

# FELINE MEWSINGS

#4

May 2001

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## \* Editorial / Introduction

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Feline Mewsings*. This is intended to be the catch-up issue, after which I hope to keep this on schedule. My health has improved, and I have re-ordered my priorities. I need less sleep, so I have more time to accomplish everything. Of course, if I succeed in finding a paying job, I'll have to reorganize my time again. I'll cross that bridge when I come to it.

Last time, I tried to encourage people to change over to reading this on the Internet. After my last two experiences at Kinko's, I have decided I no longer want to deal with their incompetence and lack of quality service. I will be doing all the printing or copying at home. At present, we don't have a copier. This issue will be printed one page at a time. I have gone over my mailing list and identified people with e-mail addresses. If this box [ ] is checked, this is the last hard copy you will receive. If you have an e-mail address but do not have Internet access and are interested in continuing to receive this, please let me know that you still need a paper copy.

As last time, this issue will be bottom heavy with mailing comments; but I'm in a good position this time to catch up completely.

\* \* \*

## \* Mike

Mike has just had his first book publication. He wrote a chapter about the Meade ETX telescope in *Astronomy with Small Telescopes*, edited by Stephen Tonkin. It is published by Springer-Verlag. The book also has a chapter by Bay Area fan Jay Freeman.

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## \* Reviews

In January, we had the opportunity to see the world premier of the opera *Color of Vengeance* by Michael Canales, the conductor of the Pasadena Lyric Opera. The Pasadena Lyric Opera is a semi-professional group with much of the work being done by volunteers. This opera is a detective story inspired by the works of Mickey Spillane. We had seen a preview of the opening scene last season, and it had sparked my curiosity.

After the performance, I was able to obtain a copy of the libretto. I needed it in order to separate out criticism of the work itself from the performance. The basic opera is solid. The plot is a bit thin, but that is far from unusual in the opera world. The music was enjoyable.

Unfortunately, the production was quite poor. This isn't just my opinion. Mike and two other fans that saw it with us agreed. Mike thought it had been a total waste of his time. The actions of most of the singers on the stage were not at all successful in conveying the emotions of the characters. There were only a couple of exceptions to this. The best actor was Kristina Valcarce, who played the secretary. She was very believable. Cynthia Snyder, who played the widow of the detective slain in the first act, was also good, though her part was rather limited. Most of the singers sang only to the audience and did not interact well with the other characters. There were also a few spots in the opera where the singers were left with nothing to do while the music played. I think these weaknesses

are all things that can be corrected in future productions of this opera.

Another problem was that there were quite a few spots where we could not understand the lyrics well enough to follow the plot. The performance left us wondering why some of the characters did what they did. A reading of the libretto revealed that there was nothing wrong with the lyrics. If we had been able to understand the singing, everything would have been explained. A synopsis in the programme would have been helpful.

I believe the composer rushed this to production. He should have waited to obtain better performers. Unable to find a singer for the lead, he did the part himself. Of course, this meant he couldn't conduct. To compensate, he recorded the music for the performance. It would have helped to have had a conductor. He probably also should have found someone experienced at directing an opera. I hope that he may still find the opportunity to perform this opera properly.

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## \* DUFF Guest

The 2000 DUFF (Down Under Fan Fund) winner visited Los Angeles a couple of weeks after Chicon, the World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago over the Labor Day weekend.

When Cathy Cupitt had asked whether we could put her up during her stay, I said we would be happy to do so. We have a guest room with a queen size bed and a separate bathroom for the use of guests. Unfortunately, my health problems prevented me from chauffeuring her around LA. Marty Cantor performed those honours.

She arrived at LAX early on the morning of Monday, 18 September. Marty Cantor picked her up. We had agreed that he would call if he were bringing Cathy up right away. He didn't call, so I went to a scheduled doctor's appointment.

Marty and Cathy showed up in mid-afternoon. Marty explained that Cathy was already tired from touring around and a delayed flight from San Jose, so they had decided to cut the day short.

Cathy took a nap. I woke her about 19h00 to get dinner. I didn't want us to stay up too late. Before we left for dinner, she started some laundry.

I took Cathy to dinner at Kikusui, the Japanese restaurant I had recently discovered. Afterwards, I took her to the grocery store to pick up some snack food and stuff to take back with her to Australia. After we got home, she took care of some e-mail while waiting for her laundry to finish.

The next morning, I got up really early to go sightseeing with Cathy and Marty. I let Marty drive my car to save some wear and tear on his.

