

# Wild Hours

9:5

# Party Time!

by Arnie  
Katz



# Wild Heirs Party Time!

**Heirs #9.5** is Arnie Katz's account of Corflu Vegas, held in April 1995. It is published at by Las Vegrants at Toner Hall, the home of Arnie and Joyce Katz (330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107). Publication date: 9/7/95

Send your comments and (inevitable) corrections to us at Wild Heirs and we'll run them in "Heir Letters."

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**Party  
Time!, Wild**

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\*Chuch Harris\*

## Fellow Traveler

Andy Hooper

## **A Brief Preface**

A couple of issues ago, I wrote an article called "The Road to Corflu Vegas." It focused on the events leading up to last April's gathering of the tribes.

I wasn't sure at the time if I would do anything more about the con, but now it seems that I have. The result is this "point-five" **Wild Heir**

-- Arnie

## ART CREDITS

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"School is out/everybody gotta scream and shout!" bellows Gary "US" Bonds in his rendition of "School is Out." As I packed away the professional work for the weekend, I felt like rending a few verses, too. Or perhaps a few choruses of "no more pencils, no more books/no more teacher's dirty looks."

This impulse gripped me even though school lies far in my past, and I'm the person around here most like a teacher. It was a kindred sense of liberation that awakened those memories of the last day of school.

I had nothing in view but four days of Total Immersion Crifanac. Nothing except co-hosting a four-day bacchanal for 120 people. I thought about days to come as I trudged around Toner Hall, running things off and setting up Thursday's night's Kick Off party.

"Meeting a fanzine fan at your local club is like talking to a French tourist in a casino," I told Aileen Forman, "Corflu is more like visiting Paris. You can observe not just a product of fannish culture, but the culture itself."

Despite this, Aileen was still warily optimistic about Corflu Vegas. Because of it, I couldn't imagine a better way to spend a long weekend.

I might as well confess before going further that even I realize that my convention reports are... different. And I don't mean my propensity to leap from verbatim reportage to unfettered fantasy. (Well, I *do* have a few fantasies about an extremely assertive woman in a leather dress, but that's another story. Not the same thing at all.)

My con reports don't have detailed descriptions of every bit of food and drink consumed during the event or critiques of the con committee. My efforts to evoke cons are mostly conversational anecdotes about my witty friends and wife -- and digressions like this one.

Some day, I'm going to write a con report that consists of nothing *but* meandering sidebars interspersed with bits of dialog. It could even be this con report, though circumstances prevented me from having enough of those witty conversations.

Oh, there were plenty of witty conversations at Corflu Vegas. Unfortunately, hosting chores kept me from engaging in many conversations. I doubt my participation increased the wittiness of any of them. I don't know if other con chairmen are similarly affected, but I found it hard to think about anything except Corflu. Just as I'd settle into a write-upable conversation, something would require my attention elsewhere.

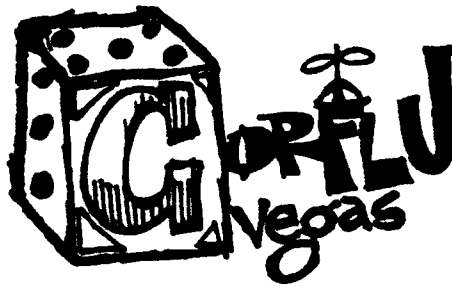
I'm never sure that the digressions are entirely welcome. No one has actually tried to stop me, like on "The Gong Show." Perhaps I have averted this contingency by surrounding myself with the brilliant indolents called Las Vegrants. (I shouldn't call them "indolent," because Corflu Vegas would have been impossible without their sometimes-Herculean labors, but I'm too lazy to go back and change it.)

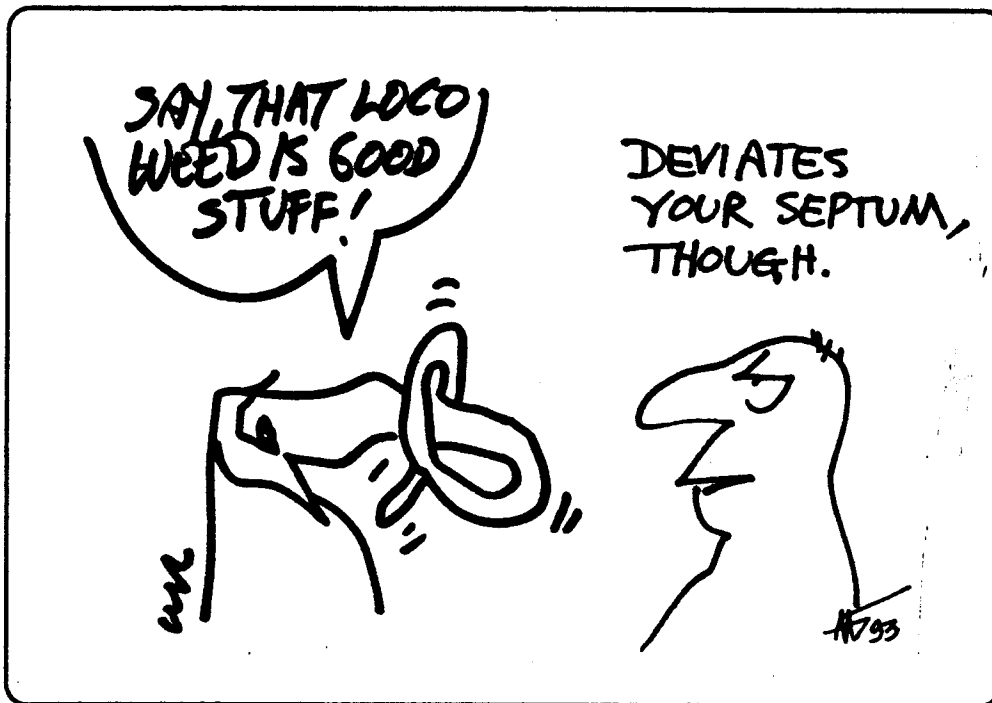
I'm haunted by the idea that you may rush

# Party Time!

## A Host of Corflu's Memories

# Arnie Katz





We appreciate fans who want to boom us for this æesse honor, but this isn't what we want. I think there are more small, fannish conventions in Vegas' future, but other fan groups more attuned to the institution will have to keep the worldcon banner aloft.

Ben and Cathi Wilson exemplify the teamwork and loyalty that help us survive staggers and stumbles. Despite their impending wedding, they broke away from personal plans to help out on Thursday and even Friday.

