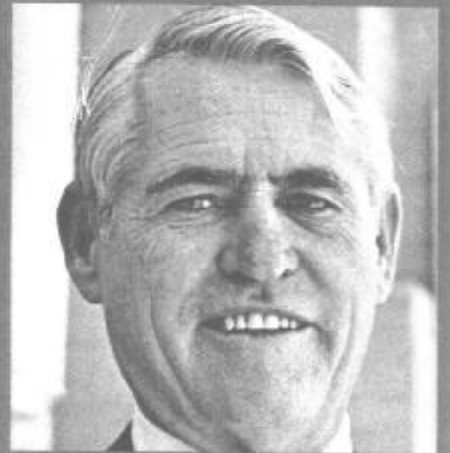


AIR WEST



AIR WEST GOES TO LAS VEGAS



That's Joe Buck, stalking a prize



joe buck, first class

Meet Joseph H. Buck, a prince of excellence among photographers and an award winner in the 1968 Air West Travel Writers and Photographers Contest;

a native of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada;

a veteran of five years service with the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II;

a graduate of the Fred Archer School of Photography in Los Angeles.

Joe Buck began his photographic career with the Hannigan and Associates public relations agency in Las Vegas in 1948. The agency laid the ground work for what is now the Las Vegas

News Bureau, publicity arm of the Chamber of Commerce. Except for a short period in the early '50s, Buck has been on the news bureau staff ever since.

As senior staff photographer in the world's most exciting city, Buck has photographed hundreds of famous stage, screen, sports and political figures. He is an accredited cinematographer and member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Motion Picture Machine Operators.

Joe's prize-winning photographs were taken at Lake Mead with 150mm lens mounted on a Hasselblad 500-C. Film was Tri-X, exposure 500th sec. at f.16.



The fluid ballet of water skiers on Nevada's Lake Mead add grace and motion to Joe Buck's prize-winning photography



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

'I felt like crying,' said Sue. 'It was like losing an old friend.'

Susan Fisher Spencer, an Air West hostess, was not the only one who cried inside a little that day - June 30, 1968.

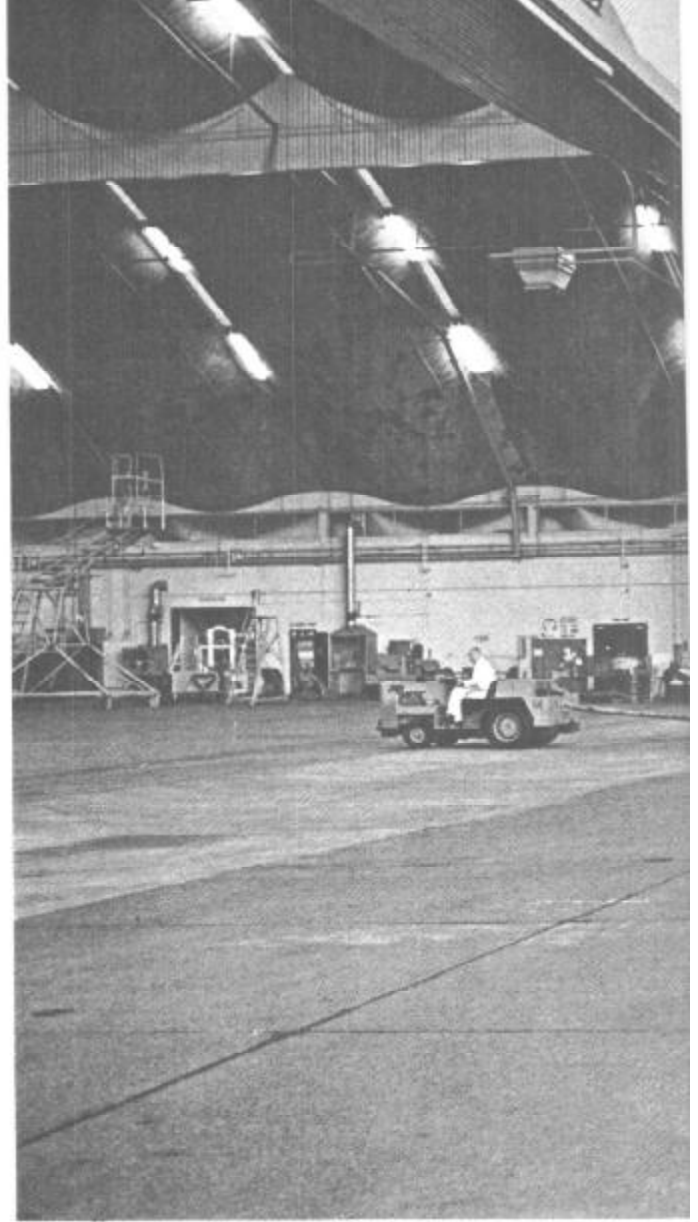
For it was the end of an era in aviation - the friendly, fraternal, pioneering era of aerial bus service when passengers and crew howdyed as they met and exchanged banter - and passed around home-made bread and sausage in the absence of meal service.

That was the last flight of Air West's last Douglas DC-3 - the last Doug in scheduled airline service west

of the Rockies. The gallant old Gooney Bird into the sunset and vanished, along with West Airlines.

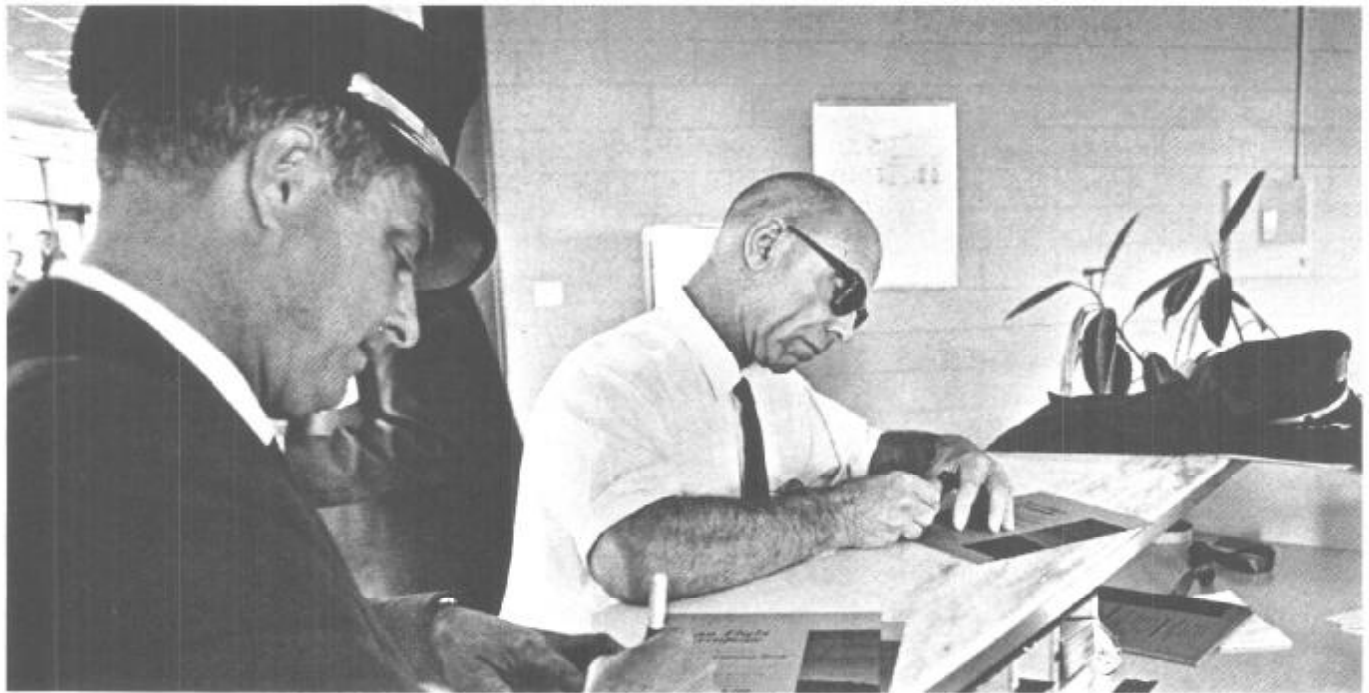
A new day dawned Monday, July 1, 1968, on the Air West, with a fleet of modern aircraft powered by jet engines. The speed, comfort and reliability of jet service has been quick to erase any recollection of the passing of the DC-3 among Air West pilots and crew alike.

