

MEANWHILE

in Sin City



So here we are, somewhere between one pandemic or another on the brink of WWII. Just more evidence life imitates art. One thing for sure, summer is upon us and the streets are just beginning to boil. So before the city goes all Dante's Inferno on us, let's get fannish!

MEANWHILE, IN SIN CITY...

WESTERCON 74

Thrusters full ahead for [WesterCon Tonopah](#) though I'm not quite sure why. On one hand, it sounds like an unparalleled bore unequalled in WesterCon history (and *that's* saying something).

If you want a free dealers table - you're too late. Dang, I inquired about a table back in April of '21. As of today, I notice the message has yet to be read. There you have it. Who said you can't be too early and too late at the same time?

Kevin Standlee has done a thorough job photographing all aspects of the convention space.

Our main reason for my attending is solely based on being Tonopah and the fact this may be my last con attending where I still have hair. Prior to WesterCon, it's been known only for the place to fill your tanks on the way to Burning Man; and of course there's the Clown Motel. But I think there's potential here for creating our own madcap adventures that might be more fun than the convention... we'll see. I hope to hell this turns out to be a blast and not a senior moment in the middle of nowhere. I intend on publishing a dandy memory book when the dust settles.

Hope to see you there!

JAPAN FESTIVAL

Who says Vegas got no cul-cha? We're drippin' with it I tell you what!

But for a two year hiatus, we have renewed our acquaintance with the great outdoors and "smell of the crowd". First event at the dawn of January was The Annual Japanese Festival held at Sammy Davis Jr. Park. And why not? After all, Sammy did a [Japanese Suntory commercial](#) in 1974.

Vegas has a fervent Japanese community and the event annually draws large crowds of every ilk for rows of exhibits, foods and entertainments.

Music, Geishas, Samurai, dancing and the always fun Taiko drums.

DeDee and Brenda enjoyed a riotous time keeping up with the Japanese line-dancing and somehow remained unscathed (or thrown out)!

This was our first time in the blazing heat of day for some time and it felt good. The evening ended quietly back at our place in the Jacuzzi over a mountain of sushi and champagne.



LAUGHLIN DAY TRIP

Sometime you just need to get away for a few days. A good bet is Laughlin on the river with masks off and breathing fresh air. This time we stayed at the Riverside Hotel.

DeDee checks out the river from the balcony >

Nice pool and Jacuzzi, spa, fun places to eat and a multi-cinema theater. It's a real vacation on the cheap.

It could be said the town is but a handful of hotels backed up to the river and a nighttime stroll shows some amazing things. Bright lights illuminate the hotels along the riverwalk bringing a kajillion gnats into the light (Carol Ann). Being low on the food scale, the gnats are followed by an army of bats, swooping and diving into the clouds for a mouthful of yummy snacks. If you look into the water you'll see herds of enormous fish coming to the surface for their piece of the flutter-pie. Amazing stuff. The Riverside is also known for its vintage car auctions and sporty museum of classic cars.



1952 Muntz



1951 Skylane



1929 Model A Ford, 1930 Studebaker, 1929 Franklin



1904 Holsman



and some Red Hot Wheels for Tara!!

You can take the water taxi across the river to Bullhead City on the Arizona side and walk to the mall.

As luck would have it, we have some friends on the other side and thought we'd stop by for a howdy.

Charlie customizes motorcycles and there is always something fun in his garage, none of which I'm allowed to take home.

Charlie decides we should stop off for some ice-cream over in Oatman - the nearly ghost town just down the road.

The town was named after Olive Oatman - the gal with the sporty chin tattoo made famous in the "Hell on Wheels" TV show. She was given the tattoo after taken captive when her family was massacred by the Yavapai indians and later traded to the Mohave.

The Dirty Half-Dozen. Charlie outfits everyone with their own wheels. When it's 120° you'll do anything for ice-cream so off we go! Down the road and through the tumbleweeds.



