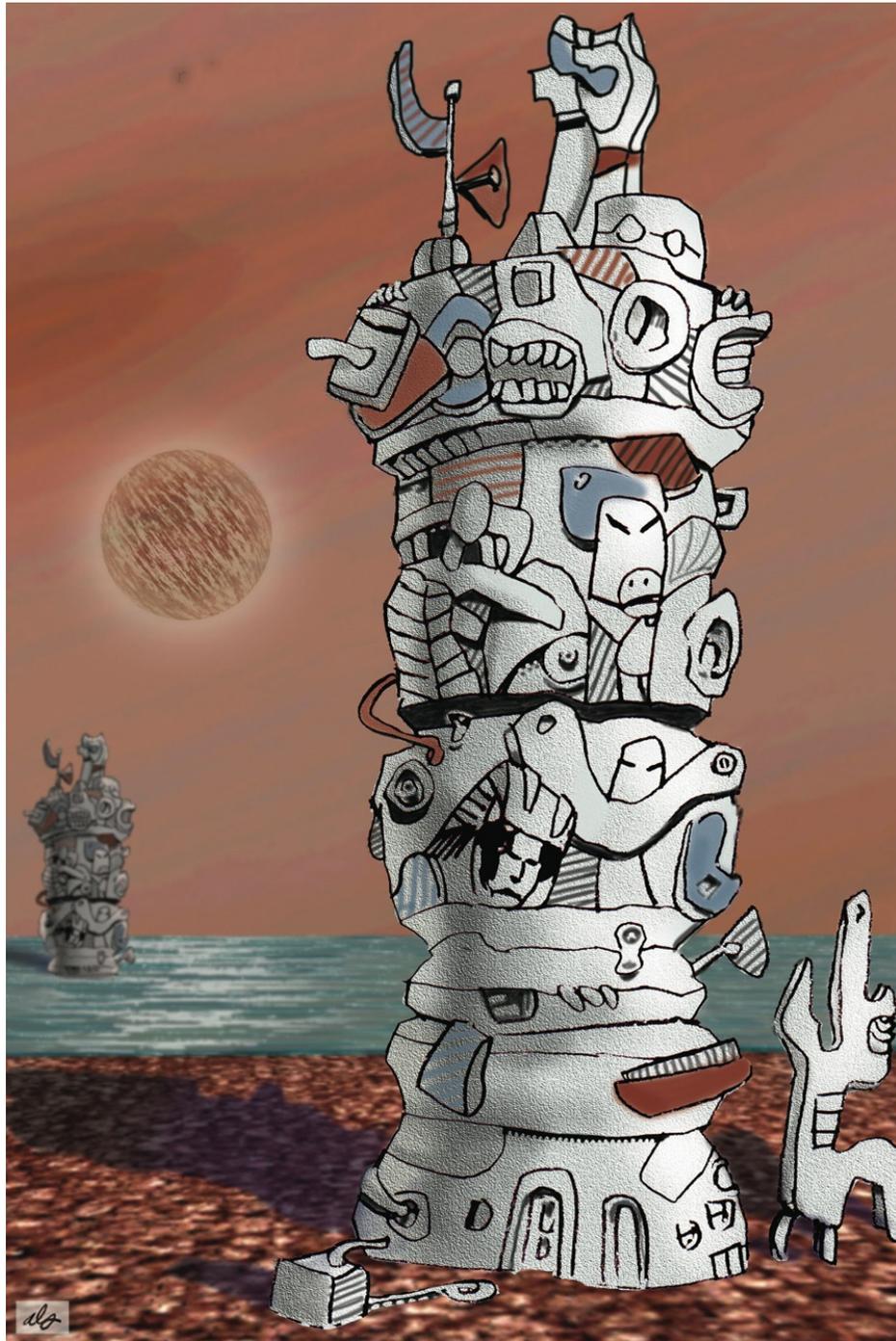


Feline Journal #51



Feline Journal



#51

August 2014

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Table of Contents

Editorial / Introduction—p. 2
Local Outings—p. 2
ConDor XX Trip—p. 3
Corflu Trip—p. 6
Amy's Motley Media Musings—p. 11
Jonathan's Science Corner—p. 12
Kritter Korner—p. 14
Reviews—p. 19
Letters—p. 22
Closing Remarks—p. 29

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[] if this box is checked, I need to hear from you if you wish to stay on my mailing list.

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* Editorial / Introduction

This is the first issue of the newly retitled run that started under the title *Feline Mewsings*. I split off the more personal parts of the zine as a personalzine under the title *Pursonal Mewsings*.

* * *

* Local Outings

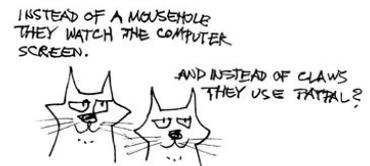
The Importance of Being Earnest: This Oscar Wilde play was the first play of the Arizona Theatre Company's 2013-14 season. It's one of my favourite plays. Being familiar with it, I watched with a critical eye. But I was not disappointed. The humour was broadly done, the only way really to do it without seeming ridiculous. There was a bit of song thrown in between the second and third acts instead of an intermission. I was very pleased with the performance.

#

The Sunshine Boys: I didn't think I'd seen this play by Neil Simon before, but it seemed vaguely familiar as the play unfolded. I think I must have seen a movie version on TV. The story is about two aging vaudeville actors. They had been partners but grew to hate each other. Clark continued to act, but Lewis left show business. In 1972 CBS wanted them to appear for a history of comedy. Trying to get the two into the same room is a challenge.

#

Clybourne Park: This play by Bruce Norris is about the changing nature of neighbourhoods. The play was inspired by Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, which is about a black family that move into a white neighbourhood. The first half of *Clybourne Park* is written from the white family's viewpoint in that same neighbourhood. Over the years after that, the area becomes predominantly black. The second half of the play takes place fifty years later when a young white couple buy the same house. The neighbourhood has become run down, and many residents are afraid their history will be lost.



#

Ha!: This trio of one-act plays by Rich Orloff was performed by the San Pedro Actors Troupe, which is local to Oracle. One of the characters in each of two plays was played by a neighbour of ours. The first play is "Oedi" and is a farcical retelling of the Oedipus Rex story; it's never mentioned in the famous story that Oedipus's mother must have been quite elderly when he married her. The second play, "The News from St. Petersburg" is a Chekhovian spoof. The premise of the third play, "The Whole Shebang", is based on the question, "What if the entire universe was just some nerd's science project?" It was all funny and entertaining.

#

Gravity: We don't get to the cinema much, but we did get to this one. Since I'm sure everyone has seen it, I won't go into what it's about. The movie was great, but it made me really tired. From almost the very beginning, there is non-stop action. I must have been tensed up throughout. When we emerged from the building, I was exhausted.

#

The Mountaintop: This play by Katori Hall depicts a fictionalized version of Martin Luther King's last night on Earth. He is visited by someone who delivers coffee to his room but doesn't leave. She turns out to be an angel. A lot of the play is about King reminiscing about his life. It was very touching but also hilarious.

#

Around the World in 80 Days: Everyone is, I'm sure, familiar with this story by Jules Verne. We had seen it done at the Colony in Burbank. I think this is the first time I've seen a play done both places where I preferred this one. What was superior were the sets. The venue for the Arizona Theatre Company in Tucson is blessed with an ample stage, where the Colony has a smaller one. This gave this production the ability to build a very interesting and versatile set. The acting was about the same in both places—great.

#

Venus in Fur: I found this slightly erotic play by David Ives very puzzling. According to study material I found on the Internet, the playwright was apparently exploring sexual roles. I don't really see that. The main character in the play is also supposedly exploring sexual plays. He's a playwright trying to cast his latest play. The woman who shows up late for an audition is clearly more than she appears. I think the large audience that showed up for this included many who showed up just to be titillated. I think this is the first time I've been really disappointed by the choice of play at the Arizona Theatre Company.

* * *

* ConDor XX Trip

Wednesday, 6 March 2013, I used my alarm to get up at oh dark hundred for a timely departure on our trip to San Diego for ConDor and some sightseeing and visiting.

We managed to get on the road a little after 07:30; we used the Lexus, because it needed exercise. I slept most of the way to Gila Bend, which is a two-hour stretch. We made our customary stop at the Shell station there. After that I was unable to get back to sleep, so I plugged in my iPod and listened to radio drama.

I ate my packed lunch about 11:15 Pacific time. The bread, which I made in a bread machine using a mix, seemed to be getting crumblier and I ended up throwing out the remainder. I saw some nice gluten-free rolls at Safeway back home, which I later bought.

We made a gas/comfort stop in Jacumba, CA; the iPhone thought we were in Mexico. We reached the Town & Country Hotel about 13:15. Check-in went smoothly, and we found our room on the eighth floor of the Regency Tower. Shortly after settling in, I called the Dennises (Jane and Scott, who are longtime T-shirt vendors). Jane was too tired for dinner that night. I spent the rest of the afternoon reading e-mail, catching up with Facebook, updating financial records, and taking a long nap.

We went to Trellises, the expensive hotel restaurant, for dinner. The Godiva Chocolate martini is to die for. The halibut was okay. Mike had chicken.

I used my alarm clock Thursday, 7 March 2013, and rediscovered that it rings ten minutes before the set time; I hadn't used it on the previous trip, because the batteries had died. Clouds were increasing and there was some drizzle.

I had a solo breakfast at the Terraces restaurant. The house sparrows in the area have become really smart. When they fly into the restaurant, they know enough to look out for the opening door in order to fly back out.

In late morning we drove up to San Clemente to meet friends for lunch at a pizza restaurant I had located where I could have gluten-free pizza. Roy was an engineer I met when I worked at Hughes Aircraft. We stayed in touch after we left the company.

After lunch Mike and I went to Oceanside Photo and Telescope; there was something he wanted to buy there. Scott Dennis called while we were out and suggested getting together for dinner that evening.

We drove up to Escondido for a leisurely dinner with the Dennises at Vintana, which is located atop a Lexus dealership. The food was great.

It rained fairly heavily on us during our drive back to San Diego.

Friday, 8 March 2013, the skies were visible with puffy white clouds; I thought the stormy weather was moving on. I was wrong. The clouds and rain came back and were expected to stay until sometime the next day.

I had breakfast again at the Terrace restaurant, an omelette since I wouldn't have time for a proper lunch.

Back in the room, I caught up with e-mail. A little after 11:00, we left the room to register for ConDor. Registration was a little slow but smooth. Then I sought out the room for the first panel (Dying Is Easy, Comedy Is Easy) I was planning to attend and sat down to organize my calendar. Eventually the panellists: Connie Willis, John Oliver, and Bruce McAllister wandered in. Connie Willis had a bad cold but was a trooper. The discussion covered such topics as timing, a reader's expectations, and repetition. It was well done.

Next Mike and I both attended a talk on "Dark Energy, Dark Matter" by Calvin Johnson of UCSD. His talk was very clear to the educated layman and meshed very well with an article about neutrinos that I was reading in *Science News*.

After that I took a snack break and also made a circuit through the art show, which featured a good replica of the time machine from the Rod Taylor movie (see photo right).

The panel "Changing History" discussed the topic of time travellers trying to change history. It featured Connie Willis, David Brin, John DeChancie, and Jefferson Swycaffer and was quite lively (see photo below).



