

VEGAS FANDOM WEEKLY

Las Vegas Fandom's Sorta Weekly Newszine

Vegas Fandom Celebrates!

More than 30 fans converged on the Launch Pad for the 13th Annual Vegas Fandom Christmas Party. Created by Ken and Aileen Forman, the Katzes have carried on the tradition for the last four years. (Originally sponsored by SNAFFU, the party has for some years been the joint project of SNAFFU and Las Vegrants.)

Fittingly enough, the first guests through the door were Ken & Aileen Forman. They'd driven from Yucaipa, CA, registered at a hotel and arrived laden with Good Things for the party. Since Joyce and I were already fully prepared for the coming invasion, it gave us a chance to spend a little time with two of our favorite people.

Other fans arrived as the countdown began to the "official" 7:00 PM start. Ron and Linda Bushyager earned the distinction of being the first Vegas fans to arrive. They insured an enthusiastic welcome with a couple of gigantic home-baked cakes. Soon after. James Taylor and

Darmon Thornton showed up to help with the actual set-up. Kent Hastings came in, left again and returned with some outstanding Kung Pow Chicken.

Michael Bernstein not only brought the SNAFFU bar, but also a table on which to display its many bottles. Michael was a tower of strength before, during and after the party. SNAFFU's president repeatedly proved himself indispensable, from erecting the tree to helping us clear the post-celebration debris.

Seeing Michael did evoke one sad note, though. It turned my thoughts to Roxanne Gibbs. Even though she is still not well enough to go to the party, Roxanne did an enormous amount of work on behalf of the event, especially in the organizational phase. Even beyond the actual assistance, it's always nice to see someone who knows something of what it means to be a fan.

The fan traffic accelerated after that and I stopped noticing the order of arrival. I do recall,



Arnie Katz and Aileen Forman express their unique (but friendly) version of the holiday spirit. Note the absence of mistletoe or other holiday aids.

Vegas Fandom Weekly #5, December 22, 2004, is written and produced by Arnie Katz (PMB 152, 330 S. De-catur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107; Email: crossfire4@cox.net; phone: 702-648-5677).

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Reporters this issue: Roxanne Gibbs, Joyce Katz, Woody Bernardi and Michael Bernstein.

VFW is free for the asking — and you may get it anyway. It can be downloaded at the SNAFFU and VSFA websites as well as at efanazines.com

Members (and Co-Past Presidents, 2003): fwa. Supporter: AFAL.

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The fans dig into the party dinner at the laden dinner table.

however, that JoHn and Karla Hardin and Teresa Cochran were the first to arrive when we officially opened the party. *(There's a box with a full list of attendees, even those who didn't write down their full names, elsewhere in this issue.)*

By acclamation, the assembly picked Teresa to pluck the names out of the hat for the Alien Auction on the grounds that she was least likely to cheat. (I thought I saw her peek once, but I could be mistaken...)

Teresa's first pick was JoHn Hardin, who opened a package that turned out to be a statuette of an angle carrying a departed

soul toward heaven. Kent Hastings picked second and, fittingly enough for a budding SF writer, got a couple of books.

Dave Gordon, making a very successful first foray into Las Vegas Fandom, showed some reluctance when Teresa picked his name. With much encouragement from the rest of us, he chose a wrapped package that contained a food assortment including cheeses and a cutting board. Teresa pulled her own name and unwrapped a *Star Trek* teddy bear

and an assortment of Belgian chocolates.

James Daughtery, attending his first Vegas Fandom Christmas Party, became the first participant to steal a prize instead of picking a package. He carried off the statuette, originally chosen by JoHn. The victim choose another mystery package, which to his vast delight, yielded a skull. When Ron Bushyager acquired a box wrapped in beautiful silver paper, he removed the wrapping with such surgical delicacy that several fans are now contemplating letting him do their minor operations. The gift proved equal to his care, a deluxe book called *Dragonology*

that passed through quite a few hands during the balance of the auction.

Things got progressively more boisterous as the auction continued, with gifts whizzing around the room as fans jockeyed for the ones they wanted. Some of the better gifts, not already mentioned, included a Spider-man doll with very ice men's and women's watches as the "real" part of the gift, a radio-shaped case that held nine old time radio shows, a Chinese chess set and a variant on Checkers in which losing one requires the owner to drink a shot of whiskey.