Oatman was having a bike rally and packed with bikers. A normal day finds it overrun by rowdy burros seeking a good time, but today was spent wandering shops and checking out the vehicles lined up like 78's in an old Wurlitzer.

We ended up crashing in an a spare RV with friends that night.



DeDee immediately wanted an upgrade; that wasn't in the cards, but we all got something refreshing.



Meanwhile... back at the hotel we packed up, saw [The Batman](#) and made tracks for home, a mere 90 minutes away. It was quite a getaway.

So what else is in Charlie's garage of chrome desire? >

Oh yeah. . .



WEDDING BELLS IN PIRATE TOWN

One of the more creative folks this side of the Malabar Coast is Captain Kitty Reign who has built some fabulous sets, playgrounds, worked on the Millennial Fan Bar, more Renn Faires and Pirate Fests than you can shake a dead parrot at. He also contributed some ghastly attributes to our con suite at Xanadu Las Vegas. As you may think, Captain Kitty's own abode is a spectacle to perceive.

Currently it is melding from the appearance of a complete live-in pirate ship to the more subtle digs of an Indiana Jones sort.



BUT!

There comes a time in the life of all sea-kitties to heave-to, shanghai a comely vixen and drop anchor. It appears this day in May was the day for Captain Kitty and the ever fetching Jennifer Christina Lizotte to splice their fishnets of life.

A handy crew of assorted mates showed for the brief but joyous festivities that kept the sea dogs from the bar just long enough to get the job done.



Spectators abound and DeDee sets sale for foreign shores. Our wedding gift consisted of a magnum of the King's best Chamboonie Royale from the sunny slopes of the vineyard that included a half-pound of Tjuana's finest "Donkey Show Gold" for those special quiet times.

By end of day wedded bliss covered the land and I heard the phrase "I now pronounce you Wife and Wife" for the first time; and this bar at the end of the galaxy known as the Tavern of the Lustry Pride shined a little more brightly across the galaxy.

The wedded couple beam with joy >



DEDEE'S VINTAGE PRO-ZINE FOUND AT LAST

The archeological dig in our garage has found a rare copy of Dedee's tabloid THE HOOF PRINT, all the horsie news in the Butte County area from the mid 70s to 80s. Nope, not a single UFO nor shapeshifter in *these* pages I'm afraid. Bot Flies and road apples are as exotic as it gets around here. But those of an equine bent will find much (If belated) horsie bits abounding within.

DeDee meant business, selling ads, typesetting, graphics and layout. She also took pics of horse events around the area.

Those were the days.



It's a State of Mind. . .

but only the Jokeress can tell what state of mind *you're* in. . . to find out, we paid a visit to Bryan Follins, who has been keeping the Jokeress under his thumb for a decade now; or it sure seems like it. His cerebral-psycho character has touched bases in paperback, comics and videos. Plus, DeDee played the Jokeress on-stage at the Sci-Fi Center.

Amazon: [Jokeress Emergence](#) • [Webtoons](#) • [Video](#)

The best part of the evening however was wifely Darlene sharing a new brew for we two shipped to Vegas by her so thoughtful sister. New Glarus Spotted Cow from Wisconsin had been off my radar until now and proved a welcome treat. <https://newglarusbrewing.com>



Who Remembers Karla Bonoff?



One of the many things I enjoy about Las Vegas is every library has an auditorium where every week they sponsor musical events, readings, movies, all manner of presentations. With this all too brief Covid hiatus, they began their new season with a Karla Bonoff concert. Her ninety minute concert sounded good, reminding everyone of the durability of those songs of love and loss and why so many entertainers have covered her material. She sang backups for Linda Ronstadt until dropping her first album in 1977 and followed with many songs covered by Ronstadt, Aaron Neville, Wynonna Judd, Bonnie Raitt and others. [Karla in Concert](#)

TAIKO NIGHTS

Another fun evening was the local Taiko Drum club make a joyous racket! They have a lot of members and are often seen at festive events. [Kaminari Taiko Girls in Action](#)



MAY THE MIRTH BE WITH YOU!

