

WILD HORERS

#4



THE WHO
SAWED
TOMMY'S
BOAT

Jophan gets back on crack

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Here it is, sooner than we planned and before you had any right to expect it... **Wild Heirs #4!**

Fannish Fanzine Fandom's occasional, occasionally wayward, walk on the wild side is produced by Las Vegrants, who are feeling extraordinarily frisky due to the imminence of Corflu Vegas.

We're doing this issue at the March 4, 1995 Las Vegrants meeting at the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz (330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107).

It is available for letter of comment (please....) or contribution of artwork or written material (pretty please...).

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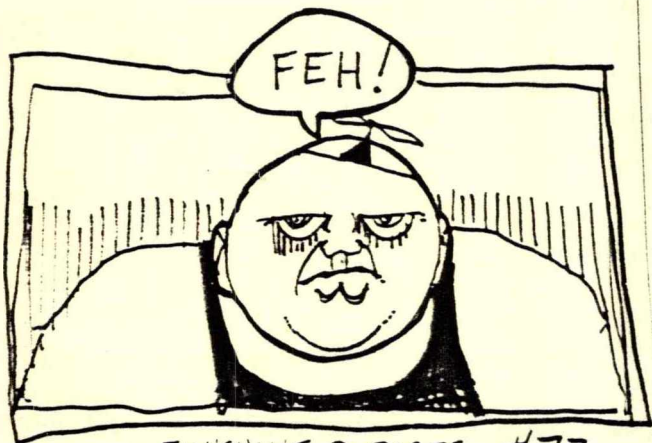
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21 Editors...

That's not too many...



FAMOUS FINISHING PHRASES #73

Vague Rants

Arnie Katz

The spirit of Corflu is upon us now. We are full of the trufannish fire. A wild light burns in our eyes, and the cheeks of our sensitive

fannish faces are flushed with excitement.

As the second weekend in April draws ever closer, Las Vegrants' publishing instincts have reasserted themselves. **Wild Heirs**, in suspended animation for almost a year, is about to have its second issue in as many months. If the strain of Corflu Vegas doesn't do us in, we may be publishing it a lot more frequently than even we expected.

I know it's more frequent, already, than you expected. I know this, because no one wrote a letter of comment in time for this issue's letter column.

So we won't be having a letter column this issue. We're pretty disappointed about this, because we spent a long time coming up with really pithy and clever answers to all the letters which we knew would soon fill our mailbox. Now we have pages of brilliant editorial answers but no letters to justify their publication.

This is an intolerable situation. Much as I hate to insult a guest in our fanzine, I think it's *your* fault for underestimating our zeal to produce **Wild Heirs**.

Miserably guilty as you are, there is still hope of redemption. Here is another issue of **Wild Heirs**, perhaps even better than the last. You can write a letter of comment and get right with the Spirit of Trufandom.

Last issue's editorial experiment enjoyed only limited success. As you may recall, we tried to produce an intensely linear multi-torial by allowing each writer to read only the immediately preceding contribution.

Reading that editorial now, we appear to have out-smarted ourselves. Many of the individual entries are good in themselves, but the overall structure's circularity compromises the total effect.

So we're going to go back to what we know best, the non-linear group editorial such as **Wild Heirs** featured in its first two issues, and in the "Retro Rants" section in #3.

Ken Forman

It seems to me that such letter hacks as Joyce, Ben, JoHn or myself have no axe to grind. It's like the paper calling the White-Out white. Even so, it would have been nice to publish a bunch of letters from the **Wild Heirs** readership. I was looking forward to opening the letters from far away places and writing witty responses.

By the by, what do we call our lettercol (when we get a lettercol)? JoHn suggested "Hot Heirs." I like it.

Joyce Katz

I recommend that we just move forward, publishing our answers to those letters that never arrived. It shouldn't take too much fannish wisdom to be able to fill in the blanks.

To wit: Why, Andy. Thank you for your kind words. I'll be looking forward to that 4-star review in **APAK** you mentioned you were doing.

And, Burb: You're right, we did run off at the mouth a bit. But, you know how it is: we live in the sun, and it effects our reason and self-control. Besides, we knew that you'd want to read all of our fine fannish wit and wisdom, so therefore we refrained from editing.

Thank you, Walt. Actually, I heard you stand facing West to cheer, when you read *The Pun*.

Say, this is fun. I could just move through our mailing list, replying to the things that everyone meant to write, but just didn't get around to mailing. When you see me at Corflu, you can tell me how well I did at figuring out which of many possible compliments you intended to include in your letter.

Marcy Waldie

I am *very* excited about attending my first Corflu. For nearly two years I have listened to Arnie and Joyce rattle off anecdotes about loyal fanzine fans. I am impressed to a point where I hope I don't embarrass myself due to ignorance. Be gentle.

All of us have LOCed more in our heads than on paper. It builds to where it can become a guilt trip. But since it happens to most of us One advantage of being in APA-V is that we verbally communicate our opinions and comments re others' zines. When I grow up and get into the full swing of zine-ing (mailing lists, etc.), I hereby promise to DO MY BEST at LOCing.

Ken Forman

The other night the NLE Boys were talking. We realized that Andy Hooper had

never loced *Nine Lines Each*. We didn't expect everyone to respond, but Andy doesn't even mention us in his WAHF column in **APAK**. We were dismayed.

After all, we owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Hooper. He is the inspiration for NLE. With Andy pubbing his zine so regularly we were motivated to put something out. Of course, we didn't feel the need to do more than nine lines per editor, but I've always felt that NLE is an experiment in absurdity. After a few issues, we started receiving cards and letters from such notables as Bruce Pelz, Harry Warner, and Robert Lichtman, but not from Hooper.

We couldn't decide if we should dedicate an entire issue of NLE to our inspiration or completely ignore him. JoHn was the voice of wisdom when he suggested that ignoring him would just lower ourselves to Andy's level. No, the plan is to mention that famous Seattle fan in every issue.

Maybe not.

JoHn Hardin

Mentioning Hooper's name in every issue of NLE? Really Ken, isn't that a bit much now that we've erected the shrine and commissioned a statue of Andy? I mean, we don't want him to feel obligated to write us because we keep persecuting him. We want him to write to us because he appreciates the fun we're having, and because he is excited by our enthusiasm.

Perhaps we should just go ahead and persecute him.

Belle Churchill

Having appeared only in local print I didn't expect any letters to answer and have no prepared statements to regret. After being informed that the possibility exists, I will be prepared in the future to respond to any and all reactions to my rambles.

How far away are we talking? Do we have contacts in unheard of places? I think all this exposure might be a trifle off-putting, at least it will be when I believe in it a bit more.

Corflu is almost a reality. April aproachs on padded feet. I'll have faces to put with some of the names that have sailed over my head like puffs of reality. The excitement generated is growing by leaps and bounds.

I'll walk softly into this new world. A little help along the way would be accepted with as much grace as possible

John Hardin

Arnie, if we can keep people from noticing that only a week has passed between this editorial and the mailing of *Wild Heirs 3* we'll have a case. Yeah, shame on you people. Where's all our much deserved egoboo? Only now are we recovering from the Terrible Frost of 93, and you bastards won't even write to us. Look at us. We're sensitive. It shows on our fannish faces. And we notice when you don't LoC us. We try to be strong, but it hurts. Where's the friendly missive from Robert Lichtman? Where's the sharp eye and wit of Jack Speer? We haven't even heard from Harry Warner, Jr, a man who LoCs **FOSFAX** and **White Trash**, but apparently doesn't have the time for a group of sensitive, earnest, intelligent, charming, good looking, modest fans. What do you care? We're only hosting Corflu, fer ghod's sake; it's not like we're doing anything *important*. Bastards. If I weren't so nice, I wouldn't be so nice.

Arnie Katz

What, you may ask yourself, is fandom coming to? I lead off with a good solid guilt-trip calculated to have every fan quiver with mortification until they have written a letter of comment to **Wild Heirs**. I thought the barely discernible threat of dire

consequences was an especially deft touch.