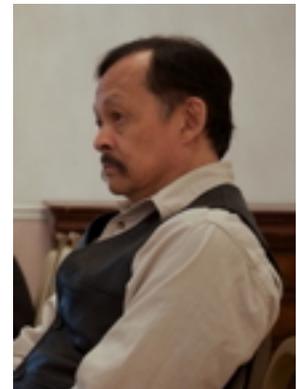
Next I attended a talk about "Future Forensics" presented by Patricia MacEwen.

The last panel I attended was about the "Inadvertent Time Traveller". Connie Willis was on this one as well, along with Scott Norton, Lynne Maudlin, Lillian Csernica, and Juliette Wade. The main discussion concerned the best course of action should one find oneself in a strange time and place.

I discovered afterward that the dealers room was still open, so I finished making my rounds in there. I ended up buying two pairs of earrings and a necklace/lanyard.

We had dinner at Trellises. We lucked out in missing the rain, which fell while we were eating.

Mike was too tired to attend tonight's ball, so I went straight to the con suite. I joined a group talking to Connie Willis. Then I talked with William Wu (see photo right) for quite a while; in particular we discussed the story he had televised for the 1980s version of *The Twilight Zone*. We were later joined by LA author John DeChancie. Afterwards it really poured for a while.



I got up much earlier Saturday, 9 March 2013 morning, with the aid of an alarm, since there were morning programmes that interested me. The skies were grey. I felt cold this morning and discovered that the AC was off, turned off by the cleaning staff!

I had breakfast at the Terrace restaurant, steak and eggs that morning, which turned out to be too much.

Mike and I both attended a talk on "Dawn: Journey to the Beginning of the Solar System" presented by Robert Gounley, an engineer from JPL. Basically it was about a spacecraft that has explored the asteroid Vesta and will soon be exploring Ceres. The asteroids present us with a picture of how things were before the planets formed, since they are thought to be pieces that failed to coalesce into a planet.

Then I attended a panel about "Bad Science in the Movies" presented by John DeChancie, Kevin

Grazier, Connie Willis, Calvin Johnson, and Gerry Williams. A few examples of TV shows and books were also mentioned. It was generally agreed that *2001: a Space Odyssey* was the most accurate scientifically.

Mike and I met up again for Connie Willis's GoH talk. She fielded questions from the audience.

I had a break then and had a snack bar as I had the previous day. Then I went back to the art show and bought three pairs of cute animal earrings. I also had a bit of time to go back to the dealers room.

In the afternoon I attended a presentation about Krypton Radio presented by Gene Turnbow, Susan Fox, and Zoe Simsay. Krypton Radio is an Internet station focussing on sf and an eclectic mix of music.

Then I went to the panel "Don't Forget to Pack Your Toothbrush", further discussions about time travel. This time both future and past time travel were considered. The panellists were David J. Peterson (moderator), Lillian Csernica, Karen Willson, Connie Willis, and Kevin Weasley-Grazier, who arrived very late carrying a black rat in a cage. Mike at this time attended a presentation on "Mars and Titan: Earth's Above" given by Bonnie Buratti from JPL. The talk was about the physical similarities of Mars and Titan to Earth.

We dined again at the Terrace Restaurant. The waiter we'd had eighteen months ago when we attended Conjecture was now doing host duties. My chicken dinner was delicious. I also had the chocolate martini again and crême brûlée for dessert. The latter was superb. Tonight we saw other fans eating there.

Mike was again not feeling up to dancing, so I did a bit of party hopping.

When I returned to the room after partying for a while, I found a bedbug. After a bit of thinking, I reported this to the front desk. We had to hastily prepare to move to a different room one floor down, a room that had been redecorated. It was concluded after inspection that there was not a general bedbug infestation. I don't know where the bedbug originated. I may have picked it up at one of the room parties.

The first programme item I attended on Sunday was a talk given by Robert Gounley about GRAIL, a mission to measure gravity variations on the moon.

Next I attended the panel "Creating Suspense" with panellists William F. Wu, Bill Stoddard, Ace Antonio Hall, Kevin Gerard, and Art Holcomb. As they discussed the topic, it occurred to me that any kind of fiction requires a certain amount of suspense.

The final panel I went to was "A Universal Translator Yeah, Right". The panellists were Connie Willis, William Stoddard, Kimberly Unger, David J. Peterson, and Vernor Vinge. There was much interesting discussion about the possibility of creating such a device, the subtle nuances of languages, non-verbal languages, and more.

Finally I went to the convention wrap-up.

Mike stayed in the room to watch an Indiana University (his alma mater) basketball game.

I had a snack bar lunch when I returned to our room around 17:30.

Mike went out to look for and photograph comet PanSTARRS.

Shortly after he returned, we went out to get dinner. Trellises turned out to be closed, so we went to Kelly's. We had a fairly decent dinner.

I had breakfast at the Terrace Cafe on Monday. About half way into my meal, I noticed Connie Willis entering the restaurant; but she didn't see me. After I finished eating, I walked up to her table. She invited me to join her in conversation, so we had a very pleasant chat.

Mike and I left for the day after I returned from breakfast to change shoes and gather up a few things. We headed for Borrego Springs; much of the drive was over windy mountain roads. At one point we saw a small flock of turkeys. A bit further on, I saw a fox in a field. We reached Anza Borrego Desert State Park about 11:15. We walked around the short trails near the visitor's centre. Unfortunately the area hadn't received much winter rain, despite the heavy rains in LA; so the wildflowers were minimal. We took a lot pictures though; and we saw some birds, including hummingbirds.

We had lunch at Kendall's Cafe in Borrego Springs.

Then we headed for the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Preserve. We saw signs for a trail, so we went there first. There were hundreds of different birds. The headquarters observation post was a long walk from the parking lot, and I didn't think the view was as rewarding. Two kinds of birds that we didn't see at the other place were seagulls and pelicans. The birds we saw there included the following: American Avocet, American Coot, Black-necked Stilt, California Gull, Red-winged Blackbirds, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Greater Yellow Legs, Northern Shovelers, Royal Tern, Western Meadowlark, White-crowned Sparrow, and White-faced Ibis.

We stopped for dinner at Applebee's in El Centro. After eating a sundae and drinking a Mountain Dew, Mike ran out to look for Comet C/2011 L4 PanSTARRS and take more pictures. I ate dinner at a leisurely pace--a Fiesta chicken, an orange cream martini, and decaf.

After we arrived back in San Diego, Mike topped off the gas tank at an Arco station in preparation for

our drive home the next day.

Tuesday, 12 March 2013, I got up very early using my alarm.

I had breakfast at the Terrace Cafe.

After breakfast it didn't take me long to finish packing. We took two trips to get everything to the car. Although there were luggage carts, I couldn't figure out how to get them into the tiny elevators. Then we checked out and were on the road. I caught up with Facebook for a while until I got too sleepy. By the time I woke up, we were well into Arizona.

I got a salad for lunch at McDonald's in Gila Bend. Mike also refuelled at the Shell station.

We were able to pick up the cats on our way home. They sounded very upset about being "abandoned". We reached home about 15:15. All in all a good trip.

* * *

* Corflu Trip

Tuesday, 30 April 2013, I used my alarm to get up before dawn.

We left a little later than I had hoped. I slept part of the way to Gila Bend.

About noon we made a rest stop in Quartzite, and I had lunch in the car after.

I napped again for much of the next leg. We stopped for gas in Colton; afterwards I snacked on the remaining sandwich from my lunch. We drove through horrible LA traffic but arrived in Santa Clarita about when I expected. We had room 414 at the Hampton Inn very close to the freeway.

We had dinner at an Outback that was right next door. I was pleasantly surprised to learn they now have a gluten free menu. Their strawberry margarita was good. I shared a gluten free brownie dessert with Mike but ended up having to bring half of it back to our room. It was chilly outside when we walked back to the hotel where I caught up with e-mail.

Wednesday, 1 May 2013, I got up with my alarm.

I tried to breakfast in the room on my leftover dessert from last night and in-room coffee, but I couldn't make the coffee maker work. The instructions were hard to understand, so I might have done something wrong. In any case I went downstairs for the free breakfast.

Then we were on the road.

About lunch time we made a fuel stop. Mike gassed up at Chevron. Then I got a lunch salad at Wendy's; it was called Apple Pecan; but I couldn't eat the pecans, which luckily came separately packaged; because they were coated with wheat starch.

During our afternoon drive I managed to catch up with my e-mail, nap for a bit, and hooked up my iPod to play some radio drama for a couple of hours. We arrived at the La Quinta in Redding a little after 16:00; this is the same place we stayed at several years ago when we visited Lassen Volcanic National Park, which is nearby. Room 311 is quite spacious. It's much warmer there than the areas we had driven through. I saw a couple of red-winged blackbirds and a magpie during our drive.

We had dinner at Cattlemens next door shortly after we settled in. It was as good as I remembered.

I slept through until my alarm Thursday, 2 May 2013.

I had the free breakfast in the hotel.

We left for Portland shortly after 08:00 after a stop to top off fuel. We had nice views of mountains during our drive. We made a rest stop very close to Mount Shasta. A while later I napped for about an hour.

A little after noon, we stopped at a McDonald's and a Chevron in Myrtle Creek, OR. As we approached Portland, I recognized Art Widner's car go speeding by us. However we arrived at the hotel before him. He later told me he had got lost. Torontonion Hope Leibowitz was the first fan I saw in the hotel. I went back down after we were nominally settled in our room, and there was a fair sized group of fans in a sitting area off the lobby. I returned to our room to get Mike for dinner, and I found the parking pass that I had forgot to give him. We went down to the parking level to put the pass in the car before heading to the restaurant, where all the fans seemed to be congregating. Most were just drinking, but a few others were eating as well.

I returned relatively early to our room to wash my hair.

Afterward I went up to the con suite. I talked with numerous people (Elinor Busby from Seattle, the Kinneys, Michael Dobson, Gary Mattingly, the Mearas from England, Nigel Rowe, and possibly others).

Friday, 3 May 2013, I got up to my alarm.

I had breakfast in the hotel. I had a bacon and cheese omelette. I was offered gluten-free toast, but it turned out they were all out. This is the first restaurant I've been to where that was offered. I had some of the toast on other mornings, and it was good.

I returned to the room after breakfast.

In the afternoon just as we were preparing to leave for the main programming room, a woman from Laramie, WY, called. It turned out she had read a copy of *Feline Mewsings* that Carolyn Thompson had put out on a "share table". She had enjoyed it and called to let me know. Then we attended the panel "The Care and Feeding of the Modern Fanzine" with panellists Mark Plummer, Sandra Bond, Andy Hooper, Rob Jackson, and Claire Brialey. Mike went back to our room after that. I stayed on for "Early Corflu Daze" presented by Lucy Huntzinger, Terry Floyd, Ted White, Geri Sullivan, and Jerry Kaufman. Then I organized a dinner outing with the Morningstars. We ended up going to the Hawthorne Fish House, which is gluten-free except for most of the beer. It was quite good.

We returned to the hotel after most of the evening programming was over, so I just headed toward the con suite, which was quite crowded; one of the people I was talking to noticed fireworks not too far away, so we enjoyed that for quite a while. The thirtieth anniversary of Corflu was celebrated with margaritas and cake. Afterward I had extended conversations with Mike Meara and Mary Ellen Moore. It was around midnight when I retired for the night.

Saturday, 4 May 2013, there were not as many people at breakfast. Other fans must have stayed up too late.