In fact, that last flight of the gallant Gooney Bird from Seattle to Portland and Astoria/Seaside at the mouth of the Colum



by Leverett G. Richards
Photographs by Hugh N. Stratford





Captains Donald K. Peters and H.H. (Pete) Whitted sign certificates inducting passengers into the Loyal Order of Gooney Birds.



and Aberdeen/Hoquiam on Grays Harbor, was one of the jolliest wakes ever.

Seattle's King Neptune (Kelly Waller) and Seafair Queen (Linda Andrews) were there; Miss Portland (Jo Ann Twitty) and a rousing reception committee at Portland; Mayor Elvin C. Goodman, of Seaside, and Mayor Harry Steinbock, of Astoria, too; and Mayor Edward Lundgren, of Aberdeen, Mayor Rolland A. Youmans, of Hoquiam and their wives.

All twenty-four seats were filled and there was a waiting list of last-flighters. B. B. Berry, retired Portland businessman and private pilot, chartered a private plane and flew to Astoria to board the farewell flight because no seats were available at Portland. He landed with the last-flighters at Boing Field with a certificate signed by an impressed crew.

Friends of the Grand Old Lady of the skies reminisced as old N1051N, the fifth DC-3 acquired by West Coast, danced happily while her engines were revving up at Portland. They broke into spontaneous cheers when Captain Donald K. Peters greased in a perfect final landing at Seattle just as dusk was settling on Mount Rainier off to the south.

'People just naturally had confidence in the DC-3, said Susan, a Hoquiam girl who flew the DC-3s for eight years before reluctantly taking a more convenient DC-9 jetliner run.

'There was more time for leisurely service, time for chatting with passengers in the DC-3. The company was good and so was the scenery. We flew lower and slower, of course.'

'We used to get right down on the beach and give the passengers a look at surf-line scenery you can't see any other way,' James S. Hale, one of West Coast's first eight pilots, recalled.

'We would come tooling down the Columbia River so low we had to pull up to clear the Longview Bridge sometimes. Had to. No other means of navigation in those days.'

Hale, who flew some of the first proving flights over the original DC-3 routes in September, 1946, flew deadhead on the last DC-3 flight. He is flying Air West DC-9 jetliners now and is no longer 'qualified' in the old granddad.

The first West Coast flight out of Seattle to Portland was made by Patrick O'Grady and D. R. (Russ) Bath, December 6, 1946, in N44587.

O'Grady, now a DC-9 pilot with nearly twenty-seven thousand hours of flight time, remembers that trip well.

'We had Nick Bez aboard and we were out to impress the world. We were right on schedule until we took off from Portland and headed for Astoria.

'About five minutes out we discovered we had forgotten the mail. So we turned around and picked it up.'

Schedules were less rigid in those days.

At one time West Coast was the only airline authorized to make its letdowns on commercial broadcasting stations at eight different cities in Oregon and Washington.

'I remember once at Roseburg when we were running late and the station agent asked the radio station to stay on the air an extra hour so we could use their transmitter for a radio range letdown.' O'Grady recalls.

The veteran pilots have a few last comparisons for the history book, too.

Grady says that 'it took more skill to land consistently with a 3, or set it down in a gusty crosswind with those big wings, than it does to fly a jetliner with tricycle gear. You had to keep your neck on a swivel looking for other planes.'

'Yes,' says Hale, 'but you are busier in a DC-9. Things happen faster. And on a short runway you have to make your approach in the slot and plant the plane on the end of the runway to get a good landing.'

The DC-3 made commercial aviation. It was the first airliner John T. (for timid) Public could walk aboard without bending way over, and it was the first one that could make money for its operator.

At one time West Coast Airlines had fourteen of them. One of them is now anchored outside the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry on a fir-covered hill overlooking Portland. Eight others are awaiting their second reincarnation at Seattle, their papers stamped 'for sale.'

Is there anyone who really believes they won't fly again?



Don Peters adds his autograph to those of Linda Andrews, Seattle Seafair Queen, and Jo Ann Twitty, Miss Portland

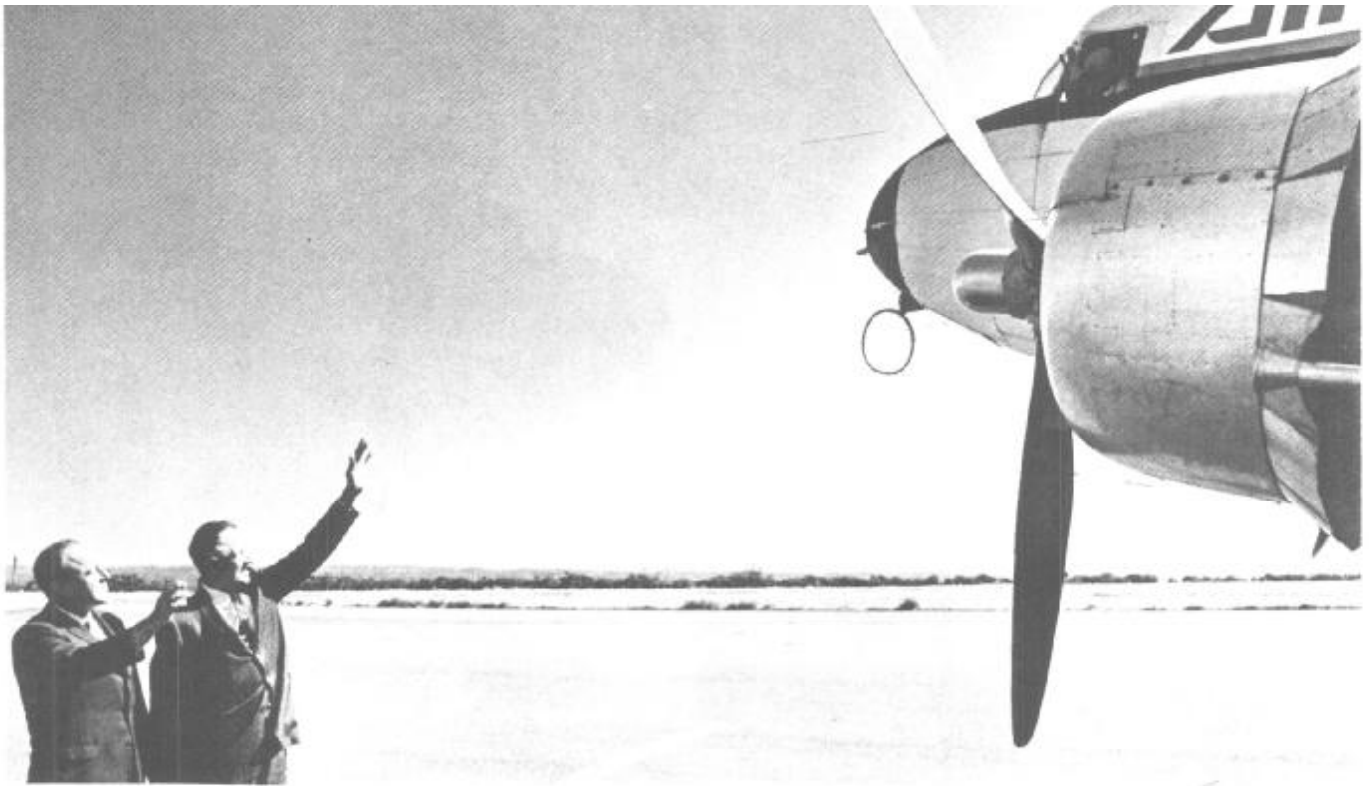
Jim Garvin (left), sales representative, and District Sales Manager Perry Jackson (right), display starter's flag on the windup trip