Ben volunteered to make an airport run and soon returned with Andy Hooper. John Hardin took the next trip to McCarren and got Shelby and Suzanne Vick. Before too long, Janice Eisen arrived, and Toner Hall began to take on its familiar "party central" ambience.

past my lovingly crafted digressions the way Joyce skips the science in SF stories. Maybe one of them will provide grist for a letter of comment.

Many fans, most prominently Andy Hooper, have mentioned Las Vegas as a worldcon site. Las Vegrants' unanimous opposition to the Chicago carpetbagger bid for '99 is well known. No need to reprise our attitude here. Yet many don't appreciate the depth of our desire not to stage a worldcon ourselves.

We forgive you all, though, because we've never voiced our most compelling reason. We are incompetent. Lovable, yes, but out of our depth as a world science fiction convention committee.

We succeed, when we succeed, by pooling our partial abilities and covering each others' asses. We rush at each problem *en masse*, and use our combined force to overcome it.

Vegas fandom has many fine qualities. It excels in spirit, friendliness and the personal touch -- all of which are easy to apply to small conventions like Silvercon and Corflu. Over two-dozen Vegrants attended Corflu Vegas, so there were always people to give that special helping hand, that extra bit of individual attention. We can't do that at a 6,000-8,000 con.

Most worldcon attendees would be invulnerable to our charm, anyway. They don't share our feelings about the community of fandom, and we would find it hard to meet their expectations for a worldcon.

More relevant to a worldcon are the areas in which Vegas Fandom is not likely to distinguish itself. Our merry band is a bad bet to mount a prolonged bidding campaign, mix comfortably with the con-running establishment, responsibly handle huge sums of money, make detailed long-range plans or execute the elements of a worldcon with the expected precision. Any of a dozen mistakes Vegas has made on Vegascon, the three Silvercons and Corflu Vegas, if raised to worldcon level, might've cost \$50,000-\$100,000 each.

"I see you've joined the Group Mind," Andy said to JanicE, recently anointed fanzine reviewer for Blat!

"Ted selects only the best minds," I said, anxious to curry favor with someone who might review *Wild Heirs* sometime soon.

"The best minds to warp," Hooper amended. I guess it's easier to be fearless in the face of potential critics when you've got the number one frequent fanzine (*A Parrot Check*).

Andy's assessment of Vijay Bowen is less jaundiced. "She's the Colette of fandom," he stated to me, conviction ringing in every syllable.

"David Wittman is the Richard S. Shaver of fandom," I retorted not to be outdone by my guest.

"That reference leaves me winded," confessed Andy, who harbors no allusions, unless they're his own. This gave me the opening to describe David Wittman. (My article, "The Call," provides a concise explanation.) Of course, the Dave Wittman allusion caused Vegrants to materialize as if from nowhere, each armed with an anecdote or, more often, a quote from the epic manuscript. After all, "this is the Year of the Corflu."

Why is David Wittman like Richard S. Shaver? Why is a raven like a writing desk? The connection is their writing styles. David is almost as florid and mock-heroic as the guy who remembered Lemuria. The Secret Master of Las Vegas Fandom, Aileen Forman, is preparing to lift her ban against printing Wittman's "The Proposal." Be patient, culture lovers, your time approaches.

I spent a few minutes, earlier in the day, picking out CDs for the kick off party. I wanted a selection that bespoke musical hipness, but not so esoteric that it annoyed partiers. I noticed quite a few conversations about the music as I circulated, so I guess my choices were noticed, if not necessarily loved.

"Do you like the Clash?" John asked Hooper as the stereo blared in the living room.

"Yes-s-s," said Andy. He drew out the word hesitantly, as if expecting a Trick Question.

"Do you know the group that's playing now, Rancid?" John continued. For those who sneer at modern music, "Rancid" was the aggregation then serenading us, not John's nickname for Andy.

"They're the second coming of the Clash," I said, not to be left out of the conversation.

Andy fixed me with his most noncommittal expression. "How Generation X of you," he said.

Ever alert for opportunities to instruct one of our Vegas prodigies, I seized upon Andy's deadpan remark, "Well, John," I said, "now you know how Andy has managed to become hated on seven continents."

Pedagogic zeal had enticed me beyond The Truth. Andy, quite rightly, corrected my error. "Hey," he said, "I don't have any enemies in Antarctica!"

Naturally, it was my sworn fannish duty to disillusion him in turn. "Just last week, I got a fanzine from down there. Three penguins," I informed.

Andy's smile drained away. Clearly, he had staked his claims for antipodal popularity on his belief that he was unknown there. Now, cruel doubt crept into the mind of Andy Hooper.

Again, it fell to me to confirm his worst foreboding about Antarctic fandom. "Two of the penguins hate your guts." His Hurt Look saddled me with instant regret. I tried to make amends. "I'm pretty sure the third one is a Hooper acolyte." I left Andy pondering my comment -- and perhaps the cost of sending *A Pair of Checks* to his newly discovered ally 'way down under.

Speaking of Down Under, Jean Weber got to the party about then, and I met her in person for the first time. Eric Lindsay has visited Las Vegas before, and become a great favorite among the Vegants, but I only knew Jean through a few fanzines and e-letters.

With the acute perception which has made me the marvel of Las Vegas Fandom, I immediately realized that Jean was probably not a native daughter of the island continent. "I'm one of the 'New Australians'," she told me proudly. Then she gave me a cynical look. "That's short for 'damned immigrant'."

Had Jean heard Joyce's explanation of the Theory of Islands, she might have lobbied Eric to make the couple ex-Australians, since they were already here. Joyce was holding several amazed fans in thrall with her dire forebodings about land masses surrounded by the treacherous sea.

Joyce tries to make a significant contribution to fandom at each convention she attends. As a con approaches, she grows taciturn, and her forehead crinkles with intense mental effort. She is looking for the Subject.

The process by which Joyce seizes upon the concept she ultimately shares with fandom are unfathomable. I can describe the apparent progression of the mania, but the inner workings still mystify after 25 years together.

As the target con looms, Vegants begin to notice a new element in her conversation. Joyce may try several themes if the first doesn't fly. Topics that don't pan out get no further than a living room audition for

me.

Soon one idea takes hold. Within a span of weeks, the original passing mention blossoms into a complete aberration. By the start of the con, Joyce can present her wisdom with the mesmerizing theatrics of a sidewalk pitchwoman.