We went to Griffith Park, where we stopped at the Gene Autry Museum. My KCET membership card got us all discounts. Then we went to the Greater Los Angeles Zoo, also located in Griffith Park. I took video pictures at the zoo. We lucked out at the otter exhibit. The feeder / trainer was there and ran the animals through some tricks.

Marty brought us back after the zoo closed and before dinner. I took Cathy to Marie Callender's for dinner. Afterwards, I took her to Albertson's, where we both failed to find what we were looking for.

I found the day fatiguing enough that I decided to skip the next day.

Marty picked up Cathy on Wednesday a little later than the day before, but I was still in bed.

They went downtown, where Marty showed Cathy the Bradbury building and the Central Market.

They met John Hertz at the library. Cathy was able to get some legal information from John about a couple of cases she was interested in. They drove to a Mexican restaurant for lunch.

In the afternoon after she came home, Cathy watched a couple of videos from our collection.

We ordered a pizza for dinner. Mike, Cathy, and I shared a large pizza.

Marty picked us up early on Thursday to go to the Arboretum, where we met Don Fitch, who used to work there. The staff there still knew him, so we got into some places not usually open to the public. Unfortunately, it was a drizzly day; so I left my camera in Marty's car. Don is generous to a fault. He paid the admission for all of us and even bought us lunch.

He followed us to the Huntington Library and Gardens, where a movie was being filmed outside one of the galleries. The working title was *Simone* and starred Al Pacino and Wynona Ryder. The rain continued on and off, but we did see some of the garden.

We parted ways with Don after that. Marty drove us to a Chinese restaurant not too far from the LASFS. We arrived way early at the LASFS, but Marty has the keys to the buildings. We weren't the first ones there, anyway. Arriving early gave us a better chance to introduce Cathy to members as they trickled in. Mike showed up a little after 20h00. I took videos of some of the early parts of the meeting and also the point at which Cathy was introduced as a guest. We left about 21h30 to go to Solley's Deli for the aftermeeting.

We introduced Cathy at Solley's, at least to the people who were there when we arrived.

Cathy went alone with Marty on Friday. Mike and I had opera tickets for that night. I gave Cathy the house key, so she could let herself in when she returned.

Marty took Cathy to the Planetarium, among other places. In the evening, he took her to a party at Lee Ann Goldstein's.

We left for the opera at 17h30. Normally, this should have got us to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in time for the pre-opera lecture. Due to a Dodger game and the metro transit strike, we missed most of the lecture. Fortunately, Rossini's *Cenerentola* is a variant of the well-known Cinderella story; so the missed lecture didn't really hurt.

Cathy was back from the party when we got home.

Marty took Cathy to Hollywood on Saturday. They had hoped to visit Forry Ackerman, but he was away in Germany.

They got home before we left for a lecture about reefs at the Natural History Museum. The lecture wasn't exactly what I'd hoped, but I did learn some useful information. Afterwards we visited a college friend of mine.

When we got home, we learned that Marty's car was having problems so he wouldn't be able to drive Cathy around on Monday.

On Sunday, Mike and I drove Cathy down to the San Diego Wild Animal Park. We drove down early and stayed at the park until it closed. We stopped at a Coco's on the drive back for dinner.

When Monday arrived, Cathy decided to take it easy.

I took her to a couple of vista points on the peninsula. The weather was quite good.

Then I took her to the PO to buy some stamps that she will be using when she submits manuscripts to the US.

After that, we went to the Redondo Beach Galleria. We bought tickets for the 14h20 showing of *Chicken Run*. Then we got lunch at the food court. After a bit of window shopping, we went to see the movie. I think we made up half the audience in the theatre. I enjoyed it quite a bit. I wanted to see it again, as I didn't remember until I saw the end credits that Mel Gibson had done one of the voices. We got some ice cream and sorbet afterwards before we headed home.

After we got home, Cathy finished her packing, showered, and rested up before we drove her to the airport, where we had to drop her off, since Mike had to work the next day.

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## Marty Cantor's Perspective

By pre-arrangement, I obligated myself to be chauffeur for the DUFF winner, Cathy Cupitt, when she spent her last week in this country in Los Angeles. This was before she had arranged for her stay here. When word came down that she would be staying with Lorraine Tutihasi in Rolling Hills Estates, about forty miles south of where I live, I gulped but mentally prepared myself for long commutes during rush-hour traffic.

Cathy sent by e-mail a list of various places she wanted to see. After some postings back and forth, a tentative schedule was agreed to which included some things, such as the Bradbury Building, of which she had been unaware.

