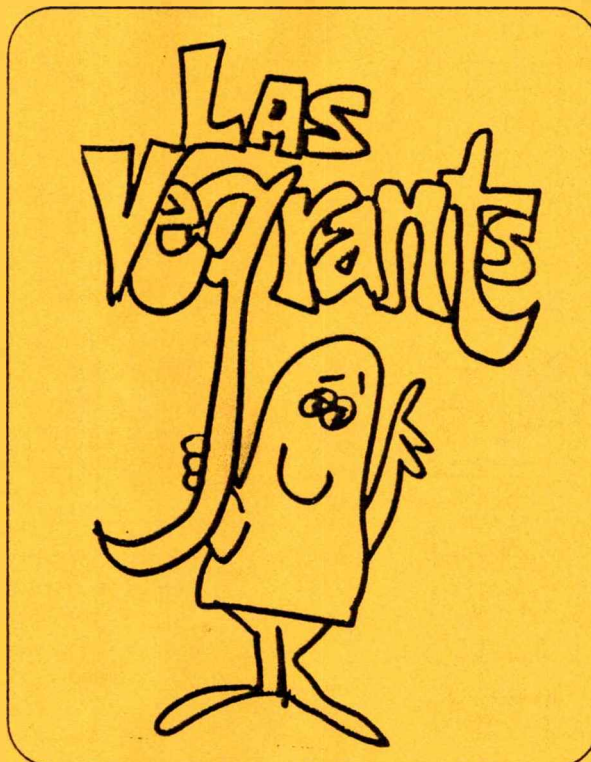
"Do you think they'll eat this turkey?" she asked. "It *is* smoked. It may be too expensive for their taste."

Ha! After a couple of sniffs, they cleaned the plate.

I was surprised that so many guests, especially guys, briefly exited the party to check out the newcomers. Unless you were there and can identify them, they will remain anonymous. Wouldn't want to blemish their macho images. (Arnie was not among them.)

Joyce gingerly picked up the silver-beige and lovingly cradled it in her arms. She floated through the door and proudly paraded through the living room as though she was in possession of the original *Enchanted Duplicator*. She looked so content that her blood pressure must have dropped 50 points.

What was Slugger doing all this time? He had awakened from his evening nap to check out the fans



with the tasty legs. Finding none to his satisfaction, he meandered toward his food in the kitchen. Lovable, jovial Frank Harwood greeted the paunchy puss with a smile and pleasant, "Hi, Slugger." Since this was a very important gathering, Slugger was on his best behavior; he took only one swipe at Frank's pants leg. That was his way of returning the greeting.

To my knowledge, Slugger was not jealous of the kittens. Like Arnie, he tolerates the youngest generation and finds comfort in knowing that

the kids eventually Go Home.

So the unexpected guests were almost as big of a hit as the expected ones. New and familiar faces alike were graced by a visit from the two adorables (who live across the street). Not only did they provide added entertainment, they were the springboard for another "Arnie classic".

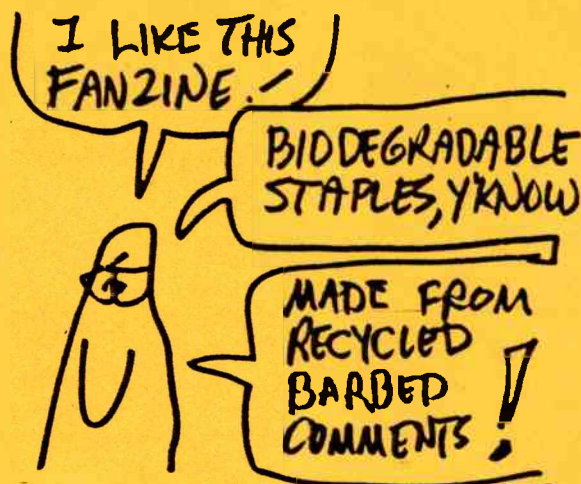
"Gee, Arnie, if it weren't for you, Joyce could have a house full of cats," Ben Wilson stated.

Arnie retorted, "And if it weren't for Joyce, I could have a harem." ∞∞∞

ZUN- WOUND

Counting My Blessings

I am an explorer. I've always been one. Whether it was climbing the eucalyptus trees in our back lot when I was a kid, or canoeing down the



Colorado River, I've always liked adventure.

When I got my job at Hoover Dam last year, I received 2 1/2 days of training, then I started giving tours. The training was intensive, but fun.

Part of my continuing training includes the authority to go just about anywhere in the entire dam and powerplant complex. They (your government) also gave me a copy of the master key, the one that opens *every* door.

Not all benefits are monetary; I also get to bring friends along. Ben Wilson and I spent six hours climbing, walking, peering over, looking at, and generally exploring the place. Much of the massive structure is automatic; we didn't encounter many technicians (besides, I had my Advance To Go, I'm

Allowed to Be Here ID Card with me). Civil Service is such a joy.

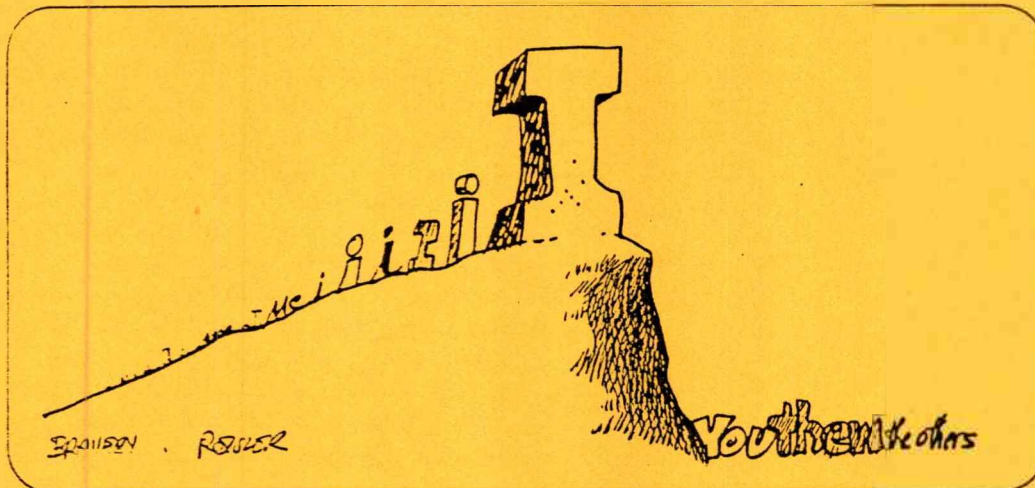
Alyson L. Abramowitz called me, the week before Toner, asking for two favors,

"Please come to Corflu Wave, you can help." I, of course said 'yes.' Her second favor was even easier to grant. "Fiona Anderson and I would like a tour of the dam." I love my job, and I especially love playing tour guide for my friends.

At the pre-pre-kick-off party Thursday before Toner, Fiona, Alyson and I made plans to rendezvous early the next morning. Robert Lichtman accepted our invitation; him being the only other fan who came into Las Vegas a day early.

As is often the case in such stories, the next morning came all too early. At least I got to drink coffee and share a bagel with Robert as we both tried to convince our eyes we wanted to stay awake and that they should remain open. We retrieved the rest of our party and drove out across the desert.

I don't recall all of the nooks and crannies we



ed...I needn't have worried. After spending four days with the people who attended Toner, the Worldcon was just an extension of the good times here in Las Vegas.

The other reason I was a little concerned about attending Worldcon had to do with the fact that my first convention ever was the 1978 Worldcon in Phoenix. I didn't

poked our noses into; my audience of three seemed to become more in awe of the immense building and machinery. I do remember watching Robert's face change from the relaxed observer, his usual facade, and to the eager spectator.

Fiona and Alyson seemed amazed, as most people are, but they didn't show the sheer astonishment that Robert did. For just a moment, I got the idea that he was daydreaming about the number of electric stencilers and mimeos that could be operated from the generators.

We ducked under pipes and climbed over railings. I didn't want to exhaust my guests so we went to the more spectacular, albeit readily accessible, locales.

Toner blessed me twice. The last day of the con, Monday, a troop of out-of-town fen (Hope Liebowitz, Linda Bushyager, Paul Williams and Cindy Berryhill, Martin and Helena Tudor, and Christina Lake) and Ben Wilson headed down to the dam for a tour. After I showed them the sights, we had time to chat.

I think I was telling stories about the people who built Hoover Dam. I explained that we (your government) didn't have accurate records of some of the older areas of the powerplant. "We find stuff, about once every three months, that has been lost for 60 years. There are structures — tunnels and such — here that we don't know anything about."

"Wow," cried Paul, "how Campbell-ian, how st-f-nal."

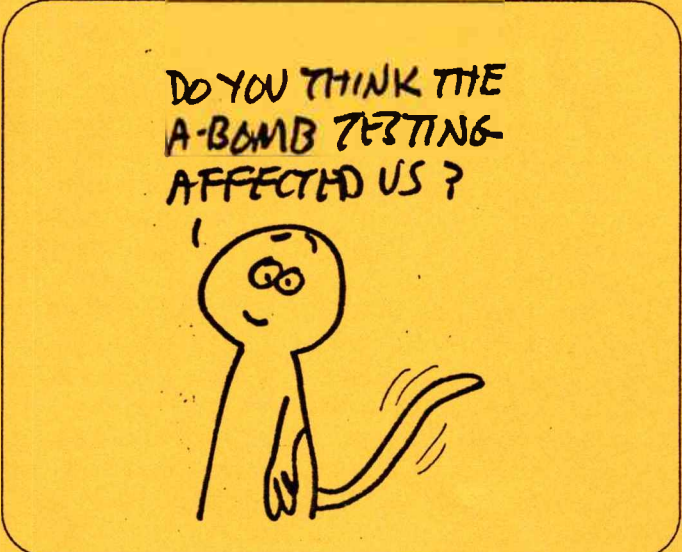
Toner blessed me a third time. Through an unfortunate set of circumstances, Joyce Katz offered me her LACon III membership. She couldn't attend and knew I wanted to go.

I was a little nervous about meeting all the fans there. I'm sure you can guess where this is head-

know what, or who, fandom was all about back then.

Since that time, I've wielded an enchanted duplicator (or at least the 90's version: an enchanted photocopier), I've tasted Boo Bird Eggs, avoided Collecting Bugs and generally followed my own version of Jophan's epic journey. Of course, I shouldn't have been concerned.

Gerri Sullivan's fanzine lounge proved to be the best part of LACon III. Without her (and Don Fitch's) efforts, the lounge would have been an out of the way hole with BNFs wandering in and out. Instead, they made it a home away from home. It was the place that everyone wanted to hang out in. To be truthful, though, while I thoroughly enjoyed the Worldcon and the fanzine lounge, *nothing* could beat Toner for the sheer camaraderie and *joi de vivre*.⁰⁰⁰⁰



ALTERNATIVE COMMAND PERFORMANCE

Confessions of a Con Woman

I love conventions. When Ken started dating me, one of our first dates was CopperCon. It seemed like a huge block party full of the kind of people I always wanted to be around. I was hooked. The main regret I had about moving to Las Vegas was that there was no convention convenient. When SNAFFU started, it assuaged that need for fannish companionship, but my lust for conventions never dimmed.

Even being one of the people running our local convention didn't ruin my enjoyment of other conventions — it just gave me an enormous respect for a well-run convention (as well as a fear of registration desks).

Arnie and Joyce introduced me to the joys of fanzine fandom as it relates to conventions. It came down to relaxation and conversation. Much different from the hectic pace of the rest of the convention. It still isn't my favorite activity at a large convention. The art show and filking, panels and parties are still my major interests, but it's wonderful to find a quiet room filled with intelligent people in the midst of convention chaos. And of course, the more I participate in fanzine fandom, the more I enjoy talking with these long distance friends.

Then I realized that there were "specialized" conventions. I could attend a filking convention and gorge on song and singing. I could go to a gaming convention and be bored. Or I could attend a fanzine convention and hold many interesting conversations with neat people. Corflu Vegas was the first such convention I attended and I had a blast! I didn't have the opportunity to go to the next

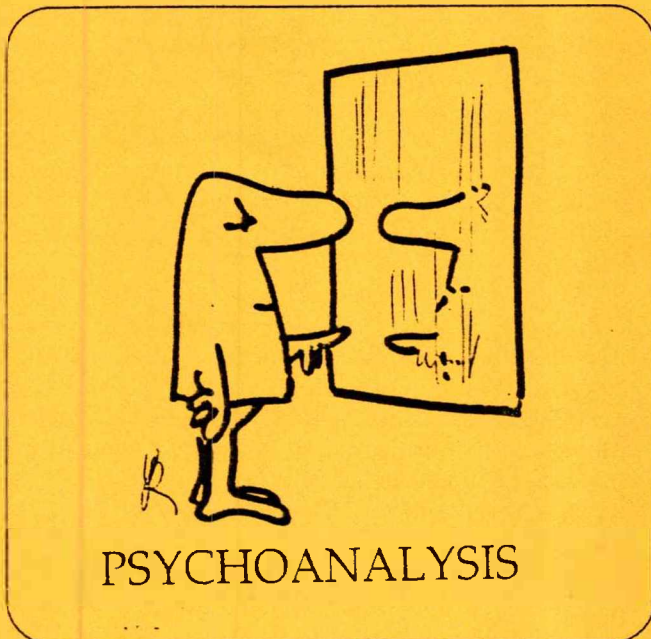
Corflu, but luckily, the Vegrants decided that fen who were visiting the Worldcon deserved a relaxing convention prior to the bustle of LACon III. I wasn't involved in the running of this convention, but instead got to just sit back and enjoy it.

Unfortunately, I had to work most of the days of Toner. The good news is that it was financially worth the loss of conversation. We had a golf tournament that same weekend and golfers are "high rollers." The downside is that I missed all the scheduled events at the convention. Friday night after work found me at the Katz's, reacquainting myself with old friends. I almost didn't recognize Geri Sullivan because she wasn't smiling. I don't think I've ever seen her not

smiling before! Actually, she wasn't unhappy, just seriously listening to someone else talking. She looked a little puzzled at me as well, probably because of my flat-top hair style. She's never seen me in my "summer cut."

Speaking of my hairstyle, Rotsler admitted to me that he keeps expecting to see me sporting a tattoo on my arm and cruising for babes. I told him I'll just have to flirt with the men aggressively to dispel his concerns and then proceeded to do so. I'm not as successful a flirt now as I used to be, but that could be my age and chubby thighs, not





my hairstyle.

That does bring up an interesting aside, though. I found myself a little disconcerted when I lost a lot of weight about 5 years ago, since men now seemed to take it for granted that they could touch me, hug me, grope me, etc. I must admit that I never had that problem before I lost the weight, whether that was because they weren't attracted or whether it's because my flirting wasn't taken seriously then, I don't know. I do know that men being more aggressive is part of the reason that I gained a lot of the weight back.

Then I decided that a firm "get your hands off me" was a better idea than health problems and a size 20 dress. Be that as it may, I've since noticed how my fellow female dealers are treated by the male dealers at work. Example: Two cute Oriental women are waiting in the hall for us to go en masse to the assigned tables and two Occidental male dealers come up, and each takes an arm of a woman, saying, "Hong's yours and Michelle's mine." Each woman looks uncomfortable, but they acquiesce and allow the guy to hug them close. Watching them, I realized that that behavior is insufferably chauvinistic and offensive. Neither man meant to harm the women, but the "ownership" question is appalling. Most of the dealers seem to take this attitude for granted. As long as I'm overweight, I don't have to deal with this, but I hope to be svelte soon. I'd appreciate advice.

Anyway, Saturday afternoon was the first chance I had to get to the Four Queens. The downtown traffic was as annoying as I had remembered since

the Fremont Experience made street navigation a nightmare.

But I didn't let that stop me, for I had Baked Goods. Neither rain nor snow, nor sleet nor hail (or even one way streets) may keep home baked goodies from being delivered to ConSuites on time. Su Williams and I made it through the crowded casino bearing pies and cake, looking for the convention area. When we reached it, feeling like Indiana Jones arriving at the site of the Lost Ark, we found ourselves alone, not a fan in sight. A quick call to the ConSuites changed that quickly, and at last we found the true treasure, friendly faces.

Ben Wilson met us at the door and relieved us of our aromatic burden.

"Go on in and have some soup," he said, and so I did. Very quickly I found myself in a conversation with Rotsler and my husband, then I started migrating around the room, chatting with Roxanne Smith-Graham, Michelle Lyons, Richard Brandt, Christina Lake, Martin Tudor and, eventually, the Vicks. It was a lovely evening.

The only regret that I have is that Saturday was my only day off. Sunday found me back at work again, staring at unfriendly players and wishing that I were back at the ConSuites. Actually, I'd rather have been just about anywhere but there, as long as I was still getting paid. My job isn't bad, but when there's a convention going on, it seems like forever before the workday is ended.

Sunday evening I was back at the convention.

There were readings from fanzines in the Katz's room, and Cathi Wilson, Ken and I ended up on their bed, which had the tendency to lift up at the head when we sat on the foot of the bed, producing hysterical laughter from the occupants. There was a wooden lattice between the bed area and the



rest of the suite that allowed sound through but not sight, so our loud giggles elicited a few speculative comments. It was a terribly comfortable way to listen to Richard Brandt and Robert Lichtman reading fanzines aloud.

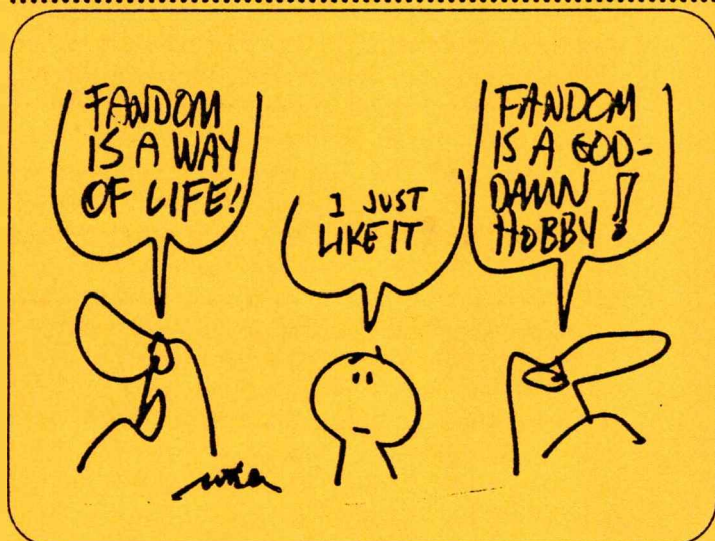
Around 11pm, my husband said, "I'm supposed to take the Vicks to the airport at 1 am." I acted suitably appalled and told him that he shouldn't stay up that late, since he had to go to work at 7am. "I'll do it," I said. Gee, how awful to have to have some quality time with two of the nicest fen I know. I lolled around the ConSuites, munching on the food that was set about the room. I declined the home-made wine that Ben and Cathi brought, just because I'm not much of a wine drinker.

Actually, I've got appalling taste in alcohol, drinking mostly light beer and frou-frou cocktails

like piña coladas and margaritas. Eventually, though, 1 am arrived, and off we went to the airport. I think my driving makes other people nervous, but not so nervous that they feel compelled to mention it. I get a lot of people that grip the "taxi handle" that's set above the passenger seats. The Vicks seemed pretty relaxed, though. Perhaps all those Floridian drivers make me seem positively laid-back.

Monday I didn't get a chance to go to Toner at all, but I rested in the firm knowledge that I'd soon see all these folks at LACon III. But that's another tale, and since we have a deadline to meet here at the **Wild Heirs** editorial staff, you'll just have to look for the continuing stooooorrrrryyy in future issues of *Wild Heirs* or in *Glamour*.

That's the closest I'll ever come to a cliff-hanger...



Facts of Fan-Life

ROTSLS ROTSLS ROTSLS THE COLUMN

Ghod knows the world is imperfect. Thus it is that my experiences with Fandom have had their ups and downs as with most aspects of life; the concept of Fandom as a microcosm is therefore justified.

Uh, yeah, I guess that works for other people as well.

My fannish life has been relatively tangential to the mundane compared with many fans to whom FIAWOL is a given, not a concept. I've probably wiped its worst incursions on my psyche from my mind; and the best times have been so diffused that it's difficult to narrow them down to any specific moments.

I remember periods of self doubt so heavy that I would make a New York subway trip all the way to the place where a fannish gathering was taking place, stand outside thinking why would anyone want me to mess up their good times by intruding on them, and return home.

(And that was before I even discovered the delights and downsides of cannabic inhalation. What fed my paranoia then, I'm not sure.) Yet I've had egoboo moments (before and after that milestone/millstone) that made everything I've done in and for fandom worth every hassle. I've had more of the latter since I came to Las Vegas than I ever did in the many years prior to that domain transition, though that is not to demean those I had before, some of which meant and mean a great deal to me.