Why don't I Put My Foot Down? Assert my Husbandly Rights, as it were? In short, why not stop Joyce before she boils over on the rest of you? Only the naive ask such questions. Yet I won't snub even these benighted (though lovable) readers.

There are four reasons. Surely, if you'll give Letterman 10 cracks at it a night, you won't begrudge me a paltry four reasons. The Top Four reasons why I don't try to moderate, or at least sedate, Joyce prior to conventions:

4. Joyce informed me quite some years ago that I do not have Husbandly Rights.
3. She will Hurt Me if I put my foot down. This is a woman whose favorite adage is: "They've got to go to sleep some time."
2. It's a funny shtick.
1. (And last but not least...) Greed. One of these madcap flights may generate something salable and then, boy, we'll be rich!!)

I have an indelible Magicon memory of Joyce explaining to Walt Willis why fantasy fans had to die. And who will ever forget her Theory of Rocks or the startling news that Christmas trees are sentient and talk with their flashing lights?

At Corflu Vegas, Joyce premiered her Theory of Islands. She believes that islands are kept in place only by the bridges and tunnels that tether them to Solid Land.

"And the bridges and tunnels are getting old," she says as she looks deep into her victim's eyes. Her persuasiveness puts grisly images of disintegrating pylons and porous walls into the minds of the unwary.

Joyce warns that as these lifelines crumble, islands will drift out to sea, bobbing like corks on the ocean. Good news: she doesn't think TAFF will be affected this century, due to the newness of the Chunnel. Eventually, she asserts with dismaying certitude, the Sceptered Isle, too, will break loose from its tenuous connection to Europe. Says the *femme fatale* turned *fataliste*, TAFF winners will only need to pay a nickel for the ferry to get stateside.

Joyce's cosmology puts large, as well as small, islands under the gun. Jean and Eric (and Alan Stewart, whom we also like a lot here in Vegas) had better keep a bag packed, ready for emergency evacuation. "I'm not even too sanguine about Australia," cries the latter-day Cassandra. "Remember Atlantis. 'Nuff said."

Joyce doesn't spend all her time Thinking Great Thoughts. You'd expect the complexities of the Theory of Islands to occupy all her waking hours, but she has mistressed the art of Deep Thinking in her spare time. (She may've taken one of those Sally Struthers courses.)

So besides her Theory of Islands, Joyce also prepared a huge buffet for the kick off party. After a steady stream of appetizers and snacks, Joyce fired the evening's main gastronomic salvo at about 6:00.

There were many more dishes, including some supplied by other Vegrants, but it's safe to say that the highlight was the three turkeys Joyce roasted for the occasion. (Resist, resist...)

Truth is, Thursday's bash ran in a well-worn groove. We've held monthly Socials, some as large as this, for nearly four years. Let me do something forty times and even I can get the hang of it.

But the trio of huge turkeys represented a new Joyce Katz Personal Best. She rationalized that visiting fans would be particularly hungry "after crossing the desert."

Though she weighed other entrees, Joyce remained certain that the only proper food for this audience was turkey. (Resist, resist... Go to the Light, Arnie, go to the light...) She must've been right, because fans gobbled the three turkeys *con gusto*. (For those of you who don't speak Italian, "con gusto" is easy to translate. The first word is "con." Everyone knows what that is: "a gathering of fans." The second word, "gusto," means a gust of wind. Put them together and the meaning is unmistakable: a big bunch of fans eating turkey and breaking wind.)

Dan Steffan observed that wholesale ingestion of turkey profoundly affected the fans. They'd spent the entire afternoon at fever pitch, energized by the mass reunion. After three turkeys, they were very mellow.

"Endorphins, endorphins!" chanted half the living room crowd. The other half sat zombie-like, digesting their meals. It reminded me of the family Thanksgivings my parents hosted in the 1950s and early 1960s.

All of the important members of the clan, led by my rich aunt and uncle from Great Neck, attended. With little preamble and less flourish, mom shuttled between kitchen and dining room, hauling full plates to the table and clearing the empty ones out of the way.

My mother, an immigrant from eastern Europe, was never more ethnic than at these get-togethers. We ate a more-or-less ordinary American diet the rest of the year, but Jewish specialties dominated holiday meals. Matzoh balls, potato kugel, tsimmiss and other menu highlights have one quality in common: they're all as light on the stomach as, say, a cannon ball.

It would be absurd to compare any mundane family with ravening trencherfans. Yet my family deserves its due, as the preponderance of expansive waistlines testifies. My mother always made too much food. She might cry about the mountains of leftovers, and my father's adamant refusal to eat them, but she never prepared a meal that couldn't feed at least half-again as many people.

To give them due credit, my family tried to join the clean plate club. They busted their buttons to devour as much food as each could hold -- and then another helping of everything. The result of the gorge, which included mega-doses of turkey endorphins, never varied. By 30 minutes after the meal, most of my relatives were zonked out on chairs, sofas and available beds. The sound of their snoring would echo through the house as we kids frolicked through the secret world of children.

Fans performed more valiantly than the Katzes and Hermans of my youth. They ate mass quantities, but they didn't fall asleep. At least not most of them. One well-known female fan sat as still as Whistler's Mother for about two hours, but that was probably due more to THC than endorphins.

Most of the Vegrants joined work parties at our house or Jackie Gaughan's Plaza, the convention hotel, reasonably early Friday morning. We didn't have a green room or walkie-talkies, but we Managed Some-how. Aileen Forman directed the transfer of supplies to the twin consuites and the registration desk near our meeting room and lounge area. With unexpected (and appreciated) help from Janice Murray and others, we got everything ready by about 2:00 pm.

I trundled stacked flats of canned soda from the parking garage to the consuites, often abetted by the delightful (but confusingly named) BelleAugusta Churchill. While traveling the halls, I saw many signs of the convention. Work came first, so I had to be content with brief "hello"s as we hurried in all directions.

With everything in its proper place, I went over to Dan and Lynn Steffan's room, 1432, where a warm-up party held sway. (I enjoyed this interlude a lot, once I got them to stop swaying.) Everyone was asking Dan, who seemed a good bet to win TAFF (he did, shortly thereafter) about potential trip plans and his expectations for the journey. At least one British fan will be elated to know that Mr. Steffan stated categorically, "I don't expect to have to French kiss D. West."

For those planning Dan's itinerary, I should note that he didn't say he *wouldn't* French kiss D. West, only that he didn't expect to. This could be a very unusual program item for the coming worldcon, and I am sure that the ever-obliging Dan will ultimately agree to plant a big wet one.