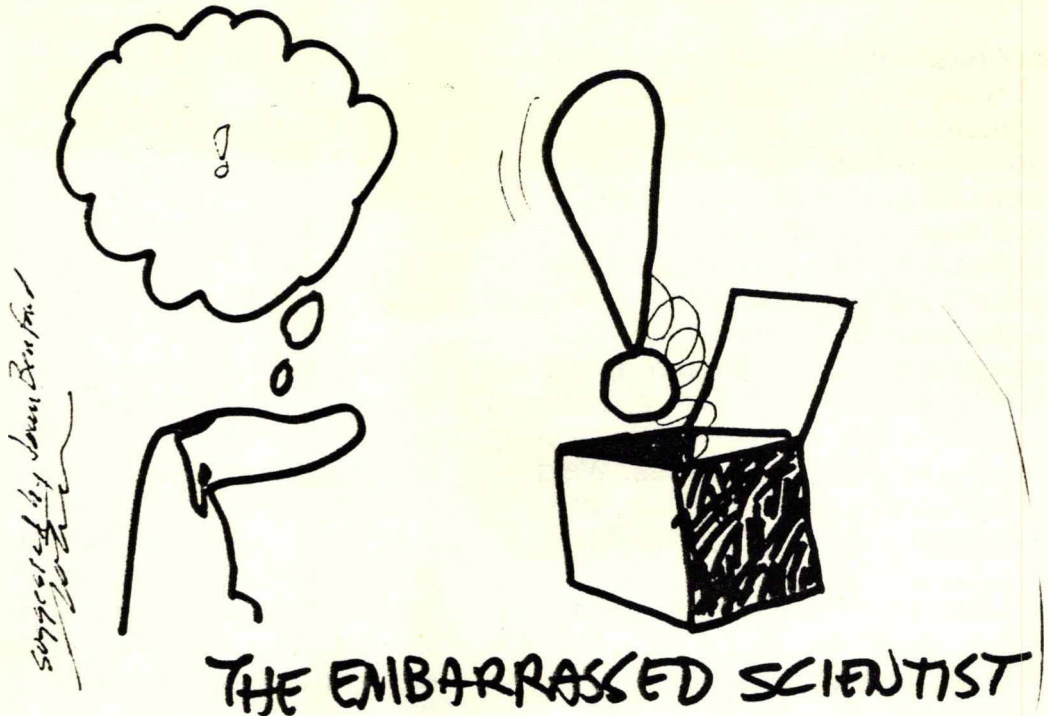
So I get things rolling. And just when I start to admire my handiwork, my supposedly stouthearted co-editors fall all over themselves to let you off the hook!

I swear this is not the way I taught them to behave. You have to excuse these people. They can't help it. They labor under the fearsome burden of Rampant Niceness. My attempt to instill feelings of inadequacy and debt worked on their gentle, fragile minds before my words could exert their wondrous effect on you.

So let's forget my original whining. Clearly, that will no longer do the job of energizing you to send that letter of comment.

I've got another idea. You wouldn't want anything untoward to happen to these friendly, delightful people. If I don't see some LoC action, and pretty damn quick, I will be mean to one or more of these naive young fans. Maybe more than one. I'm not sure some of them will be able to stand up to my Frown of Disapproval or the Sneer of Disdain. It may break their tiny fannish hearts.

Believe me, you don't want Ken Forman or Tom Springer's tear stained pillow on your conscience. Now, read the rest of this **Wild Heir**, laugh in all the right places, and send us a letter of comment. Only you can save these open-hearted and lovable young fans from the searing fire of my disappointment.



Going into the West

Part IV

By Joyce Katz

Our flight was late in departing, and we paced the Kennedy Airport impatient to leave. Once aboard, there were still delays, and I gazed at the skyline with few regrets; my heart had already flown west. As time passed, me glancing anxiously at my watch, I worried more about Slugger, already in the baggage hold.

But time passed as it always does, and soon we were lofting over the city. As we veered toward the sinking sun, I caught a final glimpse of Beautiful Brooklyn under our wings.

I've never had any complaints about New York City. I was never robbed, raped, mugged, homeless, or abused. I always had work; I made a good marriage there; I built a career in New York. The City owes me nothing, and I owe it a great deal.

I didn't take time to be swamped with memories, but I did feel a churning as I said goodbye to the past 19 years.

Arnie was jumpy, but he picked up a book and tried to concentrate as we winged toward our destinies. Even Bill, whose ability to sleep on planes is legendary, was restless. We'd each sit quietly in our own thoughts, then rouse to exchange a round of enthusiastic burbles about Las Vegas.

This time when we flew over Missouri, I kept my eyes chasing the moon. My future lay somewhere there ahead of the plane, and I wanted to see it arrive.

THIS IS IT?
THAT'S ALL
I GET? ONE
LITTLE THIN
HEART?



Waiting for our luggage, I only had eyes for one container: a helpful airline baggage handler, all smiles and solicitousness, carried Slugger's cage to me. He was unhappy: a wail came from the cage. But he had been cared for: there was sand, and someone had followed my urgent message painted on his tag "Please water me in Phoenix." I put my fingers between the bars to calm him, and his sad song quieted as I held his cage in my arms.

Our realtor Cathy Bittinger met us at the plane. We loaded gear into her BMW, and hired a limo to take us and the rest of the stuff to Bill's new condo.

We carried a great deal of luggage through with us on the plane: a mistake, since it was costly, and it would have been better to lessen the load and shipped it through. The limo driver grumbled about our gypsy-like load of boxes, bags and Slugger's king-sized carrier sitting on my lap. "A car like this isn't meant for this kind of load..." We hushed his worries with a stiff tip, and he happily helped us carry the goods into the condo.

A year or so later, one night while picking up someone at the airport, I saw another couple, surrounded by pet carrier and boxes, and knew instantly I was seeing our own arrival again.

Bill's new place already had its furniture sitting in place and Cathy had stocked the frig with fruit and sodas and snacks. We were exhausted, but too excited to settle down. Instead we set up Slugger's cat box (new sand courtesy of Cathy) and let him from his cage. He stalked out on wobbly legs; even he was cramped from the long trip.

Eventually we settled into our beds, waiting for the sun to rise on our new lives.

Federal Express came through like troopers the next day: our three computers came out of the packing crates and our work never missed a beat. By 10 a.m. we were all writing the final articles and news for the next issue of the magazine.

When we'd planned the move, we knew it would occur right in the middle of our deadline period. It was simply impossible to take time off: the issue must be finished on time. So we arranged the move to have the least disruption in our working lives as possible. We actually only had one day downtime: the moving/flying day.

Federal Express impressed me a lot during this. They kept to their schedule, and nothing was damaged. We couldn't have done it without them.

After a few hours writing, I went to the corner to use a payphone, to line up a rental car. Ended up having to take a cab back to airport row, but a nice little 4-door sedan soon had me wheeling my way back to Bill's place. I kept it for a week, got my NY license changed to Nevada, then leased a LeBaron

and returned the rental.

My driving skills were still fairly unevolved, but Vegas is delightfully easy. In the weeks to come, as I'd swerve and sway my way through the streets, often lost and almost always frightened, Vegans would just smile and wave me ahead, as I blundered into wrong lanes.

One blistering trip took Bill and I to a truck stop. Lost and already scared, I was suddenly in the middle lane between two triple-van behemoths. My terror reached its highest point in the history of my driving. In the long run, it was good: I was never again that afraid.

The previous owner of our house hadn't yet vacated despite her promise to have the place cleared by the time we arrived. Didn't happen, though. "Some friends came in and I decided to party for the weekend instead," she told us.

This left us pretty much up the creek. The van was due to arrive in three days...and we had no place to put our belongings. Ended up we stored our stuff in Bill's garage. This was a financial disaster, of course. But, as ever, Cathy came through for us. She knew a couple of guys with a truck. When we finally did get possession of the house a week later, we hired them to reload and move all the furniture and boxes. It cost an addition \$800 we hadn't planned on, but we were fixed.

But, for the first seven days, Arnie and I and Slugger stayed with Bill. We got the phones turned on (the rest of the utilities were prearranged in our first trip) We got Bill settled in, did the magazine, and spent most afternoons exploring our new home town.

The thing is, the place is beautiful. Long sunny days slipped into long twilights. The surrounding rim of mountains changed their makeup as often as a Vegas showgirl; every hour's angle of the sun, every passing cloud, showed them in new light.

As we drove around town, we marveled at the pretty buildings. Most of Vegas' shopping centers and strip stores have a vaguely Spanish motif, exotic and pleasing to our eyes. And the graceful palms added a bizarre touch to people used to the sturdy trees of New York State.

Autumn seemed to never come; the long slow summer stretched on with a stately and unhurried pace. We splashed and played in

Bill's pool for the first week, then in ours all the way into November. We used the hottub the rest of the winter: our hot thick New York blood laughed at the Vegas winter. Old timers (anyone who's been here five years or more) said it'd be different next year...and it was...but for that first winter, we revelled in the mild season.

Each afternoon we'd hop in the car and explore a little more of the city. We found a good comic store, Page After Page, in the phonebook, and that was a once-a-week trip.

The three of us stuck to each other pretty close that Fall. We found it wasn't quite as easy to make friends as it had been in New York. People tend to think new comers are transient, and don't get involved. I was hoping for a welcome wagon or something but no neighbors called. So I painted on my best smile and called on five or six of the closest. They all received me politely, even with friendly attitudes. And when I said, perhaps we'll have a block party, they said, great, we'd like to come. But it started no chains of neighborliness: polite, but aloof, each stayed in his own castle.