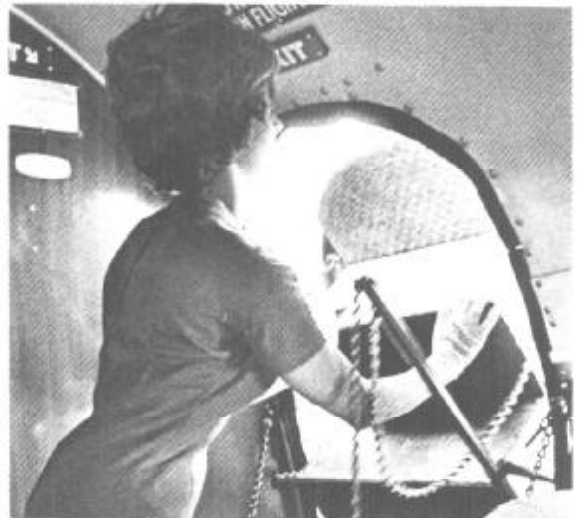
Terry Hunter, Portland sales and service manager for Air West, signals 'go'



and a Gooney Bird takes off



Hostess Sue Spencer and Captain Peters entertain the last flight passengers



Susan jockeys open the cabin door for the last time



Into Boeing Field for a sunset landing she goes, another mission accomplished



Chuck Iller, Air West mechanic, applies the finishing touch: A Grand Old Lady for sale

END

HYDROFOIL GUNBOAT

by Steve Lowell

I'd been testing planes for a long time, and here was a brand new field. It sounded like fun. Besides, it was a bigger challenge than the work I'd been doing.'

That's how Vernon Salisbury explains why he switched from flying planes to driving boats for a living.

The one-time Marine fighter pilot started with Boeing twelve years ago, directly from the service where he had remained after the Korean War. He began in the company's flight test section but switched to the Advanced Marine Systems Organization, and now he's chief of the hydrofoils trials and test staff.

Boeing has been experimenting with hydrofoils—the entirely submerged type—for several years. Some boats were built by the company to interest the Navy, and the first Navy hydrofoil gunboat, the Tucumcari, is now part of the U.S. fleet.

Salisbury, a pleasant 46-year-old man born in Eagle Rock, Calif., has been fascinated with machines that can hustle ever since he was a small fry.

Along with his interest in flying, there was a parallel interest in boating, so his change to watercraft while working for Boeing wasn't too surprising.

Besides, there's a good deal of similarity between these boats and airplanes. First, they ride on completely submerged foils shaped like airplane wings and including ailerons to help in steering, just like on a plane. The Fresh I was driven by an aircraft jet engine, as was the Aqua-Jet, a test boat which looked like a cross between a hydroplane and a lobster claw.

He thinks the Tucumcari is the greatest. It's powered by water jets, on its hull and on its foils, and Salisbury says the 71-foot boat moves so fast that, 'Gimme half a chance, and I'd be saying, 'Hello, there, Waikiki!''

There's no doubt the ship is speedy. Nobody'll say just how fast she'll travel, but she covered four hundred miles in ten hours on her trials.

There were some thrills other than speed in driving the Tucumcari.

It's a tough ship, and one of the things that proved it was a water-soaked log about 25 feet long and 1-1/2 feet thick. That 1-1/2-ton log tried to trip it.

'We scattered chunks of bark and wood all over the ocean. The three struts cut clear through, and we didn't think any damage had been done. We'd run into lots of debris before, but this time there was a bigger 'thunk.' So we decided we'd better check, and we found the hull and deck were slightly wrinkled at the bow and there was some other minor damage.

'We came all the way back home, though, with no trouble, partly on the foils and part way on the hull. The ship was designed to absorb shocks like that. It's easier to pound out wrinkles in the hull than replace struts.'

The Tucumcari, named for a town in eastern New Mexico, was quite a showpiece during tests around Seattle.

'Every time we'd pass a ferry, the passengers would rush to our side, and the ferry would heel over. We could picture its skipper struggling to hold a straight course.

'We drew an awful lot of attention, but it's been a long time since we got a request like the one a couple of years ago. A woman called me one day and said, 'I've been watching your boat through my picture window. It's fascinating. Would you mind running it tomorrow evening? I'm having a cocktail party, and I'm sure my guests would enjoy it.'



The U.S.S. Tucumcari jets across Seattle's Elliot Bay in ankle-deep froth

Boeing's chief hydrofoil pilot, Vernon Salisbury, with the Tucumcari at Bremerton Navy Yard



The 71-foot gunboat can attain speeds in excess of 40 knots. It is now undergoing Navy evaluation in the San Diego area

Drooped shape of the after foils enables the Tucumcari to turn at high speeds without lifting a leg from water.



The 'new' Navy watches the avant garde Tucumcari cavort on its delivery run to Bremerton.



LAS VEGAS: where anything

CASKIE STINNETT, winner of the first prize in the 1968 Air West Travel Writers Contest for his *Holiday Magazine* article on Las Vegas, is a veteran reporter, columnist, editor and book author who has been with Curtis Publishing Company since 1944. He has been editor of *Holiday Magazine* since March, 1967.

For two years before being named to his present post, Stinnett served as travel editor of the magazine, and twelve years ago he created a monthly publication, called 'Speaking of Holiday,' which dealt with the magazine's authors, editors and general editorial aims. Stinnett also has been executive editor of Curtis' *Ladies*

Home Journal and assistant to the editor of all Curtis magazines.

A native of Fauquier County, Virginia, and a graduate of the College of William and Mary, he worked on newspapers in the South and for the government in World War II before joining Curtis.