Can you feel the suspense build as this epic osculatory occasion draws closer, ever closer? All fandom wonders: Who will slip whom The Tongue? What is the etiquette here? Since there's no newszine to blast the word to every corner of the fanation, I guess we'd have to wait for the con reports to find out.

Joyce and I planned the opening to introduce our local friends to our out-of-town ones. Unfortunately, Ken and John stiffed us at the last moment. A live edition of *Nine Lines Each* was supposed to start the presentation. Then half the editorial team went AWOL.

The remaining two improvised their way through this hole and then introduced Joyce and me. That's our conrunning style in action. Though due to be a groom in less than an hour, Ben dove into the breach and, with Tom, did a friendly, warm-hearted greeting.

I was very disappointed, as I awaited the start of the presentation. Ben walked over to where I was standing. "Don't sweat the small stuff," he said.

I saw at once he was right. It was a disguised blessing. Nothing like a big glitch in the opening to reduce expectations. This year's Corflu committee was not going to put on The Perfect Convention, and the opening was sure to disabuse anyone of the contrary notion.

It was liberating. The intro screw-up brought home

to me emotionally something I'd known intellectually -- we couldn't let the mistakes obscure the good stuff. The presentation, including Peggy's piecing of me, seemed to please the crowd, and the original NLE skit eventually ran in *Wild Heirs*.

I loved the symbolism of Ben and Cathi Wilson's wedding. When I first returned from the Glades, many fans were writing about the graying of the hobby. More recently, fans have speculated about the imminent passing of an illustrious group of BNFs. The ceremony was a life-affirming antidote. I thought it expressed continuous fannish renewal as well as anything we could've done.

The wedding company couldn't have been more fannish. Besides the happy couple, Raven officiated. Ted White and I served as witnesses and Burb gave away the bride.

The nuptial pair weren't the only ones with jitters. Raven, newly ordained as a Religious Science minister, had never done a wedding. Such ceremonies aren't central to her ministry, but she took the assignment because everyone wanted to do something for one of our group's sweetest couples.

"Gambling 101" went well at each of the first three Silvercons, so we scheduled a session for Corflu. The membership overlap was minor, and we knew there'd be a lot of advice-hungry first-time bettors. The guidance, liberally sprinkled with anecdotes, would have been old hat to a Silvercon audience, but it was still fresh for Corflu.

The best part of our hasty coffee shop dinner was greeting friends. Joyce and I sat with Tom Springer, Tammy Funk and Suzanne Vick, but Widner, Bailes and Donaho were within quip range at the next table. We also saw Ken and Aileen Forman dining with Geri Sullivan as we left the coffee shop and paused to chat.

Geri and Aileen hit it off as well as I thought they might. I'd often told them that they needed to meet each other, which sometimes backfires, but first contact went beautifully. Presumably, their Corflu reports in the next *Idea* will provide full details of this encounter.

If anyone said anything immortal, other

hands must secure the honor. I took many notes, some partially readable, but my memories of the Corflu weekend are as much a jumble as my handwriting.

For example, someone said to me, "I offer dispensation for anyone who slept with me in 1968." Someone said this right out loud. (I know it's not one of my own musings, because no one slept with me in 1968.)

Someone said it, and I wrote it down. How Bill Rotsler, quotemeister supreme, must be frowning at me now, as he contemplates my failure to secure attribution.

Not that I didn't wrack my brain for the missing name. I spent a lot of time imagining first one fan and then another saying, "I offer dispensation for anyone who slept with me in 1968." The meanings mutated as speaker's identity changed. I worked through the whole *Wild Heirs* mailing list without pinpointing the fan. The process, though unproductive, turned out to be enjoyable. Try it at your next fan party.

Ted White and I talked about fanzine reviews. We often do. I have refrained from reviewing SF fanzines since the late 1960s, but I've covered electronic gam-

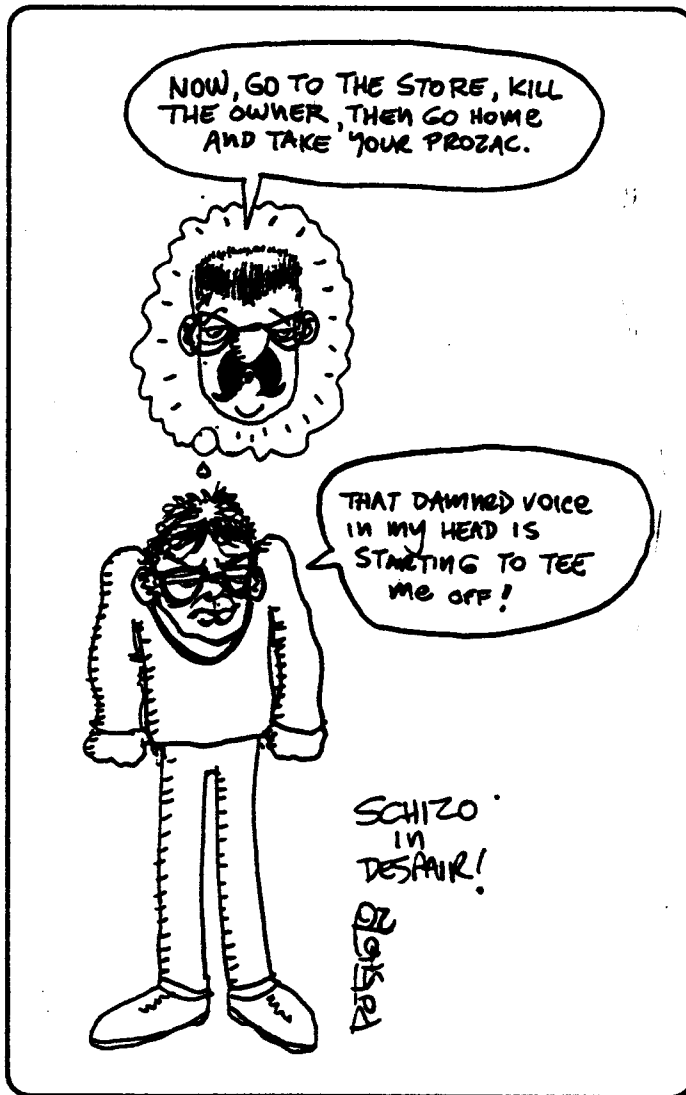
ing fanzines since the late 1980s. Ted had recently started his *Habbakuk* column, so both of us had reason to ponder the artform.

It's hard to argue against upholding fanzine quality standards or discriminating between worthwhile efforts and vain-glorious ones. Who doesn't want better fanzines?