Most nights the three of us had dinner together. Late each afternoon Arnie'd ask, "What's for dinner?" I

quickly went through my repertory and into repetition, and the inevitable response, "Oh, you look tired, we'll eat out."

That's the real Vegas vice, you know. Most people think it's gambling, but the fact is, though most Vegans gamble some, they quickly get that jones under control. If not they go under.

But food's a different matter. There's a Vegas axiom the residents all repeat to each other, like a Golden Rule. "It's cheaper to eat out than to cook at home." It's not true, of course, but all Vegans live by it.

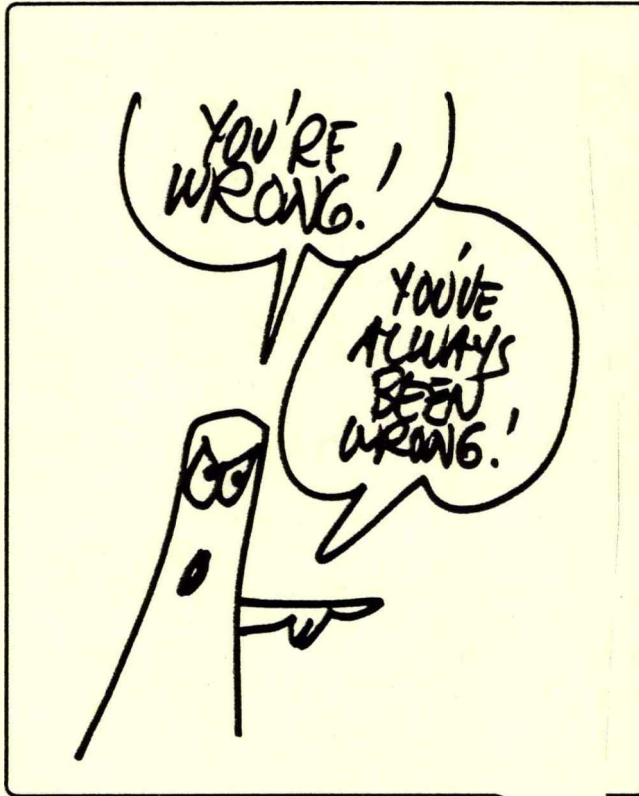
We worked our way through the casino coffeeshops. Sahara won for club sandwiches, but Riviera had the best chicken in a pot. We zeroed in on Palace Station's Iron Horse Cafe for the best 24 hour menu. One day, driving through town we spotted the New York Deli. That satisfied those cravings until, just as suddenly, one day we found it closed... it was years until we located the Celebrity Deli.

On Thanksgiving, Arnie and I went to Phoenix to visit his family, and Bill spent it with Becky and Dennis, our first Vegan friends. Christmas, Bill went to his family in NY; and Arnie and I talked about, maybe, possibly, going back to Fandom.

And when the New Year rang in 1990, a new decade and a new life, we toasted ourselves and gazed to the future. We knew that changes would come, but could not

imagine what they would be.

Soon: *Going into the West Part 5*



An Occasional Column

CHarrisma

By Chuch Harrish

I guess, over the years, I must have bored some of you silly with bits about my alternative fandom. Long before I was enrolled as a University musketeer, I spent my early years chasing the Arthurian Legend, searching for Excalibur, The Holy Grail, Guinevere's chastity belt and other Round Table relics. I think now, though, that finally, I have left all that behind. We went to Cornwall about a year ago, and for the first time ever, there was no pilgrimage to Tintagel to stand in the sacred ruins of Uther Pendragon's castle.

I think doubts first crossed my mind when, on the last visit we clambered around the headland again to Merlin's Cave -- the one that lies at the bottom of the cliff on which the castle is built. There are about 20 authentic, attested, absolutely genuine Merlin's Caves scattered around Cornwall, along with a couple more over the county boundary in Devon. Most of them have genuine, antique turnstiles and ticket booths.

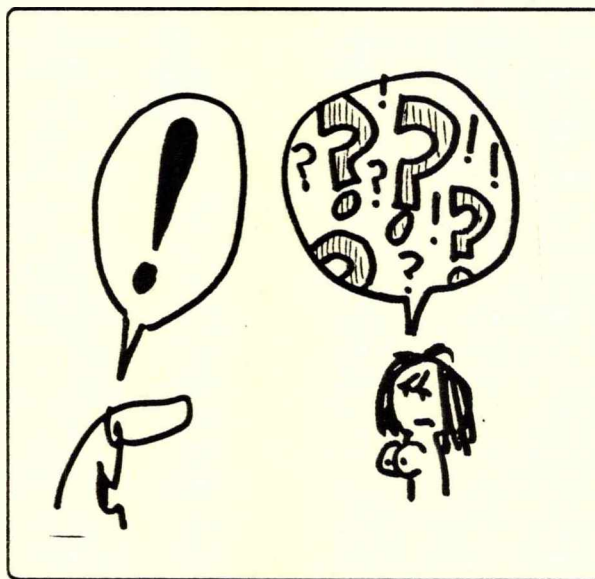
This one has always seemed the most probable. Much has eroded away, but there are still traces of steps cut into the cliff leading down to the cave, and it doesn't take much imagination to see young Wart skipping downstairs to visit his tutor below.

Well, maybe...

That's until you get to the cave, though. As caves go, it ain't very much at all. It's not only open-ended -- it connects small beaches on either side of the headland -- but the sea surges right through it at high tide. You stand

there, trying to be awestruck like a True Believer, blasphemously wondering why the old chap didn't cast a spell to raise the roof a little so that his pointy hat didn't get knocked off, and while he was about it, fix up some sort of heating system before we all die of rheumatism and maybe magick up an armchair, and all of a sudden the tide is gurgling over your Hush Puppies, your socks and halfway up your trouser legs, and sod the reverence, you have to wade for it before it's over your waist, over your head, and you're the Final Sacrifice without so much as a punctuational full stop to your name.

"Nearly another Chuckkaquiddick," said Susan, which is not quite as hilarious or topical now as it was then.



It's all very difficult. Sure, the castle ruins are still there, but they are Norman and Arthur could never have been more than a local chieftain... if he ever existed at all.

And Arthur's grave, on the banks of the River Camel, just a few yards upstream at Slaughterbridge where he fought his last battle, could well have belonged to some other Celtic warlord slain when the Saxons invaded and conquered Cornwall in

825 A.D.

Yes, sure, I know it *could* be Arthur. There's a huge weathered slab over the grave covered with faint, illegible runes half obscured by moss and 20th Century graffiti (AA loves FL and suchlike), but it could just as easily be someone else.

Once the worm of doubt creeps in, you can never really get rid of it. Finally, you are not a

Believer at all and would be Cast Out of the Latterday Knights of the Round Table if you hadn't stopped paying your dues some 45 years ago...

Coming home this time, we found that, as it was the height of the tourist season and the roads were packed solid with traffic, the county council had chosen this Saturday to renew the white lines down the middle of the road, closing off half the damn road to do so. Rather than join the 20-mile queue inching its way across Bodmin Moor, we swung off and took the tiny, unclassified lanes across the moor. We hoped to join the main road further on, ahead of the jam.

The lane happened to take us past Dozmary Pool...

It's a bit like a Stephen King scenario. It's sort of foreboding, kind of gently weird. There are no springs or streams to feed the pool. It just appears natural in the windy, natural basin. Everyone knows that it's bottomless. It's an eerie place even on the sunniest day; no fish, no birds, just the wind and the water.

It was there that Sir Bevidere, after a lot of pissing about, returned Excalibur to the Lady of the Lake.

Bevidere had carried the dying Arthur away after the battle of Camlann, and the King ordered him to throw Excalibur into the nearby pool.

Bevidere was no idiot. There was a gold hilt studded with diamonds as big as the Ritz, emeralds, rubies, pearls -- more than you'd find in HM the Q's hat on Coronation Day -- so he hid it and reported back to the King to say that he'd thrown it into the water. Arthur asked him what he had seen.

"Nothing at all, except the ripples on the lake," said Sir B.

Arthur was very sore and sent him back to carry out his orders, but once again he returned with the same story. Arthur, in spite of his dreadful wounds, threatened to get up, throw the sword into the lake himself and then strangle Sir B. with his bare hands.

Bevidere realizing that -- Wow! -- there was some deep mystical significance to all this performance, finally decided to do as he was told.

He threw the sword as far as he could, and a hand and an arm in white samite rose from the lake, caught the sword, brandished it three times and then slowly drew it down into

the bottomless lake never to be seen again.