After a stint as an infantry private, Stinnett went to Washington. He wrote munition production reports during the day and acted as Washington correspondent for a theatrical weekly in the evenings. It was in this yeasty atmosphere of explosives and entertainment that he began writing humour pieces for the *Saturday Evening Post*, an enterprise he

pursued successfully for over ten years. He has also written humour and satire for *Atlantic*, *Esquire*, *Colliers*, *Look*, *Redbook* and other magazines.

Stinnett's first book, 'Will Not Run February 22,' was an act of vengeance against the railroads and summarized experiences accumulated while commuting from a Bucks County (Pa.) farm for nearly seven years. His first novel, 'Out of the Red,' satirizes the seasonal revolutions in Caribbean countries and his latest book, 'Back to Abnormal,' is a collection of essays from his 'Speaking of Holiday.'

by Caskie Stinnett

The city of Las Vegas has had no success in one of its most cherished enterprises, and because of that, it has been remarkably successful in another. Its compulsive attempts to prove that it is no different from any other American town must certainly be one of the most resounding failures of all time, despite the frequency with

which visitors are reminded how low the city's crime rate is, how high its church attendance, and what a fine school system it has.

All this is perfectly true, but if this were all Las Vegas had to offer, no one would bother to go there. It is because there is absolutely nothing else in the world

is forgivable except restraint

like Vegas—nothing so glittering and gay and totally uninhibited—that vast numbers of people find this mirage in the desert endlessly irresistible. Las Vegas is fun, and it seems a shame that its citizens yearn for a respectability that would destroy its pleasurable image.

The peculiarities of Las Vegas can hardly be catalogued.

Gambling — the foundation upon which the economy not only of Las Vegas but of all Nevada rests—is a word to make the natives recoil in horror; they find 'gaming' much more to their taste, but the generic word is 'action.' No man wearing a mustache is permitted to work in any casino, presumably on the grounds that a mustache suggests a sinister or shifty character. There are no clocks in any gaming establishment there, nor

even in the lobbies of the hotels where the casinos are located, for time is something the operators want forever removed from the consciousness of the players.

It's impossible to describe Las Vegas in a general way; the city assumes form only by a massing of its details.

For example, in the casino of Caesars Palace I saw a bride, still in her wedding dress and clutching her bouquet, operating the quarter slot machine in total absorption. The bridegroom was nowhere to be seen. A school for would-be gamblers (tuition, two dollars) is conducted in an office building across the street from the Algiers Motel. Free drinks are served players in the casinos on the Strip—the brilliantly lit street on which most of the big hotels are located, and it is not at all unusual for the waitresses who serve cocktails to net one hundred

Reprinted from HOLIDAY Magazine (May, 1967)

It's all here, in this one place

dollars a day in tips, depending of course on how the cards are falling. Dice are manufactured in Las Vegas at the rate of four hundred pairs a day at a small plant within sight of the Strip, and they are used by the hotels at the rate of three hundred thousand pairs a year.

Las Vegas housewives spend chips from the casinos at their neighborhood supermarkets; recognized chips are unofficial legal tender. Marriages outnumber divorces eight to one, and the most sought-after lucrative municipal posts are those of justices of the peace. There are only two. The Strip is not even in Las Vegas; it is in Clark County, Nevada. The Dunes Hotel, one of the Strip's biggest, claims that it handles more money every twenty four hours (from rooms, golf course, restaurants and action) than any other hotel in the world.

A Runyonesque thread runs through the whole fabric of Las Vegas. On the first day of my visit there, a headline in the Las Vegas Review-Journal screamed: 'Ice Pick Willie' On Skim Probe Stand. The skim probe had Las Vegas mighty uneasy. It had to do with charges that underworld figures in the hotel-ownership maze were skimming the cream off the gambling take before totals were reported to Internal Revenue officials. All casino operators denied this with a look of bruised innocence.

'This town is set up so nothing crooked can happen,' one operator told me. 'Sure there are some characters with blemishes on their record working here, but since they've been in Vegas, they haven't even gotten a parking ticket.'

Another operator said that the careful scrutiny of inspectors from the Nevada Gaming Commission keeps the town clean. 'If an inspector sees that cards or dice are not in good condition, that box is closed for action immediately. Everybody here is watched by somebody.'

Monotony reduces the effect of superlatives, but much of the character of Las Vegas derives from its contempt for restraint. At the Aladdin Hotel, one of the twelve major hotels on the Strip, I was told that the sign alone cost two hundred fifty thousand dollars and could be seen from eleven miles away on the freeway to California. When I mentioned this across the street at the Dunes, an official snickered. The Dune's sign, I was told, cost

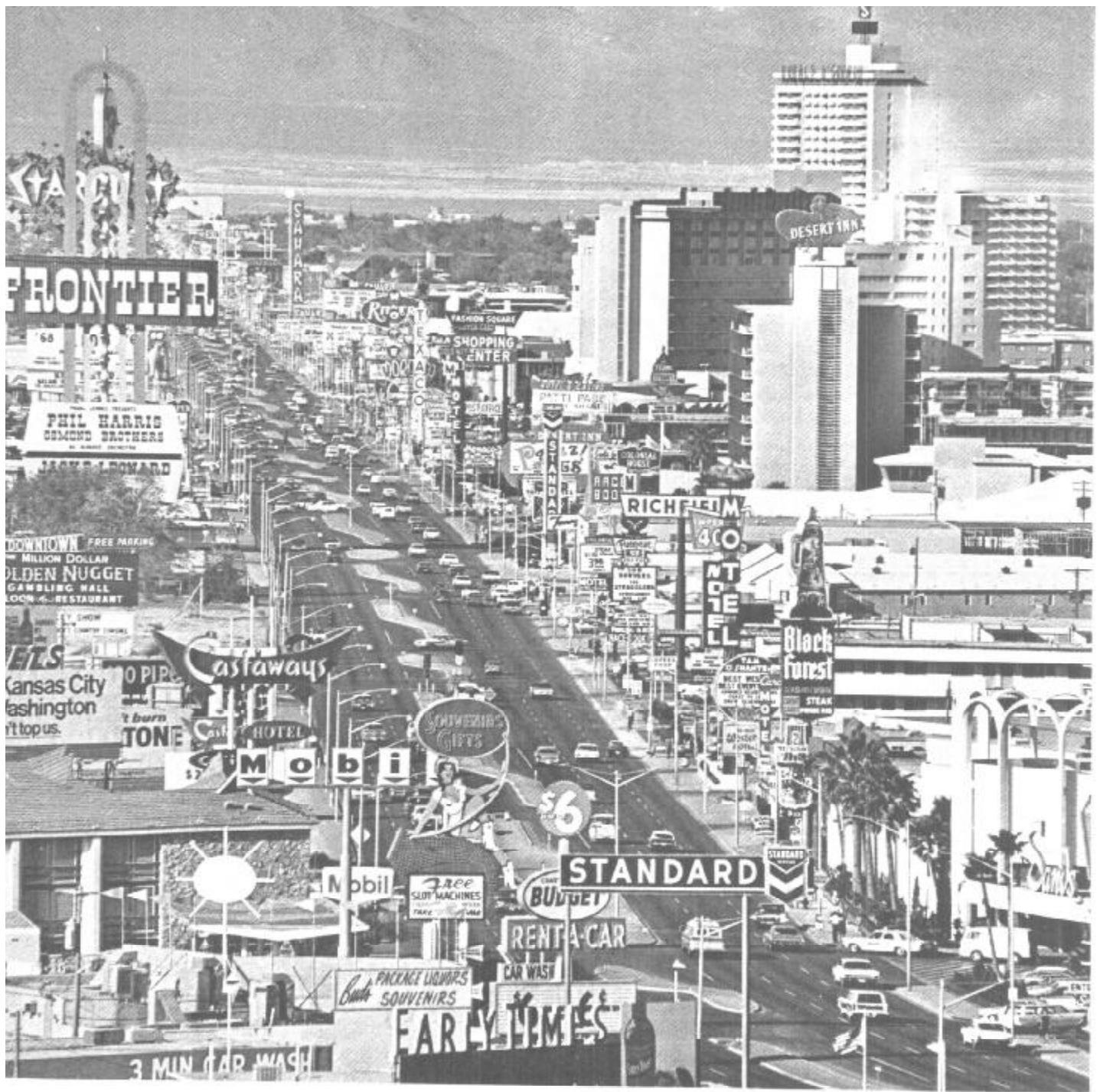
half a million, was the largest free-standing sign in the world, consumed one hundred fifty dollars a day in electricity, and was so enormous that a monorail system was built into it just to accommodate servicing.