And say the insurgent critics, isn't the truth the truth? If someone writes fuggheaded statements poorly, then saying so is no more than citing a situation. Most fans notice flaws in fanzines, if only subconsciously, so the reviewer is only stating for the record what others may be saying (or thinking) behind the editor's back. Getting problems into the open and handling them directly is preferable to clandestine carping.

Reviewers frequently laud the constructive value of criticism. It's hard to improve if others don't point out weaknesses and suggest remedies.

Tradition also favors tough fanzine reviews. I took a few neofannish lumps from reviewers. The criticism didn't kill me, and my fanzines subsequently





improved. Criticism focused my attention on facets of my fanac that needed work. Progressively more favorable reviews told me that I was getting more adept.

Despite this inspiring insurgent philosophy, I'm still ambivalent about tough, probing reviews. When it comes down to specific cases, something stays my hand.

It's easy to justify critiques of professional work. Companies charge money and hope to make a profit. Public sale implies acceptance of others' right to judge value. The audience for reviews is primarily people who want buying guidance.

Fandom is a hobby. Most people don't want their hobbies graded. Who wants a *Spin* editor to burst into their home to rate their desultory noodling on the family piano?

The counter-argument is that fanzines are widely distributed and are obtainable for money (or an equivalent expenditure of creative energy). I see the point, but I'm still reluctant to castigate a fanzine editor whose talent doesn't match their enthusiasm.

Does rigorous criticism improve fanzines? It may in some instances, but it also discourages neofannish enthusiasm. I would hate to have anyone gauge my worth as a fan editor and writer by my first (or first 10) fanzines. I don't think I'm alone.

Maybe the fanned who gets chased off by a ktf review is a wimp and a crybaby -- or maybe just someone who stops going where they don't feel wanted. Almost everyone agrees fanzine fandom would benefit from infusions of new blood. I agree. Those who want a bigger crop of neos must also be ready to exercise a little patience. We have to guide them in the path of righteous trufannishness, of course, but we can't break their spirit in the process.

Too often, a kill-the-fucker review is nothing more than a half-talented writer scaring off an ignorant newcomer. Let's face it, the unabashed ktf reviewer pounces on a neozine like a predator. That's because first fanzines are usually crap, and a ktf review is a dung beetle. They exist in tacky symbiosis with awful fanzines, which they need as targets.

Ignorance is curable, more so than lack of ability. The entertainment value of such criticism doesn't balance the suffering and estrangement from fandom of a potentially valuable fanned.

So far, my decision is that fanzine reviews are a Good Thing, but not for me. Serious fanzine critics often end up feuding with one or more disgruntled recipients of their wisdom. Though not without charm, I lack the hardcore lovability of a John Hardin, the kind that disarms such reactions. Without that shield, it's better for me to cheer from the sidelines than get into this particular game.

Taking a suite a few doors from the Non-smoking and Smoking Suites proved one of our better Corflu decisions. Room 2333 provided a haven for those who fit into neither suite category. People called it the "And Smoking Suite," but "the Courthouse" might've been more appropriate, considering all the sidebars held there.

Not that activities were limited to legal conferences. We threw the room open after dinner on Friday for a large, varied party that at times included Cora Burbee and her sister Maria, Richard Brandt

and Michelle Lyons, Victor Gonzales, Woody Bernardi, Ted White, Robert Lichtman, Lenny Bailes, Bruce Pelz and a couple of dozen others at various times.

Not among His People, and sorely missed, was Charles Burbee. He'd had an accident earlier in the day, when his chair tipped over in his room. He'd gutted through the wedding, with a little pharmacological assist from Belle, but afterwards had to return to his room in considerable discomfort.

We were all greatly worried, Cora most of all. Nothing appeared to require immediate hospitalization, but Burb wasn't feeling very well. Reluctantly, Cora decided the best thing would be to get Burbee home and have his regular doctor assess the situation. It wasn't what anyone wanted, but it was the best course. (It turned out that Charlie suffered no broken bones or other deleterious after-effects, a great relief to his Wild Heirs co-editors.)

Most people, including me, circulated among the three suites through the evening. Aileen Forman put aside worries about her impending surgery to lift Las Vegrants' hospitality to new heights. Every room was full of fans, Vegrants and visitors getting to know each other, and I didn't hear anyone's stomach growling for nourishment.

Now that she's well on her way to becoming the Bjo of the 1990s, it's hard to believe that Aileen was so reticent about meeting fanzine fans. Perhaps it was shyness, or it may've been that she'd met me and figured the rest of you were about the same. Whatever the reason, Aileen ducked chances to meet fanziners. She works so hard at Silvercons that she doesn't get to know many of the visitors.

I've always felt Aileen belonged in the bosom of fanzine fandom. "They'll love you," I assured her at the Social before Corflu.

"They will?" she asked, striking an elegant pose. I rejoiced to see the unmistakable signs of a potential egoboo junkie. A fanzine fan in the making! "Why?"

"You have all the qualities that fans esteem in women," I explained. "You're very smart, you speak and write well, you have very pretty red hair." Hair egoboo always scores with Aileen, who glories in her natural red tresses, abbreviated though they are since her recent radical haircut. "... and you're independent-minded with the ability to argue your convictions."

Aileen seemed momentarily nonplused. "I don't know why they should, but if you say they'll like me..."

"They'll love you," I persisted.

"They will?" She was still dubious.

"Well, you know what a gung ho fanzine fan I am," I said.

She nodded.

"I love you -- and they will, too."

"You do?" she said. "I didn't know that."

"Of course I do." I replied. "Ever since I met you three years ago, I've always had the highest opinion of you."

"But why do you think fandom will love me?" Aileen tried again. She was willing to be convinced, I could tell, but she was demanding a convincing rationale.

"You're a bitch," I said, instinctively ducking. "And fandom loves bitches."

That, evidently, was an explanation that made sense. The Bjo of the 90s went away, pleased.





When Aileen volunteered to host the consuites, I was doubly elated. I knew she'd do a great job, and there was no way she could avoid extensive contact with fanzine fans.

Aileen, going by past con experience, did not realize her true position until Corflu started. Several times, prior to the con, she'd commented that she'd probably get to talk to a few of them, but maybe not too many. After all, she was running the consuites, a backwater eddy where few fans go and fewer still linger. I smiled a Don Fitch smile and kept my own counsel. It was in the bag.