So there you are. Arthur, happy in Avalon with "the fairest in the land," probably got it back later -- we all get our rewards in heaven -- but as usual, there were a couple of hopeful metal detector people still skirting the muddy edges of the pool.

And worse still for me, still a smidgen of a Believer, there was a herd of cows standing up to their shoulders in water near the very center of this bottomless pool, just like a band of hippopotomi...

You win some, you lose some. Exit Arthur, Mallory, Alf Lord Tennishoe and his "Idylls of a King"... and next time, instead of Arthur, I'll tell you (at tedious length) about the lost Roman town of Bannaventa, chock full of gold the legions looted from the Iceni, and no more than *two miles* from Lake Crescent, ***two miles I tell you***, at the junction of Watling Street and the Fosse Way.

No, realio, trulio... Gold! Jewels! Queen Boadecia's 22-carat cuirass (42D cup). It's lying there waiting for us. Tacitus, or someone, has written all about it. It's in Latin, of course, but you can get translations down at the library.

All we have to do is find the right field, find the right spot, get the shovel out of the boot, brush off the earth and haul the stuff home. And don't you dare laugh; there's the ruins of a Roman villa on Borough Hill, just up by the golf course, and people are always digging up coins and stuff. You gotta believe.

All you need is faith, patience and a metal detector.

And, hey, you heard about that hoard of gold torcs -- Saxon necklace things worth a million zillion pounds -- that a Believer with a metal detector traced on a farm near Vincent Clarke?

Bottom line, that's 1,480,000 dollars, *Minimum!!!* I could hire Concorde and fly you all to Las Vegas to meet Burbee. Buy a photocopier for everyone on the mailing list... or take my new metal detector back to Cornwall and join those lonely dedicated souls skirting the muddy banks of Dozmary Pool

But no, I don't really believe now in King Arthur, Merlin or Excalibur. It's all childish silliness, of course.

But still...

LISTEN, THIS
ONE WILL
REALLY SLAY
YOU!



The subject this month is Las Vegas, right? Okay, specifically, Fabulous LaS Vegas.

Hm. Seems like I've written my impressions of this town more than once before, over the couple of years plus since Joy-Lynd and I moved here from parts eastward. Maybe it's time to give it some of the perspective I've presumably gained in the meantime.

I'm not at all sure the LaS Vegas—that is, the money money money [...makes the world go around...] aspect of it—is all that appropriate to Joy-Lynd and me, since we don't gamble, and we don't have the wherewithal to live the kind of life that revolves around the high rollers and big spenders. Nor do we work where those who do indulge in those lifestyles do. Well, Joy-Lynd has a friend, met through the Las Vegas PC Users Group, who makes her living gambling, and another who deals. But the closest we ourselves get is when we walk through the casinos on our way to the buffets...

For our own lifestyles, we are saving some money in terms of living, relative to what we would have been spending back in New York or even in Cleveland. It's not so much cheaper to live that we're banking loads of security for our later years [...coming soon, to

OK, SO WHY DID THE
PERVERT CROSS THE
ROAD?
HE HAD HIS DICK
STUCK IN A CHICKEN.



A Column by

ROSS

Chamberlain

Dither

a theater near you...], but we're doing okay, barring emergencies, for the time being. The aforementioned buffets are a godsend for those occasions we just want to eat out— The Rio's Carnival Buffet, which just recently expanded from extraordinary to fantastic, is promoting itself with even lower prices than usual this month, which further enhances its appeal. Truth to tell, however, I think both Joy-Lynd and I feel it has so expanded that it's lost something in the process. Price of progress?

To those of us from other parts of the country, before we came here, I think the image of Las Vegas was entirely composed of the Fremont Street/Glitter Gulch area for the exterior, and, inside, always directly accessible from the street, without doors, there were rows of one-armed bandits, interspersed with crowds around green roulette and craps tables. We knew there were also showrooms where the headliners like Frank and Wayne and Tom and Elvis performed, but I, for one, was never certain how they fit into the rest of the environment. Who knew the casinos—especially those along the Strip—were so big! And they (you know, the Ubiquitous They) always told us Las Vegas was set in the middle of the desert, so we had this image of climbing up over a sand dune and seeing this Neon City glittering like a jeweled oasis in the midst of nothing...

Last year, maybe the year before, now, when Joy-Lynd and I were showing an out-of-town friend around, we stopped at that World's Biggest Tourist Trap—er, Shop—on Sahara and Las Vegas Blvd. They had a poster with a neat overhead view of a very detailed, very compressed Las Vegas. I mean, Lake Mead and Boulder/Hoover Dam are adjacent—and believe it or not, there's Ken and Tom and Ben and JoHn and other adventurers rafting (okay, so it's not a canoe) in the river just below the Dam. (Well, I think that's who's in there.) Stupid's Tower is complete; and so are the Luxor and the MGM Grand—however, so also are the Dunes towers, and there's no Treasure Island... It's signed "Rupert '92"— *sigh* You try to plan ahead, but...

Anyway, we didn't buy the poster then, but this year I acquired it and some other touristy souvenir-type things when I was

working on the Corflu tee-shirt design. It adorns my office wall in front of me as I write, and, sure enough, it makes Las Vegas look like a Neon Oasis in a wilderness of sand.

Oh, in this poster, the desert is dotted with saguaro cacti... Well, this Rupert may not actually be a local, huh...

There's nothing but desert west of Rainbow, until the horizon, which is edged with Red Rock Canyon and, looming behind it, Mount Charleston. I guess, in '92, that would be closer to the truth than now, and perhaps, in the perception of some, it's still true. But generally, residential areas are ignored—the Spaghetti Bowl, too, edges on the desert. Arizona Charlie's manages to find itself located on Valley View, too, so the accuracy wanders even for things that are there.

Anybody could find things to nitpick about what was left out of the poster, since it is basically a cartoon rendition of the city; indeed, it's rather startling, on examination, to see some of the things left in. For instance, there's a big billboard for Triple J Comics, Hobbies and Toys at the corner of Tropicana and Maryland Parkway... Hmmm.

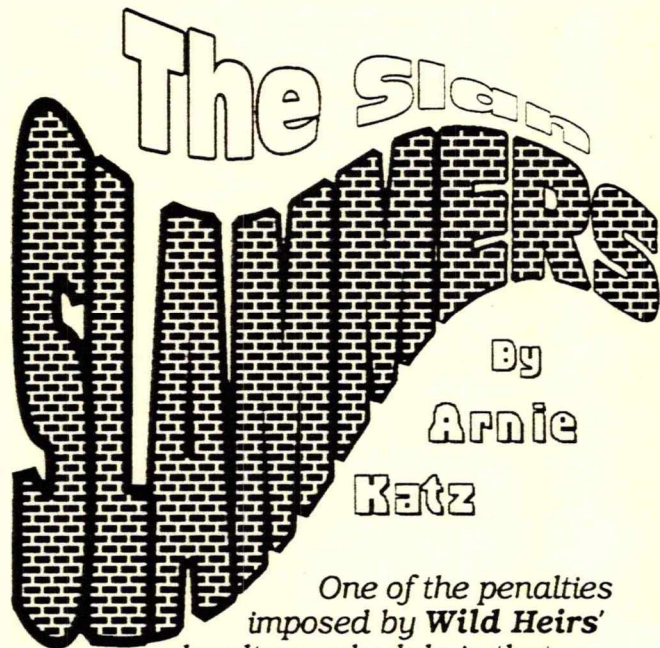
So, Joy-Lynd and I have a little better idea of Las Vegas now than we had before, at least physically. As to the social ethos, that's another story. Her difficulty in finding a satisfactory job appears to be part of it; the "it's less what you know than who you know" syndrome has apparently permeated beyond the casino/hotel aspects of the city into the general job market. However, I'm not sure but that, while we encountered it here, this is not also a general situation nationwide in this era of homelessness and joblessness—the since-Reagan officially undocumented unemployment index. One wonders what, in the future, this period will be called, as the era within the decade between the great stock market crash of 1929 and Pearl Harbor is called the Great Depression.

Depressing thought, eh? But hey, this is Las Vegas. We'll gamble that things get better. Right?

Right...

Remember the Neediest...

Write, and send, that letter of comment today!



*One of the penalties imposed by **Wild Heirs'** desultory schedule is that we haven't had many opportunities to keep fandom current on all our activities. One such exploit of the Fandom of Good Cheer is described in this article, which was planned for early fall 1994 publication.*

Bill Kunkel loves professional wrestling. His interest is currently low, but the spectacle of the pseudo-sport still fascinates him. When he came over after the July 4th weekend, he was breathless with excitement about a stunt the World Wrestling Federation had presented to celebrate the holiday.