One of the most beguiling aspects of the town, in my opinion, is its forthrightness, or perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a pattern of precarious honesty. For example, a service exists that will page you once in each of the Strip hotels for one dollar. You don't answer the calls, of course, since they are strictly for prestige. But lone men have found extremely helpful in picking up late-evening companionship; a familiar name carries status.

Since it is pretty well established that people will gamble wherever they can be attracted to the premises, Las Vegas had become the undisputed heart of the entertainment world, and on any night the Strip outshines both New York and Los Angeles in this regard. In fact, if an underground nuclear explosion at the experiment grounds one hundred fifty miles away should unaccountably backfire and destroy Las Vegas, America's entertainment industry would almost be wiped out overnight. (Something like this happened once on a small scale; a nuclear device was detonated in the desert, and enough force found its way through fissures in the earth to break every window in the J. C. Penney Company building in downtown Las Vegas.

The current taste in entertainment is now running heavily to gigantic nude spectaculars, and three of the most famous names in Paris — Folies Bergere, Lido and Casino de Paris — now are running successfully on the Strip. Nudity is generally something to be seen but not talked about, so far as Las Vegans are concerned; but when they do mention it, they concede that the Strip gets by with a good deal more than the downtown shows because of less puritanical Clark County thinking.

A new edition of the Folies Bergere was in rehearsal at the Tropicana, and I was taken in by a press agent to see how a spectacular looked in the process of being put together. It looked chaotic. Chorus girls were sleeping in chairs out front, scenery was scattered among the tables, paper cups and cigarette butts filled every surface, and the sound of carpentry was deafening. A piano and drums were providing the only music for the rehearsal, and a choreographer was putting the Baker twins— identical blonde English girls— through a standard



There are indoor sports, and when these grow tiresome,



production number that involved their being spun in an arc by a group of chorus boys and then held aloft by the legs.

It was ragged, and the director had them repeat it again. When the dancers finally got it right, there was desultory, scattered applause from out front. A girl in black tights who was dozing in a chair near me woke up and said, 'What's happening?' A man behind her said, 'It's applause, something you don't know anything about. Go back to sleep.'

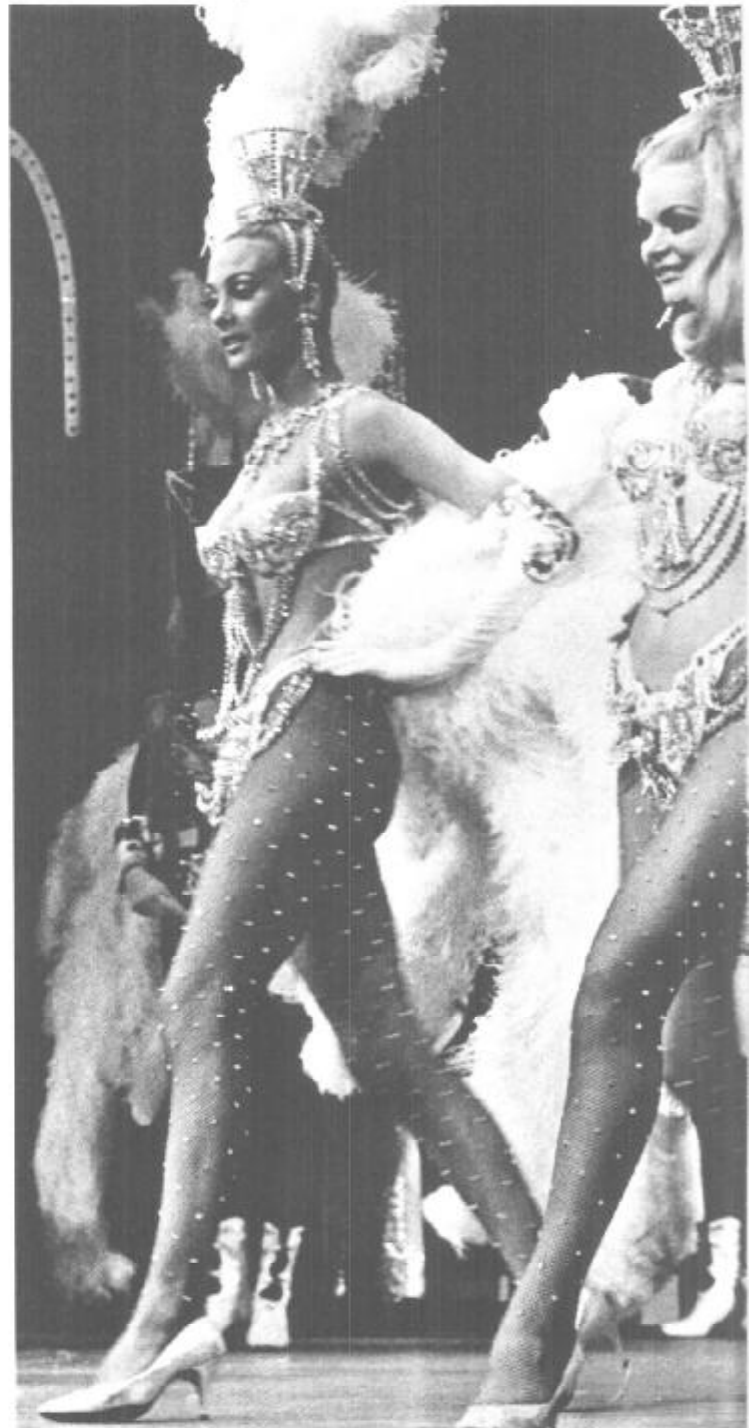
Money seems plentiful in Las Vegas. The newest hotel, Caesars Palace, is estimated to have cost \$24,600,000, a large part of which was put up by the Teamsters Union. If the figure is accurate, it may well be the most expensive hotel in the world. Land on the Strip is now reputed to sell for four thousand dollars a front foot.

The days of the big gamblers have about disappeared, and Las Vegas has learned that it can grow prosperous on conventioners and weekenders who drop from ten to thirty dollars a night, if they can be brought to the scene in sufficient numbers. Largely for this reason, a complaint that an olive is too big and a glass too small is promptly corrected, as will any other reasonable dissatisfaction. The casinos don't want their guests to be diverted from the action by minor displeasures. The Alice in Wonderland Nursery in the Dunes, which assumes the task of supervising guests' children from noon to four a.m. at no cost, is suggestive of the kind of visitors the city now seeks to attract.