The fan conventions here have helped with the positive aspects of that area of my life. At Toner this was buoyed by sharing the badge concession with William Rotsler

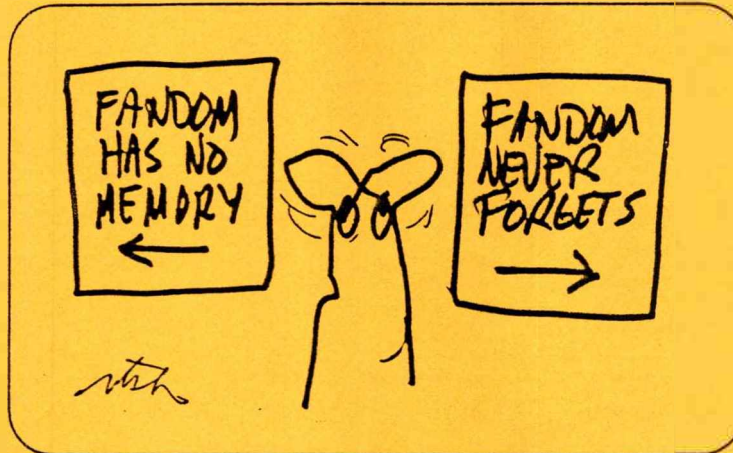
and Kunkel and feeling comfortable about that, where at one time I'd've been more than usually diffident about it.

Then, I'd have worried about deserving the honor. Now I realize

it's not a question of honor or "place," it's a question of sharing the fun. Maybe I'm not a neo any more, at last...

Now, if I could just do something about this ego problem.

Toner was fun, even if it did share with many fan conventions a hotel problem. We've had many discussions lately of how fandom has evolved (or devolved) over the years, but it does seem that the problem of the fan/mundane interface has remained something close to a constant. Yes, I'm sure there have been great conventions where the hotel ran non-interference, and no, sorry, I can't name two. In the general run of con-going fans, I'm talking as something closer to a non-participant than anything else, but these are the impressions I get. I've only been to two out-of-town (from my perspective) conventions in my 32-year fannish life—sorry, three, if you count a NonCon in Philadelphia in the 60s—and one of those was the notorious (Hotel-interface-wise) SaintLouisCon. The other was the Noreascon in Boston somewhere around 1980 (and I don't know why I always lose track of the year):

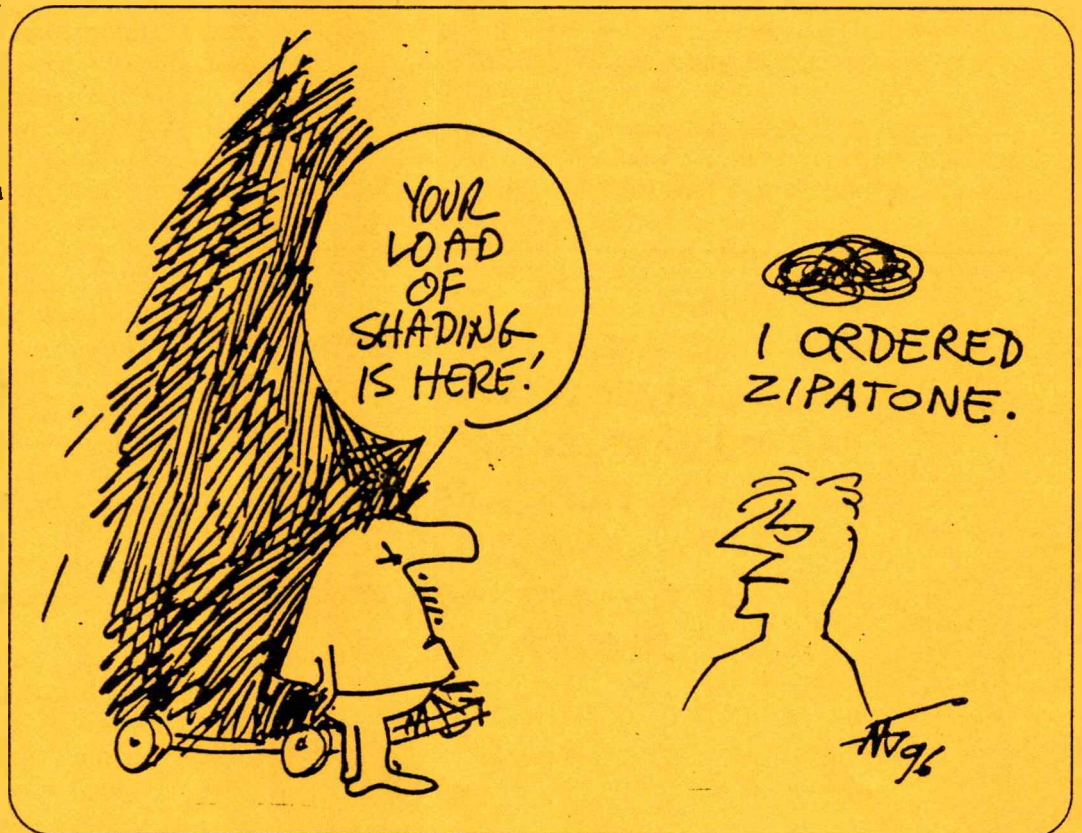


I don't remember that there were problems with that one. Of course, the mind doth blur from time to time to... (I wasn't smoking then, either. Unh... well, not much. And certainly not at the con.)

My point, however, is a tad loose with the Noreascon, since I wasn't staying at the hotel. Joy-Lynd was living in Greater Metropolitan Boston at the time, so I did not stick around much for the fan parties.

Yeah, yeah, fakefan...

My sincerest appreciation to the Fab Four, and I'm not talking about the CD comeback kids. Tom, Tammy, Ben, Cathi, some of my fave folk 'round yere, knocked themselves out to make it great, and succeeded. I, who am a lazy son of a gun, marveled at this from the comfy chairs I occupied most of the time in the hospitality sweet (sic) as I got to talk to (okay, be talked to) by the likes of Rotsler, Alyson and Hope. I did get up once in a while to acquire another bowl of soup during that particular sequence...

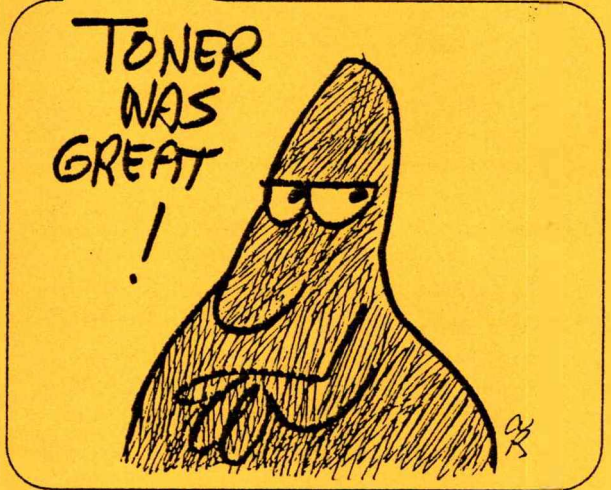


I have to acknowledge that while I enjoyed making labels for the Toner Wines, my general appreciation for wine of any kind tends to be less than positive. I tasted a couple of the Toner variety, but with all the best will in the world was unable to

appreciate their finer qualities. Sorry, Ben...

But if somebody proposed that Toner should be a continuing thing... Well, with a sidelong look at the propagators of Toner One, I'd go for a "yes" vote and trust they won't hit me.∞∞∞

BILL BENT BALANCE



Terrific Toner Times

*"When I was a kid,
I spent a lot of time
learning how to fart silently."
Geri Sullivan at Toner, 1996.*

I had a terrific time at Toner in far-off, exotic Las Vegas. They were kind enough to chip & and bring me up there, and I certainly thank everyone. First a party at Arnie & Joyce's, on Friday

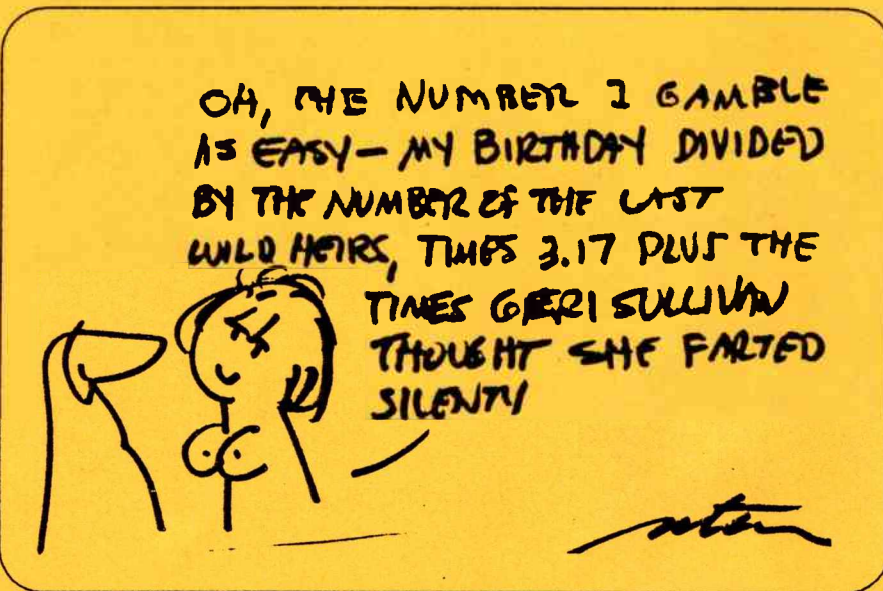
night, then at the 4 Queens Hotel for Sat & Sunday and a big chunk of Monday. We talked. Sat around & talked. And talked. Geri Sullivan, Ken & Aileen Forman, a Scottish woman from London, Bob "Robert" Lichtman, rich brown, Karl Kreder, Tom Springer, the TAFF winner Martin & the new Mrs. Tudor, Ross Chamberlain, Art Widner, Woody Bernardi, Len Bailes, Linda & Ron Bushyager, Shelby & Suzanne Vick, many others including many I don't have names for. Got to know the DUFF winner, Perry Middlemiss, and like him very much. Drew a lot.

A panoply of Stuff was discussed such as the Geri line above, which prompted innumerable cartoons by me and a finale by Karl: "Do not tell Rotsler about your bodily functions."

Erik Wilson drove Karl Kreder, Perry & I to see the CGI ride in the Luxor which I had been pushing (Perry even bought my ticket, thank you, sir) which I think everyone liked. We saw the pirate ship battle at Treasure Island and the white tigers & tropical fish at the Mirage.

All of us were disappointed at the brand new Monte Carlo, which was Very Bland. Looked at Vegas.

Last day I talked to, among many, Paul Williams & his girl friend Cindylee who has a garage



orchestra. (Yes I said orchestra.) Did cartoons for her.

We all laughed a lot alla time.

-- Bill Rotsler

Run Silent, Run Deep

The Tudors' arrival officially kicked off the Toner weekend in my household, although Tom Springer, Tammy Funk, my husband Ben Wilson and I had been preparing for it far in advance. Ben was to meet the TAFF couple at the airport while I worked. We were scheduled to have dinner after I had been released from my indentured servitude for the weekend.

My husband arrived on time to fetch me, and we headed straight for our half-unpacked, recently procured apartment. On the way home I pumped Ben for information about them. "What do they look like?" "How old are they?" "Are they nice?"

He assured me that they were nice, about our age, and kind of like us. I was seriously worried about making a good impression. I mean, I didn't want the Tudors' first impression of Vegas Fandom to be a disaster. And I wanted them to have a good time.

They are great people. You could see that they were as nervous to meet us as we were to meet them, so that soothed my mind. We had no problem communicating. We were interested in each others' lifestyles and different cultures, so that conversation came easily.

We ended up going to dinner at a hole-in-the-wall bar and grill called the Tbird. Ben and I frequented this place when we were living on the other side of town, but we haven't had much opportunity to eat there since we moved West of the Strip.

To my surprise, they had cleaned up the place. Now they have real menus and everything. But they still had the big cozy booth in the corner, so we made a bee line for that.

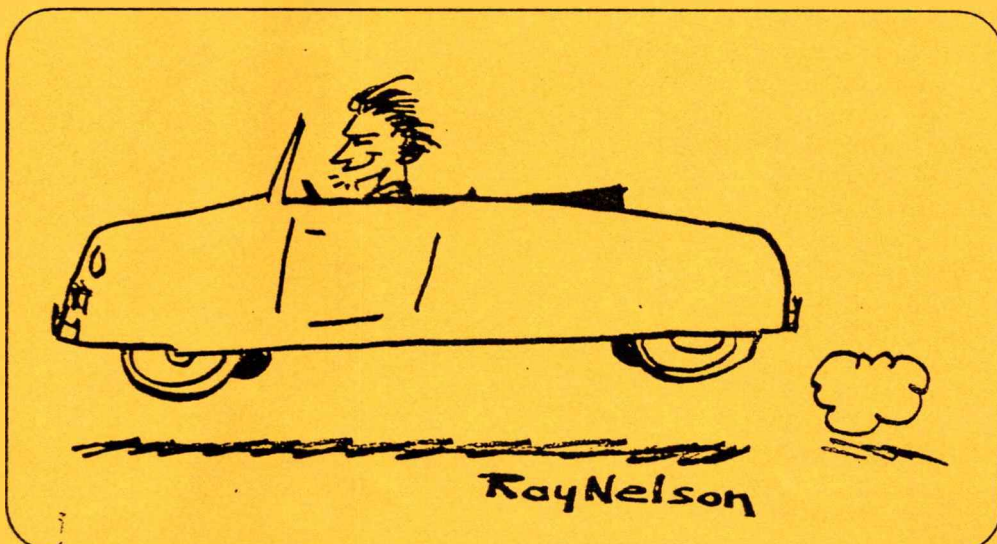
We ordered drinks and dinner and chatted some more. I wanted to hear everything they were willing to volunteer, but I did-

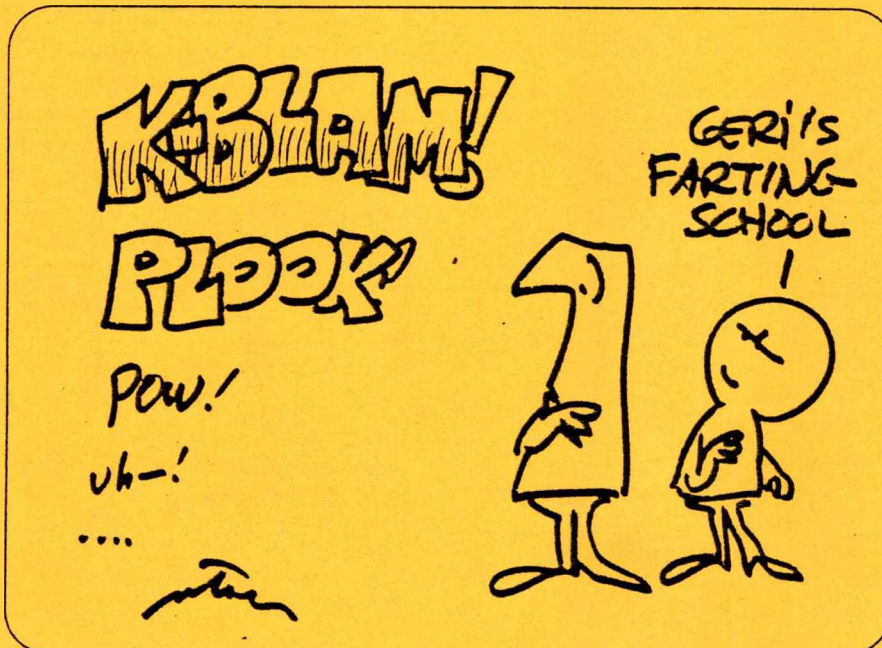
CATHI JEST JWIN'

n't want to pry. I wanted them to take me into their lives, to see what they saw everyday. This was fascinating stuff for me, since the farthest East I have been is Utah. Being a desert lizard has its disadvantages. We talked about the difference in governments and cigarettes and commuting while we waited for the food.

I was hungry when the meal came. I hadn't eaten on my break, because I knew we would be dining out. This was also going to be the first real meal in months for which I didn't have to count fat grams. It was the same greasy food I remembered, and I ate every bite. At least they hadn't changed the vittles.

After dinner we headed for home via the scenic route. Ben thought that he would give the Tudors a taste of the "real" Vegas experience. He cruised down our brightly lit Strip (which we never do





excuses not to get my ass in gear. I started my day.

Ben and Tom had a full agenda for Friday, too. They were to shuttle out-of-towners to and from the airport, hotel, and the Katz's, site of the pre-con bash. I knew we wouldn't be seeing much of them for the day.

Somewhere around 3:00 Ben did find time in between excursions to pick me up to go over to Toner Hall so that I could be at the party. That was the last time I saw him for any length of time that day.

It was a good party. People happily greeted friends whom they hadn't seen in a while and chummed up to the new faces. If this gathering was any indication of how the weekend would go we were facing

unless we absolutely have to). Helena seemed very impressed by the spectacle, but it didn't quite get the same reaction from Martin.

He was busy sleeping in the front passenger seat. I guess the twenty-five hours of traveling took its toll on him.

We didn't get to bed until somewhere around 1:00. Believe me we all welcomed a good night's sleep.

I woke the next morning around 8:00. To my surprise, I found that my house guests had been awake for an hour and a half. I made a pot of coffee for us to share while I tried to delay getting started on my day's agenda.

You see, Tammy and I foolishly volunteered to do all the food preparations for the con suite. I still had more food to finish for the con as well as a dish for the kick-off party that afternoon. I made another pot and breakfast for everyone including my husband, who had staggered out of bed sometime during the first pot.

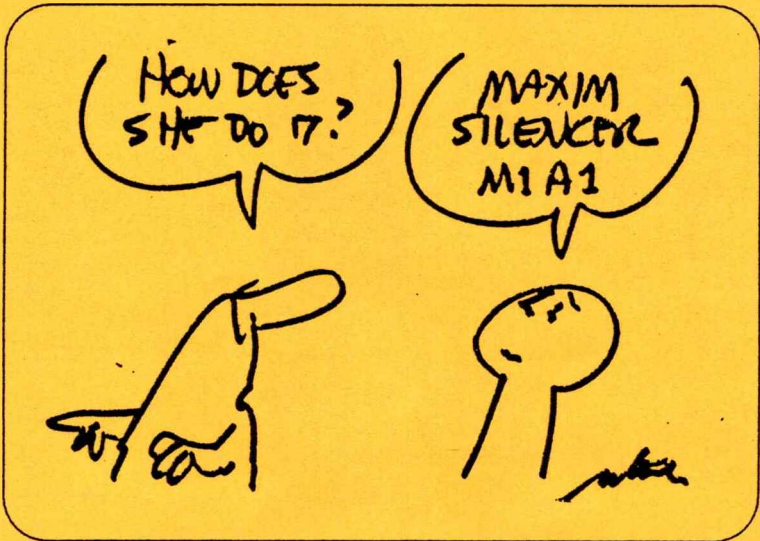
When my new-found friends were whisked away to their hotel, I had no more

no problems. Everyone had a great

time.

The men finally finished with their taxi service chores around midnight, but the day wasn't yet quite over for them. Ben and Tom still had to pick up supplies for the con suite and transport them to the hotel. Tom and Ben intended to spend the night there. That way, they could open up the suite in the morning after they finished necessary errands.

I'd volunteered to transport the bagels and doughnuts first thing, so that they had one less duty before opening for the day. You could see the gratitude in their eyes after I opened my big yap, so I couldn't rightly take it back.



Friday morning came far too early. I found myself at the Funk/Springer home-stead at 8:30 in the morning, knowing that I had only minutes to get the goodies downtown before the food fest started at nine.

I was beckoned into the apartment to find that Tammy had prepared us breakfast. My first thought was that she had gone mad. She knew as



illustrated by William Rotsler. We were sitting around the con suite Monday afternoon waiting for everyone to get organized to go to lunch. Geri Sullivan had said in passing, "It took me years to perfect the art of silent farting." and off Bill went. He had started the cartoon series in the con suite, it had followed us downstairs in the restaurant for lunch and back to the con suite for a time after that. That for me was the most memorable conversation of the weekend.

I have never before participated so heavily in a convention. I am fairly new to fandom, and I don't yet know many outside our local

well as I did that I was running behind. She had explained to me that Tom had taken the initiative and notified everyone that we were going to serve the breakfast late.

I am very grateful to have these friends. This was the weekend's last peaceful little moment with my pal Tammy. We had our respective toasted bagels over gossip and anticipations about the weekend. Then I was off to make my delivery before I had to put finishing touches on some dishes and make a few desserts.

I missed the opening ceremony.

I missed the first roundtable discussion.

I missed the first fanzine reading.

My last-minute preparations took a lot longer than originally calculated, of course. I believe I arrived about 3:00 pm, after the formal (such as it was) programming ended for the day. I was loaded down with part of my contributions as I trudged my way to the rooms where a good part of the socializing was taking place. Many people were already there, and Ben and Tom had everything going as planned. Now I could relax and enjoy the festivities.