He told me that the WWF had presented a Yoka Zuna Slam Challenge on board the aircraft carried Intrepid moored in New York

Harbor. All the promotion's top names, plus strongmen from other sports, competed to see who could body slam the 500-lb. Oriental matman. A few came close, including Bill Fralic of the National Football League, but no one could hoist Yoko Zuna into the air and put his back to the mighty ship's deck.

It looked like the WWF's top villain would triumph.

A helicopter swooped down and landed. Out bounded Lex Luger, in red, white, and blue trunks. Yesterday, he had been a vain heel called The Narcissist, but the promotion's needs had instantly transformed the muscular blonde ex-football player into the embodiment of the spirit of America.

Lugar slammed Yoko Zuna to the deck. This not only proved that Good is stronger than Evil, but also set up a lucrative pay-per-view title match between the two for the end of summer.

As Bill told me about this event, an unearthly light grew ever brighter in his eyes. The conclusion of his tale was only the prelude to a revelation. The proceeding had fired his imagination.

"The Vegrants should do something like that, something grand and fannish!" The Vegrants is what we call the informal association of about 20 local fans that has sprung up in the wake of our spring 1994 special projects and **Wild Heirs**.

"Put us on the local map," I seconded.

"We've got to have a slam contest!" He announced. "Who gets slammed?"

"Betty Huggins!" we shouted in unison. Betty is a diminutive Vietnamese woman whose physical stature is more suited to a career as a jockey. Bodyslamming her would be easy -- and fun. We could save our energy for publishing a fanzine account of our victory.

"No," Bill said coolly. Our frivolity had outraged our desert Barnum. "It must be someone who radiates power. Someone who seems... invincible!"

Names were thrown on the table and as quickly tossed away. Bill was getting frustrated, as he watched his glittering concept evaporate under the weight of our mental indolence.

The flood of candidates became a trickle. Then it ceased. The Vegrants looked at each other, hopeless and uncertain.

"Su Williams," I said softly.

"That's it! That's it!" Bill shouted.

Everyone nodded. The amazonian former Michigan fan would be our champion! At 6'1", the Junoesque divorcé has become one of the most popular Vegas fans over the last year, a mainstay of the Socials, a member of the Vegrants, and secretary of the city's formal club, SNAFFU.



The usually languid Potshot bounced excitedly on the sofa as he outlined the flourishes. Her 10-year-old son Johnny, Bill's partner-in-pugilism, would wave an American flag while hurling insults at the defeated wimps as his mother resisted their attempts to body slam her in our swimming pool.

"The Su Williams Slam Challenge would be a fannish event to remember," Bill vowed.

I forgot about it until the July 10th Social at our place. Something extraordinary happened. Su shocked me, and displayed her abundant good humor, by actually agreeing to let Bill promote this bizarre rite!

What else could I do? I volunteered to be lead announcer.

Under a cloudless summer sky, Las Vegas fandom assembles around the swimming pool. Rebecca Hardin distributes the four-page program book with Su Williams' picture on the front. It was a typical Social, so the crowd numbered over 50.

I step forward, portable microphone in hand. Among the Vegrants, we have a lot of audio equipment. We were using all of it to make this our new group's Finest Hour.

"Ladies and Gentlemen! Big Name Fans and Neos!" I roar into the black plastic mike. Bill's guitar amp insures that everyone at poolside, or anywhere in metropolitan Las Vegas, could hear. "Insurgent Ring Sports, Inc., in association with Las Vegrants Unlimited Limited, William Potshot Kunkel, head promoter present the Greatest Sporting Event in Fanhistory! Welcome to..." I paused for dramatic effect.

"... the Su Williams Challenge: Slan Slam Sunsplash!" I was proud. Try saying "Slan Slam Sunsplash" three times, and you'll know why. They greet this with applause. It is still tentative, more polite than enthusiastic.

"Su 'Wonderwoman' Williams, the Sultana of Slam, challenges Las Vegas fandom!

"She says a woman can be as mighty as a man.

"She claims she is the one irresistible force in science fiction fandom!

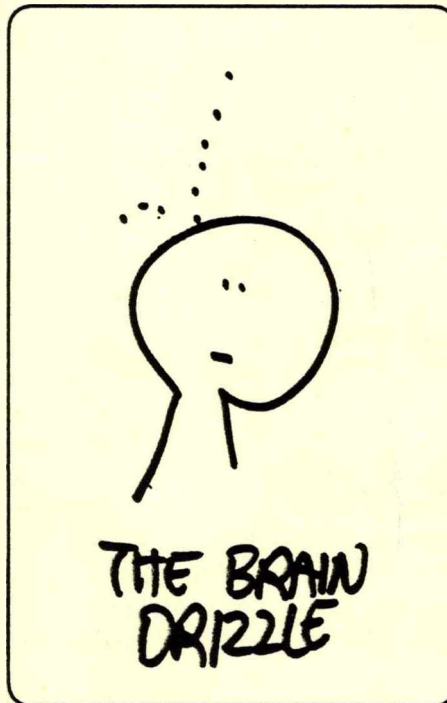
"She dares any brave fan to come forward and body slam her inside the wet and deadly Slan Slam Sunsplash Super Pool."

It's the pool we'd found in the backyard when we bought the place in 1989. I may have also exaggerated the pool's deadliness, though it does *not* have a child-proof fence.

"And now..." I throw my arms wide, like a preacher welcoming the healing spirit into the revival tent.

"...Let's.... start... slammin'!"

The onlookers begin clapping, steadily but



not very loud. The outdoor speakers boom into sudden life! "I am Woman, hear me roar in numbers too big to ignore," sang Petula Clark as only she can. Fortunately.

Su Williams, in her multi-colored swim garb walks slowly from the house to the pool. She is accompanied by her manager Bill Potshot Kunkel and 10-year-old Johnny Williams. He waves an American flag bigger than he is. As though they'd been watching wrestling all their lives, the fans breakout into the chant, "USA! USA!"

"From the Motor City of Detroit, Michigan, the Woman No Man Can Slam. Su Wonderwoman Williams!" I shout. She waves to the cloud, flips her hair back with a toss of the head. They love it! They began whistling and stomping their feet. Of course, that could be because they are all barefoot and the Nevada sun has heated the concrete decking to 120 degrees.

Kunkel grabs the microphone. He glares at everyone. "Be quiet you fakefans!" he snarls. "This is Su Wonderwoman Williams, you fat-assed faneds! You stand when a lady walks in! Stand up you porcine pencil pushing pukes!" Everyone is already standing, of course, because we have removed all chairs from the pool area. Bill turns a blind eye to this, and his surliness produces a few catcalls.

"That's right you grungy game nuts," he screams into the microphone. "You are in the presence of a real woman! Su Wonderwoman Williams! She's six-foot-one of twisted steel and sex appeal!"

"She's the fan with the plan! The fan with the Power! Too sweet..." is that an imitation of the Dusty Rhodes Southern Lisp?

"To be a man, you've got to slam this fan!" he announced. He raises his left hand. One finger points skyward. "Remember this! When you are stylin' and profilin', it all comes down to this..."

"Whether you like it...
"...or you don't like..."

"...you'd better learn to love it...
"...because it's the best thing goin'!
"...wooooooooooooo!" he howled.

The crowd yells their defiance. I step forward and recapture the microphone. "Let the challenge begin!"

Sue Williams climbs into the pool and stands in water up to her waist. Don Miller, official poolside photographer, moves into position to capture the entire event on video tape.

At first, no one moves to join her. There's a rustle from the back, and the cry, "Woody! Woody! Woody!" spreads through the throng. Their hero approaches!

"The first challenger of the afternoon," I say, "is the Living Jophan... Woody Bernardi!" As Woody shoulders through the throng, fans reach out and touch his arm and shoulder, almost reverently. "Ghu be with you," says Marci McDowell, as Woody strides past her to his rendezvous with destiny in the watery arena.

Woody slips into the pool and shambles through the sparkling, blue water toward Su. She smiles and crooks a beckoning finger toward her. "Come here, sweet thing," she purrs with deceptive solicitude.

Woody blushes as referee Ron Pehr explains the mechanics of the contest and the grip he must use in his attempt to hoist the titanic trufanne off her feet and onto her back.

He gingerly grips Su as instructed.

He strains.

He grunts.

He tugs and heaves.

Su Williams, with no apparent effort, frustrates every maneuver.