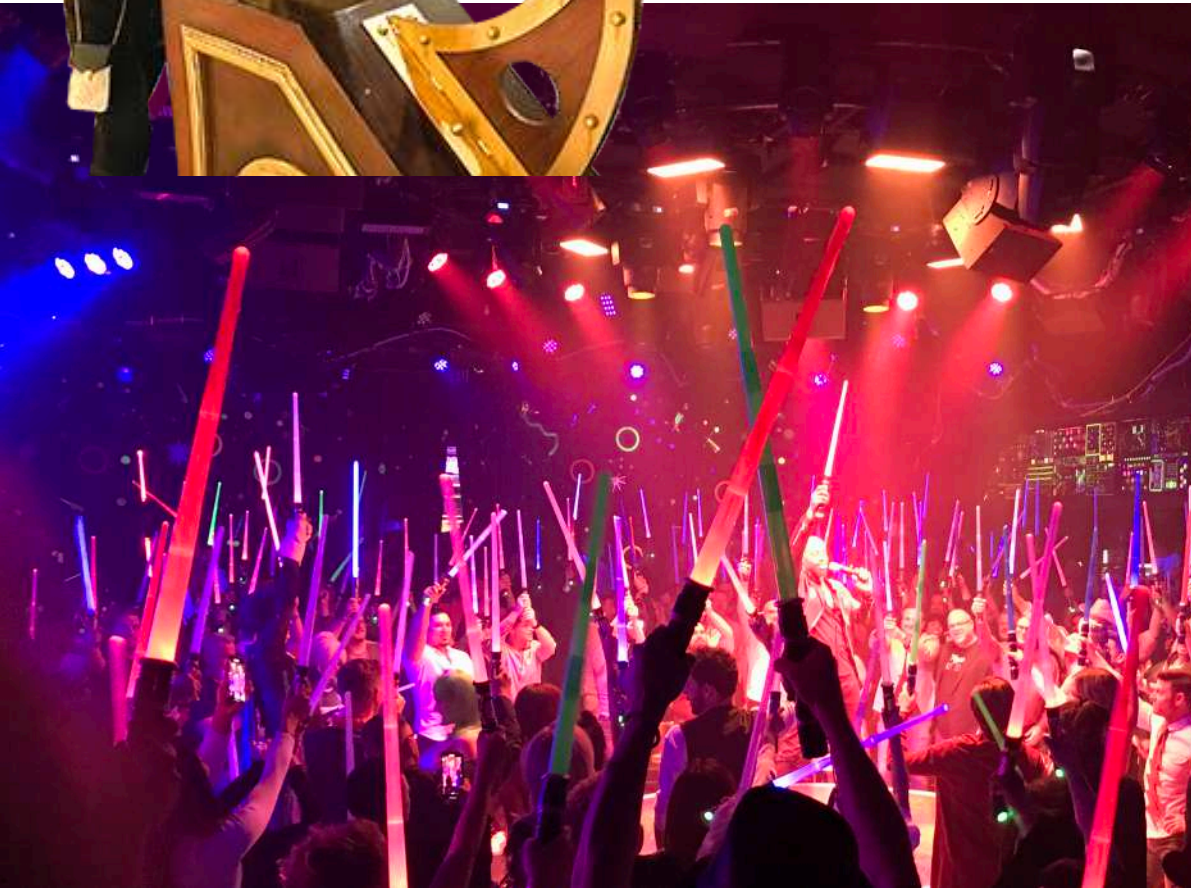
Only two months ago and not very far away. The forces of the galaxy congealed at the Cosmopolitan Hotel in Club Opium's gangs-all-here theater. I was given a couple passes by [Spiegleworld](#) to attend the [May the Fourth Star Wars Celebration](#). A fast-paced racy spectacle is just what I needed to get out of the house in these days of spreading puritanism by the overly-frigid, and surely if we had to attend *one* super-spreader this year, it *had* to be *this* one! We weren't disappointed.