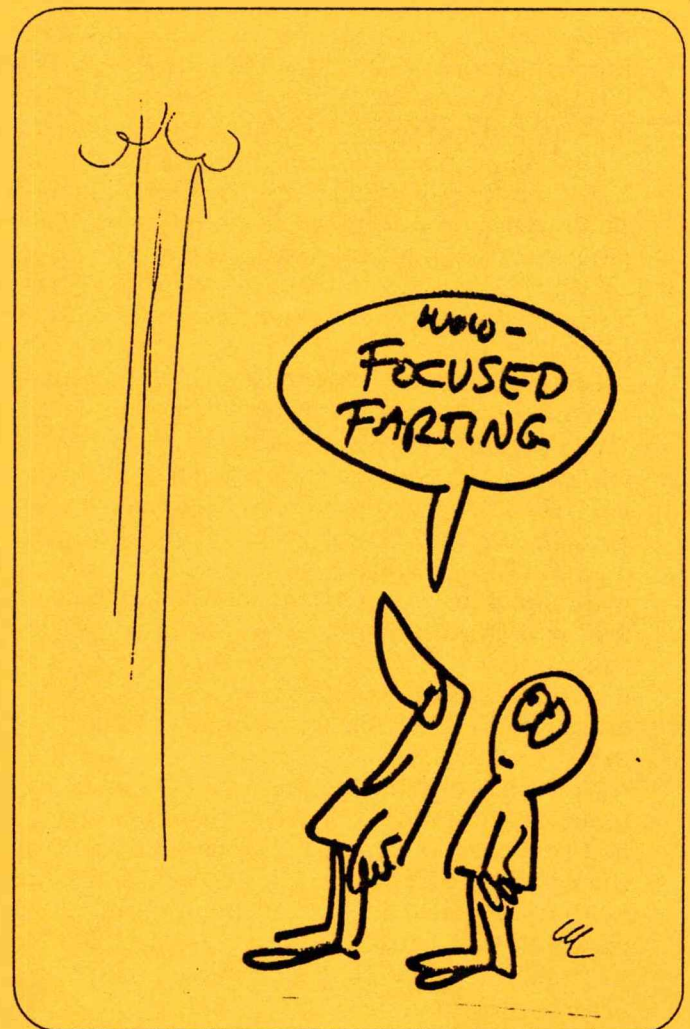
Now this is the part that gets a little fuzzy. Because of this being Vegas fandom and best-laid plans and all, nothing really got started on time. I couldn't recite any of the schedule to anyone.

No one seemed to mind about the delays. They were having too good a time to notice clocks. Food was served and devoured.

I did get to go on the bar hop/pub crawl on Saturday night; that was fun. I drank my share and of course, Got Drunk.

There were hundreds of different conversations among dozens of people that weekend. One was

circle. I've made a few more friends because of this little idea of Tom Springer's. Thanks, Tom. I had a great time at your party. ∞∞∞



JOYCE BLUE JAUNT

Nights at the Roundtable

From the arrival of the first guests on Thursday afternoon, until the goodbyes on Wednesday night to the last ones heading on westward to the WorldCon, Toner was a pleasurable reunion of friends. One high spot blew into another, and if my memory of the week is hazy, then perhaps that's my best description of the convention as well.

I had few responsibilities; the convention work was done mostly by Tom and Ben, Tammy and Cathi, Ken and Aileen and the others who pitched in when muscle was needed. The Friday kick-off party ended my heavy duties, so I was free to drift from one pleasant pastime to the next.

Therefore, it's no wonder that I floated into the con suite on Sunday afternoon, ready to co-chair a round table with Tom Springer.

Arnie had conducted a fine panel on Saturday, subjected "Can The Numbered Fandom Theory of Fan History be Revived?" He, Robert Lichtman and rich brown pretty well tore up the subject, with lots of audience participation. The final decision was still under debate the next day when I came into the con suite; it had been a rousing discussion and everyone seemed anxious to have another round of high-toned fannish conversation.

Tom and I had discussed our approaches to the topic, "Should Fandom Proselytize?" We decided to do it SNAFFU style, each of us making Strong Statements and taking Firm Stances. I had just written an article about recruitment a month or so before, and felt like a change, so I talked Tom into taking the pro side: he'd make a jolly, full-hearted statement on the affirmative, urging fan-

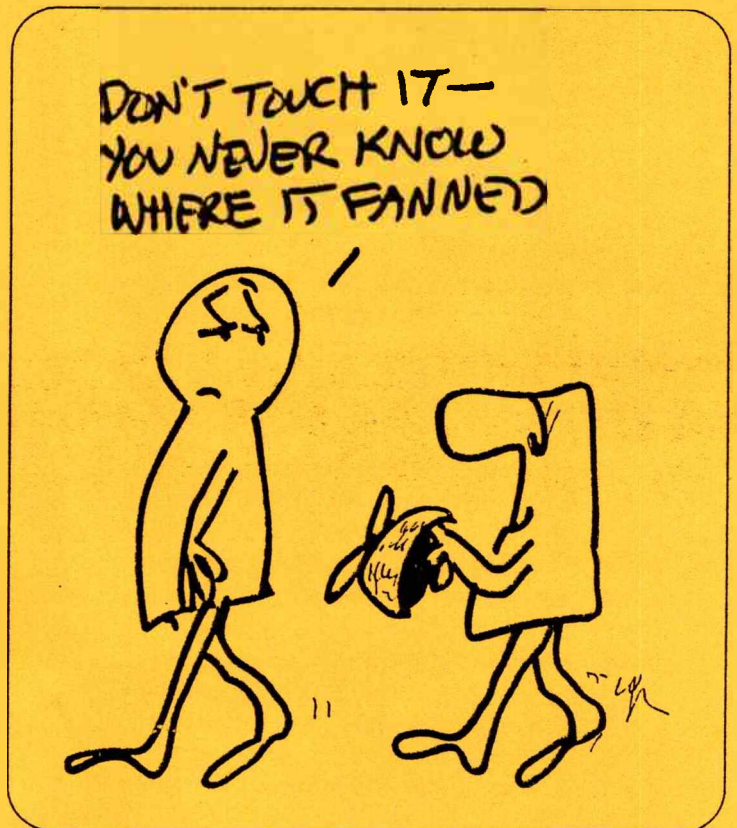
dom to go out into the highways and byways as a missionary force to bring in the sheaves. I'd pop up next with my iconoclastic views and say the equivalent of "Hell NO!", and then we'd throw it to the round table to discuss.

Naturally, formally laid plans are unlikely to succeed in a free-form convention like Toner. The fans gathered in the con suite were raring to go, already chatting on the subject, and our orderly arrangements seemed inappropriate. Tom was there, but his leg had gone bad on him from the strain of pre-con arrangements, and his pain killers weren't taking; I believe it was a relief to him not to have to give a bombastic

show.

There was a zig-zag ebb and flow to the conversation, defying any formatted debate. There was only one thing that everyone seemed to agree about: new blood is needed, wanted. The question is, whose, and how much.

I think it was Art Widner who pointed out how many years (20 or more) it's been since the prozines had done the task for us. I think it was me who said that we must recognize that the involvement of prozines in fandom is out of our



control, so we shouldn't depend on it any more.

Linda Bushyager (who's been a path toward fandom for neos in her part of the country) discussed the desirability of special fanzines, easily accessible and stripped of most inside references, to be passed out at conventions. We all tipped our hats to Barnaby Rappaport (wish you had been here, Barnaby!) who has tried this method.

Unfortunately, no one could think of any fan who came into fanzine fandom through that door.

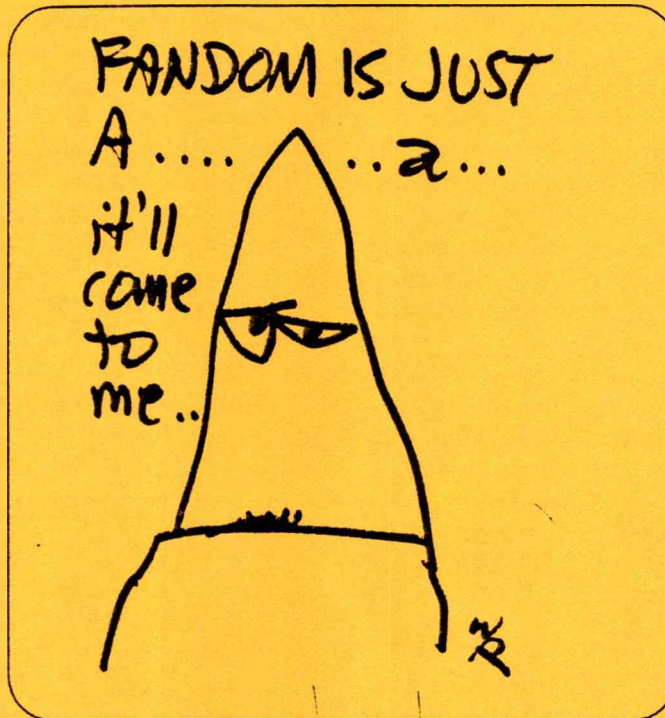
After a round of the expected proposals (notices in bookstores, aggressive approaches to people seen reading s.f., outright kidnapping of potential fans to force them into our ways), we all had to admit there were few new faces coming from those sources.

Not that we need that many. The finesse of recruitment is to find a few, not hundreds or thousands. "Look what happened to us before," I ranted. "First the Burroughs Bibliophiles, next the Trekkers, and then the Star Wars fans. And when Arnie and I gafiated, you all really lost control of the situation, and see where we are now!"

I got the expected laugh, then the subject turned more serious again. "What we need is one or two good new fans a year, not hundreds of new fanzine fans." No matter who said it first, (it may have been Arnie) that seemed to be the consensus of opinion.

I trotted out my own pet theory, that s.f. clubs are the most promising place to look for them. "They're already captive; we have repeated exposure to them; we can seduce them to our ways," I promised.

Several others mentioned the Internet, a subject that had come up in Saturday's discussion. Undeniably, there've been a few science fiction fans who became attracted to fanzine fandom because of interaction with others on the 'Net. We even had one among us, Roxanne, to point at as a good example.



Linda spoke of her good luck in finding potential fanzine fans through her local group. Everyone seemed to agree that, although it wasn't necessarily true in the past when fandom was more focused and we did have the help of fanzine review columns in the prozines, now it takes a fan to make a fan. Befriending interested club members, and involving them in our ways will land us new fans...plus a lot of free colating.

Another topic got kicked around, that the extremely high-quality of today's fanzines may actually discourage neos from trying their own. There's hardly a

fanzine existent that would have rated less than six or seven on a 1960's scale of ten. Where are those that rate three or four or five? Potential faneds back then could look at a typical fanzine and feel they could do the same.

Arnie pointed out that the fanzines in electronic gaming fandom, mostly done by teens, run the gamut in quality. Although he's shown our zines to a few fans from that milieu, only one or two (Hi there, **Mike Pezzano**, and aren't you ever coming back **Ed Finkler**?) continue to read them. Most say, "It's really good, but..." then go back to an arena where they feel more comfortable.

No one in the room volunteered to put out a regularly appearing crudzine, though lots of us agreed that poorer zines might provide inspiration to the potential new fan.

Christina Lake talked about fandom in England, where it seems definitely to be on a person-to-person basis. (If you think of it as an Immortal Headcold, rather than an Immortal Storm, you'll get the picture of how fannishness is passed from one to another.)

The panel didn't exactly close, but broke down into small groups of twos and threes, discussing how fandom can be perpetuated, and how we can acquire the necessary new faces.

It was notable that this conversation took place in the bosom of the biggest group of new fanzine fans there's been for the last several years. I think

I showed great Restraint in not pointing out that all the Vegrants came into fanzine fandom after being recruited from the local s.f. club, thus proving my own pet theory.

It was an unusual conversation, in that by the end, everyone more or less was in agreement. We don't want hundreds of new fans; even dozens would be too many all at once. But we do need a few each year, and how wonderful it would be if each fan club or local group managed to scare up just one.

The discussion wound down, and Arnie, Ken, Martin Tutor and Perry Middlemiss started setting up for the auction. The room was crowded and incredibly noisy from the many conversations;

Arnie sidled up to me and said something had to be done to make the auction possible.

So in my best stentorian voice (betcha didn't know I could speak that loud!) I told people to stay and enjoy the auction, but be quiet, or to join me in the Katz suite for conversation. I was sorry to miss the auction, but pulling a dozen or so bodies out of the suite seemed like a good idea.

And in fact, it worked out great. Ron Pehr and Raven, Bill Rotsler and Karl Kreider and a few more sat with me in uncrowded comfort in Room 1231, and laughed at a series of hilarious tales from Bill and Karl about slaughter houses.

But, that's another story, for another day.

-- Joyce Katz

ZONKED A COLUMN

Diary of a Winer

May 27, 1996

Tonight Cathi and I were invited over to Tom and Tammy's place for dinner and some lite conversation.

As it turned out, dinner was great.

Tammy prepared, I'd say, 12-oz. T-Bones, baked potatoes, pre-dinner salads and fresh out-of-the-oven biscuits. For dessert, we had an apple pie, served with Dreyer's Vanilla ice cream.

After we finished dinner, we got down to our "lite" conversation. Neither Cathi nor myself knew what was in store for us this evening. The talk started casually enough, a-little-of-this, a-little-of-that, sort of thing. Tom then produced the crux of the evening, Toner.

We've agreed to help Tom and Tammy run Toner. Cathi will assist in the food prep. division and I... will do whatever Tom needed.

Ok, no problem.



Not a lot for me to do; seems like Tom's got most of it already done.

We've also decided to make our own beer and wine. I'm doing the wine, and Tom will do the beer. I figure I'll need four or five jugs worth. So I'll have to call Mom tomorrow and see if I can get her gallon wine jars. Need to start yesterday if I want to pull this off.

May 28, 1996

Talked to Mom today. She's got only one empty jug, the other two haven't dropped yet. I'll stop by tomorrow and get it. Need to spend time with Ma anyhow.

Stopped by Von's today and looked for some jugs. Not a damn one. Nothing comes in gallon glass jugs any more. No more barbecue sauce, no fruit drinks, only eight-dollar jugs of wine.

I hope I can find something else. I really don't want to waste the wine, but there is no way I can drink a tall glass of this stuff, let alone a gallon of the shit.

Picked up some balloons and yeast. I'll get the fruit when I get the jug.

May 30, 1996

Finally got by Mom's today. Looks like she'll have two more ready in a week or so. I hope it's sooner tho'.

Stopped by the store on the way home. I picked up some Granny Smith apples and two dry quarts of strawberries. While I was there, I also grabbed a fiver of sugar.

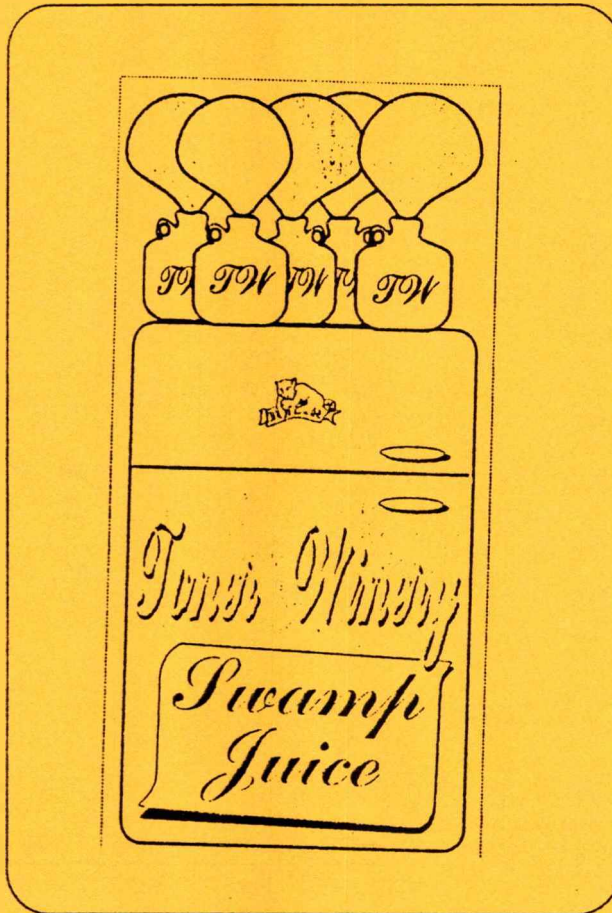
Didn't need the sugar after all. Cathi had recently restocked. Good thing sugar doesn't go bad quickly.

Started with the apples. They'd take the longest. They did. After a brief thought of peeling them, I cored them and took off any blemishes. As I created more and more smaller chunks of the sweet-smelling fruit, I recalled how much work and time we spent crushing the apples when we last made wine. Damn, that was fifteen, sixteen years ago.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw it. That wondrous kitchen appliance.

As a bachelor, it would have never even entered my thoughts that I needed this apparatus, let alone go out and embarrass myself in buying it. Thanks to Cathi, it was there, on the counter, just waiting for me.

A food processor works wonders on small



chunks of apples. It sliced, diced and smushed them to a semi-liquid mess. It was hard to tell how much two cups were. I ended up being almost on target. I only needed about 1/2 an apple.

I had a peanut butter and apple attack with the other half, while I cleaned the strawberries. I cleaned both quarts, but only really used one, I'll surprise Cathi with a bowl of vanilla ice cream topped with them.

I need to get a funnel before the next batch is started. Pouring four cups of fruit and four cups of sugar into that small opening with a rolled up pizza flyer just won't work. It took two hands to control the flow of the fruit and a hand to hold the paper funnel. What a mess.

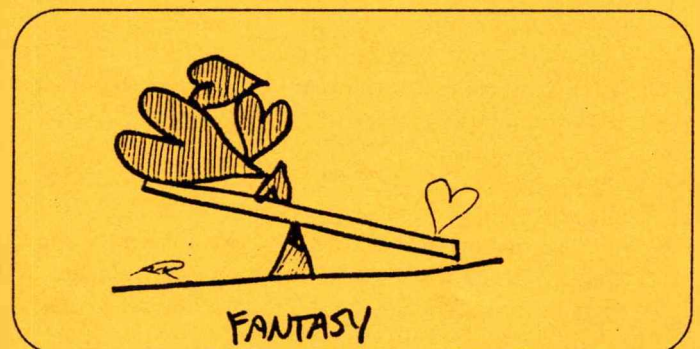
It's made though. Now comes the wait.

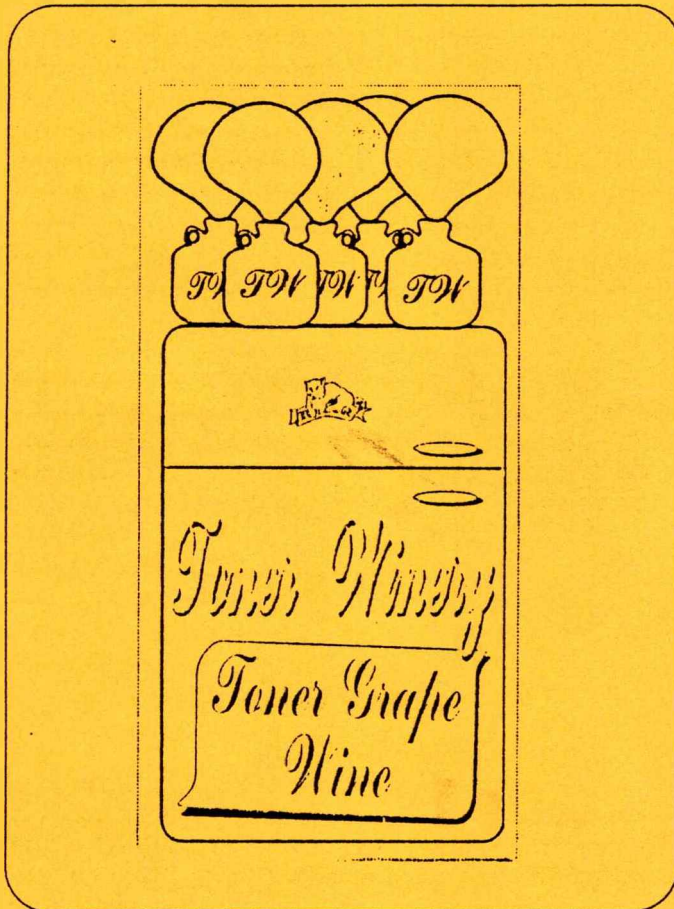
May 31, 1996

Over nite, the wine has inflated the balloon over half its capacity. Guess shaking it after adding the yeast mixture might have been a good idea. Normally it takes two to four days to inflate to this extent.

June 3, 1996

Mom called earlier, she says her pulp dropped in both wines and that one's balloon is down to





the size of a softball. If it stays down she'll strain it tomorrow. I figure she'll get the one tomorrow and the last will be done in a few days. I should have two more batches started by the weekend.

June 5, 1996

Tina called, said Mom was working on bottling the last of her wine. I could stop by and pick up the bottles anytime Thursday.

I've got to remember to call and see what she wanted. Tina doesn't call to give me Mom's messages.

That was on my machine along with one from my ma later on, telling me the same thing.

At baseball tonight I asked Tom how his beer was going. He hasn't even gotten it out yet. Said he'd get it out tomorrow, and see how long it takes. Hope so.

June 8, 1996

Finally got around to doing the wine tonight. Peach and Watermelon. The Peach went well, easy fruit to prepare. The watermelon, on the other hand, was not. Ok, maybe it would have been if I

hadn't rewarded myself so well after completing the peach.

We'll see how this watermelon turns out. As it's an experiment, I'm not sure how it'll turn out. Instead of the standard 4 cups, I used the complete contents of the damn thing. It was a little over a foot long. I used everything except the rind, even the seeds after much thought. It came to a little less than a gallon of sticky goop. Once I added the sugar and yeast mixture, it needed only a couple of cups of water to bring it up to the proper level.

Had to try and drain the balloon on the apple-s.berry. Guess I filled the jug too full. Only partially successful, I'll have to watch that one and really pay attention to the others I make.

Found more glass gallon jugs. Five bucks worth of apple juice and apple cider. I guess I can handle drinking apple stuff for a week or so. I bought two.

June 10, 1996

Glad to report all balloons are at max capacity, and they're working fine.