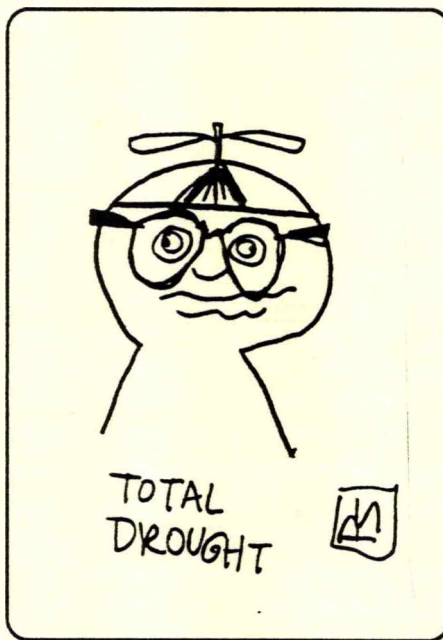
A dejected, defeated Woody climbs from the pool!"

"Go make a telephone call, ya loser!"

Johnny shrieks as Woody heads back into the house, hunched over in defeat. "Pay yer parking tickets, Richard Petty!"

"One up, one down!" Bill trumpets. "You silly boy fans will have to do better than that! Su Williams, champion supreme!"

One by one they enter the pool.



Ken Forman.
Karl Kreder.
David Alred.
They try.
They fail.

With Johnny's jeers ringing in their ears, they slink off to find Bengay to soothe aching muscles. And a can or a bowl to salve dented egos.

"Well?" Potshot crows. "Well?" Can't we get no competition in this lousy fandom?" He sounded offended at the puny attempts made to bodyslam Sue, whom he repeatedly refers to as "The Herculean Honey" and "Super-Strong Siren".

The crowd is in an ugly mood. After hours of goading from Bill and Johnny, they are more than ready to see Su Williams slap the water back first.

But no one comes forward.
No one.

I wade to the center of the pool. I start to raise Su's hand in total victory.

I am just about to end the exhibition when the speakers crackle.

Da, da, da-dun-da. Da-duh-da-duh-da-duh-da-dun-da!" The opening strains of the heavy metal anthem "Iron Man" shake the entire yard!

The earth shakes as Frank Harwood and JoHn Hardin trot from separate entrances to opposite ends of the pool. They pause at the edge. The sun gleams off multi-colored face paint.

They leap into the air and cannon ball into the water at the same instant!

The crowd goes wild!

The competition is not over after all.

JoHn moves toward Su. "Are you ready to be slammed?" he taunts her. The crowd cheers. He cups his hand behind the ear and bends forward to listen to his public bellow their approval.

"He's a friend to the poor, you know."
Joyce says to Raven,

Under my direction, JoHn assumes the stance, seizes Su, and starts to muscle her up at of the water.

One foot free of the bottom.

Now she stands on tiptoe. The strain is written on her normally serenely pleasant face. JoHn is a serious threat, and she knows it.

The crowd urges him on to complete what

he has begun.

One Williams leg clears the water. The other is rising.

No!

JoHn falls backward, exhausted.

Ray Waldie and Ross Chamberlain rush forward with a stretcher. JoHn drags himself onto the pool deck. They drag him the rest of the way onto the stretcher and began to haul the defeated fan humorist away.

I lean down, extending the mike to the vanquished trufan.

"I just want to thank all my fans, the little Hardins, for sticking up for me," he whispers. "I will return!"

Ross and Ray haul him away, amid appreciative applause.

"Iron Man" plays again, even louder than before.

The crowd knows what is coming.

"Here comes Happy Harwood!" I declare to the audience.

In an instant, he stands beside his undefeated adversary.

"I will do this," he says, "for the greater glory of science fiction and Las Vegas Fandom!" In the background, Aileen Forman breaks into an a capella rendition of "The Insurgent Anthem." In this, the climactic moment of the greatest sports entertainment exhibition in fanhistory, she has at last achieved Fluffiness.

The crowd goes wild.

Frank assumes the position.

Bill nods to Su.

Frank's Valet, Joyce Katz, steps forward and says...

"Are you asleep?" Joyce's accusing voice lashed me to alertness. "You were asleep!"

"No, no, no," I replied. "I was concentrating on the show."

"With your eyes closed," she said.

"Well, I'm awake now," I said with the smugness of someone with logic on his side. I turned my attention back to the television and tried to pick up the strands of the plot.

During the commercial break, I thought about the Su Williams Challenge. "Maybe some day," I told myself. "maybe some day." But I knew this performance would never play anywhere but in the ramshackle theater of my mind.

My first visit to Las Vegas was in August of 1988. I was helping my sister move From Bullhead City, Arizona to St. George, Utah (god knows why) and we stopped in Las Vegas for the night, at some small, funky motel near the Hacienda. This was before the Excalibur or the Mirage had been built, and that was about as far as one could be away from Las Vegas and still be considered the strip.

Anyway, I was in a serious funk over some girl, and coming down off a brief speed jag, so I really didn't feel like sleeping. I crept out of the room, walked to the next convenience store and bought fresh batteries for my walkman, upon which I had been listening obsessively to this mixed tape of Black Flag, Blondie, B-52s, and assorted thrash metal.

Thus fortified, I hiked up the strip to Caesar's Palace. Las Vegas was a little different then. The first time I went into Caesar's Palace was the first and last time I ever felt under-dressed in a casino. The place was elegant; no, opulent, in a way I had never encountered in a casino before. There is no casino left in town, save perhaps the Desert Inn, where one can go dressed up and not be out of place. It seems like the only people in ties are the dealers and the only people in suits are pit bosses. I don't know if it's a function of me changing or Las Vegas changing, but none of the casinos have that feel anymore.

Two years later I was living in Las Vegas. Having lost the lucrative job I moved here for, I was working in the food court of a mall on the strip. One of my co-workers came into a huge cache of Flamingo Hilton fun-book coupons (full of freebies for tourists); he probably stole

Bheer and Loafing in Las Vegas

By
JOHN HARDIN



them. This is where I discovered the free drink gravy train. Since the coupons were good for any kind of drink, we would go to the Rik - Sha lounge and order huge, multiple-alcohol, tourist drinks; two a piece, from the poor cocktail waitresses. We never had any money, so couldn't tip the girls. Fortunately, the coupons said "gratuity included" so my conscience never overwhelmed me, and they never ratted on us for being there every night.

When those drinks were gone, we went next door, to O'Shea's Casino, which was owned by Hilton. In the Flamingo fun book, there was a coupon for a free drink and funbook from O'Shea's. On the street in front of O'Shea's, they had cute girls handing out little scratch-off contest cards. Every card was a winner and the most common prize was -you guessed it- a free drink. So we would go in, get our O'Shea's funbooks, which naturally contained one coupon for a free drink, and head to the bar, where we would soak up six or seven of the strongest drinks they would serve us. Eventually the bartenders grew to recognize us, and most were cool about it, even though these coupons were supposed to be for tourists, and not grievously abused by penniless boozers. It was cheap entertainment.

Casinos are entertaining places, if you're desperate enough. I used to walk through the casinos, behind the ranks of people stuffing money (which I didn't have) into slot machines, and proclaim "gambling is an addiction," just loud enough to be heard over the din of the casino. It was subliminal warfare to me at the time, but looking back on it, it seems more like sour grapes cause I didn't have any money to play with.

I also silver mined aggressively. This had nothing to do with panning and everything to do with dipping my fingers into the coin return of every slot machine I encountered. Some of those machines leaked like sieves, and it wasn't too uncommon to get seven or eight bucks out of the coin return of a machine which someone had played for a few hours. Small change, but in the land of the \$1.99 all-you-can-eat buffet, eight dollars goes a long way. Unfortunately, casinos frown on this kind of behavior. It's not technically illegal, but the casinos will permanently 86 those they catch. I was only caught once, and it wasn't in Las Vegas.

My roommate and I used to traipse from casino to casino, silver mining, scouring the floors for dropped coins or bills, looking for credits on machines, hoping to find enough money to eat. That we always did was not so much a testament to our perseverance, but the unbelievable way money could be found in a casino, if one knew where to look.

I'm glad that my life as a scavenger in the casino ecology is over. I still tend to automatically check machines for credits, and I scan the floors for the occasional dropped dollar token, and my hands have an unfortunate tendency to involuntarily explore the coin returns of video poker machines, but these things are just vestiges; survival schemes living on in the form of bad habits.....uh, and that's what Las Vegas means to me. : }

Las Vegas has gambling, girls, glamour and glitz. We have fans, fun and frolic; we also have wind. I know Chicago is nicknamed the windy city, but Vegas, being in a great basin between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevadas, experiences some tremendous winds.

Fortunately we don't get many hurricanes or Vegas would be in Idaho, instead. Okay, so what do you do if you live in a city with warm weather and (somewhat) reliable winds? You go fly a kite, of course. Being fans, and being technophiles, and being Las Vegas residents, we couldn't fly just any kites. Our kites of choice are stunt kites.