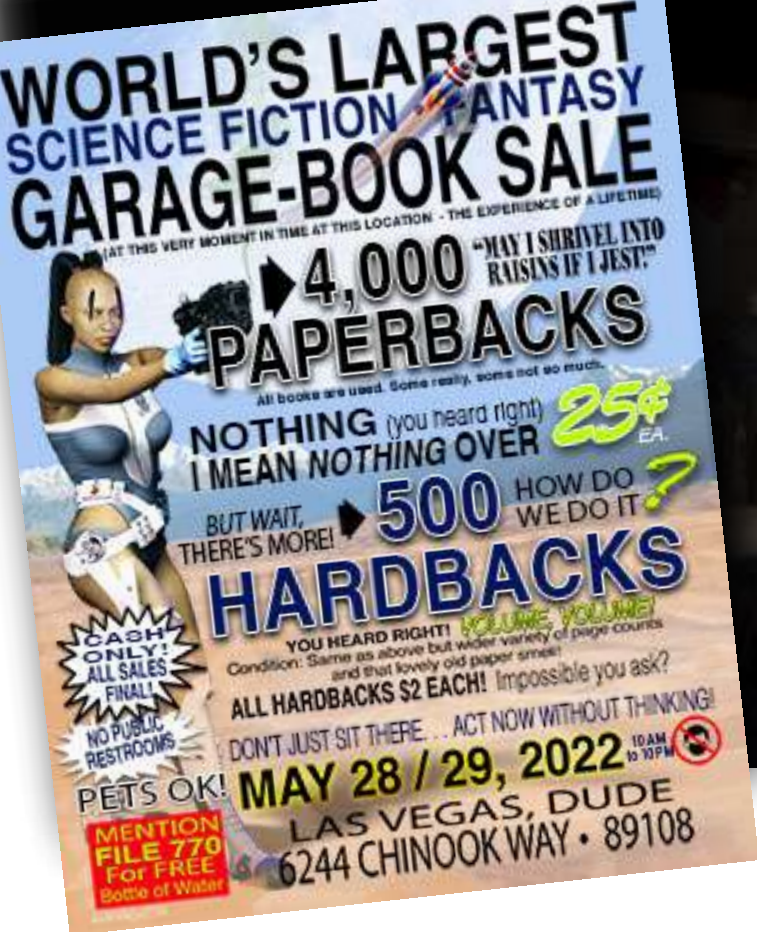
Starship OPM 73 blasted into space and sent the audience through a galaxy of out of this world entertainments, insubordinate robots, technical robo-glitches, space beauties galor, villainy, space-romance rivaling an intergalactic Rocky Horror Show and ending in a light-saber battle for the ages. The music was terrific, performances hilarious, timing spot-on, dialogue sharp and witty. The exciting climax consisted of everyone in the place getting their own light-saber and fighting their way to the bar! Absolutely brilliant!

Ahmed Best... known as "Jar Jar Binks" mingled with the muggles while DeDee and I downed a couple "unStarWarsian" Gargle Blasters. The bar was frothing with Pizza and other intergalactic delicacies, free booze, and things of a chocolate nature. Faster-than-light-travel and fighting to the death tends to work up one's appetite.

Into the night we partied to the DJ trying not to poke out an eye with our new lightsabers. After a few drinks, DeDee went mano a mano with Lord Vader himself in the 'smokem' if ya gotten' room!

Until the *next* pandemic attacks, I think we'll be checking out the other Spiegleworld offerings here in Vegas; and May the Mirth Be With You!





Dust upon dust, an army of lowly silverfish hiding in the shadows is all that remained.

What - you may ask, became of "Las Vagrants" with Joyce gone and Arnie's sight faltering?