Finished the first of the apple juice. Had help though, Cathi's girls were here over the weekend. They also helped me make the Black Plum. As I sliced the plums, Nikki pulled out the pits and Cassi processed them. I still ended up with clean up, though. That never happened when I was the kid.

June 12, 1996

The balloon on the apple-s.berry exploded some time during the night. Surprised it didn't wake either of us, although I bet Nimue got scared silly. Lucky I had a spare. It'll be fine. Better stop by the store tomorrow and get a few more of those spares.

June 15, 1996

Finished that second thing of apple...

My second major experiment in my trip down the whining road, is spiced apple wine. Here I added some nutmeg and cinnamon to the standard recipe. It looks like that stuff Mom used to use on toast when I was younger.

As for the sugar, only 3-1/2 cups of white cane sugar. The other half cup will be replaced with brown cane sugar, which I added separately. I also threw in half a cup of raisins.

...no more apples.

June 24, 1996

Tom still says he plans to make the beer, but he hasn't started it yet. I wonder if he's even looked to see how long it'll take. I think he should give up the idea, but that's up to him.

He must think he's superman with all the things he's trying to do.

My fridge looks like one of those fields with all those hot air balloons. Five full-size punching balloons all a different color, atop their glass baskets.

July 6, 1996

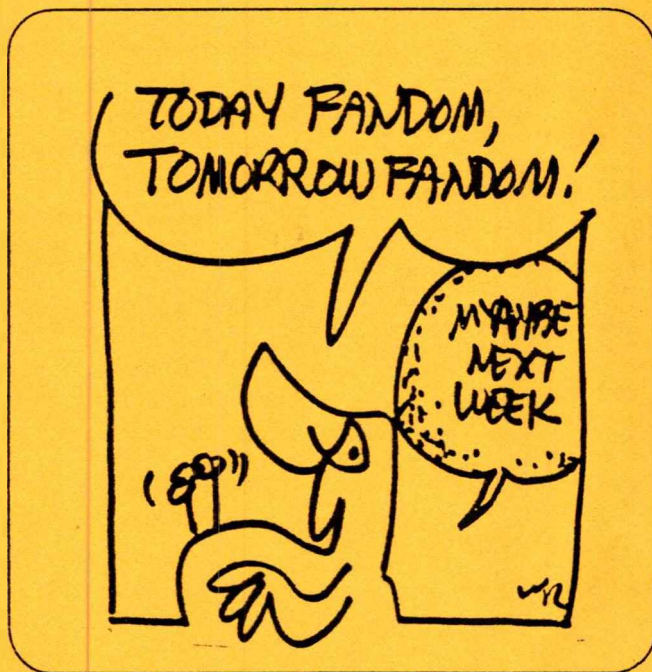
The peach pulp dropped today, and the balloon has shrunk a little. If it stays down and the balloon deflates, I'll be able to strain it off Monday. I want to ask Cathi and Tammy what flavor they'd like me to try. Hope it's not too bizarre.

July 9, 1996

Peach wine I now have. Not too bad, a little sweet. Nothing a splash of club soda won't cure. Tammy likes it, and the half-full water glass of it hit her pretty good.

It does pack a punch. I like the feel of it. It actually has the texture of a ripe peach, tender skinned and fuzzy. The taste, although not the feel, of the peach lingers for an acceptable amount of time.

Well, the next wine was decided today. Grape. Not just any kind of grape, but Toner Grape. We decided that we need to honor this wine with a special title due to the fact that Joyce has spent



the last four years tending her grape vines with love and care. This is her first harvest.

After Toner, I'll have to make the peach-raspberry that perked Tammy's interest.

Watermelon looks like it's going to be super sweet. The seeds are hanging in random locations throughout the bottle. It looks like they're suspended in a firm gel. I gave it a shake, and it was just as liquid as the contents of a baby's bottle. I'll have to wait and see.

July 10, 1996

Cathi brought home a surprise. While she was gathering food stuff out in the forest, she came across the last gallon of apple shit in glass. I'm glad she found it but large amounts of the contents gives me the runs.

Waste not, want not.

As I yanked the grapes off their vines, I realized that the largest one was maybe 3/8 of inch across. Worked on them for two hours while watching TV, half done, maybe a bit more. I'll finish them tomorrow. For now, it's time for bed.

July 11, 1996

I was pouring myself a nice tall cool refreshing glass of that wondrous drink, so aptly called apple juice. Anyway as I was pouring this glass of juice, the bottle slipped out of my hand. I was able to prevent the bottle from breaking, but lost about a third of the juice.

"That's my story and I'm sticking to it."

I found I had just the right size pitcher for the half-gallon of apple juice left. So that's where it is now and can stay until Cathi either drinks it or throws it out. I've done my bit for the cause.

I was able to do that peach-raspberry after all. Plus the Toner grape, that makes the top of my refrigerator awfully full. Purely by accident, I put up different-colored balloons than those already there.

A huge basket of grapes reduced down to four and a half cups. It's a good thing I got what I needed, 'cause Joyce has no more.

July 14, 1996

The plum dropped while I was at work today. I didn't waste any time waiting around to see if the balloon was going to reinflate, what with the grape and peach-r.berry balloons blimping out.

The plum is much drier than the peach, not nearly as sweet. It's much like a wine you might drink at an afternoon rendezvous with your favorite lover.

A 50-ft.-high wall of green surrounded me. I stretched out on a black and blue plaid blanket in the middle of a glen of tall wild grass, 20 yards from the two-foot-wide stream that loops around the edge of the hill.

Now others may not get the same impression, but that's what I got. I think I'll have some more of that. I'll have to let Tammy try this one, but keep her away from it until Toner.

July 15, 1996

I was right. Once Tammy drank the sample I was so kind to bring her, she yelled at me for more. She got right uncivil with me. Came close to throwing me out of the apartment. Luckily Tom came to my aid. What a gentleman! He got me off the hook. I could see, though, that she was upset.

July 26, 1996

The watermelon hasn't done so much as made the tiniest of gas bubbles. So I pulled out the cheese cloth. I tripled it, figuring on the existing pulp barley. Correct-amundo. I ended up rinsing out the cloth about a hundred and one times.

I don't care for this one. I can't put my finger on it, but I don't like it.

Cathi says not to throw it out, that from her understanding, fans will drink just about anything with alcohol.

Bottled it gets.

August 9, 1996

Peach-r.berry is poured off and bottled.

This is cool. The flavors didn't combine like I had expected. It's more layered than anything else. Peach layer is just like the straight stuff, but the

flavor doesn't linger as long. Then it's the raspberry's turn, coming on with a sweet bite. All together likable. With more raspberry and less peach by about 1/2 cup each, this should bring a better balance.

August 11, 1996

It's four days until we move. The stupid apple-strawberry and the spiced apple are still working. Must be due to the density of the fruit. I'm not going to move them like they are, I'll strain them Thursday, done or not.

On the other hand, today was grape day.

The Toner grape was the easiest to pour off. Maybe that's one of the reasons they use grapes.

The sweetness is too much for the grape. Next year I'll have to use less sugar. On ice and after a bit of melting, the wine becomes surprisingly refreshing.

The grape produced the largest quantity of usable wine of all the wines I've strained off.

August 15, 1996

We did it. With Ken's help, we were able to move all in one day. I wish I didn't prefer upstairs apartments, (cause oak furniture is really heavy.)

I'm going to have to tear the computer back down to arrange the living room.

That apple juice that I stuck in the fridge had to be thrown out today. Nobody would drink the damn stuff.

I had to do it. The apple combo had to be forced to finish.

The apple-strawberry is like drinking kool-aid mixed with a light whiskey. Not too bad, but definitely not my best -- or just not a good combination.

My spiced apple is a complete failure. It tastes worse than the watermelon. I think I could have left out the raisins. The brown sugar, I believe, is the culprit for the burnt caramel taste. In the process of moving, I was unable to throw it out, just not enough time.

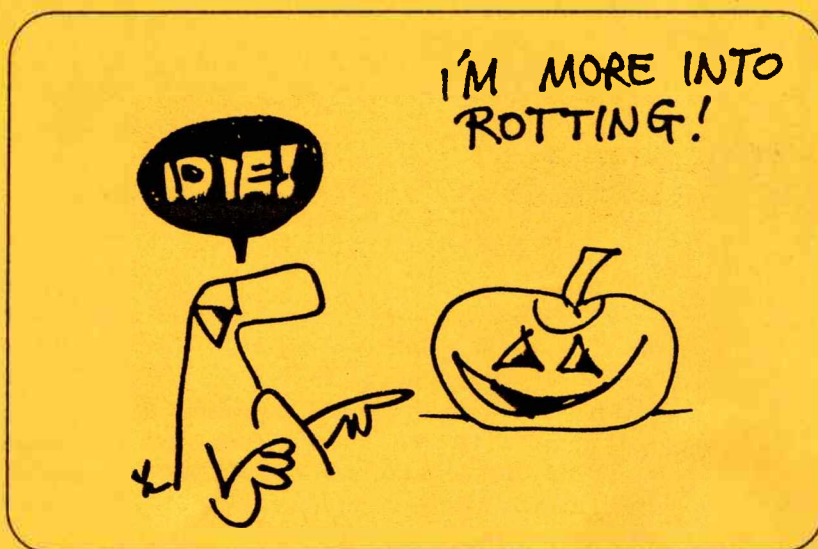
I guess I could do it now, but I barely have the strength to move my fingers.

Piss on this damn thing, I'm going to bed.

August 17, 1996

I talked to Ross, and he's agreed to draw my labels. He'll have them to me before Toner.

We came up with a real cute idea, a



refrigerator, with bottles of wine and their balloons, setting on top. "Toner Winery" and the name of the wine across the front of the fridge. It would work.

Tomorrow starts Toner. I pick up the Tudors from the airport in the evening. I doubt if I'll even get a chance to write for the entire con.

Time for Total Fannish Immersion.

August 29, 1996

Where to start? What a con!

Cathi brought the wines over to the hotel Sunday morning, along with Tammy and the Tudors. And Ross delivered the labels to me the night before, just as he had promised. Fantastic labels. He even had a couple of surprises for me. First off, Ross had printed them on self-adhesive paper. Second, he had created a Toner logo.

Slugger.

These were perfect. Remember to thank Ross just in case he missed my first dozen attempts.

Ken and I produced a wonderful display for the

unannounced Sunday evening wine tasting.

Everyone seemed to enjoy at least one of the wines. So I'm happy. I have to say that by the time the tasting came around, the spiced apple had changed. The burnt taste was gone and the flavor the raisins produced left as well. Unfortunately, the watermelon stayed unlikable by myself. Geri seemed to like it, though. She had the choice of all of them and that's the one she chose.

Having seven mason jars of wine left after the tasting, I let those who seem to enjoy it the most have their choice of the remaining wines.

A few people even told me I should go into the wine trade. They're crazy as far as I'm concerned. My stuff might be enjoyable, but for the industry they don't hold a candle. Like fanac, it's just a hobby.

I plan on making some more in the near future, mainly because I didn't have any to bring home. I also enjoy drinking the stuff. Making it, makes it taste even better. ∞∞∞

-- Ben Wilson

ARNIE KATZEN JAMMER

A Slice of Fanlife

"Seven pizzas, that's not too many," I said. Or I would've said if this wasn't the seventh day adventure known as Toner. What I actually *did* say was, "Sausage and pepperoni, please."

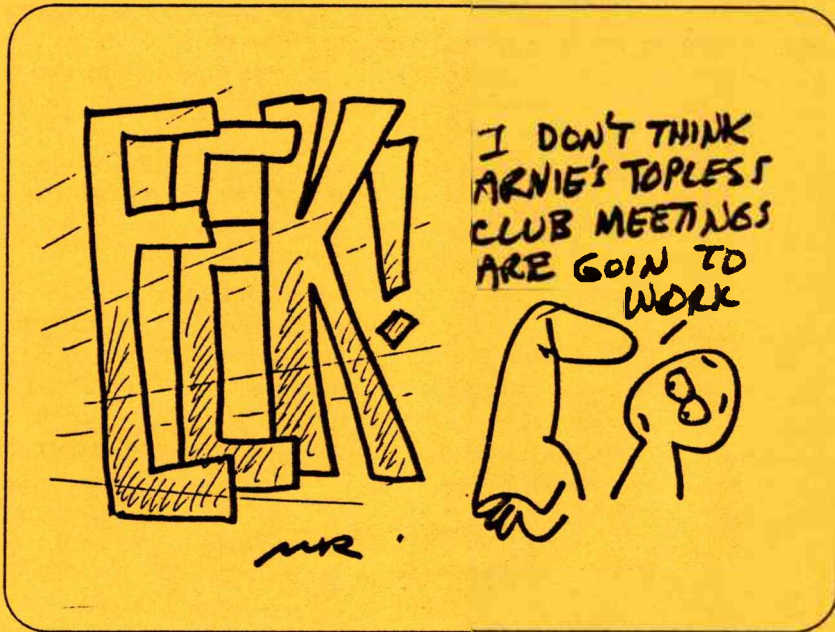
Toner: The Final Party gathered 14 slightly shell-shocked fans: Ben and Cathi Wilson, Tom Springer and Tammy Funk, Martin and Helena Tudor, Richard Brandt and Michelle Lyons, Ron Pehr and Raven, Ken Forman, Karl Kreder, Marcy Waldie, Joyce and me. Now, you may count 15, and so do I, but Tom repeatedly assured me that there were



14. Of course, he's one of the 14 slightly shell-shocked fans. Except that he is more than slightly shell-shocked after running his very first convention.

We ordered pizzas, seven of them, from the Bulgarian. He's back in business after a month in the motherland, and he's already back in form.

Michelle sidled up to me as we waited for the delivery. "I'm really looking forward to this," she



pizzerias dropped off the bottom of the Katz Rating System, we dug the Pay-Less menu out of the drawer. We ordered despite misgivings and enjoyed the New York-style pies. Six months later, at the end of July 1995, the telephone order-taker told us that Pay-Less was closing for August so that the owner and chef could visit his family in Bulgaria.

She smiled, but the wattage was lower. I think she was really looking forward to the potatoes.

Seven pies were "not too many." It works out to half a pizza per person, since Marcy had eaten a roast beef dinner with her family. She nibbled at one wedge.

Toner Hall was nearly empty when the delivery man rang the bell. Almost everyone was outside, enjoying a warm

said. She looked up at me with those captivating eyes, now lit by anticipatory enthusiasm. A little too much enthusiasm for the situation, I thought.

Everyone was hungry. I knew that. For understandable reasons, our six o'clock dinner slipped back to 7:00. Stomachs set for one time were rumbling. Yet a bunch of pizzas didn't explain Michelle's excitement.

"Why is that, Michelle?" I asked.

"I've never had... Bulgarian pizza," she said through a smile of incandescent happiness.

"It's just *made* by a Bulgarian," I told her. "It's regular pizza."

"It's made with potatoes, right?" she asked, hopefully.

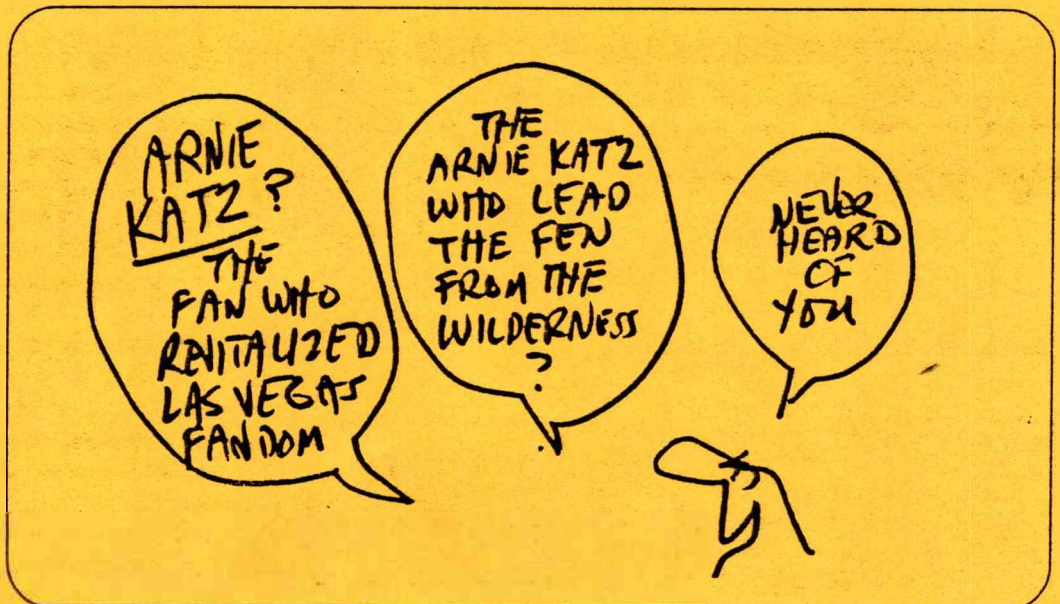
"No, no potatoes," I said. I was sure she was teasing me. Well, pretty sure. "Just tomato and cheese and toppings like pepperoni."

"Oh," she said. "No potatoes." She said it the way a little girl might say "No Santa Claus."

I tried to cheer her up with an explanation of how we came to order Bulgarian pizza from a place with the delightfully ethnic name "Pay-Less Pizza." After a couple of

Vegas evening. The boxes barely hit the dining room table when 15 fans pounced like a pack of wild dogs on a trapped rabbit. I might not have gotten my share if I hadn't clipped Tom behind his bursitic knee and hit Brandt on the back of the head with my newly purchased *Fancyclopedia II*.

Marcy approached my chair at the end of the table nearest the door the garage. "Do you think we need more pizzas?" she whispered. I looked at the remains of the seven Bulgarian pizzas. Torn boxes and sauce-smearred paper plates covered the table. I counted two pieces left, plus the one I'd just taken.



I threw the question open to those still clustered in the dining room. Our pooled mathematical talents determined that each fan had an inalienable right to three pieces. "I have my third piece right here," I said righteously.

"I had four," Tom bragged.

"I only had two," Christina said. She aborted Tom's apology with murmurs about the sufficiency of that portion.

I couldn't let matters rest there. To permit an amicable resolution would compromise the idealistic declaration I'd made to Martin a half-hour earlier. I'd expressed my heartfelt desire, Alison Freebairn's *Wild Heirs* #13 review notwithstanding, that US and UK fandoms grow closer together. "Some of fandom's best eras included close cooperation," I said. "I'd like to see that again."

"There's a lot of energy coming into British fandom just now," Martin observed.

"American fandom needs to tap into that energy," I admitted. I told him about the WH outreach. We've added three-dozen UK readers, courtesy of Pam Wells. The results are very heartening so far. We've gained contributors and received some entertaining tradazines.

"There's a lot we can learn from UK fandom," I conceded. "And there's quite a bit you could learn from us." I told Martin how funny it was, for someone whose fanning temporarily ended in the mid-

1970s, to see that the two fandoms have swapped at least one aspect of their group personalities."

"In the '50s and '60s UK fans slagged American fans as brutish barbarians."

"That's true."

"British fans set the standard for polite, decorous behavior," I rhapsodized. "Urbane, well-mannered, well-balanced, mature — that was British fandom."

"Now it's reversed," he said, before I could.

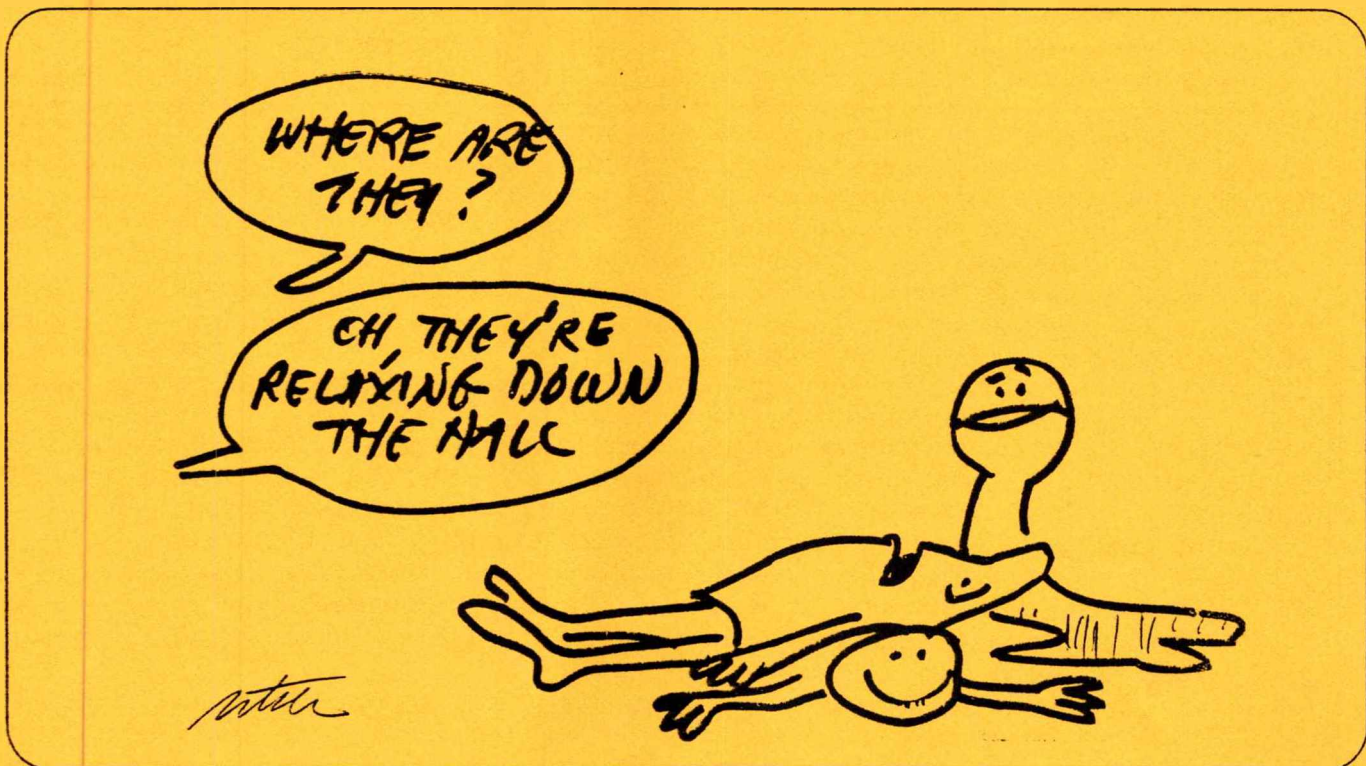
"In general, yes," I said. "And American fans are too nice. We honor the social conventions, while truth still reigns supreme in the UK." We ended by agreeing that both fandoms would also have to make some adjustments to facilitate the *rapprochement*.