Stunt kites, hyper-kites, stunters, two-line kites, they are known by many different names. One thing they all have in common is that they are controllable. Sure, all kites give the flyer some level of control, but stunters are completely under the control of the flyer.

Whereas most kites are anchored by a single string, tethered at a central balance point, stunters have two (or sometimes four) lines attached by a harness that distributes the pull to strong points on the kite. Most are made of nylon or cordura, have graphite or fiberglass spars and use high tensile strength lines. To fly, they require steady wind (between 2 and 30 MPH, it varies depending on the kite), an open field, and a little practice.

Anyone who has flown a single line kite knows the joy of watching your brightly colored piece of paper or cloth bobbing gently on a light breeze, slowly fluttering back and forth, bobbing, fluttering, just sitting there, not doing anything, sitting in the sky without doing much, suspended in the sky like a pigmented piece of paper. Boring. I love to introduce such kite fliers to two-line kites. The difference is so remarkable that I just have to remark on it.

When a novice first picks up the handles, the first thing they experience is frustration, and concern. The scenario usually goes something like...

It's a beautiful, breezy day. The flyer has his kite strings out and he's attached the brightly colored sail to one end. He marches to the other end where the handles are and with a gentle tug, launches the kite into the sky.

The first thing the novice notices is that the kite doesn't behave like a kite. It swoops and swerves and sails more like a bird than a kite. A sound like a model engine fills the air, crescendoing as the sail gets closer to downwind. Back and forth the flyer moves the kite with the ease and grace of a ballet dancer, making circles and figure-eights in the sky. With a flourish, the kite moves to the far right, does a little loop-the-loop and then starts a slow pass, the wing tip barely inches above the ground, all the way from the right to the far left. Then it soars into the sky and quickly spins around itself a dozen times. Back and forth, up and down, always moving, the flyer seems to be in complete control.

"Pretty kite," the novice comments.

"Would you like to try?" he casually asks the novice.

"I'm not much into kite flying," is the reply.

Come Fly

A Kite

By

Ken Forman

"This is much more than kite flying," the expert comments.

"Well, okay, if you're sure it would be okay?" the novice replies.

"Yea, you'll love it."

"What if I break it?"

"Then I'll fix it."

"Is it expensive?"

"A little."

"How much did it cost you?" the novice asks, gesturing at the kite.

"About a hundred dollars."

"A hundred dollars? Isn't that expensive?"

"Not really, I've got one that was twice as much and I want to buy one that's over three hundred." The novice is anything but assured.

"Aren't kites supposed to cost around five?"

"Only the boring ones."

Gently the flyer brings his kite in for a landing. He hands the novice the handles.

"The purple one goes in the right hand. Keep your arms in front of you and don't overcorrect."

"What if I get the strings crossed?" the novice asks.

"Don't worry about it, just keep your arms in front of you."

The flyer steps to the opposite end of the strings, picks up the kite, checks the lines and attachments and yells out, "Okay, are you ready?"

"Ah, I think so," the novice answers with a little uncertainty.

"Here you go," the flyer yells as he tosses the kite into the air.

"Wham," the kite goes as it smashes into the ground.

"That's okay, I'll get it," the flyer shouts, "Ready?"

"Is the kite okay?"

"Sure, here goes."

Wham! the kite smashes into the ground again.

"I don't think..." the novice starts to say.

"Don't worry, that happens

to everyone," the flyer reassures him. "It stayed in the air a little longer this time."

This kind of thing happens every time someone new picks up the handles, but eventually they learn how to keep it up. After twenty minutes or so, the novice hands the handles back to the flyer and takes a break. They usually have sweat beading on their forehead and their arms are a little sore.

"That is not a kite! I don't know what it is but it's not a kite."

"That's what I've been trying to tell you."

Even though stunt kite flying is usually a solo thing, I often go out with one or two other local fans. Tom Springer, JoHn Hardin, Ben Wilson and I (the **NLE** boys) are often seen at a local park, drinking beer, getting sercon, and flying our kites.

One afternoon the wind was especially strong and steady. These kinds of conditions usually mean some level of Power Flying. We got out the stronger strings (about 150 pound test) and prepared to sweat.

Tom set up his Maxima (a Nice Big Kite with a ten foot wingspan) and proceeded to launch. Tom is not a small man, being over six feet tall and tipping the scales about as much as a moderate sized tuna. He struggled with his kite and eventually gave up, crashing the kite rather than be dragged into a chain link fence.

I, on the other hand, set up my North Shore Extreme, (a moderately sized, but fast kite) and flew fast and furiously. Foolishly I decided that wasn't enough. I broke out my second Extreme and nested the two together. Nesting is a way to attach two or more kites together in a line. This increases pull and performance. In strong winds (like that day) it makes for an "extreme" experience.

After I setting up my kites, I grabbed up the handles and launched. Power flying is not a big enough word to describe the pull. My arms felt like they were being pulled from their sockets. You'd think I wouldn't enjoy such an experience, but the thrill of manually controlling such a powerful device is intoxicating. It also tends to make me stupid, but I'm over six feet tall and over two hundred pounds so I was sure I could handle it.

I stepped onto a convenient piece of cardboard and immediately began grass-skiing across the field. Moving along at a quick walking pace, I laughed out loud and then fell on my ass. The pull of the kites was strong enough, though, to set me back on my feet so I continued skiing. Again I fell down, again I was righted. This was too cool.

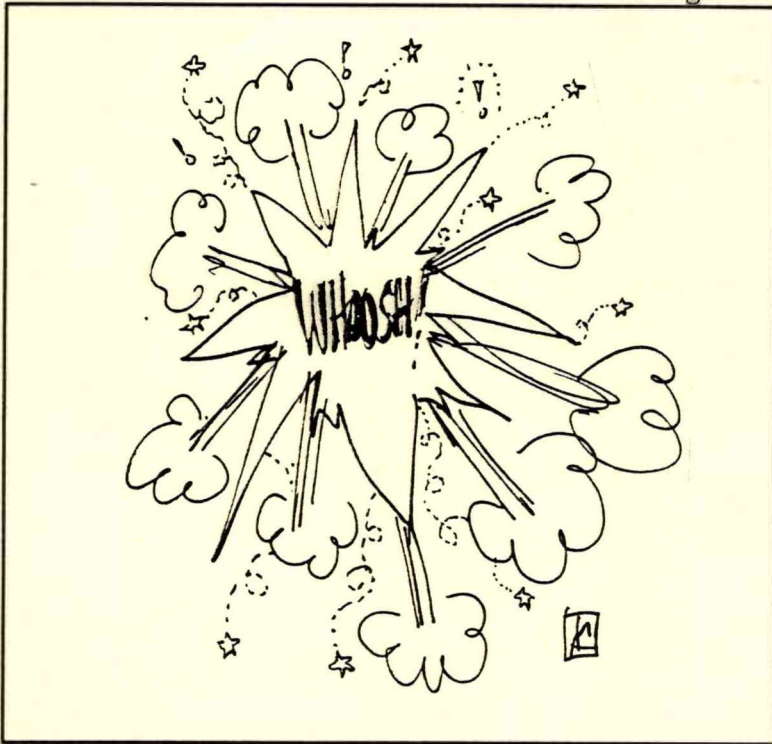
My confidence (and stupidity) soared so I tried a few maneuvers. Turns, twists, spins all the while skiing across a football field. It made my head spin, too. I lost my balance again, but this time, I started to fall forward. Mother Nature has a habit of smacking down

the over confident. Right as I was leaning forward, an especially strong gust caught my kites and pulled me off of the ground. I don't know how far I flew, I was kind of busy at the time, but it couldn't have been much more than five feet. When I landed (on my back) the kites were still flying so they continued to drag me downfield. While trying to regain my footing, I lost control of the kites, that is if I ever had control in the first place.

"Wham, wham," they said as they

slammed into the ground.

"Ouch," I said as I realized my leg hurt. The total damage included two broken kites, one sprained ankle, a torn pair of jeans and a bruised ego. I never knew kite flying could be a contact sport.



Bright Lights, Not-so-big City By Cathi Copeland

What amuses me most about Las Vegas, is that it thinks of itself as a Big City. I came from Los Angeles (the suburbs of), and a Big City is exactly what it is. Nobody really cares about what anyone else is doing. One just trudges along through ones life hoping that it won't be cut short by some wacko with an itch.

This is not so here. Others seem to want to know about what's going on around them. When their work day is done, they don't lock themselves up in their little lives and try to forget that there is a world outside their door.

Maybe it's because there are so many that transplant here. Not many of us start out with family and friends when we move here.

Maybe the attitude is to either socialize or die of loneliness. Or maybe because Las Vegas offers such an eclectic gathering of people, we can't but help being excited by the unusual and unknown. It's like our wonderful buffets, one just wants a little taste of everything.