One aspect of Las Vegas that puzzled me throughout my visit there—and still does—is the compulsion of people flee to there when they want to avoid the public gaze. Las Vegas of all places! Brigitte Bardot and Gunther Sachs, concealing their tracks stealthily, went there to be married. So did Frank Sinatra and Mia Farrow. Howard Hughes, it was reliably reported, had been spirited from a train in the middle of the night and brought in great secrecy to the Desert Inn. What special virtues does Vegas possess for those seeking the bestowal of privacy? I put the question to the owner of one of the Strip's hotels.

'It beats the hell out of me,' he said. 'I think they come here for the same reason as everybody else. The moth can't keep away from the flame.'

Maybe that's the answer.





there are outdoor sports

Japanese tourists are fond of photography,



and seafood delicacies



レクリエーション天国

That's the way they talk about Las Vegas over at Japan Air Lines, which transports many a Japanese with a yen to play the slots



Welcome to Las Vegas!



Incoming flight with Japan Air Lines tour group from Tokyo is met at Las Vegas by Air West District Sales Manager Jesse James. One of the first things the visitors do is check where the evening action is in the Vegas Visitor.



In any language, it seems,



three bars spells a winner

Story by Colin McKinlay
Photographs by Hugh N. Stratford

THE MAYOR OF LAS VEGAS

When he came to town, it wasn't on one of the 1932 vintage streamline trains.

He was aboard a boxcar, and the trip across the desert was less than air conditioned. Why, he even remembers the route: Rock Island Railroad to Tucumcari, N. M., Southern Pacific to San Bernardino, Calif., and Union Pacific to Las Vegas.

It would be unkind to call the mayor of Las Vegas a hobo. But, when Orañ Gragson arrived in the desert looking for a job on the construction of Hoover Dam, he had holes in the seat of his pants, worn out shoes and a railroad detective on his heels.

Now, Mayor Gragson is operating out of an office in the Las Vegas City Hall which in some ways resembles a gift counter. There are display cases of remembrances presented to him by visiting dignitaries — jet airplanes, miniature cannons, framed awards, plaques and even a pair of six-foot long scissors for cutting ribbons, a job mayors must adjust to early in their careers.

A taxpayer stormed into his office one day and opened the conversation with 'Good morning, your honor. I don't know why I'm calling you your honor, you're nothing but a damned bum.'

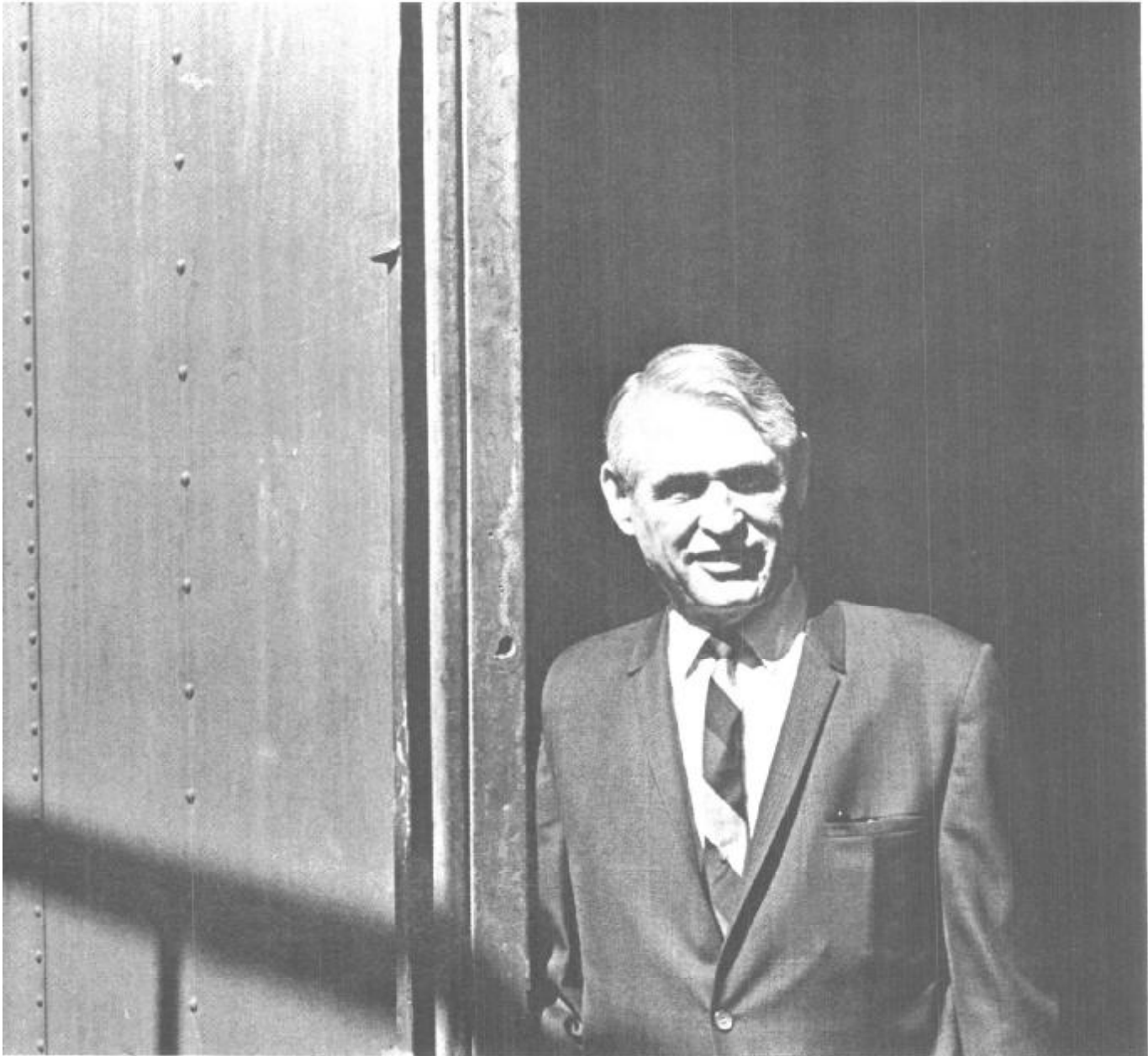
Without an emotional trauma, Gragson replied, 'Now that the niceties are over, what's your problem?' Gragson recalls that he left in a good mood, but he doesn't recall what the shouting was all about.

The chief executive of the nation's gaming-resort capital now travels about ten thousand miles a year talking about the world from the personal contacts he makes. He enjoys meeting people from so many walks of life because 'it gives you a broader perspective of our times.'

What do people want to know about Las Vegas?

Back in the 'old' days, when Gragson traveled outside the state, other municipal officials marveled at the town's gambling tax structure and felt that the city would have no financial problems at all. Gragson promptly 'informed them 'it isn't so'. Businessmen





Oran Grogson

were interested in the tax structure and the possibility of locating a firm in the area. Many others noted the increase in the community's minority population and

He was campaigning for governor of Nevada then, in 1962, and received his only campaign setback. He tried to fill the political shoes left by the death of Lt. Gov. Rex

Being a mayor isn't all business



But his secretary, Claudia Cloudman, is



On the administrative front, Mayor Gragson is teamed with A.R. (Art) Trelease, Las Vegas' city manager

disturbance. The mayor's answer:

'Because we've had reasonably good communications and responsible minority leadership. Members of minority groups are represented on all boards and commissions.'