"This pizza controversy threatens US-UK fannish solidarity," I said jovially. "Isn't that always the way with those Americans?"

A low buzz of muttered assent.

"When it comes to sharing, American fans think 60-40 is an equal split." A few cheers and scattered applause broke out among the guests. "American scum!" For a moment, I felt like a Leeds fan.

Alas, the Pizza Feud of 1996 never got off the ground. Despite my best efforts as a *tummeler*, everyone decided to have a sidebar and go swimming. ○○○○



Robert Lichtman's

HERMITAGE

Burblings c/w Elmurmurings

#4 or 5 or possibly 7

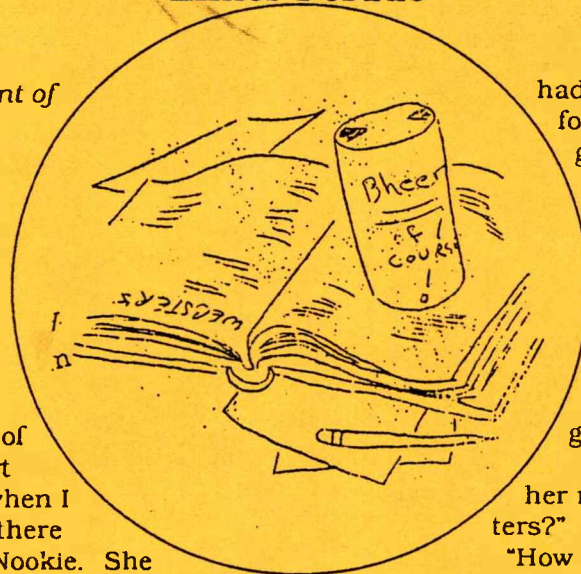
by
Elmer Perdue

FAPA Mlg. 86
Fall, 1959

nook (n) f An old measurement of land, sometimes equal to two fardels, sometimes to one. (Webster's 2nd unabridged, 1947)

PROLOGUE

So Kepner came up late last week, and I outlined my plan for these eight pages. Also told Kepner of the scope of the project. He mused a short while, and said, "You know, when I was going to Sunday School, there was a girl in the class called Nookie. She



had a brother, whose name I have forgotten. But I am sure he was gay."

"This was in Galveston, Doc?"

"Yes. Funny thing, though: he spent most of his time hanging around with the girls. It was a long time before I figured out that he was talking to the girls as a girl would talk."

"And Nookie — did she spell her name with five or with six letters?"

"How do I know? I only heard it

When Tom Springer asked me to contribute to the fanzine readings at Toner, I immediately thought of the following piece, my first experience with the writing of Elmer Perdue. Receiving it was my first introduction to the corporeal Elmer as well. He made a rare appearance at a LASFS meeting early in 1959 and handed me a copy of "Burblings c/w Elmurmurings #4 or 5 or possibly 7," as Bjo's front cover lettering has it, of which this piece constitutes the major part. Even as a relative neo (I'd been around fandom maybe six months) I could sense by this single initial meeting that Elmer was unusual, a step beyond most of the fans I'd met up to that point. My further knowledge of and contact with him over the years certainly proved this out. Elmer was definitely an "original."

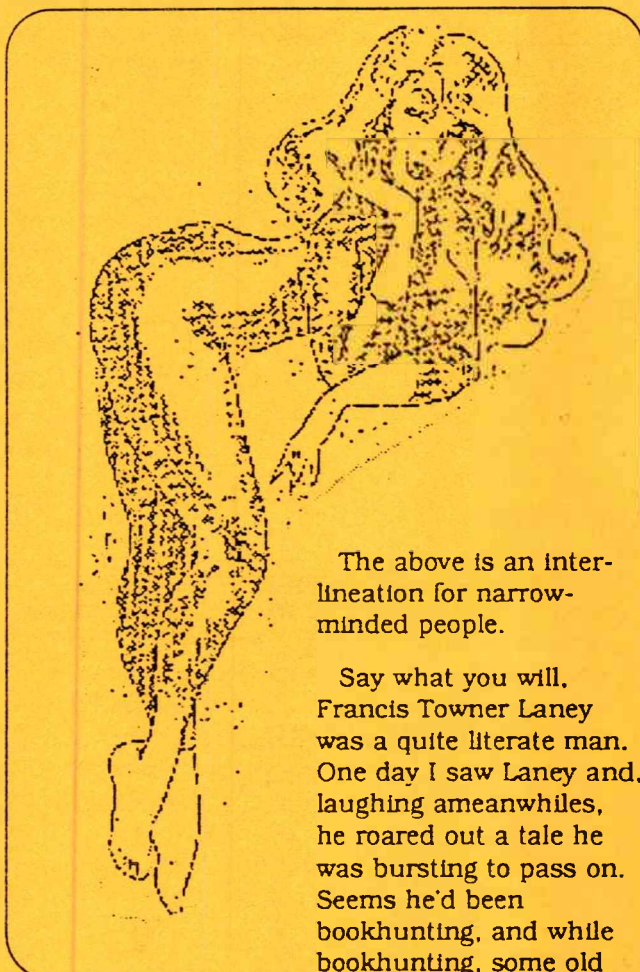
When I got around to reading his contribution to the zine, I immediately added Elmer to my personal list of favorite fanzine contributors — those whose work I would henceforth seek out. Rereading it before Toner, I found it rather like sitting around hearing Elmer speak: it's not particularly linear. That concerned me, but those who heard me read seemed to enjoy it. They roared with laughter in places and looked bewildered elsewhere. Perfectly normal responses to Elmer's writing.

Elmer refers to "this sterling trilateralization" in one place, an accurate turn of phrase since as Burbee observes in his colophon for the issue, it was "co-written and edited by Charles Burbee and Elmer Perdue. Staff artist, a red-haired girl-type fella named Bjo Wells. Seems like all the fanzines I do these days have girls mixed up in them. This is some kind of trend I believe. Offhand it would seem like a good trend, or at least an interesting one."

Since many of Bjo's cartoons are reproduced along with the text, you can see for yourself if Charlie was right. -- Robert Lichtman

verbalized. But I'm sure her brother was gay. And I had my doubts about her, too, always dressed in jeans or boy's clothing."

He was unable to shed any light on the basic question, though.



The above is an interlineation for narrow-minded people.

Say what you will. Francis Towner Laney was a quite literate man. One day I saw Laney and, laughing ameanwhiles, he roared out a tale he was bursting to pass on. Seems he'd been bookhunting, and while bookhunting, some old

coot had been asked to leave the store. The old coot complied, grumblingly; stopped at the door, turned, shouted at the proprietor, "Go swive yourself!" and left quietly. Laney's laughter had a most carrying and raucous quality: I could well visualize the scene and roared with Laney, although more at the proprietor's embarrassment from the Laney laugh than at the rather obscure boffo.

Another Laney, this by secondhand from G. Gordon Dewey and rewritten from my memory of his story...

(Gordon and I share an admiration for the Burbee's magnificent ability to turn a phrase with economy of words and devastating tersity. 'Ability'

is used rather than 'talent' for the specific reason that it is not a gift, but an earned quality.)

Dewey was telling his nephew Carey of the beautiful line, "And there stood Meyer, mouthing his cigar as though he were saying goodbye to an old and very dear friend," followed by Dewey's recollection of Burbee giving Laney his comeuppance in two perfect words:

It seems that Laney had parked his car before the clubroom on Bixel Street, locked the door, and gone to meeting. Present also was the Burb. The meeting over, adjournment to the car, consternation. Laney had locked the door with the key in the ignition. Laney, cursing, attacking the windwing gently with a rock, in order to reach in and retrieve key. Gently so as not to make a larger hole than necessary. Meanwhile, slivers and fragments of glass sprinkling over the floorboards and front seat.

Success, and the key retrieved without a cut wrist. Laney opened the door, reached in the back seat for a whiskbroom, and naturally dusted the glass fragments off the front seat. Meanwhile, a recital was given to Burbee about the many unexpected uses of a whiskbroom and the advantage of keeping one in the car.

"Yes," said Burbee. "Foresight."

This issue is illustrated by Bjo. Holes have been left in various intriguing locations. In addition, I intend to use Audrey's typer because I like its legibility. For these reasons, and in order that there be no question of adequacy, eight pages have been rough-drafted in single space on my own elite machine. I have no idea how many pages the finished product will contain, but estimate maybe sixteen.

nook (n) [An old measurement of land, sometimes equal to two fardels, sometimes to one.

Genesis of research problem:

So I sat in my corner, having a quiet conversation with Meyer, and a certain word came up. It was fairly obvious that had a different meaning to him than to me.

"?" said I. "I first heard it in 1940 when some of the boys in the Patent Office showed me a comic book (The Kind Men Like) and it was explained that it meant one's partner in sexual intercourse during the act. It can be either male or female, depending on who addresses whom."

"No, Meyer, they tell me it means the female

partner only."

No Webster being to hand, the matter was dropped subject to future research.

The first investigation was in the office unabridged, which was quite silent. However, the previously quoted definition came up, which resulted in an engaging problem in research.

A nook is either equal to one fardel or it is equal to two. Webster is a precise reference tool. He is speaking of discrete whole numbers. A fardel must not be a measure which varies with the judge's foot. Speculation as to why and how a nook was one, or was two, was interrupted by my boss and partner in research, saying, "Elmer, the most basic question is what is a fardel."

"I know. But all listed fardel definitions appertain to volume or to mass."

Interlude, dedicated to Francis T Laney. When I drove down here in December of 1944, the car was

loaded with all it could practicably carry. Left behind were maybe a dozen boxes of phonograph records of which I'd tired. Laney flipped when he saw the crud list. I offered to trade them at face cost against his Weird Tales, to be valued at \$2. We hit many records on which the list price was indeterminate. Shall never forget his expression as he stood up and stretched, shoved his hand into the slot between December of 1929



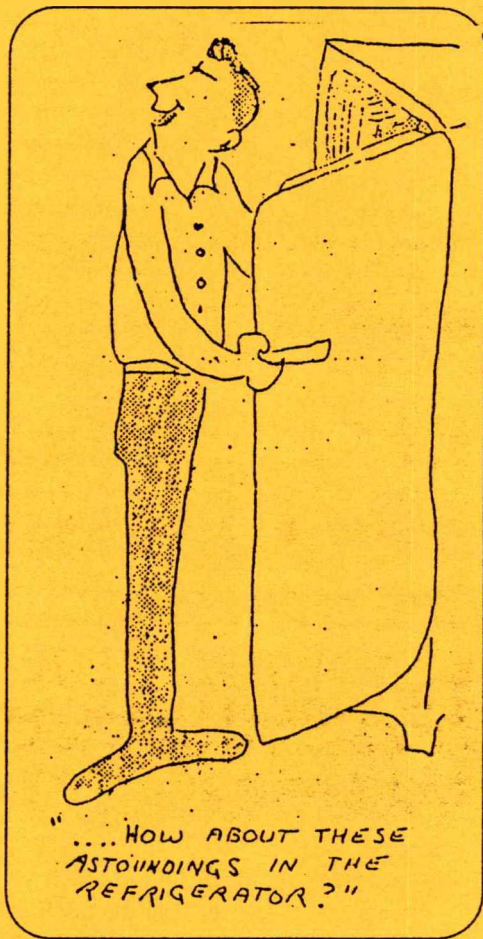
and January of 1930, pointed to the maybe four feet dated before, and said, "Thell with it. These for those even up?" Which I did.

Another Laney: Among the records that were brought down was the Bessie Smith Memorial Album, published by Columbia in 1938 or 1939.

My copy cost me \$5 in 1940, bought at Ballards' in Washington, D.C. I hocked the album with Laney about 1945 for \$5, being out of work at the time and impoverished. Laney had a most lugubrious look when they were redeemed a few months later. After all, they were then being bid for at \$25 in the jazz collectors' magazines. One would almost feel that he regretted my getting back on my feet...

I then took the question of the meaning of to G. Gordon Dewey. He came through immediately, correcting the spelling (it seems there are only five letters), advising the origin was Harlem about the year 1933, and defining it in a manner that agreed neither with Meyer nor myself. Mr. Dewey then told me a gloriously funny story of a certain overnight jump between one-night stands, Dewey riding in front with the driver. It involved a male and a female in the back seat, together with a bag of salted peanuts. He also promised a bit of writing intended authoritatively to settle the definition.

Thursday evening, January the eighth, one Kenneth H. Bonnell, former member of FAPA, publisher of a small zine cylept FoLo-Con and first known fan to pick up Burbee's word crisanac, dropped over for a short visit and to return my tape recorder. There was some desultory conversation, during which he mentioned that "this time tomorrow we'll be pulling into Las Vegas." I con-



gratulated the groom as per specifications. The bride, the former Miss Lorraine Hernhuter, is a quiet young lady fairly well known to local fandom, and wedding announcements were mailed January 21st. The reception, regretfully, conflicts with publication date of this sterling trilateral.

I've seen Bonnell fairly often during the last couple of years. An amateur photographer, he'd formed a corporation to turn out short subjects for lease to television. None has yet been released. He'd heard of my hobby of freeway chasing and street strolling and has written a script based on same, which likewise has not yet materialized.

Her sister Emma, her brother Arthur, and her sister's husband, Jim Wilson, are known in fannish circles.

Good luck to the new pair.

Here we must depart from the prepared draft account absence of a Bulfinch. These anecdotes are lifted out of context and out of logical sequence that the time might not be wasted...

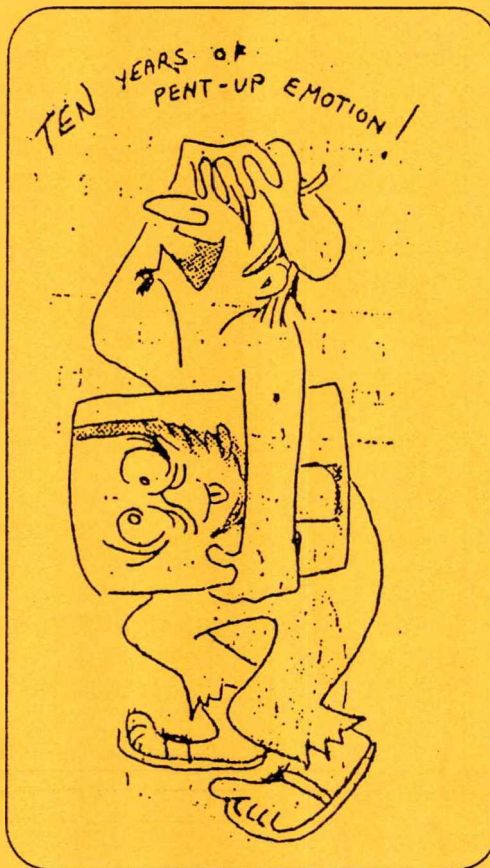
Elmurmurings Number One. A family magazine dedicated to the proposition that life can be beautiful.

My favorite newspaper columnist is Sidney J. Harris, a Chicago man, whose "Strictly Personal" makes me think.

Harry Warner Jr. wrote, maybe three mailings ago, the definitive article on jazz. He digs and is cool.

Laney's humor was often scatological. I've twice heard the story of the biology class and the scalpel and the dead cat with the overfull bladder and what happened to the professor.

Another odd bit of anecdota comes out of the dim distant past. Seems once on a time there was a bundle of live wires in the LASFAS. Dated girls, drank, did all sorts of non-fan type things that were tabu when I got here in 1944. One of their unwritten rules was that whenever they took a girl out to a motel, the couple should register as Mr. and Mrs. Forrest J Ackerman. One wonders how many log entries could be found, here and there



along Ventura Boulevard...

Sometime in early December, 1859, Dr. Zamenhof was born. And on the first Saturday in December, Esperantists throughout the world foregather in local banquets in his honor, to speak of their hopes for the future, to chat together, to get caught up on the past year. I've mentioned such a banquet a couple of years ago, where the maybe 75 people present were a year older, and of the single new blood — a fourteen-year-old self-taught youth from the San Fernando Valley. And he spoke quite acceptable Esperanto.

I went to the banquet this last December, having skipped a year. Four or five people wore fifty-year pins: fifty active years of speaking the language. The kid wasn't there. They told me that he had died.

Esperanto as a spoken language will outlive me. But its death is lingeringly inevitable.

Resumption of tale, anent nook, one fardel, two fardels...

Somehow, about this time I was reminded of an evening a couple of years ago, when I had asked one Cyrus Banning Condra about a word whose definition I remembered but not the word itself. It had turned up in Clark Ashton Smith, and meant the male counterpart of a caryatid. We searched Smith for quite some time, but never found it.

Maybe eight months later he came to me raving of a self-made artist he'd found bartending on Lincoln Boulevard in a Mexican section of Venice. Seems the man made plaster-of-paris semisculptures, showing the front half of the face in relief on a diamond-shaped background. They were well-done images, too: the vampire bat on the throat of a sleeping female; the rotting head and oozing corruption from the lips of an unembalmed corpse; the expression on the strangulated face of a hanged man, rope with properly tied hangman's knot around the neck awry...

I had a very odd feeling as I looked at the dozen semi-sculptures. The question was asked whether Hugh Weller (Chicago Art Institute graduate; over-

seas study in Florence and Naples, Italy, about 1925) should be invited to look at them. It was asked twice or more. The impression was that I should decide whether these were good or not, and the questioner would be guided by my judgment.

Condra then reached into his shirt pocket, gave some preliminary remarks, concluding with "and so, after six months, I found not one but two words, and present them to you," handing me a card bearing the words telemon and atlantide. This card I promptly lost. (Thus, part of the delay. I could not see holding up this publication whilst the foregoing spellings were verified.)

Recently while in the library on City business I remembered the question. It took ten minutes to find the proper book, five to locate the two herein animadverted plus another.

Research question: Under what circumstances is a nook equal to two fardels, when equal to one? Time so far (January 27, 1959) two minutes thirty seconds to verify irrelevance of fardel in Webster.

A nook is still a measurement of area, sometimes equal to two fardels, and sometimes to one.

Illustrations in this family-type magazine are by Bjo, whom I have had the pleasure of escorting to a jam session given by my beautiful kid sister. Bjo amused the company in her own way with spontaneous cartoons, which, when I passed them around, caused the trumpet man to lose his lip.

Another Laney anecdote was before my time here. There was a miniature golf course by Gitelson, their twin course, located three blocks from the clubroom. Eighteen holes on the upper course,

eighteen on the lower. This would be a nook that would be equal to two fardels. Before his wife Jackie got here, Laney ate with the boys and sometimes they'd play a round of miniature golf after supper. One time they were playing on the lower course, and a fan-type person showed up late. Peewee courses use golf balls that are color-coded so you know who has made the lucky shot that holes out through the blind drop. This unhappy fan-type wished to join the game, and called down, "What color balls you got?" Laney roared back the obvious answer.

Requiem for Robert A. Houseman

On July 14, 1958, my immediate supervisor died of an embolism following an operation. I have just discarded a page of inadequate rough draft and wish only to say that he lived a good life, that he leaves behind a perpetual legacy of three persons per year (none of whom have ever heard of Houseman) that would otherwise have killed themselves at grade crossings of railroads, and that he is sorely missed by family and by coworkers. The

credit is his: my job was but to assist. These improvements went in against opposition ...bless him, wherever he may be.

Hang down thine head, tom dooley:

There was a time last fall when the disc jockeys were giving Tom Dooley a terrific plugging. It kept intruding itself upon me until the lyrics finally made a coherent whole. But it bugged me, man, that the tale was rather pointless as for motivation. You suspected that jealousy was the most probable cause, but just why did he stab her with the knife?

It bugged me to the point of telephoning one of my spare brains, who collects folk music, what with having about four feet of the Library of Congress folk albums, and asked him outright why she was stabbed. And for that



matter, what was her name?

"Meyer, I'm downright glad you asked that question. For a month, now, that record's been out; and I've been hankering for someone to ask me.

To begin with, 'twarn't Tom Dooley. He was a soldier in the War of the Rebellion, and this girl was the town chippy. Tom Dula was his real name. He killed her when he decided that she was the one from whom he contracted a venereal disease."