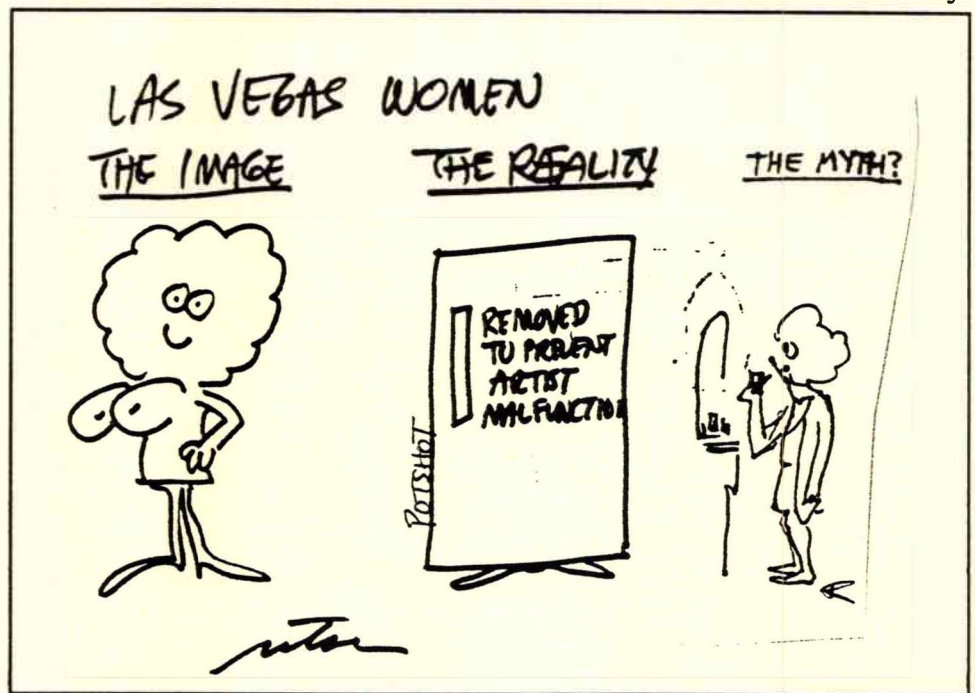
I've lived in Las Vegas for a short time (about four years) and have met more types of people than I could have possibly met spending a lifetime in L.A.. I have been befriended by so many different people with so many different backgrounds it sometimes amazes me. I have met a true honest to goodness JAP who once told me that I didn't act like I came from L.A. because I had "the style of a true New Yorker". I have had the pleasure of sharing time with an Italian family from Boston, a

family of Irish hiding from the IRA, a lot of Easterners escaping the cold, and Midwesterners who do think of Las Vegas as a Big City. I do believe all these people have something in common. The desire and hope for something better and the guts to go find it.

The open minds and open hearts of the people I have met here makes the hope for the city's future seem a little brighter than Los Angeles. Don't get me wrong there are cynics among us, but isn't there one in every crowd.

I have met many here who have found what they were looking for. I have even found a new life here with my intended, Ben Wilson.

The future seems a little brighter for me here than it did in L.A..I feel better about my



daughters growing up here, and I have made great friends and cohorts whose company I really enjoy.

Well here's a news flash for everyone, it's the night before the Las Vegrants meeting, when we will put together **WH #4**, and I'm just getting around to typing this out. The Society of Procrastinators strikes again! Cathi has had her piece done for a week, so I guess I'd better buckle down to writing mine.

Las Vegas, "Sin City" a place to come where, you can easily break several of the 10 commandments with nobody noticing. I lived in several small and surreal towns in Northern Michigan while I was growing up. People say that Vegas just isn't that big, I beg to differ. Mackinaw City, where I spent several years after high school, had a summer population of 50 plus thousand. In the winter it drops to something around five or six hundred. The winter statistic also includes animals.

We live in a city that has 7-11s no more than a couple of miles apart. The towns that i grew up in Onaway, Tower and Mackinaw City, didn't even have 7-11s. Mackinaw City had a McDonald's (the only fast food establishment in any of those towns) but it closed for 5 months of the year. In fact in the cold time of the year the only things open in M.C. are the Ramada Inn, two gas stations (one servicing the locals and one the highway), a restaurant and the necessary government buildings.

People say that this is not a big city, I say it is. Let's look at this way. What doesn't Vegas have that any other city does? We have more fast food restaurants than I can personally count. We have gyms, schools, arcades, pool halls, several hospitals, hotels and motels coming out the ears and just about anything your heart desires (within the confines of the law). We have traffic problems, a high crime rate, corrupt politicians (but that's no determination) big corporations, over taxed school systems and insufficient governmental organization. The permanent population in Vegas alone is in excess of nine hundred thousand, with a constant influx of people monthly.

Sure Vegas isn't a metropolis like L.A. or New York but Vegas got a late start after all.

Fandoom

More Reflections
on the
Sodom of the
Southwest

By **Den
Wilson**



A Woman of Convenience By Marcy Waldie

In May of 1986, Ray, my sister Penne, her husband Don and I decided to move together from Wisconsin to Las Vegas. We no longer had any close family in the area and were ready for a change. Don was burned out after 23 years of teaching as I was after 15. Ray was tired of commuting 80 miles a day, and Penne was always ready for some excitement. Soon after our arrival, we dabbled in various jobs, this being a respite from our careers.

Penne, Don and I ended up (don't laugh) at a Chevron station/c-store. The business was just starting and, fortunately, the location was prime. We and several others who were raised with traditional work values and ethics and were self-motivated (the modern term is "sucker") built that corporation to a take of \$6 million in 1994.

It was at that pit stop where I learned more about people than at any other time in my life. My combined years of schooling, teaching and counseling don't come close to down home, realistic, working-stiff education.

Every so often the media spotlights a downer of a human interest story. That's the closest that most of us come to life on the down side - I mean really down. Scores of people who were dealt life's blows came through the c/store doors, but they all had the same basic philosophy: Once you reach the bottom, the only way to go is up. It surprised me to witness in them a trait that is in short supply nowadays, a sense of humor. From these unfortunates, we employees learned to look at life's lighter side, to replace stress and anxiety with humor. Sometimes this was at the expense of super duh customers, but we didn't let on, so it was okay.

Example #1: Mr. Silk Suit wearing a Rolex took a cashier to task for not setting his gas pump. The cashier calmly walked to the pump, pointed to the instructions adhered thereto and raised the level to the "on" position. What followed inside the store was a humorous discussion on how difficult it was for some people to function outside of their element.

Example #2: A customer asked, "How far is it to Las Vegas?" No commentary is needed here.

Example #3: After "destroying" the store, a couple and their herd of kids piled into their van and took off.

Moments later a little girl wandered from the aisles to ask, "Where's my family?" The kid was stuck there for hours. The family was travelling through California before they noticed that the girl was absent.

Example #4: "Oh, the gas pumps aren't automatic? You mean I have to pump it?" See Example #2.

We saw show people, dancers, strippers, limo drivers and the lot pass through our doors. Know what? They complain about their jobs as much as the construction workers who work 70 hour weeks and pull triple time.

Celebrities patronized our joint. They, too, are just people doing a job, ordinary Joes who don't want to be recognized. They included Sammy Davis, Jr., John Madden, Andre Agassi, Tommy LaSorda, Emilio Estevez, Martin Sheen, David Soul, Randall Cunningham (Phil. Eagles), Lauren Tewes (Love Boat), Don Osmond (he doesn't go by Donny anymore), Gladys Knight and Wilford Brimley (Quaker Oatmeal guy).

Other observations include the following. Although prostitution is illegal in Clark County (yeah, right) our "regular" hookers were in every night to buy condoms, 12 minimum. The most courteous patrons are the participants in the National Finals Rodeo. Chinese are loud. Teenagers are polite when treated with respect as are Bloods, Crips, Skinheads and punkers.

On occasion, Japanese will purposely give a cashier too much money - to test their honesty. Prisoners being transported are very quiet. Trucks labeled "Toxic" are free to pull into gas stations.

Surprises lurked behind the restroom doors - everything from crap on the walls to an aborted pregnancy. Armed robberies? Sure. Four of them over the years at different times of day and evening. Two on my shift and one on Penne and Don's.

Every element of society passed through our doors. Behind the glitz and glamor of this city that is portrayed to the rest of the world lies a true but unrealistic cross-section of the US population. Eighty percent of our patrons were tourists with locals and transients completing the figure.

This is the Las Vegas I know best after spending 7 1/2 years in the armpit of the city.

What an education.

FAKE FANMAN

IN "FAKEFAN"
NO MORE

by Totshot