Now, the questions are all about Howard Hughes, and what he's up to. 'Have you ever seen Mr. Hughes?' they ask.

Gragson has never seen Hughes, or talked to him. His answer is, 'We have good communications with Mr. Hughes, but it is through his top personnel. I have no idea what he is going to do, but we are pleased to have Mr. Hughes establish his residence with us.'

Born in Tucumcari, N. M., Feb. 11, 1911, the Gragson family moved to Arkansas when he was eight. Their dust bowl living was wiped out and when a young man, Gragson went to the oil fields outside Seminole, Okla., before heading for Las Vegas. When he landed in Las Vegas aboard his private railroad car, he was unsuccessful in getting a job on the Hoover Dam construction, but he did get a job with the Nevada Highway Department, working on the main highway linking Las Vegas with Reno.

In 1934, he returned to Mansfield, Okla., to marry his childhood sweetheart, Bonnie Henley, a pretty blue-eyed blonde. He brought her back to Las Vegas in real class — a 1929 Model A Ford roadster.

Gragson was in the furniture business in Las Vegas when he took his first shot at politics. He was an unknown Republican, running in a non-partisan race against a very well-known city commissioner, a Democrat in a community where Democrats outnumber Republicans three to one. He wasn't given much of a chance. But, his opponent blundered. He made a personal slur about Gragson's speech impediment, and a sympathetic community voted him into office in 1959.

During one campaign, Gragson said, 'Sure, I have a speech impediment. A lot of other people do too. The only difference is that mine shows.'

before the election for Nevada's top job. Gragson campaigned like a trouper, but lost. Even the voters in his own precinct rejected him.

Now in his third term, many have said he can be mayor of Las Vegas as long as he wants. Last year he gave up his furniture business to devote more time to city affairs, then announced, 'I'm looking for a part-time job to supplement my income.' He gets \$15,000 a year from the city. But, Gragson never found an acceptable position.

'I had several job offers, but none I felt I could hold and do justice to them and to my present position. I didn't feel I would have had several of the offers if it wasn't for my position,' he said.

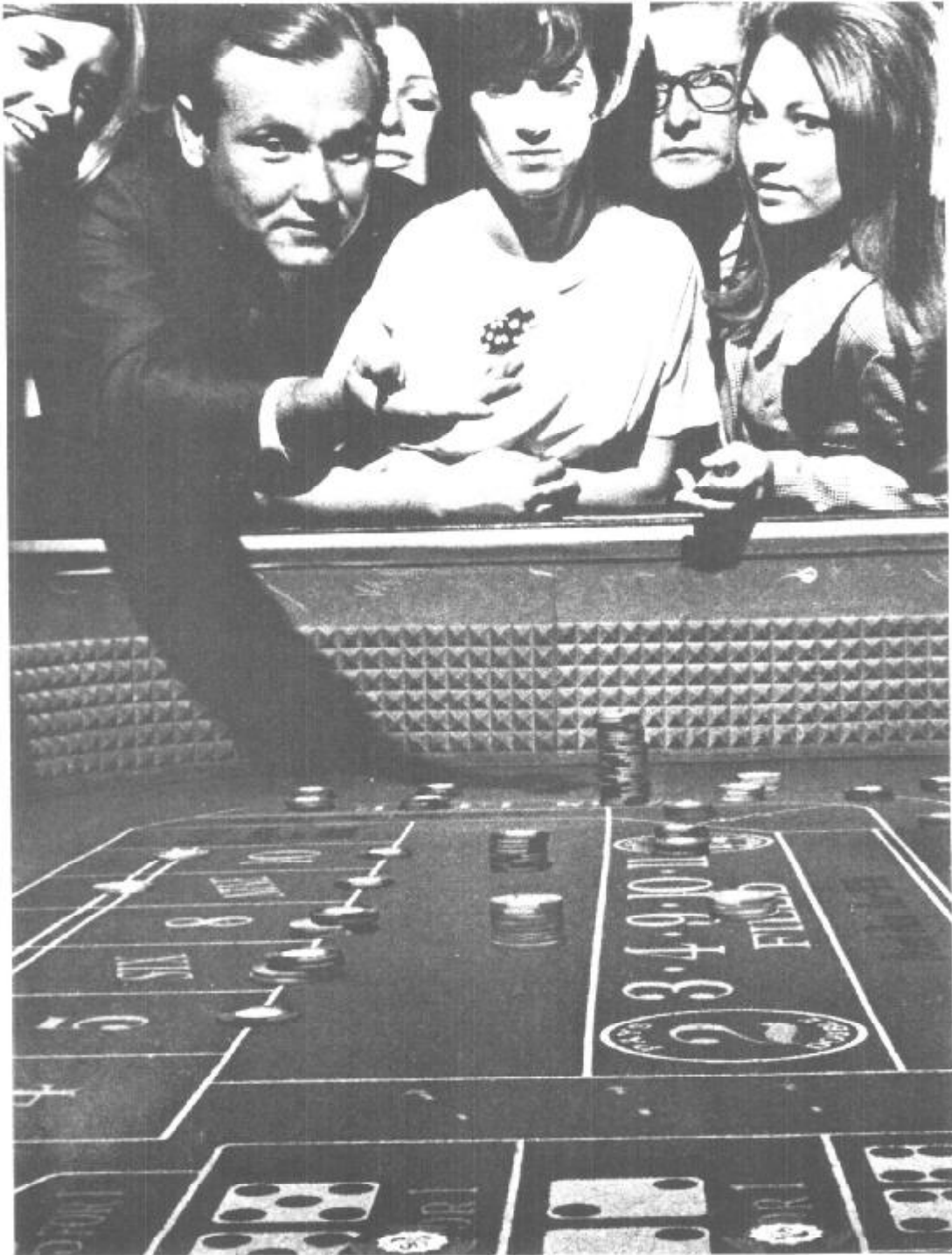
He gets fifty to sixty-five requests a month for personal appearances, and one month attended eighty-five. The unorthodox is his forte. Gragson plunges into sensitive political arenas like labor negotiations where others wouldn't dare tread. Every time his influence resulted in a compromise settlement. Once he accepted an invitation to appear in the Las Vegas Press Club's 'Branding Iron' farce, a takeoff on the National Press Club's Gridiron dinner. He was in the all-male chorus line as a showgirl, attired in a scanty outfit and wearing high heels. The next day his picture—in this outfit—appeared on the front page of the newspaper with the line beneath,

'This is your mayor.'

Perhaps all this might have contributed to his greatest honor. The Fraternal Order of Eagles selected Gragson its national 1968 Mayor of the Year and presented the honor to him in Houston last month. The feeling of Las Vegas can best be summed up by the remark made at a birthday dinner for him eighteen months ago which one thousand five hundred persons attended, paying fifty dollars a plate for dinner:

'If some fellow planned to run for mayor and saw what kind of a cross-section of the public attended this party, he would probably move to Pioche.'

dice mill



A finished set of Las Vegas casino dice is the culmination of more than eleven months of curing and precision machining involving thirteen separate operations, all designed to insure the ultimate in action, dimensional stability and long life. There is no luck involved in their manufacture; that ingredient must be added by the shooter.