When I returned from breakfast, Mike told me he had located a camera store not too far away. His iPhone app said it took thirty minutes to walk there. I thought it would give us some much needed exercise. Of course it would take us longer than thirty minutes. It took us an hour, and I was very grateful for the comfortable chairs at the store. Mike bought a set of extenders and a spare body cap. Returning to the hotel took longer for two reasons. It was uphill, and I was already tired. Fortunately we found some park benches to rest on about half way to the hotel. Back in the room, I found it necessary to take a nap.

There was afternoon programming consisting of three panels. The first one, "The Class of 1970: a Fannish Tribal Reunion", had as panellists Jeff Schalles, Dan Steffan, John D. Berry, Frank Lunney, and Bill Kunkel's Ghost. The second one was "Ink Stained Memories: Fanartists Look Back" with Rob Hansen, Jay Kinney, Dan Steffan, Steve Stiles, and Bill Rotsler's Ghost. The third panel was "Lager, Lager, Lager & UK Fanzines: a Ratrospective" with Roy Kettle, Graham Charnock, Rich Coad, Rob Hansen, and John Brosnan's Ghost.

For dinner we drove to the Seasons and Regions restaurant, which I'd seen recommended on Facebook. The place was packed, and the food was good. I ate too much. They have a very large gluten-free menu.

There was evening programming. "My First Time: a Meeting of the Group Mind" was hosted by Mike Dobson. Later I dropped into the con suite. I meant to stay only for a short time but ended up not leaving until past midnight. I had extended conversations with Angeleno Milt Stevens and Kathleen Mitchell, who I believe is married to Roy Kettle.

Sunday, 5 May 2013, I awoke to my alarm, although I believe I was only half asleep by that point.

My breakfast consisted of a snack bar.

I caught up with e-mail and Facebook and updated my financial records.

Then it was time for the brunch banquet (photo to right; I'm the one with green hair). There was a large variety of food, and everyone could find something to eat. After we ate, a hilarious GoH "speech" was presented by Lucy Huntzinger and cast. Next up were the Faan Awards; I should try harder to vote in future. There was other business also taken care of, including choosing the past president of fwa and choosing a site for the next Corflu.



We returned to our room to regroup. Then I went up to the con suite. I talked briefly with Mike Meara. Then I chatted with Kate Yule, Linda Deneroff, and a few others. Eventually I joined in a conversation with the Moores and Eve Harvey. As dinner time rolled around, I asked Mary Ellen and Murray to join us for dinner. She was amenable, so we came down to the fourth floor, where we had our rooms, to regroup.

We went back to Seasons and Regions. It was much less crowded than the night before. I tried a

different martini.

After brushing my teeth, I returned to the dead dog in the con suite. I talked with several people, among them Elinor Busby, Hope Leibowitz, Ian Sorenson, Mary Ellen Moore, Ellen Stiles, and possibly others. I decided to retire about 23:00, since we had a lot planned for the next day.

Monday, 6 May 2013, when I went down to breakfast, Linda Deneroff and Elinor Busby invited me to join them. They were finishing up but stayed to talk. Elinor left first, but then Carrie Root joined the table. Then Linda left, but Tamara Vining joined the table. The three of us remaining left together.

Then Mike and I went out for the day and headed toward Washington Park, where the International Rose Test Garden and the Japanese Garden are located. We did the roses first, since the Japanese Garden was not yet open. The roses were barely starting to bloom, so we probably looked at each blossom and photographed many. Then I visited the gift shop, where the clerks knew were knowledgeable about Oracle. We also met a friendly Italian greyhound outside the shop. When we walked to the pathway to the Japanese Garden, the free bus to the top of the hill arrived; so we rode up. The garden (see photo right) is quite spacious with 5.5 acres and nicely designed on a slope. I bought a bonsai starter kit at the gift shop to be shipped home; unfortunately it turns out that azaleas are poisonous to cats, so this will have to be an outside bonsai.



Then we started our drive to Lyons to visit the Kraupas; Jenny Kraupa is one of Mike's nieces. On the way we stopped at a Carl's Junior and refreshed ourselves with milk shakes. Mike also refueled the car. We arrived early at the Kraupa house, but Steve was home. Mike petted Panther, their outdoor cat. We talked with Steve until Jenny got home from work. We had steak for dinner. They raise their own beef and will be getting new pigs as well. In the fall Steve hunts for deer and elk, which also supply their larder. He works for CenturyLink but fortunately uses a different phone company.

At breakfast in the hotel Tuesday, 7 May 2013, I discovered a few other fans had stayed over. I spoke briefly with them.

Afterward Mike and I drove to the Crystal Springs Rhododendron Gardens (see photo below). It's a lovely place that includes ponds, waterfalls, and many birds. We saw ducklings and goslings. We were there for a little under two hours.

It took us about an hour to drive to the Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum. We needed every minute of the three and a half hours plus that we had there. There are two buildings of exhibits and many planes outside. There is also a small exhibit in the theatre building that shows iMax movies. We saw the film "Fighter Pilot" that showed events at the Red Flag exercises at Nellis AFB near Vegas. Mike went there twice when he was in the Air Force.



We tried to find a Bellagio's Pizza that featured gluten-free pizza for dinner, but we were frustrated in our efforts. Our information from the Lexus GPS and the web may have been outdated. We ended up eating at an Outback.

Back at the hotel, I caught up with e-mail and did as much packing as I could.

I used my alarm to get up earlier than usual Wednesday, 8 May 2013. For the first time since we

arrived, it's cloudy.

I had my usual breakfast in the hotel but with the business crowd.

Then we left for Astoria, which is on the coast. We reached Marina and Tom Stern's summer place about 11:15. Their house is fairly spacious. The guest room is in the basement similar to Mimi's place. We saw deer in the back yard and later while we were driving around. Their dogs are large, and the younger one (CJ) wants to play all the time.

Early in the afternoon we went to lunch at a pizza place. Their gluten-free pizza was probably comparable to the one at the Union Public House in Tucson, quite good.

Then we toured the historic Flavel House Museum; the Flavel House was built by George Flavel (1823-1893), who was Astoria's most influential citizen at the time. Then we visited the Astoria Column (see photo right), a very tall tower with a great view; it was built in 1925 to salute Astoria's explorers and early settlers. Tom and Marina also drove us to the site of a shipwreck.

Dinner at a fish restaurant was fairly late.

We got around to doing our laundry quite late. While the washer and dryer were running, we watched some TV; Mike essentially retired for the night. The dryer took a long time because of Mike's rather heavy pants. Marina and I talked dogs for a long time. Tom retired. When the dryer was finally done, it was after midnight. It was after one before I got to bed after sorting all the laundry.

Thursday, 9 May 2013, I got up on the early side. It took me a while to catch up on my diary. The Stern house is kept at a fairly comfortable temperature.

I ascended about 08:00. I chatted with Marina while she made breakfast.

After breakfast I finished packing. Then Tom drove us to Cannon Beach to look for puffins. We had to walk about a mile on the beach from the parking lot. The place where the puffins are usually found is Haystack Rock. We were not successful in our search, but I didn't really know that until we returned home and enlarged Mike's photos. Afterward we got lunch near their house. Then we went back to their place, packed up our car, and left after saying our good byes. Tom and Marina are good hosts.

In the car I read e-mail until I got sleepy. Then I slept for about an hour. Not too long after, we started to run into traffic; so we arrived in Federal Way about half an hour later than we'd hoped. We stopped for gas after getting off the freeway. Then we stopped at the nursing home to pick up the house keys from my sister, Mimi, who was having dinner with my parents.

After dropping our stuff at Mimi's, we went to dinner at McGrath's Fish House. We returned to Mimi's afterward to settle in.

Friday, 10 May 2013, I got up shortly before Mimi left for work.

I made myself breakfast.

Then we left for Bremerton, reaching Jan's, Mike's sister-in-law, place about 10:45. After chatting for a while, we left for lunch in nearby Poulsbo.

Lunch was nice. I had halibut. Mike had a large cheeseburger.

Back at Jan's Mike showed a bunch of photos to her on his iPad. We finally left Jan's when I realized we needed to get back to visit Mother and Dad at the nursing home.

Mother and Dad had just started dinner when we arrived. Dad didn't eat much at all; he sometimes doesn't. Mother was confused and kept thinking she was at home and wanted to know when Mimi would get home. Mimi didn't arrive, so Mike finally called and discovered that she wouldn't make it. If the front receptionist hadn't misread Mike's entry in the guest book, Mimi would probably have been able to let us know sooner. Unfortunately the receptionist thought we had visited at lunch time and forgot to sign out. We left after Mother wanted to return to her room.

We got back to Mimi's only a short time before she did.

Saturday, 11 May 2013, I woke up extra early in order to accompany Mimi and Mike to the Apple store. Mimi emerged from her room as I was finishing breakfast.



Shortly after I finished eating, we left for the Apple store in Bellevue to get her OS upgraded. The upgrade had a couple of glitches due probably to cable problems; that probably led to us being there an extra half hour. While the upgrade proceeded, Mimi shopped for a new printer and an iPhone. Setting up the iPhone was relatively quick. Altogether we were there for three hours. I'd taken my iPad and caught up with e-mail.

Mimi treated us to lunch at the Nordstrom Grill.

After we helped Mimi get all her computer paraphernalia and my iPad into her car, Mike and I drove to the Rhododendron Species Garden. It wasn't as nice as the one in Portland, but it may have been about the same size. We were there for about an hour and a half. After we got back, we had just enough time to shower before heading out to dinner.

Mike was tired, so I drove to Linda Deneroff's to pick her up for dinner. We went to Assagio's, an Italian restaurant in downtown Seattle. I had gluten-free spaghetti, actually linguini; the sauce was excellent with lots of meat. Afterwards Linda took us to the building where she works a few blocks away. Her company has offices on the forty-fifth and forty-fourth floors with great views (see photo right). She also showed us her cubicle on the eleventh floor.

Then we drove Linda home before returning to Mimi's.

Sunday morning Mike worked on getting Mimi's computer and accessories set up.

We left before lunch to pick up food and flowers for Mother's Day. Mike and I picked up food at Panera Bread while Mimi went to Safeway for flowers. Then we went to the nursing home. Some of my parents' friends that we'd met were there, and we said hello. Mike showed a lot of photos to everyone. There was an opera on TV after lunch, so we put on the TV for Mother in her room. Mimi put Dad in front of the big TV in the dining room to watch the opera.

After we got back to Mimi's, Mike continued with tech support work.

Because of restaurant crowding due to Mother's Day, we ordered dinner from Outback and picked it up. Mimi and I both had ribs.

In the evening I caught up with e-mail and Facebook.

Monday, 13 May 2013, our departure from Seattle was delayed because Mike was suffering from problems related to dehydration. Mimi left for work before us.

I was a bit late making breakfast, and we left Mimi's about forty-five minutes later than I had intended.

Mike drove about two and a half hours, then stopped at a rest area. I took over driving at that point. During my driving stint, we stopped for lunch. We switched off driving at our third stop, where we refuelled.

Mike drove the rest of the way to Boise.

We had dinner in the hotel. I had food left over that I could eat for breakfast.

I slept through the night and woke to my alarm Tuesday, 14 May 2013. Mike was feeling better and had slept well.

I ate the previous night's leftovers for breakfast.

We discovered Idaho is on mountain time. We checked out about 08:30. We drove until we entered Nevada and then stopped for gas in Jackpot.