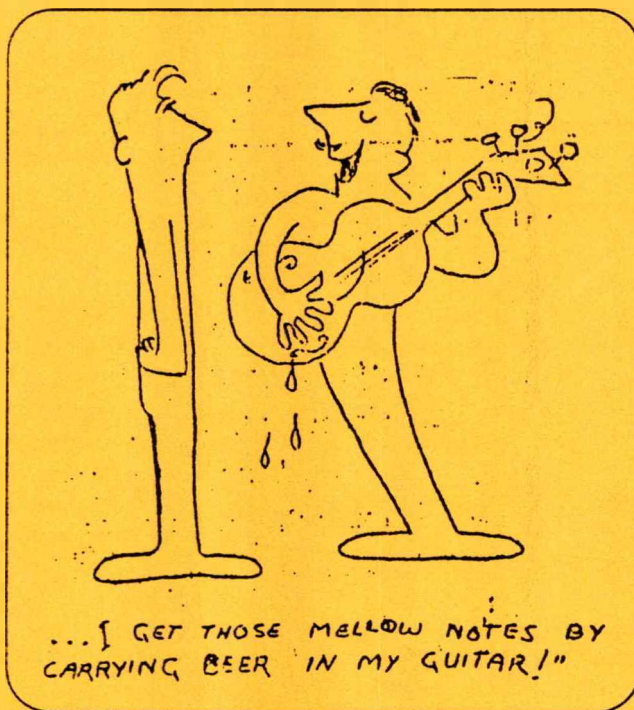
I applauded.

Today there was a publicity story in a local paper about they're going to make it into a movie, tentatively called "The Life of Tom Dooley." I read the first paragraph, saying that it was to be based on the experiences of this eighteen-year-old Confederate soldier. I stopped reading then, bemused and aghast at the bowdlerizing that must be done.

And then I visualized a scene that will bring to some inchoate beatnik an Oscar. It will display the changing emotions of shame, revenge, hatred, and withal an underlying bittersweet memory as he walks to the counter of the general store and buys a bag of Bull Durham...

Another year, another pyramid of confusions further distorting that reality that seems to be in accelerative recession. I don't know how much longer the pretense can be continued. There are times when I relapse towards normality, followed by experiences such as yesterday when I would swear that one out of four people seen (strangers that is) were usurpers treading the earth in human guise. The feeling is strongest in elevators — there was one six-foot-six baboon who was so glaringly obviously non-human that I was actually surprised the other passengers could conceal their shock!

The months continue to have their relative order, and memory clearly distinguishes the season in which things happen. The year is lost. I know well when I dated Ruth for a fund-raising banquet for the United World Federalists. It was raining heavily, and it was early December when I arrived



at her Hollywood home. She has perfect vision, and asked whether I would mind riding with her instead of in my car. I was not only amenable, but also agreeable. We had a pleasant dinner-dance at the Riviera, pleasant drive back, no good-night kiss. But when? 1952 to 1955 sometime, but hell, I don't know. I would not know in what year my divorce became effective unless I were to look it up.

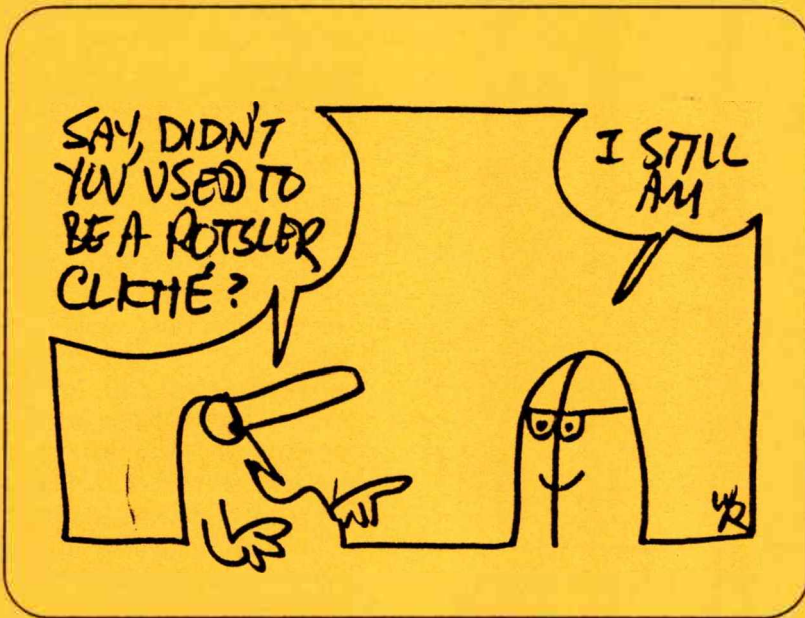
At work I live in a timeless land. The boss might ask in the first breath, "What did this Department spend for crossing protection in

1954," and in the next breath say, "In a 1952 rate case we trended the Los Angeles Transit Lines revenues to and including the year 1955. How far off were we percentagewise? Do that after you give me the first answer." There's a calendar on my desk that says the date and the year, which are usable as a reference point. But this timeless corner wherein I exist and have being is withdrawn indeed...

1943 was the cutoff year for record collecting. That was the year Fats Waller left to play Celesta, doubling on hammond and piano, for de Lawd. And now, I must remember to use 1958 as the cutoff year for motion pictures. In early 1959 came forth the first film to use subliminal perception in the background — a terror film in which BLOOD and DEATH alternated below the threshold to create a mood the story line could not uphold. No more movies for Unka Elmer, thankee.

Elmurmurings serves as another anchor into the time stream. Review of any issue helps sort out the formless past. Putting it down here will remind me that 1958 was the year in which I lost about twenty-five pounds, and the doc found diabetic symptoms. Also, the year in which insight into the problems of the fat was gained. Gentleman, did you ever stop to think that after a certain degree of corpulence is attained, the *only* way stockings can be donned is by lying flat on your back in bed?

Sorry, there are other ways. If I had been mar-



ried. I suppose there is no limit to the weight because the old sow could put the stockings on for you, without engineering studies on how to bring the kneecap past the central bulge.

1958 was also the year in which a world science-fiction convention was held here. I got so drunk the first night that I had to stay sober for the balance of the convention. A certain Mrs. Carr of Seattle, Washington (who so admired my work that she copied one whole issue of *Elmurmurings* on her typewriter, hoping some of the magic would rub off) invited me to drink with her. I did. I read the gentlelady's character as not intentionally to double-cross: that when she asked sincere questions she would not distort the answers. And I was right: her convention account did not take advantage of my drunken state.

However, Uncle Charlie Burbee damn near disavowed me account of certain drunken answers, shouted for all to hear.

But, Charles E. Burbee, were they not unabashed, truthful answers? I, too, like mammaries and gluteel maximae. Perhaps I should have shouted my drunken replies in Latin — not in the Anglo-Saxon words which refer, respectively, to the carriers of molten iron to the pigs, and to the Army beasts of burthen...

Should we go at this time into whether Stan Woolston Is A Strange Man? ... No. Let us discard a quarter-page of rough draft here and now.

July of 1958 was also the year and month in which my work assignment was changed to enhance the flexibility of the Department in meeting various challenges. I had worked in each sec-

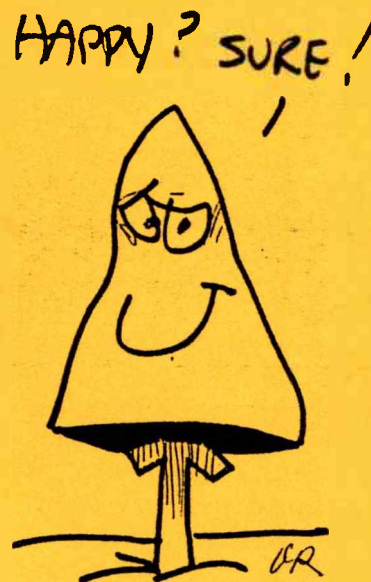
tion, and now I report to one man who in addition to his own work assigns me to the surplus jobs from each of the other sections as needed. It's a challenging position and continually interesting...

It is also a perfect account for off-gooing account the various section heads often forget to clear through my boss.

At this point hesitation is necessary. The mongrel hound dog is on the bed, ears upcocked, total attention kitchen-and-mousewise. All twenty pounds of dog is outmoused by a half-ounce bundle of fur that runs through the fence. For shame, account poor Honeybelle must run around the fence and by then the meeses have run back through the fence into the heese...

At this point, Gertrude, your pointy ears should begin to erect, account of I've just decided to outthrow a page and a half dedicated to the weird contents of an envelope from one Walter J. Gordon, of 1737 - 101st Avenue, Oakland 3, California. Frankly, the man isn't worth the laying of a caustic pen across. So you may once again start your transcribing, e'en though don't just stand there with your shoes full of feet — Ted Anderson

—Elmer Perdue, February 1959



HAVE BAG, WILL TRAVEL

TAFF REPORT

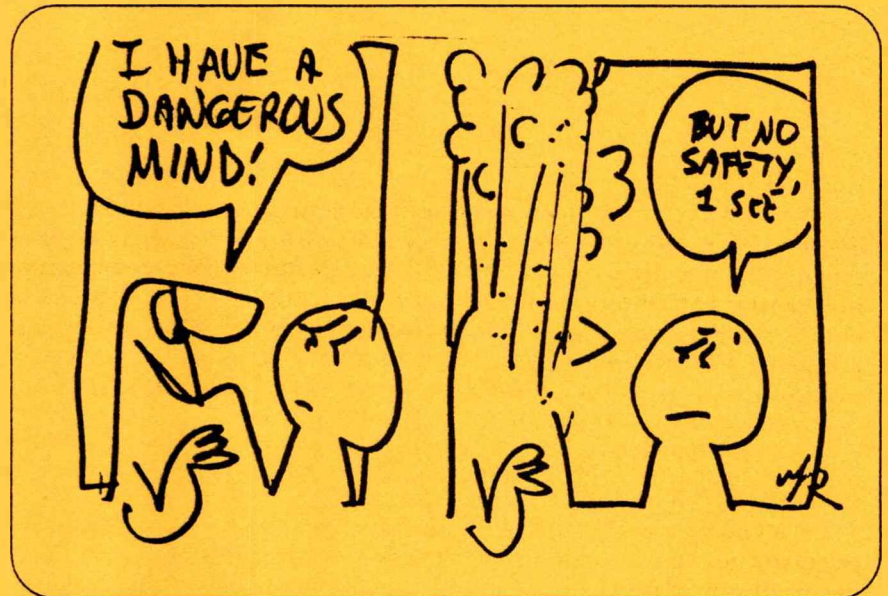
Part One:
"Gimme Some Money"

BY MARTIN TUDOR

After months of nail-biting tension it was finally happening - we'd got the all clear to go ahead and book our tickets! I'd been checking out various travel agencies for a few months and had an idea where to go for the best deal so I started calling people. Immediately, however, I ran into a problem - there were no seats available out of Heathrow on any of the days we needed to travel. We decided we'd have to fly from Birmingham, forking out the extra 200+ pounds each and even then we'd have to settle for a no smoking flight.

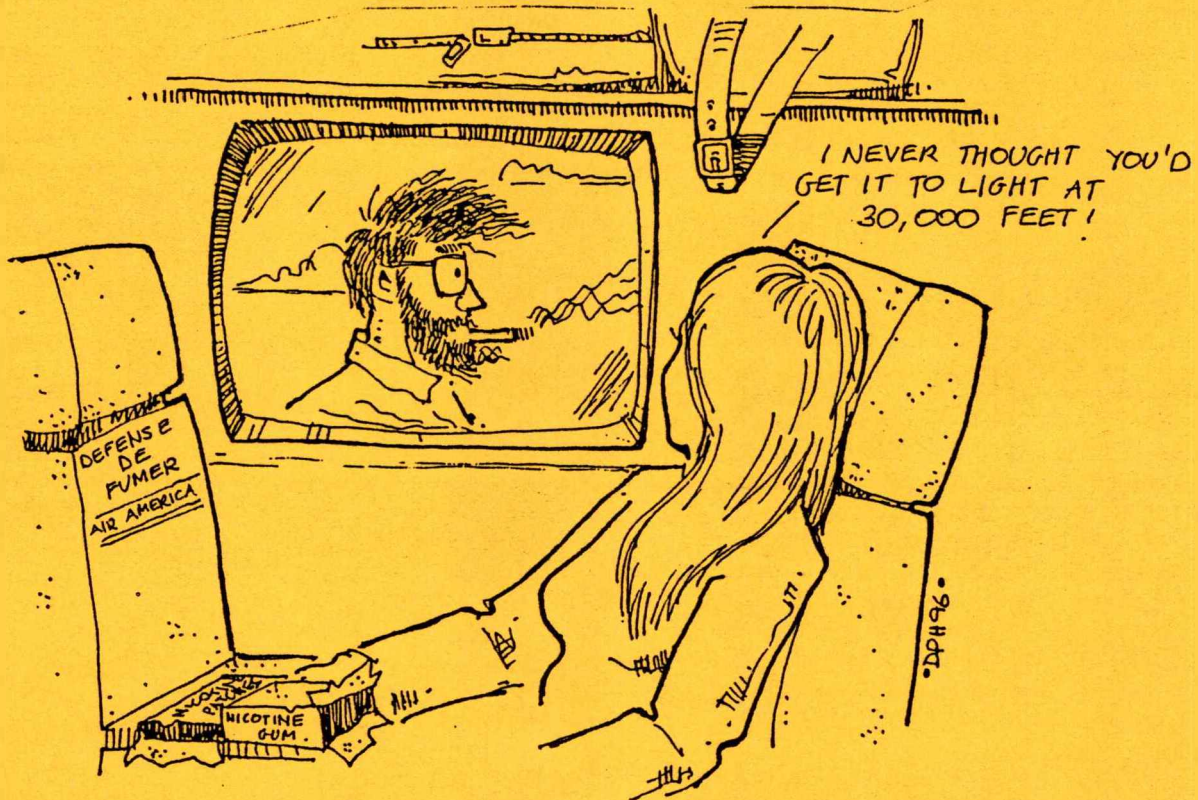
Next problem was how to pay - the money was going to take another week to clear through my account, but with the popularity of our dates I figured we couldn't wait that long; so I called my brother Keith who agreed to slap it on his credit card for a week. He also suggested trying a company called Trailfinders, which I did and miraculously they had two seats out of Heathrow (due to a cancellation that day) on United Airlines, as well as seats on all the internal flights we needed. Even better than that, the all-inclusive price was several hundred pounds cheaper than anyone else. (Although, of course, they were all no smoking, gulp.)

With just six weeks to go things were getting quite hectic: I still had to produce two BSFG newsletters, the fourth Novacon 26 progress report and EMPTIES #17; I needed to tie down a hotel for Novacon 27; finish printing, collating and mailing



WAVE #47; organize the auction material and get it to the USA - and time was running out. Then I was informed that the Elderly Resource Centre where I worked was being closed and that, as my job was disappearing, the Council were putting me on the redeployment list. They went on to inform me that there weren't any jobs in the pipeline. Great, by the time I came back from the USA I'd have nowhere to work.

I must admit I started to panic. I'd already been applying for jobs, and was waiting for replies from four of them, but I'd figured we had until March 1997 - the end of the financial year - to get sorted. Wrong! As I was already working a 45 hour week (to make up sufficient flex time to add two much



needed days to my annual leave for the trip) and spending my usual 20 hours per week travelling to and from work, there really wasn't enough time to do any more than chase for replies to existing jobs. I checked the papers for vacancies anyway, but there was nothing going.

Of course, this news meant a lot more work at the office as well. We'd started winding things up as soon as we realized that it was likely the Centre wouldn't continue, but there was still a hell of a lot to do and only a month or so to do it in.

There wasn't much more I could do about the job situation than I was already doing, so I put it out of my mind and concentrated on the fanac. I finished printing and collating CRITICAL WAVE #47 and decided I should get out a TAFF newsletter to let people know what was happening, remind everyone in the UK that TAFF existed and plug the TAFF auctions I intended to organize. I produced TAFFlon Tudor #1 on 17 July and mailed it out with WAVE, the August Birmingham SF Group newsletter, and sent bundles to everyone I thought would be willing to distribute them.

Fortunately, a Novacon committee meeting was cancelled - which gave me an extra weekend to play with and I got stuck in to doing EMPTIES #17. Dave Cox had lent me his laptop computer to take with me on my trip so that I could produce HAVE BAG, WILL TRAVEL more easily, but never

having used a laptop before I figured producing EMPTIES on it would give me a head start, and if I was to run into any problems with it, it would be easier to sort them out when Dave was just a trunk rather than an international phonecall away. As it happened his laptop had Word 6 loaded on it, and as I was already familiar with Word 5.5, I picked it up quite easily. I managed to produce some copies of E#17 for the committee meeting of Attitude: The Convention on 3 August and hand them out.

Attitude was looking in good shape, so the only work that meeting generated for me was a letter of confirmation to the Abbey Hotel in Great Malvern. Pam Wells had brought a load of fanzines for the TAFF auctions up with her to the meeting that weekend, so I spent every available moment the following week sorting through them as well as sorting my own fanzines which I had collected out of storage at my mother's and from the Evans' at Cape Hill.

The days sped by and suddenly, on 9 August, Greg Pickersgill and Catherine McAulay arrived with another load of fanzines to be sorted.

Greg and Catherine had come up to collect seven boxes of stuff that I was donating to Memory Hole (it was impractical to auction all 16 years worth of my fanzines and we needed the space). They also wanted to attend the special MISFITs "Good

Riddance to the Tudors" meeting/farewell party at Paul Berry's pub, the Three Tuns in Willenhall. Quite a crowd showed up with locals such as Tony Berry, Dave Cox, Theresa Derwen, Mick and Bernie Evans and Anne and Alan Woodford being supplemented by Greg and Catherine, Pam Wells, Julian Headlong, Chris Murphy, Mike Siddall, Cat Coast and Dave Hicks (the latter bringing the first four of the HAVE BAG, WILL TRAVEL headings and swiftly drawing the final two, whilst sitting, hungover, on our sofa Saturday morning!)

After over-indulging on the Friday and Saturday nights, Greg got stuck into re-sorting the auction material for me. We had several piles of stuff by the time we'd finished: material to take/send to the USA; fanzines for the postal auction (coming to a TAFF newsletter near you in November!); stuff for the Novacon auction; material we decided wouldn't sell which went off to Memory Hole. (*PLUG* For information regarding Memory Hole contact Greg Pickersgill, 3 Bethany Row, Narberth Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA61 2XG, UK.)

I was still waiting on several specific issues of fanzines to complete runs or part runs of material before I could mail them to the USA.

Unfortunately as Britain was suffering the most disruptive series of national postal strikes since the seventies, I checked the post each day to no avail.

I'd arranged a meeting with the Britannia Hotel in Wolverhampton on 13 August. A lovely, old, worn-out "station hotel", the Britannia has suffered an unfortunate "refurbishment" which has destroyed most of the previous bar/lounge space - turning it into a plastic wine bar area and tacky looking restaurant. So, despite reasonable prices and half-way decent function space, it wasn't suitable for a Novacon. (If anyone is looking for a venue for a convention of 120-180 people, however, this is your place!)

When I got home I opened the mail to find a letter about the last of the four jobs I'd applied for. I now had a full set - they'd all turned me down. Shit.

Another postal strike on the 14 August had delayed the fanzines again, but finally on Thursday, 15 August, they arrived. My mother-in-law and Helena's brother Pete came and collected the two hastily packaged parcels that night; and I called UPS couri-

ers on Friday morning to collect them from their house. (With Helena and me both out at work from early morning to late evening each day, it was the only way we could dispatch the parcels.) Finally things were going right - 42kg of fanzines were on their way to Arnie and Joyce Katz, and at my redeployment interview on Thursday morning my Area Manager had confirmed that she had a post for me at Selly Oak Area office - whoopee!

On Friday morning, 16 August, I stopped off to draw some cash from the ATM on my way to work. It was the BSFG meeting that night, with my illustrious ex-opponent Simo addressing the Group on the delights of working for SFX magazine. As usual I was heading straight to the meeting from the office and, as my bus passes the Prince Hotel before it reaches the city centre and I don't pass a cashpoint, I needed to get some money on my way to work.

The machine read "Service Declined".

Now I knew I had plenty of cash in the account - all the spending money for the trip had been paid in and while some of it may not have cleared, there should have been a few hundred quid at least.

I tried for a balance enquiry - "Service Declined". Shit.

So when I got to the office I called Girobank who said that my account had been closed on 13 August. "WHY!" I enquired. They told me that there had been a review of my account and, as they hadn't approved of the way in which it had been handled over the last 12 months, it had been closed, my direct debits and standing orders had been cancelled and there was a letter in the post informing me of this.

[Now, those of you who have read my article "All Banks Are Bastards" (Trad.) in Tony Berry's EYEBALLS IN THE SKY, will know that I have had more than my share of problems with banks over the years. But until the Alliance & Leicester Building Society had taken them over 18 months ago, Girobank had been an exceptionally reliable bank.

Last year, however, I had several run-ins with them over their annoying habit of treating cash deposits as cheques (and taking four working days to clear them) and their even more annoying habit of paying one of my direct debits twice each month and bouncing all my standing orders (charging 10-25 pounds a time in fees)



which constantly put my account into the red. Eventually, after contacting the Banking Ombudsman, I received a letter of apology and a refund of over 200 pounds in charges.