Long time friend Cathy Matthews came to cater Arnie's needs as his blindness became total and immutable. Feeding and caring for him, there was a brief time when a smattering of Vagrants visited, Cathy would set the table as before and things seemed almost as it had been. Covid became a thing and all went quiet.

In time, Arnie took a fall that broke several bones and his pelvis. He was taken to a hospital Bedridden; things got worse and like his books, unable to move - speak or have a clue what was going on around him. Having never visited a doctor (*really*) there was no medical paper-trail nor clue of prior care which protracted his predicament.

And there he lay near vegetative through two years of Covid slowly opening his eyes on occasion and perhaps speaking softly for a moment.

As funds dwindled Arnie was moved to a small care unit until his disposition was determined.

Certainly Arnie was unable to receive calls, and save for Sammy and myself, Lenny Bailes calls frequently but not a single Vagrant visited. Several called Cathy and pledged a visit but never did.

Visiting wasn't easy. On the initial visit, I was shocked at his current state - almost skeletal in a fetal position and to be honest, my first thought was he looked like a dead lab monkey kicked to the curb. Even I couldn't snap a picture of this, and that's saying something.

Not sure he knew who was there.

Two decades ago Joyce and Arnie found their new digs on Eugene Cernan St. in a neighborhood where every avenue is named for astronauts and aptly titled the place "The Launch Pad"; a fine place for "Las Vagrants" to continue their fine work.

FYI: Yes, Vegas also has a neighborhood where all the streets are named for Star Wars characters.

The home was a hotbed for fannish activity where fans from around the world visited and one could hardly claim title of "Vegas Fan" without a regular visit to The Launch Pad.

The outpouring of zines and other fannish works were constant for many years. One of the grand plans was to establish a fannish library available to all local fans for free. And a grand plan it was. Joyce donated her collection and many others gifted their well-read tomes which grew and grew.

The local Border's Bookstore closed and the shelving was snatch up by several members of the club where the foundation of the library was slowly taking shape in Joyce and Arnie's garage.

In the beginning some patronage was noticed in the library but dreams sometimes do not work well in practice.

Years rolled by, Joyce became ill and faded away taking much of the sparkle with her. Fans passed, moved on, and gafiated, leaving the library so near yet lost to the ravages of time with no savage gods to protect them.

After requesting everyone send greetings, to Arnie, a dozen or so managed a weak “Get Well” so I added everyone else’s name on the list anyway. He perked up some, particularly at names: Lenny Bailes, Bill Burns, John Purcell, Brad Foster and remarked how glad he was to hear from them. Alas, he drew a blank on many otherwise familiar names.

I asked a longtime friend why he hadn’t visited Arnie to which he responded: “I’m uncomfortable around hospitals.” which puts things in perspective: 15 minutes of unease trumps 50 years of friendship that even phone calls on his condition can’t alleviate. Perhaps, if Arnie manages to come home,

THE WORLD’S BIGGEST SCI-FI BOOK SALE!

Is this really the world’s largest sci-fi garage-book sale? Who the hell knows? It’s all ballyhoo anyway, but fans being who they are, I added “At this very moment in time at this location.” Still I received a number of messages claiming *they* had over *umpteen* thousand paperbacks, so there. None of them had a garage sale however nor were they willing to part with what they had, so fuck’em.

Meanwhile, digging through row after row of books, dust upon dust from the dark and dreary tomb in which they survived all these years there were weekly trips fishing boxes from worthy dumpsters to make 14 trips from Arnie’s garage to mine with loads of books for a mighty garage sale.

The business model was: “Gut-Blowout Firesale” everything must go in two days, DAMMIT! Non-quibble prices: Paperbacks: 25¢ each, Hardcover \$2 each hoping to score \$1500. Every cent going to the 3F = “FuckedUp Fans Fund” for in-home care, paying bills, and keeping afloat. Yeah, I know \$1500 may only buy somebody hauling Arnie to the can *once*, but it’s better than a garage full of crumbling books that are only good for refilming that scene from the Time Machine. “Books? Yes, we have books.”