I slept a lot during the trip, probably a couple of hours altogether. We should have stopped at a Burger King for lunch, but I was so sleepy I fell back asleep. Then there was no other opportunity. Instead I just had a couple of snack bars.

We arrived in Ely, NV, and checked into La Quinta a little before 14:00. We had plenty of time to rest before dinner. I caught up with e-mail and much of Facebook. I managed to finish reading all the magazines I brought.

For dinner we went to a restaurant we found out about from the hotel clerk. It was basically a diner, and we both had salad.

I stayed up late catching up with e-mail, Facebook, and financial records.



I went down for the free breakfast Wednesday, 15 May 2013. It wasn't bad with two kinds of eggs and sausage.

We left Ely about 07:00.

We stopped for lunch at a Mexican American restaurant just outside of Wikiup.

I took a nap for about ninety minutes after lunch and woke up a couple of times, the first in a traffic circle in Wickenburg, AZ, and finally on the freeway in Phoenix. It was rush hour with its concomitant problems. We reached home about 19:00.

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Amy's Motley Media Musings

Reviews by Amy Harlib

Message from Amy: For the foreseeable future, "Amy's Motley Media Musings" will resurrect all the reviews in my files in alphabetical order, for they are not readily found anywhere else any more. I hope these will contain some interesting perspectives to amuse and enlighten on various genre and popular culture offerings in the past several years—opinions from a curious, feminist, inquiring, and, I'd like to think, culturally educated, mind. I hope *Feline Mewsings* readers find what I have to say worthwhile. Thank you very much for your attention.

***Cats On Quilts* by Sandi Fox (Harry N. Abrams, NY, Oct. 2000, \$16.95, hardcover, ISBN#: 0-8109-5725-6). <http://www.abramsbooks.com/>**

Sandi Fox, an American quilt maker, quilt scholar and museum curator, pairs together 51 color photographic images of cats sewn onto quilts and bedcovers with feline-relevant text that quotes poetry and prose by a variety of notable authors.

Cats On Quilts begins with an introductory essay that relates the history of cats - (from worship as a divinity in Pharoanic Egypt to revilement as demons and witch's familiars in Medieval Europe to the status of cherished pets in the present day) - to the ways in which writers portray them and then in turn to the depictions of felines as an artistic subject, specifically as a domestic companion appearing on numerous quilts, equating the coverings and the cats as sources of maximum comfort!

Fox goes on to discuss how the styles and techniques of quilt making changed over the past century, noting the sources of the various designs which feature cats and kittens in all manner of poses, activities and interactions (sometimes anthropomorphized). Drawing on a wide range of poems, rhymes and musings from Pliny the Elder, Henry David Thoreau, Lewis Carroll, Emily Dickinson, W.B.Yeats, T.S. Eliot, and Anne Morrow Lindbergh to Theodore Roosevelt and more, so also do the quilts, dating from 1840 to the mid 20th century, derive from a variety of provenances in the USA: the More children of Oakland, California, c. 1893; a descendant of Pocahontas in Virginia, c. 1900; a grandmother working a ranch in the prairies of Nebraska, late 1940s, for example.

The textiles themselves are diverse too - here are rare and never-before-seen baby quilts, crazy quilts, floral appliqué and geometric pieced work, embroidered and iron-on transfer quilts - a history of superb American quilt making in a visual panorama.

Cats On Quilts, in print and easily available online, a compact, square, glossy hardcover, is a beautiful book that vividly showcases the artistic objects that are its subject matter. Whether as a holiday/birthday gift for a loved one or for oneself, this volume is widely appealing to cat lovers, quilt collectors, crafts enthusiasts, or anyone with an appreciation of aesthetic beauty. By combining charming written passages with vibrant images, this delightful publishing effort can't fail to please - felines are fascinating in just about any form!

-- Amy Harlib

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Jonathan's Science Corner

by Jonathan Vos Post

My Experiences at the 2013 Eaton Conference

This is a short summary of highlights of what I encountered at the 2013 Eaton Conference, April 2013 in Riverside, California. This year's theme was "Science Fiction Media" so our badges were (Fifth Element reference) "Multipass" and the program book was in 2-color 3-D, 3-D glasses free.

University of California Riverside's Eaton Science Fiction Conference is a premier academic conference devoted to the study of all aspects of science fiction as a literary genre and social phenomenon. It highlights an exceptionally large collection of science fiction, fantasy, fanzines and SF ephemera donated to UCR and built upon over the years. It has established and cultivates science fiction studies as a serious academic discipline, and introduces prominent academic critics to SF literature, film and culture. The conference brings together academics from all disciplinary areas, scientists, SF writers, illustrators, critics and editors. For more, see their web page: <http://eatonconference.ucr.edu/about.html>

This year, the conference was held at the Riverside Marriott, but I chose not to stay nights at the hotel, nor to commute fifty or so miles from my home in Altadena but to limit my presence to attending and asking questions at what looked like the best panels on Friday 12 April 2013, hanging out with old friends from the writing, editing, publishing, and academic worlds, meeting new people, and performing by invitation at the SFFA (Science Fiction Poetry) event, which had a Space theme, as it was Yuri's Night.

Examples of Friday afternoon panels: Session 29: Contemporary Queer Theories and Science Fiction; Session 30: Rewriting Colonial Histories; Session 31: Afrofuturism in Art, Television, and Comics; Session 32: Queering the Genre; Session 33: Time Travel in Literature, Film, and Theory; and Session 35: Techno-Aesthetics. For details of these, see: <http://eatonconference.ucr.edu/Friday3.html>

First, I greeted old friends such as Dave Brin, Greg Benford, Sheila Finch, and then decided to go to lunch in the break between morning and afternoon panels with Bradford Lyau, with whom I'd done a great panel at the most recent Worldcon, Chicon 7. His background is in history, specifically intellectual history. He recently wrote a book on French sf in the 1950s, before Dick's big influence of the late 1960s. In Chicago, he discussed why Dick was so popular in France, along with A. E. van Vogt. Here's a link to the panel's mp3: <http://uploaded.net/file/jy7qfxgh>

Brad and I had lunch with Dr. Simona Martini, a translator and web copywriter from Milan, Italy. Rather than eat in the hotel, as it was a lovely day and there were restaurants nearby, we went to The Trattoria, and I had a fine Veal Lasagna, while she had a vegetarian special. Then back to the Eaton.

I chose to attend Session 34: How Hollywood Gets Science Wrong in Room: SALON II, Moderator: George Slusser, University of California, Riverside. Panelists: Gregory Benford, award-winning science fiction author and astrophysicist; David Brin, award-winning science fiction author and scientist; André Bormanis {a no show}, Writer/Producer for *Star Trek: Enterprise*, *Threshold*, *Eleventh Hour*, *Legend of the Seeker*, and *Tron: Uprising*; Kevin Grazier, Hollywood science advisor for *Battlestar Galactica*, *Defiance*, *Eureka*, and *Falling Skies*.

It is tragic that the panel was not recorded. I've known Brin and Benford and Dr. Slusser for more than thirty years (I went to Caltech with David Brin, and we'll be at our 40th college reunion next month). The guy I'd not known as well was Kevin Grazier, so I hung out with him after the panel, which bristled with horror stories about how Brin and Benford had been treated by Hollywood, with Kevin giving some happy stories, to play Devil's advocate. For fifteen years Dr. Kevin Grazier has held the dual titles of Investigation Scientist and Science Planning Engineer for the Cassini/Huygens Mission to Saturn and Titan, at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, CA. At JPL he has written mission

planning and analysis software that won numerous JPL and NASA-wide awards. Dr. Grazier still continues research involving numerical method development and computer simulations of Solar System dynamics, evolution, and chaos.

He earned B. S. degrees in computer science and geology from Purdue University, and a B. S. in physics from Oakland University. He earned his M. S. in physics from Purdue and then went to UCLA for his doctoral research in planetary physics, performing long-term large-scale computer simulations of early Solar System evolution. While in graduate school, he worked at the RAND Corporation, processing Viking imagery in support of the Mars Observer Mission.

In addition to his JPL duties, Dr. Grazier is active in teaching the public about science and space. He teaches classes in stellar astronomy, planetary science, cosmology, and the search for extraterrestrial life at UCLA and Santa Monica College. He has served on several NASA educational product review panels. Dr. Grazier also works in Hollywood, currently serving as the science advisor for the science fiction series *Eureka*, having performed the same role on *Battlestar Galactica*, *Virtuality*, *The Event*, and the animated/educational series *The Zula Patrol*.

He was also editor and contributing author for the books *The Science of Dune*, and *The Science of Michael Crichton* (whom David Brin kept attacking as “depressingly Crichtonian”), co-authored *The Science of Battlestar Galactica*, and is editing the upcoming anthology *Fringe Science: Parallel Universes, White Tulips, and Mad Scientists*. In what passes for spare time, he enjoys working out, martial arts, and SCUBA diving.

The next day I thanked with an email that read, in part: Fellow Astronomer and JPL person Dr. Kevin R. Grazier, it was a great pleasure to see you, my Caltech classmate David Brin, my long-time friend Greg Benford, and the irreplaceable George Slusser on the great (sadly unrecorded panel).

I enjoyed our chatting about our respective JPL, Astronomy, and Science Adviser for Hollywood and TV experiences. The pilot episode of *Defiance* was as amazing as you said it would be. I recorded it (DVR) for re-viewing, and have been asked for one of my columns to write five hundred words on the Eaton Conference, and I'd like to split that between a follow-up with you, and a description of my co-presenting at the SFPA... at Eaton's Yuri's night-related performance of astronomical poems, including my Rhysling winner that first appeared in *Analog*: “Before the Big Bang: News from the Hubble Large Space Telescope” [*Star*Line*, Nov/Dec 1986; reprinted in *Analog*, January 1987; reprinted in *Nebula Awards Anthology* #23, ed. Michael Bishop, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989.

As to *Defiance*, Dr. Grazier suggested “You can't tell the players without a program”: <http://studioatgawker.kinja.com/heres-a-handy-guide-to-all-the-races-battling-for-surv-470897154>

At past Eaton Conferences, I'd presented formal academic papers, which in one case is lost to the world because that year's *Proceedings* was never published, and I long since lost my back-up of the paper.

The poetry event, featuring old friends from the world of verse, such as Denise Dumars, and readings from her, Kendall Evans, and Howard Hendrix, was in the room that had the Art Show, so our readings were graced with paintings of cities on alien planets and monsters and spaceships, while the event organizer (and former SFPA President) Deborah P. Kolodji ran a slide show of space art and Hubble photos and the like. Then we had a long dinner in the hotel, and I enjoyed lemon-pepper calamari, and artichoke Ratatouille. Deborah P. Kolodji also had me perform (short!) poetry at her session of April 17, National Haiku Poetry Day, 7:30 p.m. until about 10 p.m., Bean Town Coffee Bar, Sierra Madre, California. <http://www.thehaikufoundation.org/national-haiku-poetry-day/>

I got to thank her, in the presence of her son, and the winner of an international haiku competition, for helping to make this year's Eaton Science Fiction Conference memorable.

-- Jonathan Vos Post

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* **Kritter Korner**

Tigger: The Cat Who Came To Dinner by Clif Flynt (Part 3 of 3)

Tigger's Near Death Experience

The summer Carol's mom died was pretty trying for everyone. Carol spent several months in Chicago cleaning up the paperwork, while I drove various vehicles back and forth dealing with physical matters. Sometimes I'd spend the night at home, but more often I spent them in Chicago.