A brief six month period followed where they did their job and then early this year they'd started their old tricks again. I'd been keeping a dossier of all their mistakes and intended, on my return from the USA, to open an account with another bank, and then report Girobank to the Banking Ombudsman and their parent company, Alliance & Leicester, to the Building Societies Ombudsman (who has considerably more power).

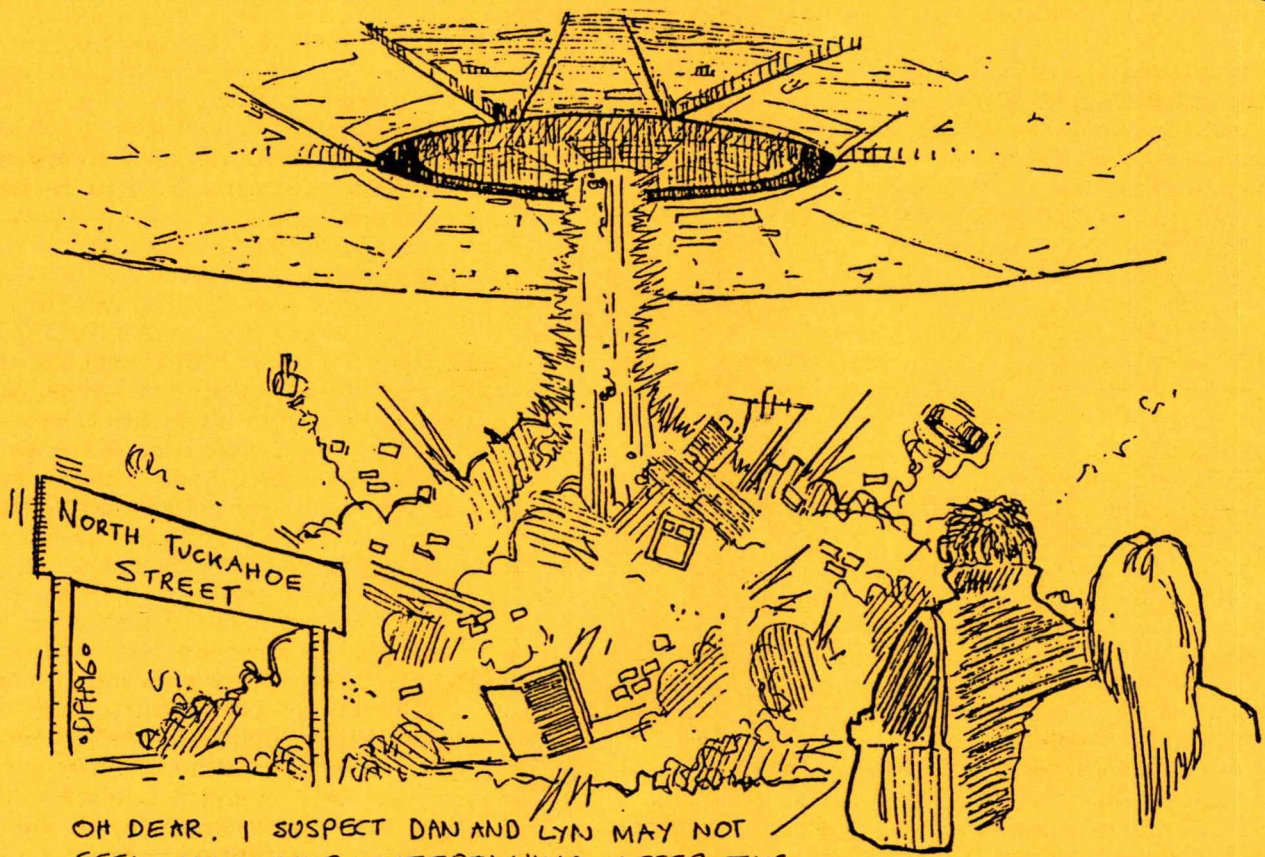
[They'd beaten me to it. Obviously realizing that, as my account had more money in it than ever before, this was the best chance they were going to get to claw back not only the overdraft but also help themselves to as many fees and charges as they cared to invent.]

Somehow, through a superhuman effort of will, I kept my temper and enquired, politely, how I was supposed to get my money back with my account closed. They told me that they'd sent me a cash cheque in "a week or two" as soon as they'd calculated and deducted outstanding charges. I pointed out that within the week I'd be flying to the USA

for the best part of a month and needed MY money back NOW. They told me it would take at LEAST a week. I pointed out that I had only just received a bank statement including charges up to 8 August and that if, as they said, they'd closed my account on 13 August they only had five days of charges to calculate - how could it take longer than the period to be charged to calculate the charges? They replied it would take a week to ten days to calculate the charges after which they would send a cash cheque.... Having used the "broken record" trick on difficult clients myself, I realized I wasn't going to get any further and told them I'd be back in touch.

Once I'd finished smashing my head against the desk and swearing profusely I called our Salaries department to stop them paying my salary into my now defunct account on 21 August (the day before we left for the USA). Too late, said Richard at Salaries, the instructions went out yesterday. Between sobs I explained my circumstances and, kindly soul that he is, he promised to do what he could and get back to me in a few hours.

Next I took a deep breath and called Helena at her office to ask if she had any cash she could bring along that night for the BSFG meeting and to



OH DEAR. I SUSPECT DAN AND LYN MAY NOT FEEL MUCH LIKE ENTERTAINING AFTER THIS,,

get the details of HER Girobank account. (The only way I could think of to get our hands on the money was if we could persuade Girobank to transfer whatever money they left me with into her account - where she could draw on it from a Visa compatible ATM in the USA.) Once she'd stopped hyper-ventilating she confirmed she'd draw some cash for the evening and gave me her bank details.

Girobank agreed that if I wrote a letter of authorization they would transfer the cash.

I somehow made it through the day without slitting my wrists or leaping on a train to Bootle to deal (in a terminal manner) with "C J Longworth" at Girobank; at 15.30 Richard called back to confirm that if I could get into Birmingham and report to the Council Tax office on Wednesday, there would be a cheque for my salary waiting which I'd be able to cash at the Co-Op bank around the corner. Phew, we'd have some spending money at least.

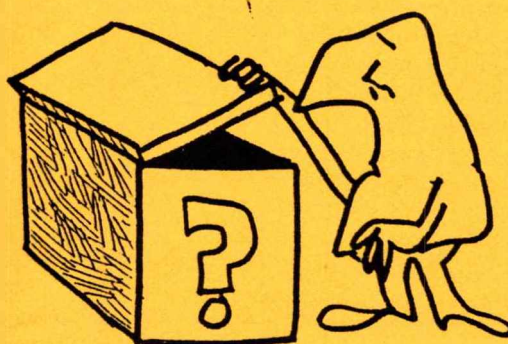
Now, if I was spending all of my salary on dollars, I needed to find a way to pay my bills while I was out of the country. Intersection had promised to pay Dan Steffan's hotel room bill from the convention and there was supposed to be a cheque in the post. Dan had told me to use the cash (thus avoiding bank charges for conversion) and we'd sort out the two TAFF accounts when I got to Washington DC. So I called Alice Lawson to ask whether the cheque had been mailed yet and if not to make it payable to my wife Helena. It turned out that the cheque was in the post made out to me. I called National Westminster, where the WAVE account is held, to confirm that I could endorse the back and clear it through them. They said this would be fine. Whew. So I could leave post-dated cheques with Helena's brother, Pete, who was house-sitting, and my bills would be paid. I called all the organizations that were due payments and explained that I was changing banks and that they would be paid by cheque this month and requested new standing order/direct debit mandates.

The next day, Saturday 17 August, Helena and I rolled into the Abbey National to convert her unused account there into a joint account, so that I could arrange for my September salary to be paid in (as my Salaries department could only make one cheque payment per year). Finally we were sorted.

When we got back home I continued copying EMPTIES #17 and THE TUDOR DYNASTY - the latter being a collection of my fan writing that Bernie Evans had produced for my TAFF campaign. Beautifully illustrated by Daves Hicks and Mooring, these had been mailed out to fans in Britain but, thanks to the Post Office losing the US masters, it had never appeared in the USA.

Having managed to dispatch all the heavy auction material, I figured we could use our luggage allowance to transport fanzines to the States; so I was trying to produce 200 copies of EMPTIES and TTD to take with us - I'd convinced Helena that non-essentials, such as clothes, could be purchased over there! (Copies of THE TUDOR DYNASTY are available from me at Toner or Lacon III for a \$5.00 - or more! - donation to TAFF.)

But, of course, with its usual impeccable sense of timing, (which comes, free of charge, with the machine's built-in "critical stress analyzer"), the WAVE copier broke down on Sunday night. On



Monday morning I called our service company to arrange for an engineer to call on Wednesday - well it wasn't as if I had anything better to do the day before we travelled....

Tuesday, 20 August, was a fun-filled day. As it was my last day of work at the Billesley Resource Centre for the Elderly (when I return from the USA I'll be starting my new job at the Selly Oak Area Office), Ann Conrad, one of my colleagues, had organized a leaving lunch and a collection. A wonderful buffet had been prepared by Ann with an excellent curry and rice supplied by Sheila Parmar, a Home Care Assistant, and in the region of 50 people showed up. I was presented with an engraved tankard and over 50 pounds in cash (VERY useful) from the people at the office and a \$20.00 note from the staff at our parent office "to gamble in Vegas" - a really nice send off.

I arrived home from work shortly before 9pm on Tuesday to be welcomed by a mountain of mail - we hadn't received a delivery for several days. Amongst this was a letter from the Passport Agency telling me that as my cheque from two months (!) previous had bounced, my passport would be impounded unless payment by postal order was received before it was used.

Panic.

We were due to fly on Thursday morning. There was another postal strike scheduled for Thursday - short of traveling to Peterborough and paying in cash or finding a courier to take the postal orders same day on Wednesday, there was no way I could guarantee payment before I had to use my, now apparently invalid, passport....

Helena and I, given the fact we couldn't do anything about this until the following morning at 9am, went to the pub and wept into our drinks.

Wednesday morning the copier engineer arrived bright and early at 8.15, fixed the copier and left by 8.40. At 9.05 I was talking to the Passport Agency - don't worry, they reassured me, it is a form letter, just send the postal orders and as long as the payment clears you'll be fine. You'll be able to leave the country no problem, but if the payment isn't made we'll impound your passport on your return. Hell, I thought, they can have it then!

I quickly copied the flyers for the September meeting of the BSFG, copied the covers of the newsletter, dashed into Birmingham, collected my salary cheque, cashed it, collected some money from Tim Stannard which Dave Holmes had arranged to be repaid to me, delivered the flyers to Andromeda for Steve Jones, the BSFG's publicity officer, to collect, hurried back to Walsall and bought the dollars from Co-Op Travel, got my haircut and went home where Helena's brother Pete, took me to Staples to collect more paper. Then I started copying the interior pages of the September newsletter: the copier broke down again.

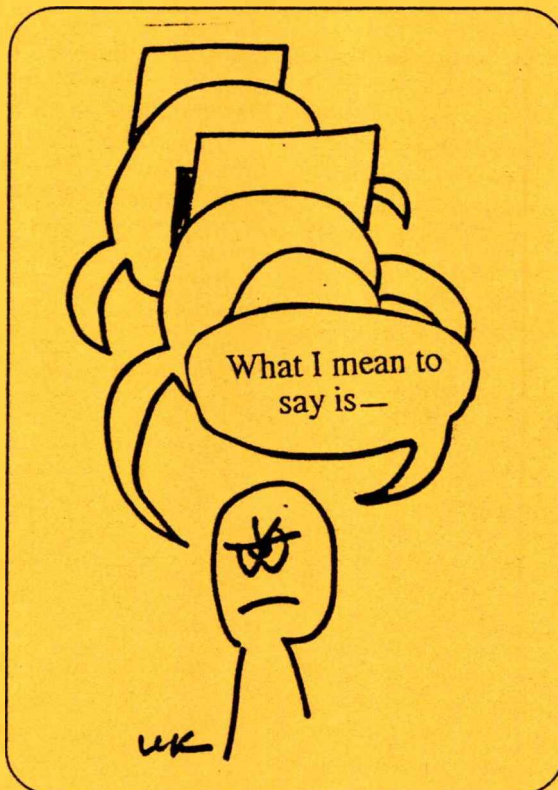
I sat down and cried, again.

Then I called Bernie Evans to check that it was okay to send her the masters of the newsletter for her to copy for my return. It was, and I did.

Luckily I'd finished copying TTD. I just needed to take the masters for EMPTIES #17 to the USA and get it copied there.

Despite all this, by staying up all night, Helena (who'd managed to grab a few hours sleep) and I were packed, showered and ready for 5am on Thursday 22 August when my brother, Stephen, and his wife, Tracy, were supposed to collect us and drive us down to Heathrow....

By 5:30am, after several phone calls to their



house - and messages on their ansaphone, we were starting to panic. I called Wolverhampton Station and checked train times: to make our flight we'd have to catch the 6.15am train to London, which meant we'd need to be in a taxi by 5.45am. I was calling a second taxi company when Stephen and Tracy arrived - at 5.40 am....

The drive to Heathrow was uneventful (thank God) and we were soon being processed through the system at Heathrow. The officials were obviously dubious about why I should be taking a laptop computer on what I claimed was a holiday - strangely Helena's explanation about a trip report didn't satisfy them, but when she mentioned she worked for the government they let us through, doubtless deciding we were spies.

There were further problems,

of course, at the x-ray machine, but eventually after loading the pc and proving it wasn't actually a bomb in disguise we got through.

After an hour or so wait in the departure lounge our Gate number was announced - it was Gate 13.

Now Helena had been very good and patient so far. She'd put up with my incredible run of bad luck through job scares, banking problems and invalid passports - but this was the final straw. But she took a deep breath, and taking her life in her hands, she headed off through Gate 13 with a man, she was now convinced, was the unluckiest man on earth. Brave? Foolhardy? Only time can tell.

.....

Well, we made it to the Dulles in Washington DC with only minor turbulence suffered, and body and soul intact - and without having to resort to a single nicotine patch or piece of nicotine gum!

We had been due to wait 2 hours 45 minutes for our connecting flight, but as our flight was early arriving and our departure to Vegas was delayed, this turned into closer to five hours.

But all was not lost - down by Gate D28 we found not only a Samuel Adams bar with several excellent beers, but a smoking lounge! So more relaxed and happier than we'd been for several days we headed off, at 6pm, for our flight to Vegas - in Row 13...

Obviously, though the gods were quite obviously

playing with us, they meant us no harm and an uneventful flight again followed.

As we staggered off the "mobile lounge" into the airport, at 8 pm Vegas time, I was feeling tired and dreading trying to find my way to the baggage

claim. Having stumbled over the carpet, I glanced up and there stood a tall guy, with fair, spiky hair, holding a piece of cardboard with "Toner for Tudor" scrawled on it; I staggered over and introduced myself and Helena - we'd arrived.

HAVE BAG, WILL TRAVEL

TAFF REPORT

Part Two:
"America"

BY MARTIN TUDOR

The gentleman wearing a Corflu Vegas T-shirt and holding the "Toner for Tudor" board turned out to be Ben Wilson, and he, thankfully, knew his way through the labyrinthine complexities of Vegas Airport to the baggage collection point.

We'd gone no more than ten steps from the arrival gate when we saw conclusive proof that we'd arrived in Vegas - a couple of rows of bright, noisy, slot machines!

It was fortunate indeed that Ben had met us because I'm sure that my jet-lagged brain could never have coped with the various buses and corridors that seemed to be involved in traversing the airport. Eventually, though, we arrived at the collection point, collected our bags and headed out to the Wilsons' car. As he drove us back to their apartment, Ben explained that his wife, Cathi, was working at the moment, but he'd pick her up when her shift finished at 10 pm and, if we liked, we could go out and eat. He filled us in on who was coming from out of town, what was planned for the weekend and told us we were welcome to stay with him and Cathi when we weren't staying at the Four Queens for Toner.

When we got to the apartment Ben apologised for the unpacked boxes - he and Cathi had only moved into the apartment two weeks ago - but I assured him it made us feel at home: our house currently being full of boxes of TAFF auction material.

Helena, meanwhile, was introducing herself (and falling in love with) Ben and Cathi's cat, Nimue. A beautiful grey and peach "tortoise-shell", Nimue was in a playful, skittish mood and, being more accustomed to the sluggish, bad-tempered behaviour of our own cat, Polly, this was a delightful change.

Ben called Tom Springer and Tammy Funk, to see if Tom had collected Christina Lake okay, and Helena and I freshened up and changed our clothes. Apparently Tom hadn't found Christina yet, so Ben went out to collect Cathi. When they returned he checked with a couple of casinos to see what time their buffets served until. It turned out that they all finished around 11pm and as it was after 10pm now, he suggested a local bar in their old neighbourhood. I (reluctantly, of course) admitted that I could probably manage a beer, or two, and off we set.

Ben had described this as a "local bar", but it was local in the American sense, of course - about ten minutes drive, rather than walk, away. The T-Bird was a neat bar littered with 50s-style memorabilia and more recent pop culture stuff such as Galaxian arcade-game tables. I opted for a Shiner Bock (a tasty, dark beer) and Helena tried a Seagram's Wild Berry wine cooler. The food was good, the drinks were fine, Cathi was also a smoker, we felt comfortable and at home.

Cathi Wilson was short, dark-haired, pretty and,

given the fact that she'd just finished a shift at Taco Bell (where she is Assistant Manager), amazingly bright and bubbly. After a couple of drinks we headed back to the apartment, with Ben, of course, insisting on picking up the bill. (I'd been forewarned by Pam Wells of the incredible hospitality and generosity of the Vegrants and the next week was to prove her absolutely right.)

When we got back to the apartment Cathi called the Funk/Springer household for a Lake update, and we discovered that Christina had apparently missed Tom and vice versa - with each of them wandering around different parts of the airport periodically calling Tammy to find out what was happening. Ben allowed himself a (quite restrained) gloat - "I told him he should've done a sign!"

Before we'd left the UK, Dave Cox had given us a sealed envelope with instructions not to open it until we were on the plane. With all the hassle prior to our departure we'd both forgotten it; but as she unpacked, Helena found it and we now opened it. We'd expected it to contain nicotine patches and/or gum, but instead discovered a good luck "Tabby National" greeting card with best wishes for "a great honeymoon" from Dave and \$100.00 - thanks Dave, that was really appreciated! (Why not embarrass the poor perisher across

several continents, eh?)

After confirming that Tom and Christina were likely to track each other down shortly, we all headed for bed - it looked like Friday was going to be a long hectic day.

Having slept on both flights, Helena and I expected to have some trouble sleeping, but as it turned out we were both out like lights and awake early the next morning. After a coffee and shower I went out to the balcony with the laptop and was working on the first installment of the trip report by 8am. (Such discipline, eh? Well I was impressed.) Cathi surfaced a little later with Ben, who is not a morning person.

After we'd eaten our fill of the pancakes Cathi prepared, Ben got on the phone to Tom to sort out the plan of action for the day. Tom and Ben were the main movers and shakers for Toner, with Cathi and Tammy supplying all the food - they'd apparently been cooking and freezing food for several weeks! The plan for the day turned out to involve vast amounts of driving for Ben and Tom with yet more cooking for Tammy and Cathi - a pattern that seemed to run throughout the weekend.

As we went downstairs and outside to the car Helena and I got our first real idea of how HOT it was. Sitting indoors in the air conditioning or out, in the shade, on the balcony hadn't given us a clue

YOU DON'T WANT HYPHEN! - NOT WHEN YOU CAN HAVE ONE OF THESE LOVELY FANNISH MOMENTOS STEVE GREEN HAS THROWN UP INTO!!



as to how hot it was in the direct sunlight: it was like walking into a wall of heat. I swear you could feel the liquid in your body evaporating, and I was surprised that I couldn't see steam rising from my skin. The relief when we were sitting in the car and Ben turned on the cool air was intense.

Ben dropped Helena and me off at the Four Queens, where we met up with Tom and Christina about noon. Once Tom had booked all of us into our rooms and he and Ben had moved the first load of stuff up to the con suite, they headed off to collect more out-of-towners from the airport and supplies for the con suite - arranging to pick us up from the hotel bar around 3pm.

Tom Springer is impressive, at 6'2" and 285lb, dark haired, heavy-built and with a cute boyish face. He radiates enthusiasm and a zest for life that it is hard to withstand. He promised that as soon as the con was up and running we'd have plenty of time to sink a few beers - at the bar stagger that was planned for Saturday night and the following week when he'd take us to a real pub with draught Guinness - my kind of fan!

While Helena had a shower and got changed, I sat down to work on the first installment of the trip report for an hour. When Helena was ready, we called Christina's room and went down to the casino. Christina was desperately hungry so we went to grab some food in the casino's restaurant. Although we all opted for what looked like a light lunch on the specials menu (bearing in mind the warnings we'd received of the vast amounts of food Joyce Katz would be preparing) it turned out to be pretty hefty and far too tasty to leave. But we managed to finish and then wandered over to the Four Queen's cocktail bar.