Sure enough, at Corflu Vegas, Aileen found herself in the thick of the revels, meeting lots of fans and finding common cause with many. She did an amazing job as hostess. Characteristic of her special touches was bringing trays of ice water around to room parties to help parched throats recover from the midnight dessert festival.

Las Vegrants, including the wedding couple, and quite a few notables ended up back in 2333 after midnight. The cabal included Joyce, Ted White, Dan Steffan, Richard Brandt, Michelle Lyons, Cora, Geri Sullivan, Rotsler, Lenny Bailes, Nigel Rowe, Tom Springer, John Hardin, Janice Eisen and two late-comers -- Mike McInerney and Gary Hubbard.

I hadn't seen Mike since he moved to the BArea over 25 years ago. Joyce contacted him before Corflu and successfully encouraged him to come. His arrival was a joyous surprise to many (as was his first fanzine in years, produced shortly after the con).

Lenny and I talked about putting fanzines on CD-

ROM. We'd barely started the discussion before Bruce Pelz provided the best justification for the project with his account of the havoc the quake caused to his fanzine collection. They're still sifting through the boxes, trying to put things back where they belong.

With writable CD-ROM headed to market, the idea of transferring hardcopy fanzines to disc starts to look feasible. Once the price of the read/write drive drops under \$500, a CD-ROM with complete runs of the top 50 fanzines of all time might sell enough copies to pay for the project.

Think of all the lovely, and spirited, discussions we can have about which fanzines belong in the top 50! I'll pay a buck to the fan who invents the best excuse for not automatically including all Hugo winners...

Despite going to sleep at 3 am, I awoke at 6:30 am. Nervousness won out over sleep deprivation, and I could hardly wait to get out of the room and into the con. While Joyce went home to feed the cat and pick up a few items we'd need later, I worked on some details for the "Fannish Feud" game.

Aileen was already setting up the consuite when I arrived. Ken, who planned to serve breakfast to the multitudes, was starting more slowly, but I detected unmistakable signs of life.

Belle and Eric, KarlaH and Vicki Rosensweig were among other early birds. The hospitality area was going full blast by the time Ken presented the lavish breakfast menu.

The program was supposed to start soon after Ken's morning feast, so Belle and I went to check the room set-up.

Some fans complained about our early start times. I sympathize. I'd rather start the convention day at noon. Unfortunately, it's impossible to please everyone. An equal number of fans begged us to start early. Since some would be unhappy either way, I went with the 11:00 am start. It put more space between program groups -- those who followed the ever-mutating format of "Family Feud" know how spaced out that was -- and it left more late afternoon and evening hours free without further reducing our already light formal programming. It may've been the wrong choice, but everyone survived, anyway.

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"I'd give one of your testicles for a pool!"  
-- sensitive fan wife

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I didn't take notes during the program on Saturday, but a copy of the schedule prodded my memory enough to produce a little information. Those who hate accounts of program items will be glad to know that I haven't retrieved much.

"I knew Jack Speer wouldn't let us down," I said, when he drew Gary Hubbard's name as Corflu Vegas Guest of Honor. I was so consumed by relief that I don't actually remember the comment. Several people quoted it back to me later when I returned to Earth. So I'm going to take their word, and I think you should, too.

Joyce and I spent a lot of pre-Corflu fourth-dimensional crifanac time speculating about how various fans would do as GoH. Some made delightful

speeches and won universal acclaim; some did not.

Gary Hubbard didn't figure in any of these scenarios, because we didn't know he was coming. When Jack drew his name I was happy we'd drawn a long-time fan who'd spoken well at a previous Corflu.

I never auctioned anything before Silvercon I. They needed someone, and I volunteered because I knew the items. Ken Forman is about the best assistant an auctioneer could desire, which was a terrific advantage for an untutored huckster like me.

Like Caligula in "I, Claudius," I discovered that I liked doing it. With the Mainspring setting up the items and Peggy Kurilla doing the bookkeeping, I've handled the Silvercon sale for three years.

Corflu Vegas got a taste of my motormouth, kinetic style on Saturday. It seemed to play well against the intellectualism of Andy Hooper and the warmth of Jerry Kaufman, the other two auctioneers at the session. I guess the chemistry clicked, because we raised \$1,500 in an hour.

Andy Hooper seemed surprised by the prices. I wasn't. Las Vegas is an insatiable market for old fanzines, and that's mostly what we had. Only five Vegrants (Ross, Bill and Laurie, and Joyce and me) have seen the classic fanzines. That leaves about 20 fanzine fans who are anxious to build up collections. Fanzines at Silvercon always fetch good prices, and Corflu Vegas continued the trend.

Andy Hooper, whose name has begun two consecutive paragraphs, wrote in *Ape or Rat Cheeks* that the Vegas fannish pantheon has Rotsler at its center. While no one could argue such a choice, the bull market for Rotsler Rocks resulted from more than esteem for Willie R.

It's easy to forget that most Vegrants are new to this. There's never been such a sudden influx of fanzine fans from one city, and I don't think fandom yet appreciates all the ramification of this unique phenomenon. Vegas fans didn't pay fabulous sums for bits of stone with Rotsler cartoons on them; they paid fabulous sums for unique memories. Corflu Vegas is one con in a series (hopefully a high spot), for most fans, but it is the biggest thing that has happened to these fans.

The And Smoking Suite provided periodic refuge. It wasn't so much an on-going party -- the room rarely stayed in use for more than 30 minutes at a time -- as a string of sidebars. I met at least 40 fans in the suite during the course of the day, and I know I didn't see everyone.

It's hard to separate one visit to 2333 from another. I can't offer more than short summaries of the conversations for which I took legible notes. I ought to do things right and use a recorder, but that might make fans think that I have added muttering to myself to my other quirks.

The morning's first sidebar was devoted to contemplation of Mike McInerney. His surprising (and welcome) presence at Corflu was a hot topic Saturday morning.

It tells you what kind of a person he is, that with some of the sharpest tongues in fandom wagging with full morning vigor, every anecdote and comment was pure egoboo. If Mike could've eavesdropped on that conversation, I don't think he could have endured it without blushing.

"Arnie's Deli" was the mid-day food function. I presided, without actually having to do much of the work, in the consuite. The Celebrity Deli distinguished itself, even though it was logistically impossible to force every Corflu attendees to eat an Arnie's Special, as described in *Trap Door*.

The Falls Church contingent bullied me into scheduling their "Fannish Feud" game in the afternoon session. They didn't really bully me. They asked, politely. None of them asked for anything else special during the whole con, so they got their wish. I only said "bully" because I wouldn't want to ruin their insurgent image.