Tigger stopped eating during this excitement and lost a pound or so. On an eleven pound cat, dropping a full pound is significant.

Once we were back home, we expected her to be happy again, start eating, and gain back the weight.

Instead, she lost more weight.

At the same time, Cinder developed a large lump on her forehead.

Around September, the cats got a visit to the vet. Tigger was as happy as she only got when she was going to visit the vet. As soon as she saw the kitty carrier, she bolted, and once we wrestled her in, she used extremely foul language.

But, once the vet was done with the exam, Tigger got better news than Cinder.

Tigger was diagnosed as having a higher-than-normal liver enzyme count, indicating liver problems, and potential kidney failure.

The prescriptions was a special kidney diet, and no high protein treats. No Tuna! Tigger will starve!

As bad as that was, the diagnosis for Cinder was less pleasant. She had a cancer in the sinuses. It was non-operable and guaranteed to be fatal within six months. We could take her to a place about an hour away for daily radiation treatments that would last for six months, make her sick as a dog, and might extend her life for six months.

We decided to not extend her life with six months of hell. Instead, we put her on hospice style treatment. She got medications to reduce the swelling and pain, and plenty of scratching, and love.

Cinder hated getting pills even more than Tigger did. When she started hiding from us, even if we weren't going to dose her, we discontinued the medication, and just gave her petting and a warm place to sleep. When this wasn't enough, the vet's assistants came to the house with an injection for her; and she went to sleep in Carol's arms and didn't wake up.

While this was going on, Tigger was still losing weight, though not as fast. She was down to some six lbs in November when we graciously allowed her to go back to the vet's for an ultrasound examination.

She spent an hour with a visiting vet, having her stomach shaved, greased, poked, and prodded while I held her back paws and Carol held the front. It was agreed that Tigger would put up with more manhandling from us than from the vet's assistant, and that we were responsible enough to put the cat through temporary hell to get an overall improvement in her health.

Through the whole forty-five minute procedure, Tigger gazed up at Carol, and trusted that if Carol were there, everything would be OK. The end I had wasn't quite so trusting, but she mostly held still despite having the electric-razor sized probe shoved into her stomach.

The upshot of this was that there were some anomalies around her liver, and Tigger got to go back to the vet's for another visit, and this time she got to see the sharp side of a knife.

Well, she would have seen it if she'd been conscious.

Dr. Tom did an exploratory abdominal surgery, removed some tumors from her liver, and noted that one kidney had failed completely, and the other was failing. He warned us that you couldn't tell how long a cat would survive once they developed liver and kidney problems. It could be two years, or it could be two weeks.

The good news came a week later when the lab reported that the tumors were benign. Tigger's attitude was "'benign' my right whisker! Nobody cuts me open and calls it benign. Lets just say they weren't cancerous and leave out this benign stuff."

She was pretty weak and sickly after the operation. And she was weak and sickly before it. That's why it happened in the first place. There's no such thing as minor surgery. She ended up with a pretty severe scar down her stomach that you could feel when you picked her up for over a year.

Tigger got some medications to go with everything else, and a requirement that she drink a lot of water and gain weight.

The immediate problem was that she'd lost so much weight and wasn't eating enough. When a cat stops eating, its metabolism can shut down and it can be impossible for the animal to start again. Tigger had been eating so little for so long that her stomach had shrunken, and there was serious fear that if her metabolism had shut down she'd starve to death within a week.

So, for a few weeks, she got all the nicest foods we could stuff down her, regardless of the protein levels. The high-calorie/high-protein stuff might have been more stress on her kidney, but not eating would be fatal much more sooner.

Dr. Tom sent us home with some A/D canned cat food that they described as "like liver pate". We stopped at the grocery and got some pure meat baby foods, like we'd used as treats for Penny after she got her daily insulin shot.

The pure-meat baby food cut with Carol's chicken broth and heated to body temperature in a microwave was worth eating even when Tigger didn't feel particularly well. We called this "Gruel and unusual Nourishment". Tigger called it about time.

After she started gaining weight, we cut down on the high-protein snacks and fed her the Purina Kidney diet. She only got treats after she got her twice-a-day medicine doses.

This started what turned out to be the last three golden years for Tigger. She'd get a dose of medicine in the morning, and then a teaspoon of tuna to help the medicine go down. Then a nap, some petting and human-time, and another evening medication, and go to sleep on Carol.

A Place Of Her Own

Even though she had the run of the house, there were some places Tigger considered special:



The back of the green chair was one of Tigger's favorite places when she expected to be scritch.

If no scritch was in the offing, she'd sleep on one of the cat pillows Carol picked up.



Anything warm was fine with Tigger, she loved to

sleep behind the brown chair, next to the warm-water baseboard heat radiator or sprawled out in the sun.

During the last year, when she seemed to be less comfortable, Carol wrapped an electric heating pad in a towel, and let Tigger sleep on that. With a heating pad underneath her, and a warm, arm-shaped, pillow, Tigger was a contented as a cat could get.

Unless she had the opportunity to sleep on a lap,



Or a spot next to her favorite human



Or, better yet, on her favorite human

If nobody would lie down for her, Tigger would be content to settle in Carol's arms while she played computer games. Tigger never quite figured out why humans seemed to enjoy these games, but she kept watching, and maybe someday she'd figure it out.



Patent Medicines

Tigger gained weight slowly, and finally got back up to almost nine pounds. We changed her medication every few months, and finally ended up with 1/4 tablet of commercial Pepcid, 1/4 tablet appetite enhancer, 0.35 ml of ursodiol, and 0.5 ml of metaclopramide every day, with a half tablet of prednisone added on alternate days.

Tigger turned out to be extremely adept at spitting pills into a corner when we thought she'd swallowed them. We finally borrowed a mortar and pestle from a friend, ground the pills to powder, added the liquid, and slurped the slurry into a syringe (no needle) to shoot into her mouth. We referred to the mix as the "Slurry with the Syringe on top". Tigger used less polite terms to refer to this.

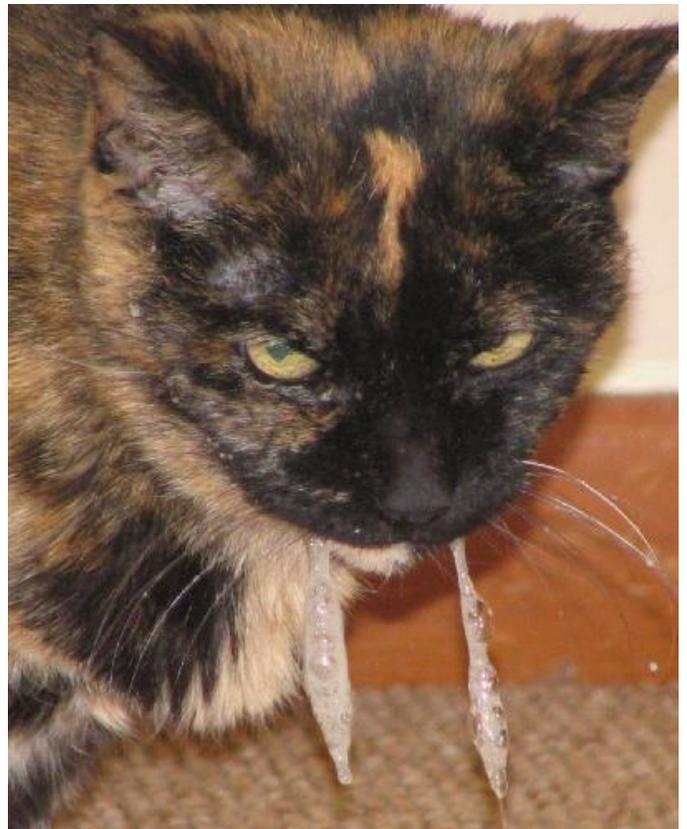
For a while, she got a half pill of the appetite enhancer. She did not like this at all. She would drool and foam, and try to hide when she saw us prepping the morning dose. When we cut back to a quarter pill, she still didn't like it; but she didn't drool and stopped fighting the dose.

She never avoided us when we weren't going to dose her. She'd be underfoot in the kitchen right up until she realized that we were prepping her medicine, and then she'd walk casually out of the room and hide. At that point, we'd set the medication aside and eventually, she'd come back out, get her dose, sulk for a short while and then eat her treat and be underfoot again.

In December 2004, Tigger started losing weight again. It looked like we might be saying goodbye. We were worried that her kidney was starting to go.

The vets suggested we try giving her a poor-man's dialysis treatment. A subcutaneous injection of about 100 ml of Ringer's solution when necessary. We started doing this on days when she vomited, and Tigger stopped losing weight and started gaining again.

Over a few months we went from once a week to daily injections. At first Tigger disliked the sub-Q treatment; but once I got the idea of warming the solution, and Carol decided to warm it even more,



Tigger came to look forward to the evening "douse".



Every night, we'd fill a big saucepan with water as hot as it comes from the tap, put in a bag of lactated ringer's solution, and wait 15 minutes. When the water was warm, Tigger would get about 100 ml, subcutaneously, and then a spoonful of tuna.

Tigger actually liked the "douse" (to distinguish it from the "dose" of medicine). I think the warm water made her feel good. Sort of like wetting your pants in a dark suit, but on the inside. Of course, the mylar-bagged tuna (or salmon, or sometimes shrimp, or the organic cat food) treat didn't hurt in the least.

Most often, we'd open a 5-oz. bag of seafood for Tigger, feed her treats for a few days and then I'd eat the rest before it went bad. Carol didn't care for me telling folks I was being fed left-over cat food, even if it was true. I

didn't need to worry about any iodine deficiency while Tigger was getting treats.

We ended up with Tigger getting her "dose" in the morning, about 10:30, and her "douse" in the evening, again about 10:30. About 10:00 each evening, Tigger would come to wherever Carol and I were working and stare at us. We'd tell her she still had a half hour, and she'd go away, and five minutes later she'd be back; "Is it time yet?". We referred to the stare as "j'accuse", but sarcasm was always wasted on Tigger.



Once we succumbed to the pitiful eye, and headed for the kitchen, Tigger would trot along behind, ever hopeful that she'd get more tuna than usual. I'd spread a folded blanket on the floor, and Tigger would promptly take her position on the corner.

She'd wait patiently (once the prep was started) until I had the bag of saline solution hung on the plant-hook above the sink, put in a sterile needle, and run enough saline through to get the cool water out of the line. Then I'd sit down, and drag her from the corner of the blanket to the center, between my legs, and poke her with a needle.

Putting the bag on plant-hook above the sink gave us almost six feet of head. We used an 18-gauge needle,

despite Tigger's objection when we got one that wasn't as sharp as the others, or Carol or I needed two tries to get the needle in right. We tried a 20-g. needle and while it went into Tigger easier, the flow was enough slower that Tigger would start to fidget before we had the 100 ml into her. With six feet of head and an 18-g needle, the douse only took a few minutes. This was well within Tigger's attention span.

Given that Carol was usually preparing Tigger's Tuna Treat (with Tigger carefully supervising from the

floor, with big round eyes), there was a limit to how long she was willing to sit still.

Tigger would crouch in a Sphinx pose and purr while I gave her the douse. She'd stay quietly and keep purring while I stroked her to spread the solution (and gently hold her in place) until Carol made a motion that looked like putting the treat dish onto the floor. Then Tigger was all ready to leave. Now.

Why she thought that getting under Carol's feet or putting her head between Carol and where the food dish was heading would get her a treat sooner is something only Tigger knew.