Casino Hotels are quite an experience; rather than the funereal quiet of the lobbies in UK hotels, you walk from the heat and noise of the street into chill air conditioned chaos. Every available corner seems to contain a slot machine. Vast ranks of them fill the lobby, spilling over into the casino proper; most of them occupied by little old men and women - with their attention totally focused on the spinning, flashing or rolling symbols. But the first thing that hits you, even before the cold air and the flashing lights, is the sheer NOISE. Bells, clangers, sirens, horns and, of course, the constant clatter of coins dropping into slots and spilling out into the trays.

The cocktail bar was at the far end of the casino from the restaurant, so we slowly negotiated our way past all the slot players, coin girls, and card tables. The bar had an enormous video wall on its back wall, with smaller video screens, beside it, all showing different sports programmes. The surface of the bar counters contained more slot machines - one for each bar stool; so I slithered in between two stools and bellowed my orders to the barman,

eventually finding a beer that they did stock, and then we settled down at a table as far from the video screens as we could - it wasn't exactly a peaceful place for a drink!

Around 3.15pm I wandered off to find the toilet and then over to reception to see if anyone was about. It was difficult to miss the disheveled hair, bald spot and beard which adorns the head of DUFF winner Perry Middlemiss, who'd just arrived along with Bill Rotsler and Lenny Bailes. I chatted with Perry for a bit, exchanging travel stories - Perry had been on the go for 24 hours and was ready to crash - then I fought my way through the slot machines back to the bar.

Ben had arrived by now and he drove Christina, Helena and myself over to the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz for their pre-con party.

"Cups and Cakes"

Ben started introducing us to the other early arrivals: Woody Bernardi, Ken Forman, Marcy Waldie, Dave Whitman, Richard Brandt, Michelle Lyons, Robert Lichtman - at which point Arnie interrupted to point out that it had only taken two TAFF trips for Robert and me to meet. Arnie introduced himself, accusing Ben of leaving him out, though Ben was quick to defend himself - claiming that he had been building to a Katzian climax.

Woody offered to take us on Joyce's nickel tour as Joyce was on the phone; along the way he explained that it was wise to avoid Arnie and Joyce's enormous, mean-looking ginger cat. Slugger, as it had a disposition even meaner than its looks hinted at - and was particularly fond of attacking unsuspecting ankles. (I noticed that everyone but Joyce gave Slugger a wide berth throughout the party.)

The Katzes live in a great sprawling bungalow, with bedrooms, bathrooms and small offices off to the left-hand side and a large comfortable lounge area, large office with a big Gestetner, kitchen and a dining area complete with a serious, collating-sized table, to the right. We grabbed some drinks from the bathtub as Woody headed out the bathroom's second door and followed him through the covered patio by the hot tub, out to the pool.

At this point Helena woke up. A keen swimmer and devoted sun worshipper, Helena had been eagerly anticipating a cool dip in this pool all day. She'd put her costume on under her clothes and had insisted I wear my trunks under mine - although being a devout non-swimmer and boozier, I had NO intention of taking a plunge.

Just past the pool was a stone alcove with built-in bench and on the table in the middle was an ashtray - this, Woody explained, was the tobacco smokers area.

We went back into the house and sat around the

large coffee table for a while sampling the various dips and appetizers that Joyce, Marcy and Belle kept bringing in from the kitchen.

Joyce Katz was almost exactly the way I'd imagined her - short, aproned (she seemed to be cooking and/or carrying food out all evening), friendly, smiling and charming - a lovely hostess. Arnie, however, was totally different to what I'd expected, at least physically. He was far taller than I'd imagined at 6'3", with a shock of unruly black hair - somehow I'd expected a short, balding guy. But as for his personality... that was spot on: we all sat and listened as Arnie told story after story about fans past and present, conventions and fanzines, with the occasional contribution from Robert Lichtman. Fascinating stuff.

As the evening progressed more and more people arrived and I gave up trying to keep track of them all. Every so often Ben and/or Tom would bring in another batch of out-of-towners from the hotel, grab a soda and shoot off again, either to the airport, back to the hotel or on another shopping expedition. As I was suffering enough from the heat just sitting around drinking, my admiration for them both was increasing by leaps and bounds.

Then Joyce announced that dinner was served - dinner?! We'd all been stuffing our faces for hours, but yes, there was more to come. Helena and I had been force-fed all the way from Heathrow by airline staff, eaten an enormous meal Thursday night, a hefty breakfast Friday morning and a substantial "light" lunch. But the food wouldn't stop - and it was all too good to ignore; so we kept on nibbling away.

Dinner consisted of an enormous buffet of meats, cheeses, lasagna, spaghetti and meatballs, and I can't remember what else. After a while both mind and stomach overloaded - Vegas fans are seriously into food!

Helena joined Christina, Belle Augusta and others for a swim, I ducked indoors again for a beer and to avoid the risk of Helena dragging me into the pool. Eventually Helena surfaced and came out for a cigarette.

Dave Whitman, who had joined the smokers (Don Fitch, Cathi, Helena and myself) at the table earlier, had remained there most of the evening. So when Helena went over to the table and lit up, Dave was still there. He was talking to, I think, Richard Brandt and launched into a spiel about how terrible nicotine addiction was, the damage it did to your health and how annoying it was that when he came outside for fresh air he ended up breathing tobacco smoke.

Now, being British, Helena just sat there through this - and refrained from asking the obvious question: if tobacco smoke bothered him so much why

had he made a beeline for the only table surrounded by smokers and stayed there all evening? (As they say back home, "There's nowt as strange as folk.")

The party continued; yet more food was served and a small group formed around the hot tub, which was now bubbling away. By now Aileen Forman had arrived, and she joined Christina, Belle, Sue Williams, and others in the tub; while a group of smokers - Cathi, Don Fitch, Art Widner, Helena and myself - sat around the tub chatting (of course Dave, realising all the smokers had moved over to the hot tub, came over to join us).

It was here that I discovered that Tom Springer and I weren't the only ones with a pathological hatred of bugs - suddenly Aileen screamed, pointing at a beetle-like "water bug" that was scuttling around the edge of the hot tub. Sue quickly started throwing water at the bug to chase it away and it scuttled under the platform I was sitting on. Mindful of the importance of keeping cool, I took several large slugs of my beer, dragged heavily on my cigarette and squashed the urge to leap up screaming myself - though I kept a wary eye on the platform in case the bug reappeared. Her mood destroyed, Aileen retired indoors - carefully, watching every step.

Gradually people started drifting to their various homes; while Ben and Tom, having had oh, almost an hour or two break, started running people back to the Four Queens. Finally I helped Tom and Tammy carry out some crock pots they were borrowing for Sunday's soup tasting, and Tom drove Helena and I back to the Four Queens.

Saturday we were up bright and early again, I typed up another chunk of the trip report and then we wandered down to the con suite for the promised bagels, doughnuts and, most importantly, coffee. We chatted for a while with rich brown, Cathi, Karl Kreder, Bill Rotsler, Don Fitch and others, hearing all about cans of Japanese helium beer from Karl - the thought of what the average British lager lout could get up to with cans of helium packed beer boggled my mind. Having had several caffeine fixes, I grabbed a beer from the bathtub and headed back to our hotel room to work on the trip report some more before the opening ceremony at noon.

Gerl Sullivan was, as usual, on form and, once Tom had introduced her to the audience, she read from an enormous scroll she'd brought with a description and explanation of the nature and importance of Roscoe. She then unrolled another scroll to be signed by all Toner attendees and invited Tom to be the first to sign.

Having signed Gerl's scroll and drunk, ate and chatted some more, we headed back to our room.

Helena read various Vegas shopping and tourist magazines while I finished the first installment.

I was working as fast as I could in order to finish it in time to attend Arnie's round table discussion "Can The Numbered Fandom Theory Be Saved?" at 2pm - but I failed to do this. It was gone 3pm by the time I'd completed and spell-checked it and Helena had subbed it all. So I transferred it to disk, ready to print off, and we wandered back to the con suite.

We arrived there just before Arnie and the crowd returned from the meeting room - Arnie announcing to the room that fanzine fandom was saved, we didn't have to worry any more, we could just party.

We did.

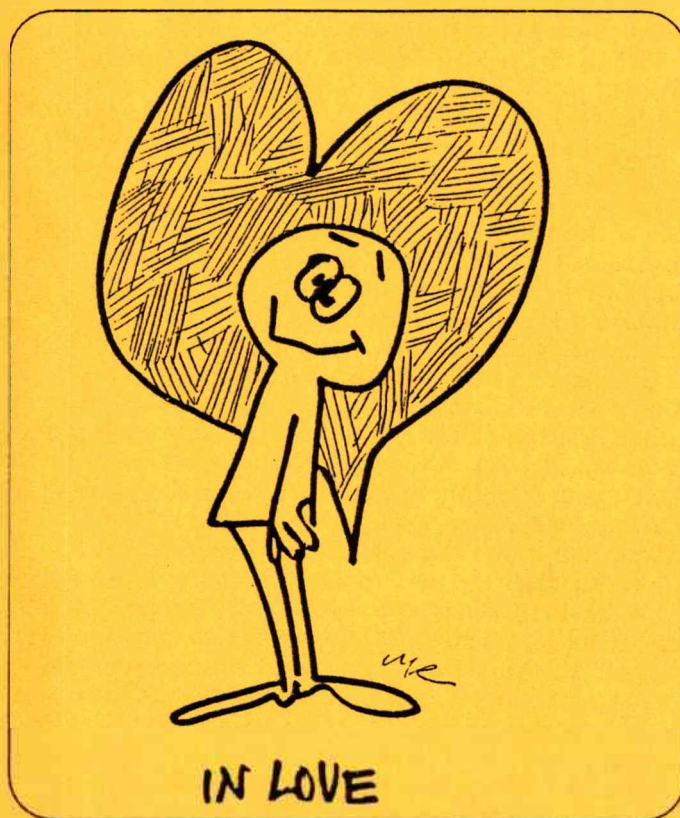
Plus more food, which Cathi and Tammy had been busily preparing for the last few weeks, was wheeled out, including: BBQ hot wings, Teriyaki Wings, Spicy Meatballs, Ham & Asparagus Roll-Ups, Devilled Eggs (which Tammy swore she'd never make again - but which were delicious), plus dips, vegetables, pasta salads, crackers, etc, etc. As everyone dove in, Helena tried desperately to convince me to eat more, but I was determined to save SOME room for the beer on the bar stagger which was due shortly. (When I questioned Cathi about all this food later, she grudgingly admitted that Vegas conventions are really just combined food fests and cookery competitions - if only British hotels would allow this!)

Given that all the decent bars and pubs are way out of the centre of Vegas, Tom apologised for the fact that the bar stagger would have to be restricted to the casino bars on Fremont Street - he needn't have worried, they were great.

First was the Golden Nugget - a typical casino bar with the slot machines built into the counter. (We'd voted unanimously to skip the bar in the Four Queens). It had a few interesting beers which we sampled, while Geri won some money on the slot machines and Art Widner won even more. Tom squealed with delight (honest, I heard him) as he spotted that Bill Kunkel was drinking alcohol and rushed over to share a toast with him. Then we moved off, taking our drinks with us to the bar in the back of the Horseshoe Casino.

Neither Helena, nor I, could believe the number of people wandering around Fremont Street with drinks in their hands - a practice which is frowned upon in Britain, some places it's illegal. And the fact that none of the bars objected to your bringing in drinks from other bars - this simply wouldn't be allowed by any pub or bar back home.

The Horseshoe was decorated like a Wild West Saloon and the bar was fantastic. An enormous wooden counter with no slot machines in it! Thick, red, velvety curtains were draped across the walls and it had a decent selection of drinks and a



friendly barman. Again we had a couple of drinks there before moving on - 'though I for one would happily have sat there for an hour or two chatting with Tom, as it was one of the few bars where you could hear yourself think, situated as it was beside the card tables with no slot machines near by.

As we wandered out on our way to Sassy Sally's House o' Beer, someone noticed it was almost time for the next Fremont Street Experience Light Show, so we hung around for a minute or two to watch.

Fremont Street has been covered with a tapestry of computer controlled neon tubes or cables. On the hour each night a different light show begins, lasting for about 5 minutes, during which they block off the traffic. The shows have different themes, the one we watched was the "Viva Las Vegas" show - with 20 foot light-pictures of cartoony Frank Sinatras; dancing girls and cabaret music - fairly impressive stuff.

On to Sassy Sally's which has got to be the noisiest, tackiest, casino in Vegas. Above every bank of slot machines there is a T-shirt and shorts clad young girl badgering you to come and play THEIR machines - as you fight your way through to the bar. I'm not sure whether their air conditioning was playing up or whether it was just the heat from the kitchen next to the bar, but it was uncomfortably hot in there. However, by way of recompense, it had the widest range of beers that

we saw in any of the bars.

But the heat was TOO much and Bill Kunkel headed back to the Four Queens, while the rest of us headed off to indulge in the dubious delights of the Shrimp Brother's ritual meal - a shrimp cocktail at the Golden Gate Shrimp Bar.

Tom was most insistent that I, as a card-carrying shrimp brother, HAD to eat a shrimp cocktail, and so I did. The driest tasting seafood I have EVER experienced, with a very strange spicy tomato-style sauce. Certainly an experience.... Geri and Christina were even less impressed - not even trying to finish theirs; 'though they raved about the Imitation Crab Cocktails - declaring themselves the Crab Sisters. (The imitation crab was that strange white and pink, processed unidentified shell fish meat that is packed and sold as "ocean" or "crab" sticks in the UK - urgh.)

To wash down the seafood (and remove the taste from our mouths) we finished up at the Las Vegas Club casino bar; where Helena and Tammy were delighted to discover 13 flavours of De Kuyper schnapps plus loads of bizarre flavoured liqueurs.

As they ploughed through a selection of butter-scotch, almond, and lord knows what else flavoured shots - washed down with \$1.50 frozen cocktails such as Mudslides and Dreamsicles - I downed a number of glasses of the best beer I'd found yet - Rhino Chase Peach Wheat Beer. This was the Vegas Club's draft beer of the month, \$1.25 a glass, and it was very cold, very tasty and wonderfully refreshing.

As people were beginning to flag (we'd lost Art Widner back at the Golden Nugget) we headed back to the Four Queens. As we left the Vegas Club, we were just in time for the next Fremont light show - this time the sf show. An enormous hatch stretches the length of the street, slamming shut; the sound of lift off; stars rushing by; planetfall with bizarre animals bounding past; the hatch slams shut again; lift off. Again quite impressive stuff.

Helena and I popped back to our room to freshen up, but Helena discovered she couldn't and crashed instead. As I wanted to check with Tom what time he intended to set out on his errands Sunday morning, I wandered down to the con suite.

(Tom had offered to run me to his apartment to print the first installment of the trip report off from his pc and, as he had a few errands to run, take me to a copy shop as well.)

There was no sign of Tom when I got to room 1248. Figuring he was resting his knee (which had given way earlier), I joined Perry, Rotsler and Karl. They were talking about violence and how to deal with it. As I have been casualty of many brawls, Perry asked for my input and I told them what

you shouldn't do. Rotsler described how to intimidate with mannerisms and expressions (which he also demonstrated) and Karl explained how to rip someone's ear off (which he fortunately didn't demonstrate). After a couple of cans of Guinness, I turned in for the night.

With the first installment finished and ready to print, I enjoyed a lie in on Sunday morning - wandering down to the con suite for coffee around 10am, to see if Tom had surfaced. No sign of Tom, but Cathi, Tammy, and Shelby and Suzanne Vick were there and we drank coffee and chatted for a while about the incredible energy of Geri Sullivan. Suzanne explained this with the fact that Geri was obviously an "energy vampire" - so the next time you're feeling exhausted after several hours trying to keep up with Geri as she 'partys on down', you'll know why!

We discovered that neither Tom (whose knee was pretty bad now) nor Ben (who was burnt out) were likely to surface, but Tammy and Cathi were running the errands and said we were welcome to tag along.

Having stopped off along the way to pick up some mason jars to display Ben's seven different home made wines, we arrived at Tammy and Tom's apartment. I was relieved to discover Tom used a word processing package with which I was familiar, so it didn't take long to run off a set of masters and paste-in Dave Hicks' illo.

We packed yet more food Tammy had prepared into the boot of the car and headed over to Kinkos - where Cathi and I discovered our brains were too dead to operate the copier, so we left the masters at the counter and popped back to - you guessed it - pick up more food that Cathi ("the Cake Mistress" as her Rotsler-badge proclaimed) had prepared. We also collected Ben's home-made wines, one of which, "The Toner Grape", had been produced from Joyce's first grape crop.

On the way back to the Four Queens I shot into Kinkos and collected the copied and collated the first installment, and as soon as the car was unloaded at the hotel, I dashed upstairs to staple some copies. I was determined to hand some copies out in the con suite before heading over to the Royal Pavilion meeting room in the North Tower for Joyce's round table discussion at 2pm - "Should Fanzine Fandom Proselytize?". I especially didn't want to miss this item as I'd sent a longish loc to WILD HEIRS on the same subject recently.

It was a great buzz handing out the first installment - the look of chagrin and venomous hatred from fellow fan fund winner Perry Middlemiss being worth all of the effort in itself!

Tom announced that the discussion would be held in the con suite as it was too much hassle to

keep dragging people over to the meeting room in the North Tower. (There were armed security guards at the bases of the elevators checking keys: the keys were different colours depending on which Tower your room was in.) Unfortunately Tom took me to one side and said they hoped to start the Fanzine Auction earlier than the scheduled time of 4pm, as there was so much stuff to sell - so I missed most of Joyce's discussion as I had to start sorting the TAFF fanzines.

Because of the vast amount of fanzines that had been supplied by DUFF, Toner and TAFF for the auction, the TAFF stuff needed to be pruned quite severely and prioritised. Robert Lichman offered to help with this but I lost track of him after Joyce's item. I tracked him down indulging in a sidebar in Joyce and Arnie's room (I know, I should've guessed) and I joined them there. Tom, Arnie and Robert quickly scanned through my list highlighting what should go first, whilst leaving a sizeable amount of material for LAcon III.

The sidebar was probably a bad idea for me - I'm completely out of practice and so it hit me pretty hard. However, it did have a major benefit - the auction was the first fan programme item I have taken an "on-stage" part in without a cigarette in my hand for over 13 years and I barely felt the need for a nicotine fix. (Of course, I could barely feel anything, distanced as my head was from my body, but...)

Arnie said a few words and passed it over to me, as I had the most to sell. I started with a "lighter" item to help warm things up - an autographed, hard-cover copy of THE LEAKY ESTABLISHMENT by Dave Langford which fetched a disappointing \$11.00 and a copy of Eric Bentcliffe's 1960 TAFF Trip Report, EpiTAFF, sold for just \$9.00; this was hard work! Prices began to pick up when I moved on to a Pickersgill classic, RITBLAT/GRIMNEWS #1 and #2, fetching \$15.00 and then a run of Hansen's EPSILONS, #7-18, picked up \$20.00, with six assorted fanzines by Owen Whiteoak fetching \$18.00. A few bits and pieces went for under \$10.00 a time; then I took a break and passed over to Arnie and Robert while I sorted what we had and reconsidered my strategy.

Round Two: I decided to go with a big gun, but only managed \$20.00 for a copy of HYPHEN #22 (sorry Walt), and a facsimile by Vinc Clarke of his copy of HYPHEN #1 fetched \$10.00. I decided to try more recent stuff and got \$8.00 for a single issue of Christina Lake's SORGENKIND (helped by Christina trying to describe what was in it), #3-#9 of Michael Ashley's SALIROMANIA went for a respectable \$13.00 and RASTUS JOHNSON'S CAKEWALK from Pickersgill fetched a very respectable \$35.00; PULP #1-19 fetched \$50.00; but a rare run of three issues of the Cretin's

INDIAN SCOUT fetched only \$15.00, although I managed to get a further \$7.00 for just one additional copy of the three. Time for another break - I passed back to Arnie who called on Perry to do his stuff.

All through this, of course, Helena had been fetching fanzines and keeping track of what was selling for what. (Tom was keeping the actual auction tabs, but I wanted an idea from my list of what was fetching what and how much "stock" I had left.)

Things were definitely slowing down when I stood up for my "Third Round". After several fanzines went for figures that Arnie felt were too cheap, I received a bid of \$35.00 for EMPTIES #1-16, but Arnie called out to save it for LAcon III. I was glad to have a rest - being so far out of it, I had already referred to the "WILD HEIRS" editors as the "WEIRD HEIRS" - hopefully everyone who noticed thought it was deliberate!

The auctions didn't do too badly with DUFF raising just short of \$50.00, TAFF \$255.00 and Toner around \$220.00.

Perry helped Helena and I carry the fanzines back to our room, and then I decided to have a nap before the soup tasting started at 6pm.

Two hours later I woke up - an hour after the soup tasting had finished. We wandered down to the con suite but there wasn't much going on, so Helena and I decided to take a walk down Fremont and have or drink or two.

We went back to the Las Vegas Club, as Helena had several more schnapps to try, and relaxed for a while.

When we got back to the con suite an hour or two later the party was going again. Helena sampled a few of the soups that were left and we both tried Ben's home made wines - the Plum being the overall favourite, though several others ran a close second.

The conversation moved on to what was happening regarding the tour of the Hoover Dam on Monday - no one was sure. So Christina, Helena and I wandered down to Joyce and Arnie's room to find Tom, Ken, Ben and other allegedly responsible bodies.

We were all horrified to discover that we needed to be ready to roll by 9am - so after sampling a few more wines to steady our nerves we headed for bed. Tomorrow the Dam Tour! ∞∞∞

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