Their plea for extra sleep succeeded where Vijay Bowen's failed, despite those magnetic eyes, because they were nice to me when I was a neofan. Except for Dan Steffan. He wasn't nice to me when I was a neo, mostly because he entered fandom after me. I was nice to him when he was a neo, so that's almost the same thing.

Lucy Huntzinger didn't return from her field trip to the Liberace Museum in time to participate in the Vegrants-vs.-Falls Church preliminary round of "Fannish Feud." Robert Lichtman, described as a "life-long Falls Church resident and pillar of the community" took Lucy's place, but he could not prevent the NLE Boys (Ken Forman, Ben Wilson, John Hardin and Tom Springer.) from snatching victory in the final round.

Robert and teammates Ted White, Dan Steffan and Rich Brown, were trufannish sports, indeed, because my administration of the rules left a lot to be desired with regard to consistency.

The electronic fandom discussion followed the game show. It didn't answer many questions, but it fostered discussion at the session and afterward.

One hopeful sign was that the speakers, and the audience, recognized that the debate about the possible existence of electronic fandom is over. The real issue is how and when fandom will utilize current and near-future technology to extend our insouciant subculture into cyberspace.

Telecommunications knowledge is still spread unevenly. Many prominent fanzine fans aren't yet Netizens, and a few, like Lenny Bailes, ride the cutting edge. Future neofans are likely to come equipped with a lot more knowledge about, and facility with, computers.

My old friend's incisive grasp of the enabling technology surprised and impressed me. I mentally kicked myself for not having put him on the panel, though Lenny's excellent presentations from the audience kept the focus off comparatively boring questions like "Should there be an electronic fanzine Hugo?"

Moshe Feder likened *Listmaker*, which generates mailing lists of like-minded individuals, to an apa. Others countered that this system didn't yield the coherent, multi-pathed interaction of a hardcopy apa. (The subsequently formed *Timebinders* is a much closer approach to the idea of an electronic apa.)

Rich Brown bemoaned the transience of most on-line communication. Andy Hooper felt the ability to retrieve massive amounts of information via modem offset this to some extent. Moshe hedged this claim by

pointing out that the Net forced each participant to become an archivist

The panel agreed that today's limitations will probably disappear in the next few years. "The potential to do stuff," is what excites Moshe the most. He points out that fans have always been desk top publishers, but that computers -- and by extension computer networks -- let fans do more, and do it more easily, than the old lightscope-shading plates-lettering guide technology.

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I was impressed with how many of the fans had seemingly enrolled in law school" -- Dan Steffan, Saturday afternoon in 2333.

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Joyce didn't feel like making a production out of dinner, so we had a fairly quiet one with Lenny Bailes. Nattering about computing and mutual friends proved a revivifying change from the pace we'd been keeping. I can heartily recommend the restorative effects of an informal dinner with Lenny Bailes to all harried Corflu runners.

We met Vijay and Vickie, who'd spent much of the day with other members of A Woman's Apa. They'd invited some female Vegrants, including Belle, to join them with good result. Everyone in local fandom loves Belle, so I was glad that the rest of fandom appreciated her, too.

Vickie complained about her shrimp dinner, but failed to incite much sympathy. Not only was this obviously a case for the Shrimp Brothers, but I'd observed that she enjoys low-key griping. I didn't want to ruin her good time.

The "Fannish Feud" finals between New York and Las Vegas took place at 8:00 pm. Las Vegas beat the easterners, but only because her partners kept Vickie Rosenswieg from giving one last correct answer in the game's closing seconds.

The championship went more smoothly than the prelims. I'd gone over the previous rounds and managed to solidify the rules. Even so, I was glad to have "Fannish Feud" run its course. The game show was a good idea, but it's time to put such things on the shelf for awhile at Corflu in favor of other entertainments.

The TAFF/DUFF folks at Corflu weren't receptive to offers of help, so I mostly watched from the sidelines. I suddenly felt sick to my stomach and dashed from the hall. (This illness should not be taken as an Editorial Comment about the DUFF auction; my queasy stomach was purely coincidental.)

The auction still seemed sluggish when I returned a half-hour later. I grabbed a couple of items off the table, sold them for good prices, and retired to the edge of the room.

The take disappointed TAFF/DUFF loyalists. Some suggested that the Corflu auction sucked up all the money. I thought that was a misreading of events, but I didn't want to see the funds hurt, whatever the reason. When a couple of fans came to me after the auction wanting to know what Corflu was going to do about the Injustice of It All, I gave substantial donations to both on behalf of the con (which was

about two grand in the hole and had no money to give).

Parties in 2333 and the two consuites filled my Saturday night until the small hours. The official food functions -- pizza at 11:30 and chocolate at midnight -- fed the hungry without pulling too many fans out of the mix. The free eats gave even the sidebarbarians ample reason to circulate through all the rooms.

At one point, I turned 2333 over to the sizable Lilapa contingent. They did whatever it is members of that private circle do while the revelry continued at a much higher decibel level along the rest of the corridor. Jack Gaughan's Plaza isn't fancy, but it shares several virtues with other Vegas hotel casinos: they expected us to party, everything is on a 24-hour clock, and they were reasonably sensitive to guests' needs.

One of the things I like best about Corflu is meeting interesting new people. A bonus for coming back after a long gafiation is that I found a backlog of sterling, as-yet-unmet fans waiting for me. I spent the first few years back in fandom meeting folks like Andy Hooper, Art Widner, Chuch Harris, Rob Hansen, Avedon Carol and James White in person for the first time.

There's a special anticipation about seeing for the first time someone whom you've already "met" in paper fandom. It's different than the surprise of encountering a really appealing person for the first time without such preamble.

My favorite "new fan" of Corflu Vegas was Victor Gonzales. Friendly, yet edgy enough to help charge up the conversation, Victor slid naturally into the 2333 ambiance.

Victor cemented friendships with Las Vegrants by providing verbal footnotes to his previously enigmatic *Apparatchik* article about a canceled Vanguard party. His descriptions of those Seattle gatherings struck a familiar chord, since we've been holding similar monthly parties (the Socials) for almost four years.

Vegas fans are still not completely used to fanzine fandom's little ways. They take fans' constant low-level creebing more seriously than they should. Fans feel the need to comment about everything, and they are experts at ferreting out the fly in the ointment. Most of the Vegrants are so new to the hobby that they actually *listen* to those complaints. They even try to do something about them.