Good News and Bad News

In December of 2005 we noticed that Tigger's urine was getting a pinkish cast, and she stopped eating much of her dry food. She dropped to 8# 3 oz, and we made an appt for her to go to the vet for a checkup in early January.

The good news was that her blood enzyme levels were almost those of a completely healthy cat. For a cat of her age, they were just about perfect. Evidently, the daily dousing and medications were doing the job just fine.

Dr. Karen thought Tigger had a bladder infection (thus the blood in the urine), and it was obvious that she had a sore in her mouth (thus the non-eating).

Tigger went home with a 10 day supply of clindamycin liquid, to be taken twice a day, and an appointment to return for a follow up checkup in a couple weeks.

With the sore in her mouth, Tigger couldn't eat the normal hard, dry food, so we started feeding her canned K/D, canned A/D, fancy organic canned cat food, and her usual tuna and salmon treats. This was enough nice food that she'd almost forgive us for the clindamycin, which seemed to taste terrible.

Actually, she did forgive us. She'd sulk for a few minutes after her antibiotics dose, but then she'd be back in a lap, underfoot, and face-first in the treat, just like normal.

If Carol and I headed for the kitchen about 10:30 at night, Tigger would trot ahead, head high, and tail higher. One eye on the refrigerator and the other on her treat dish, checking over her shoulder to be sure we were following, and she'd get her douse and treat.

The Final Chapter

After the clindamycin was done, Tigger still wouldn't eat the dry food, and wouldn't let Carol check her teeth. We called the vet's office, and they suggested we bring her in for a tooth cleaning and a more thorough oral exam. The problem was likely to be an abscessed tooth, which they would pull.

When Tigger went in to the vet's office for her teeth cleaning, I was in DC. Carol dropped Tigger off, and then went home, to come back when Tigger came out of the anaesthetic.

About a half hour after Tigger's appointment started, Carol got a phone call. Tigger didn't have an abscessed tooth after all. She had bone cancer. The teeth were sitting in very little bone. Dr. Karen told Carol that Tigger had been in pain, and the kindest thing to do was just not let her wake up. She was sleeping now, just let her go in her sleep.

This wasn't the death we'd planned for Tigger. We'd expected that she'd die at home, wrapped in a towel, being scratched by me, and held by Carol while she went to sleep. Instead, she ended up in the place she liked least (the vet's office) and a cold, hard, antiseptic table.

When Carol got the call from the Dr. Karen, she called me, and we discussed whether it was any sort of favor to Tigger to bring her home for a day of treats, pain, post-anaesthetic nausea, one last night of sleeping with Carol and then a final visit for a somewhat less unpleasant death. We decided the kindest thing was to just let her sleep, and Carol went in to the vet's office to pet Tigger in her sleep, as she went into the big sleep.

Tigger may not have been awake to enjoy the scritch, but I think she knows it was there.

Every animal is unique, and every pet is special. They all have their own little tricks, quirks, and bits of personality that make us love them. Tigger was a bit more special than most. Quite doglike in her willingness to behave, be affectionate and playful up until the very end. And, of course, the perfect comedienne: always leave them wanting a just little more.

Send in the clowns.

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* Reviews

***Dreadnought: Britain, Germany, and the Coming of the Great War* by Robert K. Massie, 1991, Ballantine Books, trade paperback, 1007 pp.**

***Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War* by Robert K. Massie, 2003, Ballantine Books, trade paperback, 865 pp.**

As it is near the one hundredth anniversary of the start of World War I, a plethora of works old and new are out or being re-issued, as were the above. The first looks at the arms race before the Great War, the second at the war at sea during that conflict.

When reading both books, one will get the sense of history as being one of personalities, not just more names or numbers spouted out in a dry text or lecture.

Not so much a return to the Great Man or Woman theory of history but the values choices and even whims of leaders in the past affect people living now.

Also it parallels later arms races—atomic weaponry and nowadays computers, stealth drones, and the whole shebang of what was once considered mere fiction.

Massie has managed, despite the subject and the length, to infuse history history with life.

-- Anonymous

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***The Bully Pulpit: Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and the Golden Age of Journalism* by Doris Kearns Goodwin, 2013, Simon & Schuster, hardbound, 910 pp.**

Goodwin pulls it off again, as she manages to interweave what one would consider to be parallel, but not connected stories, of lives and eras.

One does not usually think about TR and Taft together; but, as the author makes clear, both were dependent on the other, acknowledged at the time or not. In many ways their political and personal relationships hearken back to that of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. As a result this is not just another book on Theodore Roosevelt.

Running as an undercurrent but as important as the political biography is the tale of journalism and journalists of that era. With such magazines as *Collier's* and *McClure's* and writers starting with S. S. McClure himself, with others such as Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell, Goodwin brings their place in that era into focus much more than mere muckrakers as whatever few words spoken in a history class or written down in a text imply.

A comparison with today's news sources could be made, but in my opinion, would fall short; as the nature of the beast, so to speak, was different back then, a more thoroughly research story released monthly carried more weight than articles of today. In fact I think that would still be the case today if we weren't conditioned to get our "news" now no matter how many facts may be missing.

However this tome also highlights the interplay between journalism and politics, as least how it happened back in the Progressive Era and how in quite a few ways the two parties have mutated over the years. It also prompts a reappraisal of Taft as president.

-- Anonymous

#

***Lord of Mountains: a Novel of the Change* by S. M. Stirling, 2012, ROC (Penguin), 430 pp.**

***The Given Sacrifice: a Novel of the Change* by S. M. Stirling, 2013, ROC (Penguin), 369 pp.**

These are the latest in a rather intriguing series by Stirling, based on the premise of what would happen if a few electrochemical reactions were altered.

Some forty years or so after the change, it looks like the good guys, Rudi MacKenzie and his ilk, have won the fight against Evil and are resting on their laurels; or can they?

The latter book, *The Given Sacrifice*, ends with a cliffhanger. However purplish this series may sound, it is very well written; and the author makes you care about the whole cast of characters. He has borrowed a bit from history.

Unless he tires of the series completely, there's more to come.

-- Anonymous

#

White Savage: William Johnson and the Invention of America by Fintan O’Toole, 2005, Farrar Straus and Giroux, hardbound, 402 pp.

The First Frontier: the Forgotten History of Struggle, Savagery, and Endurance in Early America by Scott Weidensaul, 2012, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, hardbound, 474 pp.

The Barbarous Years: the Peopling of British North America—The Conflict of Civilizations, 1600-1675 by Bernard Bailyn, 2012, Alfred A. Knopf, hardbound, 614 pp.

Here are three rather interconnected books dealing with people and places that are mostly given passing notice in texts in school.

The first, *White Savage*, deals with the life of Sir William Johnson, otherwise known as Warraghiyagey to his Mohawk and Six Nations brethren. He had a short life to be sure but very full of events and contradictions. A convert to the Anglican Church from a people who, in their own country, had a bare legal existence and settling on a raw frontier with opposition from those established there—the old Dutch families in Albany. O’Toole also looks at the other side of the coin, how the Native Americans viewed the newcomers. He also points out, though we wouldn’t recognize it, how the Indians became a consumer society as the bulk of their necessities came from European traders in return for furs.

Highlighted in this work, but only in a limited sense, is how Janson straddled not only the European society of the Enlightenment or what of it passed to the New World but also the Native American culture, which in many ways resembled yet another strand, that of the older travel in Europe still to be found up until the mid-nineteenth century in Western Europe and to a degree still extant in Eastern Europe.

Moving onwards Weidensaul’s *The First Frontier* underscores the mix of cultures, though the time span is lengthier than O’Toole’s book. It focuses mainly on the English settlers and their impact, but what a spectrum of people and events! Harvard educated Indians caught between both people, not fully in either world, and scalping knife wielding Puritan housewives—now that was something I didn’t get taught in school! But that may be just a New England specialty, like lobsters rolls or scrod.

Then there’s Bailyn’s work, a part of his ongoing series about how and who made up the society of North America claimed by Britain, a fairly diverse crew that subsumed colonial efforts of the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, and practically anyone else! Also Huguenots, Germans, various Native American tribes. He also makes mention of the backgrounds of a good many of the colonial leaders; quite a few had come up through the various wars in Europe culminating in the Thirty Years War.

This background tends to be ignored to my mind, at least by the PC brigade; for, if one is used to settling things by force among one’s own, so to speak, you are not really going to care about what you do to anyone else, especially if they tend to cumber the land one wants.

-- Anonymous

#

Davy by Edgar Pangborn, 1964, Ballantine Books, paperback, 265 pp.

Thank the Lord for used books! It’s been about twenty plus years since I last read Pangborn’s post apocalyptic novel, and it’s still as good as it was back then.

There are no ravening horde of zombies, no truly harsh, bitter landscapes at this time of two to three hundred years or so past the collapse of civilization in North America and around the world. The precise nature of what happened has not been outlined, but one result has been the encroachment of nature on man’s works and climate change, global warming.

Davy being originally from the country of Moha travels and grows from a boy into manhood whilst retaining his good nature—a journey well worth following. Pangborn’s writing is subtle, a bit like Theodore Sturgeon’s.

The only villainy is done by people. There are mutants, but that’s mainly the result of a return to a non-scientific level of culture. What we would regard as a birth defect or some other non-threatening condition, such as Down’s syndrome, would be regarded with horror.

-- Anonymous

#



***Kavin's World* by David Mason**, 1969, Lancer, paperback, 221 pp.

***The Return of Kavin* by David Mason**, 1972, Lancer, paperback, 286 pp.

Still more blasts from the past, though today after re-reading them, I think they would make a couple of fair films.

It's techno-fantasy, magic and science co-existing and intertwined in a parallel universe. The tale of Kavin, prince of lost Dorada and eventually King of Koremon, and his struggles against his three evil opponents, one non-human, is still engrossing.

Mason has definitely sugar-coated the philosophic pill with quite a bit of action. Finding these two books may be a bit more problematical than getting a hold of Pangborn. As Mason has been gone since the mid 1970s and where Lancer went belly up, it took a lot of its list with it into the nether world of litigation.

* * *

* Letters to the Editor

The text of letters received will be in brown. My replies to the letters will be enclosed in double parentheses and will be in black. I will also routinely make editorial corrections in punctuation, spelling, and the like. Deadline for next issue is 15 July 2012.

Gary Mattingly, Dublin, CA

12 April 2013

I thought I should write you a LoC. I found *Feline Mewsings* on line at <http://www.weasner.com/laurraine/Felinemewsings>.

The cover is very nice. Hm, it says quarterly. I wonder if I've missed seeing #50.

On to the editorial. First I look forward to the new adventures of Mercury and Gateway. I hope things go well with them.

The stage play sounds interesting. I haven't been to a community theatre play in many years. I've been to a few plays and musicals in San Francisco. It has been a while. I should buy tickets to another one. I considered going to see *The Book of Mormon*, but the ticket prices when I began thinking about it were outrageous. Maybe it will come around again.

I watched a bit of *Men in Black 3* on HBO or ShowTime but not all of it. I have it on DVD and will watch the whole thing eventually. It looks like fun. I also have *Prometheus* on DVD but haven't watched any of it yet.

I thought "Where Have All the Pufferbellies Gone?" by Taral Wayne was very good and very interesting. It doesn't hurt that my father was a railroad depot agent for a number of years and that I also was allowed to ride in the locomotive once. I don't recall being allowed to go into the sleeping quarters though. I was allowed in a caboose or two also but really don't recall that very well. There were usually freight cars on the side rails, and I climbed around in a number of those.