Just before she got into town, something unexpected, at least by me, occurred -- a transit strike. With no buses running, this made the traffic even worse than its usual nasty. With no trains or subway running, this actually impacted one of the planned days.

Anyway, as I usually get up sometime between 5h00 and 5h30, getting up at 4h45 so that I could leave my place at 6h00 was really no problem. It turns out that the cheapest Arco petrol station is right near a San Diego Freeway on-ramp. Getting gas there obviated trying to get onto that freeway from the one-lane Ventura Freeway interchange with the San Diego Freeway. That first Monday was a grind, but I survived.

The first order of business was meeting Cathy at LAX. Her aeroplane was scheduled to arrive at 7h55. I arrived at Lot C parking at 7h00, so I was there in plenty of time.

Finding the right gate was no problem, so I settled in with a book. A bit before arrival time, I looked at the board and discovered that there would be a delay. Well, what else is not new? Anyway, before the airport experience was finished, I had been directed to three different gates and many more delays. She got in more than two hours late. There was a lot of fog along the coast. She later told me that she had sat in her plane, which ran out of drinks, in the San Jose airport for two hours before it took off for the very short flight to LAX.

Well, as Cathy was wearing a Chicon 2000 T-shirt, as she had said she would be, and I had seen a picture of her on-line and I was holding a small sign with her name on it, we had no trouble connecting when she arrived.

At this point, we were both a bit tired before we had really begun any touring, so we modified our plans for the day. In fact, a lot of leeway had been built into the plans so that if Cathy wanted to spend more time at a place, there would never be any feeling of being rushed. Also, given the way Los Angeles is spread out, as much as possible, I

had designed an itinerary that grouped things geographically.

Both of us being hungry, we went to the Farmer's Market on Fairfax and Third.

I had already told my doctor that I would be off my diet and exercise programme for one week in September, and I had the Farmer's Market in mind when I told him that. There was no way that I would have been able to go to any salad bar in that place with all of its ambient aromas. We savoured both the ambience and some of the food.

After our repast, we went a short distance to the Page Museum, location of the La Brea Tar Pits, and spent many enjoyable hours at this tremendous repository of Ice Age fossilized critters. As with many of the places I revisited during this week, the museum had changed, mostly for the better, since my last visit and it was partially new to me. Considering how long it had been since I had previously been to most of these sites, it was almost like looking at something new.

After many hours at the museum, we were both tired and quite willing to call it a day. Almost. It was a long drive to Lorraine's place, and I then had to drive home through going-home rush-hour traffic.

I had never before been to Lorraine's house. However, after having previously downloaded various maps from the Yahoo map site, I never had any problem finding how to get to anyplace from anyplace else. I put all of these maps/directions into plastic covers in a loose-leaf notebook.

Tuesday, traffic was even worse. After spending twenty minutes to go the first 1.8 miles on the San Diego Freeway, I managed to get off and take old Sepulveda Boulevard over the mountains, a route I continued to take for the rest of the week, except for Saturday.

This day I left my automobile at Lorraine's, and I drove Lorraine and Cathy in Lorraine's car. We gassed up near Lorraine's place and went back up the 405 and into the San Fernando Valley. Neither Cathy nor Lorraine had eaten breakfast (neither are the early riser I happen to be), so we got off the freeway as soon as we got to Ventura Boulevard and found a place to eat.

Afterwards, with a comparatively easy drive over the Ventura Freeway, where I could point out the NBC and Disney Studios as we passed them, we went first to the Gene Autry Western Museum. Whilst this museum was new to me, it had been around for quite a few years. It was *very* impressive in its exhibits. Now I am not particularly a fan of the Old West, but there seems to be serious scholarship here. At the time of our visit, they had mounted a special exhibit about the early Chinese experience in California. Very comprehensive.

Right across the parking lot from the Autry is the Los Angeles Zoo. Again, another place considerably changed and upgraded since my last visit there, with Robbie. Of course, one thing about the zoo remains the same. No matter where you want to go, *everything* is uphill. Even though I had spent quite a bit of time doing brisk walks as part of my exercise programme, my legs were very tired after the zoo tour and they remained tired for the rest of the week. I hate to think of how they might have felt had I not been doing brisk walking in the previous months.

Not wanting to rush things for Cathy, these two places were the only places we visited on Tuesday.

Wednesday had been reserved to see various things in the downtown area, but I had originally set it up so that we would go to the North Hollywood subway station and go downtown by subway. Now, we were going to have to drive to and park downtown. I used the Pershing Square parking garage. I was worried about finding a parking space because of the transit strike, but we managed. Lorraine, because of health problems, did not go with us on this day.