Several fans complained that the beer being given away in the consuites was not sufficiently refined for their palates. The various domestic brands (Miller and Coors predominantly) were not fit for the holy "h." These are the same people who can reduce a mountain of stale Cheez Doodles to golden crumbs.

Hints that the bar was just downstairs and that liquor stores were ready to handle requests didn't stem the discontent. Our local beer snobs needed no further excuse. JoHn Hardin and Tom Springer, abetted by Mike McInerney, raced to the nearest micro-brewery and returned with several types of brew which were pronounced acceptable. "I think they're getting the hang of fandom," said Andy Hooper of the Bheer Runners.

The wake-up call pulled me out of bed at 7:00. Joyce needed the extra time to make the trip home to

feed Slugger. I lolled around the room, updated my notes for Saturday night (with equivocal success) and thought about the weekend.

Three thoughts were uppermost. First came regrets about everything that went wrong. This must be the feeling that sucks otherwise well-balanced people into chairing another con! Having done it once, they feel that they surely will be able to do it flawlessly the next time. Or the time after that.

Not me. I knew damn well that, with all its glitches, Corflu Vegas was about the best I could do. Another Corflu would only be pressing my luck. (And by putting this in print, I insure that other fans than me will have to take responsibility for the next Corflu Vegas, if and when.)

Next came an upwelling of joy as I considered all the fans who'd come to our party. Trufandom had flocked to Vegas -- and had redeemed the promises made when some of the SNAFFU members joined in doing "those fanzine things."

Finally came the sadness, the kind I always feel on the Last Day. Corflu Vegas would soon disperse. Three of the four days were gone, and fans would begin to trickle away even before we raided the banquet dessert cart.

Being the host intensified the feeling. Ordinarily, I slip out the door and into Mundania as unobtrusively as possible. Getting into the cab to the airport provides a sharp cut-off. Once the door slams and the driver pulls away from the curb, the convention is over.

As host it was my role to stay as long as possible. Instead of the unambiguous end, I would have to watch Corflu Vegas melt away.

As I prepared to meet the fan world, I forced my mind back to thought #2. I knew that it would crowd out the other two, and it did. I was back in good humor by the time I entered the consuite at 9:00 am.

I was glad to find rich brown having a light breakfast. I hadn't seen as much of my best fan friends as I'd have liked, but rich was one whom I'd scarcely had a minute with. When I apologized for the slight, he observed that his timeclock seemed out of sync with the con. He'd fallen asleep early several times and ended up cruising the casino in the early morning hours.

The banquet, heavily reported elsewhere, went about as well as these things ever do. Both the breakfast and lunch lines had decent grub. Gary Hubbard was able to stay long enough to deliver his GoH speech, and Blat! (Best Fanzine), Hooper (best fanwriter) and Steffan (fan artist) were popular winners of the Fan Achievement Awards. The certificates, done by Joyce, looked good without being too pompous. (I still like Ted's idea of giving fan winners at the worldcon a trophy that looks like a Big Staple...)

The assembly confirmed Lucy Huntzinger's Nashville bid for the 1996 Corflu, elected Charles Burbee as past president of the fwa and gave the Vegrants three ringing cheers of approval.

With only the SNAFFU Weird World of Food and the Burbday Barbecue and Bheer Bash left on the agenda, Joyce and I felt like celebrating. Dan and Lynn Steffan, Frank Lunney, Janice Eisen, Robert

Lichtman, Ross Chamberlain, Jay Kinney, Mark Kernes, and Ted White were of similar mind, so we threw open 2333 again for the afternoon. Geri Sullivan, Ray and Marcy Waldie, Michelle Lyons and Aileen Forman augmented the company along the way. Countless other worthies also stopped by before the Burbday party, which we had decided to hold in *absentia*. (The Burbees left Saturday morning to rest his aches.)

Among other things, we talked seriously about serious fanzines. Not necessarily sercon ones, but those which grapple with Weighty Issues and make Significant Statements. Several advanced *Warhoon* (early 1960s vintage) as the epitome of that kind of zine. Ted and Joyce whipped up considerable support for Redd Bogg's *Skyhook*, an impeccable and erudite publication, and there was also support for *Blat!*,

I've always admired such fanzines, perhaps because I couldn't and wouldn't do one myself. *Guip*, *Focal Point*, *Swoon*, *Folly* and *Wild Heirs* are more my province. Of course, if my penchant for plonking fan philosophy intensifies with age, I may eventually be ready to produce *Science Fantasy Lightbulb*.

Tom Springer and I talked about *Wild Heirs*. We kicked around some ideas with a few of the other co-editors, including Joyce and Rotsler. We both thought, correctly as it has turned out, that Corflu would energize Vegas Fandom

Bill noticed that Joyce and I had the only undecorated badges at the con. We'd been on the go so much that we hadn't had the chance to get any of the artists to do their stuff. Bill collected our badges and soon returned the ones printed in *Wild Heirs* #6.

I don't mind being "the Moses of Las Vegas Fandom," as Bill jokingly dubbed me in the illo. I've made a lot of friends in fandom, been part of a lot of groups. It's hard to imagine one finer than Las Vegrants. I can't think of a bunch of fans with whom I'd rather wander the desert.

Twinges of sadness couldn't keep me from having a fine time at the Burbee Barbecue, hosted by Joyce on Sunday evening. Gates Barbecue hit its usual high standard, and the Burbday cake was another nice touch. We sang "Happy Birthday" loudly if not well, and there may've been a few tears among the smiles.

Too bad Burb couldn't be there. He is perpetually surprised by the high esteem in which we all hold him. I don't think he expected that a lifetime of acid-tongued insurgentism would lead to being one of fandom's most beloved citizens.

One last time we sat in 2333 with our friends. Then Joyce ran out of adrenaline. We packed up our gear and headed out, leaving behind a bunch of determined, but sleepy-headed compatriots.

Corflu... what a trip. My old friends had met my new friends without bloodshed. We'd given the party of our lives, and people had seemed to enjoy themselves. More than 20 fanzines were handed out during the con, and who knows how many more inspired.

Thank you, fandom, for giving Joyce and me the chance to express our love for all of you. Whatever we did, whatever we gave, we received in return a hundredfold.

Thank you all.

MY NAME IS LESTAT FEINSTEIN.

**F**AN HYBRIDS:  
A GOTHIC  
GAMER IS  
GENETICALLY  
CROSSBRED  
WITH SF  
FANDOM'S  
MORE...DORKISH  
ELEMENT...

Polshitsky