Once Patty and I stayed at an interesting place in northern California. The rooms were all train cars including freight cars and a caboose. We stayed in a freight car but were allowed to wander around in a caboose that did not have occupants at the time.

My father was a depot agent for at least four or five years I think but finally got bumped from his job. Railroads were downsizing and closing depots, and someone with higher seniority got his job. Still I thought it was very interesting while it lasted. It must not have paid a great deal since he also did the accounting for the grain elevator business next to the depot. Of course, that got me entry into the grain elevator, wandering and poking here and there. This all occurred when I was between the age of about four to nine or so. Then after being bumped from being a depot agent, my father became an insurance adjuster/inspector or something to that effect, and that wasn't nearly as interesting as far as I was

concerned. He was on the road a fair amount for that job. He kept that job until just before he died although he did switch companies once. I guess he had a more stable work history than Taral's father. We did move around a bit though.

We never lived right next to the train tracks. I think we lived three or four blocks away. Now when I look at Google satellite or whatever it is called, it seems to me that that last small town where he was a depot agent no longer has a depot at all. As far as I can tell, there aren't even any train tracks running through the town. The grain must now be conveyed by trucks.

Taral's description of the bridges also sound very interesting and something I wish I could have walked over. We did not have any train bridges locally. There were a few out in the country that I walked over whenever we went that way, usually for a family picnic or some such thing.

I have my father's railroad watch sitting on my desk. It still runs, although it probably needs to be cleaned inside. I liked watching my father communicate with other depots with his telegraph key. He knew Morse code. I didn't. Somewhere my sister or I have a picture of him sitting at his desk with the telegraph key sitting on it. I liked the smell of the depot too. It wasn't very big, just his office and a waiting room as far as I can recall. There was also a large clock with a pendulum in the waiting room. This was way before any digital clock displays in such areas.

During that period we also took the train from Kansas to California, where his father was living at the time. And, interestingly enough, it was in San Diego.

Where we lived when he was last a depot agent was Bronson, Kansas, which might have been similar to Gormley. However I doubt it got as cold in Kansas. Also it was unlikely I would have ever been locked out since most people in Bronson rarely locked their doors. They probably do now.

((You might be surprised by how cold it can sometimes get in the Midwest.))

My father never pointed out Sputnik to me.

The tales of crossing the bridge late at night, watching and listening to trains, was great.

When we visited my grandfather in San Diego, we also crossed the border to Tijuana. However I was only six or seven at the time. I really don't have many memories of that, although there is a picture of me sitting on top of a donkey which I think had been painted to look like a zebra. I think they also stuck a sombrero on my head.

Patty and I visited San Diego and Tijuana in the late 70s or early 80s. We walked across the border at that time. We didn't eat anything. Fortunately I did not buy any quarter sticks of dynamite while I was in Tijuana, although I was quite tempted. It was fortunate, since on the way back, I guess the US Border Patrol didn't like our looks (each of us wearing a black leather jacket) nor that we told them we'd only stayed a few hours in Tijuana. They took us aside and patted us down quite thoroughly.

It seems a little surprising to me that the police thought Taral was a killer on the loose. Taral never seemed to be someone who could be a killer. Admittedly I've never met a killer, and the only ones I've seen have been in the newspapers or in movies.

I also wish that there were more passenger trains crossing North America. It has been a long time since I've taken a train other than the local steam train which is just a short ride maintained by local steam train enthusiasts. I finally decided that I really needed to take the train, so I'll be taking the train from Oakland to Portland and back for Corflu XXX. Should be interesting.

Anyway, I thought Taral's article was marvelous and look forward to more.

I enjoyed your Westercon report and all the notes about visiting your sister and parents. My father died quite a few years ago and my mother remarried. This was well after both my sister and I were out on our own. My step-father was a professor at the University of Nebraska and taught classes about trees and reforestation and things like that, I think. He was okay but a very devoted fan of college sports, particularly Univ. of Nebraska football. Since I have absolutely no interest in college sports, we frequently

did not have much to talk about. We could talk about gardening and my mother's health but really not much else. Anyway, my mother had been in a nursing home for a number of years. She had Parkinson's and osteoporosis and had a tendency to fall and break bones. Eventually it just got to a point where my step-father could not take care of her on his own. She also developed dementia, which progressively worsened over the years. Anyway, last year, he died in his sleep at home. It was rather unexpected. He had a heart condition, but his health had otherwise been good. He visited my mother daily in the nursing home and knew all the staff and most of the residents. Almost a month later my mother died. Even though you never really could tell if she knew who anyone was, we were all pretty sure that she knew he was gone. Anyway, that will probably end my trips back to Kansas where I grew up, other than possibly to funerals for aunts and uncles who are still alive. My cousins in Kansas are all extremely religious and conservative, and we really have little to talk about. I even unfriended one of my cousins on Facebook. I'm very liberal and he frequently derided my posts and would frequently post Bible verses in support of his position. It got to be just a bit too much.

With respect to your trip report, I was a little amused at your quest for gluten free restaurants. I'm vegetarian and frequently have a similar problem. Admittedly mine is a choice and I believe yours is due to your health.

I haven't been to a Westercon for ages. I rarely go to Baycon in Santa Clara. I really have lost interest in attending large conventions. I actually did go to the Reno worldcon to see if that was still the case. It was. I did see a number of fanzine fans there and hung out in the fanzine fan area. It is just that the people I want to see are usually involved in something else or wandering around in the huge maze. Corflu is a good size as far as I'm concerned. Potlatch is usually a little bigger, but it is fine too.

You must keep copious notes and/or have a marvelous memory. Maybe I should keep notes. After the convention I usually can't remember the names of panels I've gone to nor who was on said panels nor what party I may have attended.

((I keep a diary and try to keep good notes. I also refer to the convention programmes and brochures I pick up for places I visit.))

Hm, you stopped at Livermore. That is about fifteen minutes from our house in Dublin.

Anyway, interesting and enjoyable convention/trip report. Nice photos also.

"Amy's Motley Media Musings" was interesting but I'm afraid I'm not familiar with any of the books. They sound interesting though.

"Jonathan's Science Corner" was also interesting and entertaining. I don't know if anyone famous ever went to my high school. I particularly liked my chemistry teacher who let several of the advanced chemistry students stay in his unused class room during what was to have been our study hall. We used it for study hall but also entertained ourselves in nerdy fashion now and then. The room also had a computer terminal connected to the school district computer, and he allowed us to use that. I wrote a program that was a multiple choice test for South African History. I was given the choice of either taking a second semester of American government or a self-study class on any subject I chose. All students in this class were automatically given an A; if the person who ran the class thought you were actually doing something, which we all were, you were given an A. I read many, many books on South African history about the tribes there, the Portuguese "discovery" and up to and including the Boer War. I thought it was quite interesting and my chemistry teacher did also.

I was also entertained and amused by "Kritter Korner - Tigger: The Cat Who Came To Dinner" and the included photos. We don't have cats. I had cats when I was growing up, but Patty is allergic to them. She develops a rash if she touches them. We have two dogs. We are now on dogs #5 and #6 actually. Our first dog was Bob and then we got Doug. Both were from the animal shelter. When Bob died we got Kelly, again from the animal shelter. When Doug died we got Buku from a rescue. When Kelly died we got KD, from the animal shelter. Then when Buku died last year, we got Cosmo, also from a rescue. These have been our dogs over the last twenty-five or thirty years. They have been very good dogs and I should tell more about them but that would take a while. Here are some photos of our dogs: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gsmattingly/sets/72157614550590417/>

((Nice looking dogs. I'm also happy that you adopted rescue dogs. I'm mildly allergic to cats, but I get shots for that. I believe from past allergy tests that I would also be mildly allergic to dogs and horses as well, but that doesn't keep me away from them. I don't know if there are shots for dog and horse allergies.))

More reviews. Interesting but I've not read any of the books reviewed.

And then on to "Letters to the Editor". Bob Jennings talked about the earlier issue about audio media. I still have reel to reel tape and a tape player that works. I listen to it every once in a great while. I still have cassettes and a few cassette players. I have a fair number of vinyl LPs and just bought a new turntable last year. It sounds quite marvelous. I also have CDs and DVDs and some VHS tapes too. My DVDs are all in a database here: <http://connect.collectorz.com/users/gsmattingly/movies/view>. I'm maybe a bit over halfway through putting my CDs into a database here: <http://connect.collectorz.com/users/gsmattingly/music/view>; and after the CDs and LPs are all into the music database, I'll get back to my barely started book database here: <http://connect.collectorz.com/users/gsmattingly/books/view>. We have shelves and shelves of books so that will take a while. I suppose I could do my comics collection too but that may be in the far distant future.

((I started cataloguing my books many years ago on cards. When I got my first computer, I keyed them into some sort of file. Later I used DBase III. When I met Mike, I switched to Apple computers, and I now use Filemaker Pro to catalogue everything. However, I've never catalogued magazines or comic books.))

Brad Foster mentions armadillos. I went to Texas A&M for one year after graduating from high school. I saw numerous dead armadillos on the road; but in the spring when I was there, an armadillo decided to take residence outside of our dormitory. The person taking care of the grounds thought that was a bad idea and with some effort moved the armadillo elsewhere. I then went back to Kansas where I had grown up and got my first BS in Social Sciences. We had no armadillos in or around Kansas State University as far as I know. Although there was a vet school there. Who knows what they might have had. I also lived in Iowa and Detroit before moving to San Francisco. I can recall no armadillos there nor in the San Francisco Bay Area other than in the zoos. San Jose State Univ. where I got my BS in Elec Engr also had no armadillos to my knowledge.

Rita Prince Winston mentions operas and *Madama Butterfly*. I have never been to an opera. I would like to go to one, but Patty has no interest in it whatsoever. However I do happen to have that opera on CD, so I have listened to it and a number of other operas. Maybe one day I will go on my own.

Andy Porter also mentions trains, and his trips to the UK made me recall that I did take the train a lot while in the UK and Europe. I lived in a small town called Angermund outside of Düsseldorf for about four months a number of years ago. I was working for Siemens at the time and did not have a car while I was there. I rode the trains a lot then. I really enjoyed the trains in Europe. The trains and local transit can get you almost anywhere you want to go, and they seem to maintain their schedules quite well.

Eric Mayer mentions watches. I have a pocket watch I use, not my father's but one I bought maybe five years ago. I don't like things on my wrist, so I finally decided to stop wearing a wrist watch. I will on occasion check my cell phone for the time, but my pocket watch keeps time in a quite satisfactory manner.

Nice illustrations throughout by delphyne woods, Alexis Gilliland, William Rotsler, Franz Miklis, Steve Stiles, Taral Wayne, and Alan White.

And I come to the end. I enjoyed *Feline Mewsings* #49.

#

Amy Harlib, New York, NY

16 April 2013

Glad to get *Feline Mewsings* # 50 at last.

Attached is a review for the next issue of great relevance due to its feline-related topic, and a photo of me from a recent performance.

Below is a LOC:

Greatly enjoyed the 50th *Feline Mewsings* issue!

Appreciated the con and trip reports since I can't afford to go anywhere outside the NYC mass transit system (unless paid for by a gig). I can at least get a vicarious experience!