God knows Arnie’s window of enjoying any of it has closed forever, and if truth be told Arnie admitted years ago, neither he nor Joyce had read sci-fi for 20 years prior.

Besides, I’m from the old-school - Sell it while you’re still breathing and upscale your lifestyle before you kick the bucket and it all goes in the dumpster. Some dusty old crank hoarding books just isn’t funny anymore.

Yes, there were scoffers, “You’re dreaming” they cried! Fearing they may be right, one could only hope for the best but time will tell.

more friends will grow a pair. Cathy claims he has made some headway and is more responsive. Maybe he will make it home after all. But should he, Cathy would be unable to move him about which requires visits from some home-care person checking on his well-being. Funds are in the same condition as the water in Lake Mead.

Then one day... “Remember those old books in the garage that no one has mentioned in a decade?”

Lightbulb.



First there were certain considerations. DeDee was leaving town for 6 days thus giving me a weekend window with an empty garage to pull this off and had to be ready for business May 28/29 and returned as if nothing had happened by Monday evening May 30. Because of the Vegas heat, I planned it for *inside* the garage and added three fans for optimum comfort. Vegas temps had already breached 90° heading upward and by Wednesday the 25th, all books had been transferred to my garage, all shelfy materials ready to go. I did that gaudy flyer for the internet and signs were festooned about the neighborhood, ads thrown on garage-sale and fannish interest sites.

DeDee slid from the garage Thursday 9:30 am, May 26th. It was showtime.

Garagey stuff shifted from here to there and shelves went up. Bricks, boards, found materials served as tables and shelving. It sorta worked to plan.

Boxes opened and books hit shelves by the hundreds, down one row then another.

It looked great in a “Little Rascals” sort’a way and the smell of old paper brought back memories. The fans came on - it was already getting hot in here.

It was 8pm before giving it up in favor of cold beer and a hunka hunka somethun’ to chew on.



Jen Farey got her days twerked showing up early Friday morning - a welcome visitor who spent much of the day helping chuck books here and there. And of course, she got first pick of the litter!



FYI: Those square cinder blocks I originally bought for bookshelves in my first apartment in 1966. Some things are timeless!

We were making good time and by end of day, the place looked pretty damn good.

Saturday morning up at the crack and spreading signs to entice the unwary fly. By opening time 10am, the garage door rose as if unveiling the treasure of the ancients and I swore I could hear “Thus Spake Zarathustra” in the background.

There was... nobody there... (uh oh) no lines going down the block like the opening of Star Wars, - nothing. Maybe this was a bad idea after all. Ah, but an hour later the dribs and drabs began dribbling and drabbing.



By the way, there were indeed 4000 paperbacks and about 500 hardcovers available. Something for everyone at prices that should fly outta here. Soft classical music played in the background to lull customers into a sense of monetary pliability.

People began buying things. During the day several people asked for Isaac Asimov books based entirely on the *Foundation* TV series. Someone asked for *Dungeons and Dragons* and bought all 20 copies we had. One woman was a Zalazny collector and picked up a handful. Steven King sold out. Some walked out with a handful, a few with bulging bags and some with a full box of books - a delight to see.

There was a cooler full of water bottles, soft drinks and beer so a few readers sat a spell and chatted over things bookish; that was fun.

In the afternoon, things slowed as the temperature rose.

Some old coot drove by and yelled from his car window:

“Got any tools?”

“Nope, just books.”

“How about gold and jewelry?”

“Nope, just books.”

“Any old road-maps?”

“Nope, just books.”

His window silently slid up and he drove away bookless.

A few friends dropped by, a pleasant surprise and we chatted for the longest time. Covid had kept so many friendly faces away but today was a brief respite from cooties and masks and such. Everyone was friendly and one old gal threw in an extra \$20 for the 3F.