The Alien Auction seems to run more smoothly every year. We used to get some folks who took it all much too seriously, but this year's partiers took an appropriately lighthearted attitude toward the whole thing.

The last present in the auction had just been claimed when Ross Chamberlain knocked on the front door. That was a wonderful surprise for me, since he'd said he wouldn't be coming when I asked him at the Vegrants meeting before the party.

He handed me a Christmas card. It turned out to be the latest in the annual series of Chamberlain custom-done Christmas cards! Ross has given Joyce and me some terrific home-made cards in the past, but this one is possibly the most hilarious one of all. (I'll reproduce it in *VFW* as soon as I get a scan.) Seeing his latest creation reminded me, again, of the many years we have fanned to-



Karla Hardin hugs a gift/



Teresa holds a red package as the Alien Auction continues in high style.

gether. What a privilege to know such an intelligent and sensitive man — who just happens to be one of the five greatest fan artists of all time.

The Alien Auction successfully concluded for another year, fans' attention turned to food. Joyce's massive turkey, pasta and side dishes, liberally enhanced by many, many gifts of food and drink, gave the local trenchermen (and women) all they could handle.

Steve Brust, accompanied by the tall and enigmatic Lupe, met Vegas Fandom for the first time. He's a long-time Minneapolis

Who Partied?

Here, as promised, is a list of the fans who attended the Snaffu/Vegrants Christmas Party on December 18, 2004: Arnie & Joyce Katz, Ken and Aileen Forman, JoHn and Karla Hardin, Alan and DeDee White. Ray and Marcy Waldie, Lee and April Reckling. Ron and Linda Bushyager. Stan and TinTin Jeckewicz; James & Kathryn Dougherty, Steve Brust. Lupe. Woody Bernardi, Terry W., Teresa Cochran. Lori Forbes, Rachel, James Taylor, Kent Hastings, David Gordon, Michael Bernstein, Ross Chamberlain and Darmon Thornton.



fan who has many friends in common with Vegas fans. We talked about a colorful cast that included Jim Young, Fred Levy-Haskell, David Emerson, Jon Singer and the late Dave Van Ronk.

Steve showed himself to be a good fan as well as a good professional who seems to be quite at home with local fandom. He'll be doing an autograph session for SNAFFU and is expected to become a Vegrant.

People talked and laughed until after 1 AM. Linda, Ron, Woody and Michael led a vigorous clean-up crew that left the Launch Pad in surprisingly good shape for its next mission.

Thank you, everyone, for your help and support in making this the best Christmas Party of recent years. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves enough to want to return to the Launch Pad for the 2005 edition next year.

New Year's Eve Open House

The Christmas Party is history, but the celebration continues unabated. Joyce and I will again host a New Years Eve "Open House" for Las Vegas fans. We invite fans to stop by, get a little nosh and push on to the next party or whatever. (We'll watch the ball drop at 9 in New York City and then again for the local festivities at midnight, so it's fine

if you want to hang out for the night.)

You don't have to bring anything but your good spirits. (Any food or drink you may want to share is gratefully accepted.)

All we ask is that non-Vegrants call before they come calling. The number is 648-5677.

SNACOA Changes Direction

The Southern Nevada Alliance of Clubs, Organizations and Associations (SNACOA), started by Joshua Andrews about a week ago, is having some birthing problems.

Doubts about the group's aims and resistance to its founder's bullying recruitment campaign have caused some changes. The group will no longer accept memberships from individual fans. Henceforth, only representatives of local clubs will be accepted.

So far, leaders of the city's major SF fan clubs — Vegrants, SNAFFU and VSFA — have shown no interest in the embattled group. "Things like compiling a directory of clubs can easily be done without the weight of an organization," Joyce Katz observed.

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Yes, indeed! So there's just time to wish you a Merry Christmas before I sign off for this week. Send/call in your news.

—Arnie

Club Calendar

Las Vegrants December 31 7:30 PM
The Open House replaces the month's first Vegrants meeting.

VSFA January 3 7:30 PM
This formal SF club meets at the Clark County Library on the first Monday of each month.

SNAFFU January 14 8:00 PM
This formal SF club meets the second and fourth Friday's of each month. This time, it will be held at Borders bookstore on Sahara at 8:00 PM