"Jonathan's Science Corner" was a hoot – loved the story about Richard Feynman – I have all his books for laypersons – he was a brilliant and vibrant character who I so wish was still with us.

Ah – my favorite – "Kritter Korner"! Penny and Tigger's story is so heartwarming and interesting. The antics of cats always delight me. I can't help noticing how my Fiona is rather a long-haired variation of Tigger's gorgeous tortie patterning. It's so sad when they die – cats' lives are too damned short, yet their companionship is so precious and so worth it, we endure the grief. New cat Sarah/Cinder really looks like Fiona.

Drumlin Circus/On Gossamer Wings sounds like a must read – just the type of SF stories I love.

Recent films I enjoyed: *Oz: The Great and Powerful*, *The Croods*, *The Host*, *Jack the Dragonslayer*, *From Up on Poppy Hill*, *Beautiful Creatures*, *Blancanieves*, *Wreck-It Ralph*, *Django Unchained*, *Les Misérables*, *Man With the Iron Fist*, and of course *The Hobbit* which I saw twice.

I also love going to Met Opera in HD in Cinemas – although I avoided *Rigoletto* set in Las Vegas as an abominable desecration of the story as it was meant to be told. In NYC we also get wonderful screenings of Royal Ballet and Bolshoi Ballet, and Netherlands Dance Theatre in cinema and operas in cinema from Covent Garden and La Scala.

#

Brad Foster, Irving, TX

15 May 2013

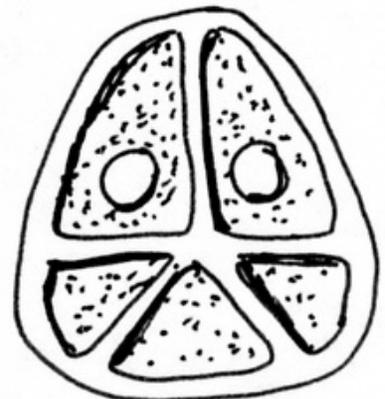
Alright, *Feline Mewsings* has now hit the half century mark with issue #50. Congratulations. (I hit and then left behind that same personal benchmark a "few" years back, but we won't dwell on that.) Now, onward to the big century issue!

No problems with there being a delay between issues. This is all supposed to be something we are doing for the fun of it; and when actual real life starts to take up more time, things fannish do have to be put aside. Just good to see a new issue now.

That play *Freud's Last Session* sounds like an interesting idea, I'll have to keep an eye out for the chance to see it myself one day.

LOTS of travel to report this issue. But what struck me most from the report was probably just because of my own weird sense of humor. The first couple of times when you mentioned how you got up each morning, it started to sound like an on-going adventure with your alarm clock: "I slept pretty well that night and got up to my alarm." In my head, I read that this way: "I slept pretty well that night, and got up in the morning, to my alarm." Like you were both surprised and alarmed that you got up after that night. Then, "On Monday, I used my alarm to get up." This time I had a visual of you having some sort of huge alarm clock that you grabbed and physically used to swing up and out of bed.

Then, "Tuesday I work up before my alarm", and that time I saw you opening your eyes, glancing over to see the alarm still sleeping, and you got up very quietly so as not to disturb it, letting it sleep a little longer. Then there was no alarm mentioned at all for Wednesday



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or Thursday, which made me think possibly the alarm had gotten up early on those days and was already up and about it's own business before you. But it was back for Friday, and then on Saturday, it was even there to help you do laundry!

Like I said, my own weird sense of humor...

Speaking of alarm clocks, Cindy got a new one a few weeks ago as her old one was starting to get a bit "off" as far as keeping the right time. Have since found out that the tone the new alarm goes off at is evidently one right in the middle of my deaf spot. I can hear it if my left ear is open to the room (*i.e.*, not pressed into the pillow), but hear nothing at all if that ear is muffled. Indeed, I turned the alarm on and held it directly to my right ear, and could hear absolutely nothing. Not the best thing to have if I'm going to be on my own...

I've been in those hotels where the light in the bathroom is, for some strange reason, hooked up to a timer. It makes sense when it also is hooked up to a heating element- you don't want someone to accidentally leave that on when they are not in the room. But for just the light? Very odd.

Fun to see the photos of our kitties in this issue. I showed Silver her picture and she was, of course, totally unimpressed. Some new cats have shown up in the neighborhood the past few months. We've managed to grab one of the boys and get him snipped, so that is one source of multiplication stopped, but still trying to get a couple of the girls. Maybe have some new photos for you down the line.

((Thanks for your work in controlling the feral cat population..))

#

Amy Harlib, New York, NY

17 May 2013

Congratulations for reaching *Feline Mewsings* #50! May there be at least fifty more issues!

Allan White's cover was lovely; and I really enjoyed your travel and con reports, although I would have liked a few more details about what was said at the panels you went to and what you thought of various writers' presentations.

I really appreciate "Jonathan's Science Corner", and the amusing details about Richard Feynman's off-campus activities – humanizing a genius I've always held in awe.

How I love the Tigger stories – I can't get enough about cats – I love them so, esp. torties like Tigger and esp. Cinder, who looks almost exactly like my darling Fiona who is an only cat. I wish I could have more, but I cannot afford the vet bills for more than one.

Drumlin Circus/On Gossamer Wings – instantly on my "must read" list – sounds like just the sort of otherworldly fantastic fiction I love best.

Speaking of otherworldly, I have enjoyed all the recent screenings of Met Opera in HD in movie theaters and such Hollywood fare as: *Oblivion*; *Iron Man Three*; *The Croods*; *Oz The Great and Powerful*; *From Up on Poppy Hill* (another masterpiece from Japanese anime Studio Ghibli); *Midnight's Children*; a documentary about magician Ricky Jay, *Deceptive Practices*; *Tai Chi Hero* (a martial art fantasy genre film); and some genre films (which I hope get distribution) screened at the local Tribeca Film Fest.

I'm really excited about the new Star Trek film!

#

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, ON

4 June 2013

Thank you for *Feline Mewsings* 50! Quite a milestone, few people get to that number in any fannish publication. This may have to be fast; this day promises to be a little crazy.

Tuscon 39 and Westercon sounded like a lot of fun. Wish we could travel the way we used to, but we are still saving for London, and we're still not certain for that. We're finding there's lots of little conventions here and there outside of Toronto, and we've gone to a couple of them and had some good times. I like the

idea of panels about particular books, as long as you get plenty of warning so you can read them before the convention. My memory of reading those particular books is pretty foggy, and I am sure I could discuss them after a re-read.

Loscon 39...I learned a few things from the voiceover panel I was on, and made a few contacts. The last time I was on such a panel, one panellist turned the panel into a personal commercial and bragfest, and I was a little afraid this was going to be the same. The Proud Bird wasn't as good as I remembered it from the past. The whole con was a great time, and we wish we could return.

The letter column...I've had some serious dental work done, and I will return to the dentist as soon as I get other work done...on June 11, I will have a cataract removed and a new lens put in. I am so glad that Yvonne has some level of benefits from her work; I still cannot find work, even though I've had some good interviews. I saw that Brad Foster's had the same kind of retinal reattachment surgery that I had; he will probably have to get a cataract treated as some point.

Time to go...the day is alternating back and forth as slow as molasses, and then where does the time go? Many thanks for this one, and I will look for the next.

((Most people who live long enough will have cataract surgery.))

#

Murray Moore, Mississauga, ON

10 August 2013

While writing my letter of Aug. 7, 2012, I understood that Corflu in 2014 would be in Arkansas. As I expect you know, next year's Corflu will happen in Richmond, Virginia.

Bob Jennings typed "...the (Westercon) trip looked mostly like a long dissertation on where you stopped to eat and the various foods you consumed." Be grateful, Bob, for the lack of detail about the rest stops, and the lack of related photos.

Congrats on 50 issues. Why did you switch from FAPA to StippleAPA?

((I couldn't keep up with FAPA. The mailings were large, and I found myself not enjoying reading them as much as I had previously. StippleAPA is a smaller APA, or least was, and is much more conversational, a style I like.))

#

Bob Jennings, 29 Whiting Rd, Oxford, MA 01540-2035

19 February 2014

Received *Purrsonal Mewsings* #1 today, thanks for sending it along. I'm very sorry to hear of your recent medical problems, particularly the Lyme's Disease. I hope you caught this early enuf that some effective treatment can be administered. My understanding is that this is a condition that is tuff to pinpoint, and that the longer it goes untreated, the more difficult the long term consequences can be. You indicated you had more problems with the dental situation, but my opinion (for what's its worth), is that dental problems can usually be dealt with immediately, but this other thing really requires more attention since it affects your total long term health outlook. I hope your medical problems clear up soon so you can get back to a normal life again.

((It probably wasn't Lyme. My doctor prescribed antibiotics on very scant evidence. I believe it was a dental abscess. Of course, the antibiotic worked on that.))

I envy you the dry winter weather you have been having. Living over here in New England is very pleasant most of the year; it's just the winter months that are bad. Living here I expect the weather to get very cold in winter; and I expect to get a lot of snow; but this year has been awful, as in one of the worst winters I have ever endured. The temps have been around zero to the low teens for most of the past two months. A week or so ago the temperatures got up into the mid twenties, and I remember thanking the weather was rather mild---which just goes to show you how hammered down I've become by all this mess. Last week sixteen inches of snow fell, followed by Monday's eight inches of snow, followed by yesterday's six additional inches of snow, and it's still not done yet.

The only winter experience I can remember that was even comparable was back in 2008 when the region got hit by a huge winter ice storm that ripped down thousands of power lines. I was without power for five and a half days, while some places were without power for more than two weeks. The roads were like polished glass, and the whole region came to a dead stop for a long, long time. Fortunately my warehouse is near a big power sub-station, so I knew that area would get power back within a day or so, which it did. I slept and lived in the warehouse during that period. Not fun.

The photo of the Desert Spiny Lizard “one of the many colorful animals around our area” was interesting. How “colorful;” is it when this thing grows to full adult hood, stands seven feet tall and shoots out twenty foot long streams of fire? I suppose the giant rocks that circle your landscape pick off most of those critters before they reach full maturity, but still, I think I’ve gained a better understanding of why sales of high powered rifles are so prevalent in your part of Arizona.

The title logo looks OK to me. The second word is more visually impressive than the first word, but still a decent logo, and far better than what most zines these days use. I will be looking for the rebirth of *Feline Journal*. Meanwhile, get well!

#

Gerri Balter, St. Paul, MN

21 February 2014

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* to me via snail mail. I'm so sorry to hear about your medical problems. I hope things improve for you soon. From now on, you can send *Purrsonal Mewsings* to me electronically.

I have joined the ranks of the retired. It has been so great even though I do live on a limited income. My only complaint is that the winter here has been awful. Too much snow and too many cold days.

I do volunteer work at our library in the Open Computer Lab. It is sad there are so many people who either don't have a computer and/or don't know how to use one. I really enjoy helping them.

I'm guessing you won't be at London for Worldcon. If you are going to be there, let me know as I am going. I have been saving for this for years.

#

Taral Wayne, Toronto, ON

28 February 2014

Got your ensmalled version of your zine. If it would save you postage and trouble, I'd be more than happy to receive your zine in digital format. I have on-going problems with where to store fanzines, as well.

* * *

* Closing Remarks

I had intended to have this ready about four months ago. As usual life got in the way. I hope everyone enjoys at least parts of it.

Also if anyone can come up with better title graphics, I would welcome it.

Laurraïne

8 September 2013