Gene Kelly stayed quite awhile helping tidy the store and customers find their heart’s desire. It was a homey - feel-good kind’a day.



ROSS CHAMBERLAIN
The Fantasist



GREG PRESTON
The Lensman



GENE KELLY
The Transendent



The Magnificent Shipleys
MADLEY, RICKLEY and **KARALEY**

Fabulous Photographer Greg Preston stopped in and we chatted for so long. His studies of Comic Artists is a **must-have for fans everywhere**. Ross Chamberlain only lives a few blocks away and came up the drive with a smile. Hadn't seen him in nigh-on two sets of Covid. The biggest surprise was seeing James Daugherty who had been spending so long down Yucatan way running the **Flycatcher Inn**, photographing lizards and exploring the ruins. A man of many talents, some of which can't be mentioned in civilized society.

Before long 6pm showed up and business either dwindled or came to a screeching halt depending on your outlook.

Observations on the day: Nobody under 40 showed up but for Madley and she was in tow but bought a half dozen Star Trek books. No one asked for *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, Manga or *Lord of the Rings*; everyone avoided the L. Ron Hubbard stuff like the plague. Total for the day: \$550; a far cry from the desired amount. Oh well, tomorrow is another day.

And thus, Sunday appeared and the day warmed slowing as if we were frogs in the proverbial frying pan.

All things were neat and tidy, the cooler was cool and hope was in the air. Gene came by again and we chatted forever as old guys tend to do on warm summer afternoons. Mulling over things we must surely do when the Covid leaves or the summer cools or the cotton is high.

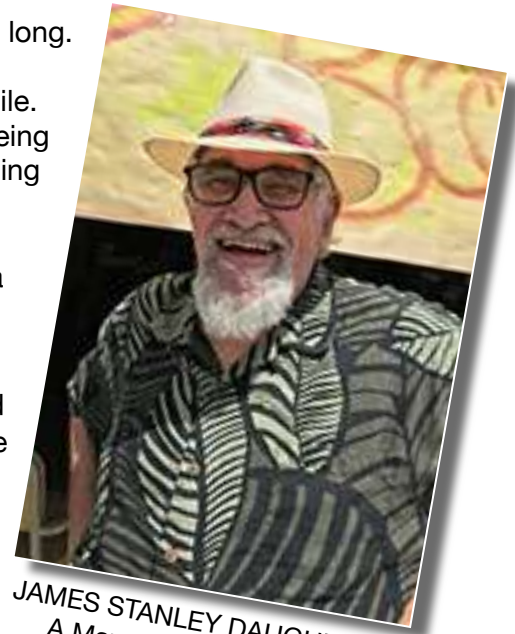
Perhaps it was time to close the store and retreat with our winnings and call it a day.

As despair was at its peak a black van pulled up in front and out came a young fellow who had bought a few things the day prior. He asked what I wanted for the remaining books and I said \$600 takes all.

Done and done.

We packed that van to absolutely stuffed, "Keep the hardcovers" he said and drove away.

The garage transformed to a mundane normalcy, DeDee returned and slid into her spot as if nothing had happened. By hook or crook, the entire total for the two days came to: \$1,060. Cathy got the money and I got a story to tell. ☺



JAMES STANLEY DAUGHERTY
A Man of Many Mangoes

BARRING CALAMITY

Attending WesterCon 74 and returning with a Memory Book stunning and brilliant. It will be on eFanzines two weeks following (give or take).

Seeking stalwart souls: brilliant, witty, and brazen with no PC agenda to consider artistic and written contributions extolling observations, happenings about the con and photos of public drunkenness. Must have a damn sense of humor. Sound like fun? See you there or: **Contact**





DINO WATCH: VEGAS



MEANWHILE #3

June, 2022 from
Alan White.

A Deadly Muse
Production.