Cellulose nitrate, the heaviest and liveliest of all the thermoplastics, is the basic raw material used, and is purchased by the manufacturer in slightly oversized cube form, at a cost of four dollars per pound. The raw cubes are then rough-milled; spot drilled and painted with a special catalytic resin compound; heat treated and cured for two weeks in 120 degree ovens to equalize internal stresses.

Next, the semi-finished dice are 'scalped', a process which removes excess resin from the surfaces, then sub-

jected to a final, secret curing process.

Diamond trueing mills bring the dice down to within three 10,000ths of an inch of finish dimensions before special thermopneumatic stamping presses emboss the required design below the surface of the cube. The near-complete product is then micro-lapped to final dimensions, holding a tolerance of one 10,000th of an inch, approximately one twentieth of the thickness of a human hair.

After the lapping stage, the individual pairs are washed and dried by hand, inspected and packed in special, tamperproof boxes for delivery to the crap tables of Las Vegas' famous casinos where they will be accorded more attention and verbal caresses by ardent crap shooters than will the city's equally famous showgirls.

Good luck!

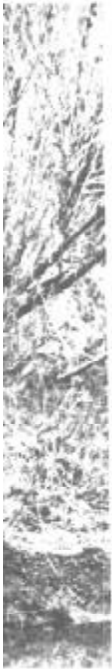
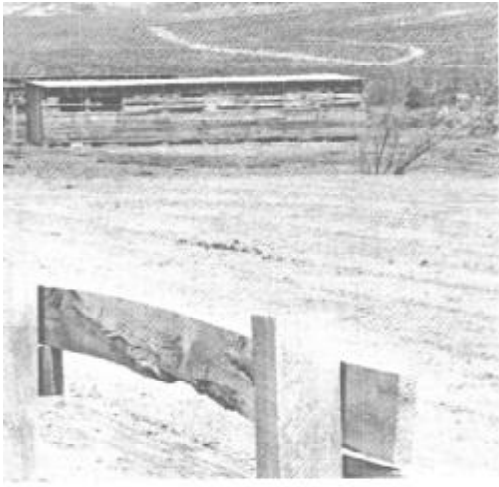


From assembly line to consumer



go the most pampered dice in the world

Text by Bud Taurtellotte
Photography by Terry Todd



After their ride in the sun, the two hostesses settle down around a friendly fire

a day at red rock

Las Vegas is unquestionably Actionville, no matter how you happen to swing. There's the gaming and the lavish productions and the bright lights and the personalities, but when you're in that city every week . . . well, there can be too much of a good thing.

If you happen to be a pretty Air West hostess you might use some of your time away from the famed Strip engaged in one of the many fresh air pursuits available to the Las Vegas visitor but seldom publicized.

The snow is great for skiing and sledding on Mount Charleston. The bass fishing, water skiing and sailing on Lake Mead are there for those interested, and the desert and mountains of the Red Rock Recreation Area are great for riding in and through on horseback.

Our heroines, as vivacious and charming as only airline hostesses and fairy princesses ever seem to be, are Linda Owens, 23, and Linda Dudley, 21, of Phoenix. They chose Bonnie Springs guest ranch on the edge of the Red Rock Escarpment, just thirty minutes west of Las Vegas, for their day in the sun.

Both of the Air West hostesses dig the outdoors and athletics. Tennis, golf, bowling and fencing, they say, rank among their favorites, although they both sit a horse very nicely and add immeasurably to the beauty of the desert.

The girls made a day of it at the ranch. Host Al Levinson had their horses saddled and ready within a few minutes and they were off into the twisting, scenic trails of the Red Rock foothills to taste the high desert air.

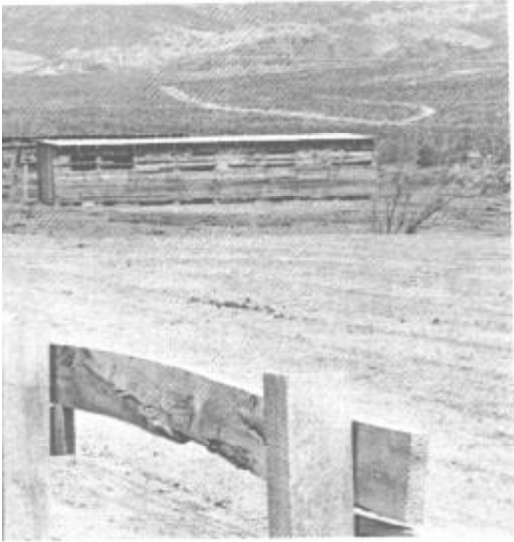
After two hours of that air, the beauty of the surrounding mountains and the saddle-bronc exercise, both Lindas were ready to hang up their hackamores and head for the cozy, hardwood atmosphere of the ranch house for a big slice of bar-b-que beef and a coffee at the rustic fireside.

A leisurely lunch followed by an hour feeding the rainbows and ducks in the ranch trout pond, and it was time to hit the trail back to the wild blue yonder, both gals rosy cheeked and already looking forward to their next day off in the desert Disneyland of Las Vegas.



Like a good airline hostess, Linda Owens gives her horse a cool drink

Text by Bud Tourtelotte
Photography by Terry Todd



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AIR WEST

FIFTIETH ISSUE August/September 1968

The Las Vegas News Bureau

One of the principal reasons Las Vegas is so well-known is the Las Vegas News Bureau, publicity arm of the Chamber of Commerce. Headed by former Las Vegas newsman Jim Deitch, the fulltime staff comprises Don Payne, assistant manager; Don Beale and Bud Taurtellotte, writers; Joe Buck, Don English, John Cook, Milt Palmer, Jerry Abbott, Terry Todd and Bob Hooper, photographers. The Las Vegas profile in this issue was produced in cooperation with the news bureau. Readers can see some of the more than 80,000 photographs that it turns out each year for worldwide consumption, and some of the people and activities that keep the Deitch team whistling while it works.

Credits and Acknowledgments

Photos by Hugh Stratford: Mayor of Vegas; Mission Accomplished; indoor sportsman. Tucumcari photos courtesy Boeing News Bureau (Al Hobbs). Japanese tour group coordination was by Bob Joyce, Japan Air Lines, Los Angeles. The balance of the photography is from the Las Vegas News Bureau. Last Flighter Lev Richards is aviation editor of the Portland Oregonian

Editorial

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Editorial Board: J.N. Bez Jr., E.N. Altman and Larry Decker. Donald P. Gooding, Editor
Hugh Stratford, Photographer; Dolly Connelly, writer, Harvey Kyllonen, printing supervisor

Opposite

Caskie Stinnett (left), editor of Holiday Magazine, received the first prize award in the 1968 Air West Travel Writers Contest from Mayor Oran Gragson, of Las Vegas, and Ed Converse, vice chairman of the board of Air West, in a ceremony July 29, 1968, jointly sponsored by the Las Vegas chapter of Sigma Delta Chi

Cover

Jackie Hewitt, Miss Showgirl International 1969, and other photos by Las Vegas News Bureau. Mayor Oran Gragson by Hugh Stratford