Cathy had originally mentioned wanting to see the Grand Central Market and the Los Angeles Central Library. I immediately added the Bradbury Building (right across the street from the Market) and later (after a suggestion) added Angel's Flight, the world's shortest funicular railway (almost right in back of the Market).

First, we walked over to the Bradbury Building, completely cleaned up and without the sweatshops it contained when I saw it decades ago. Even though clean, the outside is still comparatively nondescript. However, we then went into the lobby. *WOW!* As amazing a building interior as anyone can imagine. It cannot be described in words with any sense of completeness. Cathy said that her camera was just not up to capturing its reality. No wonder it has been used as a location for so many films -- it is a visual treat. Previously, in its parlous state, one could go all the way up to the fifth floor. Today, unless one has business in the building, one is not allowed to use the glass elevators or to go up the marble stairs any farther than to the first landing. Still, the Bradbury is an *experience*.

Afterwards, we crossed the street and wandered through the Grand Central Market and then took Angel's Flight up to where the modernized Downtown buildings begin. There is a nice plaza up there; and, after some wandering around it, we went down Angel's Flight so that Cathy could take a picture of the train cars from across the street.

From there, we walked over to the Central Library. In front of one of the entrances, a movie or television show was being filmed (one of three film shootings we saw during the week) and Cathy was able to take a picture of the picture takers before we went into the Library.

I had not been to the Central Library since its major fire, and the new Bradley Wing is simply amazing in the vista of viewing (from the main floor with its glass roof) the escalators going down five basement floors with the

library rooms opening off the patios between the escalators and the walls -- with the only walls being the side ones and the far wall through which one could see automobiles on the street several floors from the bottom.

The original dome had been saved from the fire, and its decorations are still viewable if one knows where to go. We were shown this by John Hertz who met us at the library by pre-arrangement.

After the library, John drove us to an Oaxacan restaurant, a cuisine new to both Cathy and me. We all experimented with each other's order. I found the food interesting but not quite to my taste. Of course, wearing a partial plate, I was not able to get the full flavour of the food. At home, I remove my plate before eating so that the taste buds on the roof of my mouth can come into play. This is a bit, er, impractical, when I eat out.

From there, John took us to the restored Union Station. It is, indeed, a nice building, and I am glad that it was restored instead of allowed to continue to deteriorate. Nowadays, not only is it still a regular railway station, but it is also the terminus of the subway. Unfortunately, the subway was closed. So John drove us to Pershing Square, and I drove Cathy back to Laurraine's house.

Thursday morning I took both Laurraine and Cathy to the Los Angeles County Arboretum in the San Gabriel Valley. The whole day was overcast (so I was not able to point out the obscured San Gabriel Mountains, an impressive site when driving into Pasadena), and much of the day saw scattered drizzle and misting. We got a bit moist, but not much.

At the Arboretum, by pre-arrangement we met Don Fitch, a fan who used to work there. Don's deafness has progressed to a point where we had to ask him questions by writing on notebook pads. Both Don and I came equipped with pads. I think that we got a tour better than that given by the regular guides as we wandered through the grounds.

After a lunch at the arboretum, we drove over to the Huntington Museum and Library. And wonderful gardens, as well. Don followed in his automobile and graciously paid our way in.

We first went into the library to view not only various vases, furniture, and related items, but many old books. The library has one of the forty odd remaining Gutenberg Bibles and other wonderful old books on display. I particularly remember a Boccaccio, open to a page with magnificent illumination. There were books by Chaucer, and Cathy seemed to read every word from every book.

There was some sort of movie or television filming going on just outside the main house (which is maintained as a museum), so we saved that to last after looking at portions of the gardens. As usual, my mind was calmed by the magnificent Japanese Gardens.

We ended the day in the main house; and, as the grounds close at 16h30, we left just before that time. I, for one, would be most happy to be able to live in that setting.

Leaving Don at that point, we headed off to the San Fernando Valley. Upon getting to North Hollywood, we went for Chinese food and then went over to the LASFS clubhouse.

We were there early, and Cathy got to meet many members before the meeting started. Unfortunately, when I had introduced a proposed by-laws amendment last June, I had no idea that the date set for its consideration would be the date of Cathy's visit. As it was, she got to see LASFS at its nit-picking best. Or worst. At least, my amendment passed.

Laurraine's husband, Mike, met us at the meeting so that I did not have to drive Laurraine and Cathy back to Laurraine's house. I live a mile and a half from the LASFS, and I had to take the *De Profundis* issues home so that I could apply postage and mail the copies on Friday morning. I was a bit more than tired at this point.

I left North Hollywood at 9h30 the next morning, after applying stamps and mailing *De Prof.* The first of our stops for the day was visiting the used book store in Canoga Park owned by fans Marty and Alice Massoglia. Cathy picked up some books; however, I had cleverly (read that as "prudently") left at home my list of sf books I own so that I was not tempted to expend any of my rapidly diminishing funds.

After this stop, we drove to the other end of the Valley, back to Griffith Park, and we went to the Planetarium. The Planetarium is due to be closed soon for a year or so for major renovation, so I am glad that it was still open. And, despite some haze, there were some fine views of the basin and the hills (including the Hollywood sign).

It had turned a bit chilly when we left, so we went to the Denny's near LASFS for something to eat. Whilst there we were joined by LASFS Board President Mike Stern who came in for a bite to eat before going off to the club.

Normally on Friday nights, I get to the club about 19h00 and play a board game, Settlers of Catan. Friday nights are gaming nights although the games played are usually Magic the Gathering or various FRP (Fantasy Role-Playing) things. Second Sunday is when the board gamers usually show up.

Tonight though, Cathy and I left at around 19h30 so that we could go to Lee Ann Goldstein's birthday party to which we had been invited. At LASFS, earlier, Cathy had had a small chance to talk with some fans who were not at the Thursday meeting, and now she had a chance to meet some more new fans. It is unfortunate that we had to leave early; however, it was getting to the point where I was having trouble not dozing off on my drive home from

Laurraine's each evening, so there was no way that we could stay at Lee Ann's much past 21h00 without me completely falling asleep on my way home. With minimal traffic at that time, it was about forty-five or so minutes from Lee Ann's place down to Laurraine's house, thence about an hour for me to drive home.

Saturday morning found traffic a comparative breeze. We drove into Hollywood and viewed the footprints/handprints/etc. at the Chinese Theatre. Also some of the Walk of Fame Stars. However, we had to be at Forry's house at 11 to Noon on Saturdays - except, as we found out when we got there, he was in Germany, so we could not tour his place. I had been leaving messages on his answering machine for over a week but he had not returned them, so it was a gamble that we could see his place. We lost.

And so did my automobile. In heavy traffic, when the temperature gauge starts to rise, I usually turn on my air conditioner, which then turns on the radiator fan. A big oops. Two things wrong at once. The radiator fan did not want to turn on at all and the air conditioner did not want to work. Fortunately, the way that modern autos are designed, radiator fans turn on only when needed. And, with comparatively little traffic, there was no need for the fan to turn on at all.

So I got Cathy back to Laurraine's house and managed to get home with no untoward event.

Still, this put the kibosh on my plans to pick her up on Monday and to take her and Laurraine to Disneyland, getting her back to Laurraine's house in the late afternoon. Mike and Laurraine would take her to LAX so that she could catch her 23h00 flight back to Oz. I could not take my car through the traffic (and projected heat of 90+ degrees) in its present condition.

Both of my car's problems were taken care of on Monday morning (new PCM & ECT sensors replacing the bad ones so that the radiator fan would work and tightening a loose hose which had allowed the air conditioner's freon to escape). Too late for me to do anything else with Cathy, who I hope had a wonderful time in her remaining days in the US. I know that her Sunday plans were to go with Mike and Laurraine to San Diego. I am just sorry that I could not finish touring with her.

Would I do this again? You bettchum! I had a great time although I wish that Cathy had not learned so much about traffic in our area.

One thing, though - were I to do this again I would hope that the visitor would have a place to stay in the San Fernando Valley. Not only would time, petrol, and wear and tear on both people and automobile be saved, but a lot more things could be seen if we were driving *against* the prevailing traffic patterns.

*At this point I would like to thank Laurraine Tutihasi (and her husband, Mike), Don Fitch, John Hertz, and Lee Ann Goldstein, fans who helped me make Cathy's stay productive and (I hope) enjoyable for her.*

Tiredly, but happily, yours, Marty

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**\* Mailing Comments on FAPA #252 continued:** Note to non-FAPA members: FAPA is an APA of people in science fiction and fantasy fandom. It has a large membership, currently about fifty. There are openings right now. If you are interested in joining, let me know and I can send you the relevant information.

**Harry Warner, Jr. (Horizons, Vol. 61, No. 3):** Belated thanks on your belated congratulatory note on our wedding.

I'll have to see about getting a copy of Mahler's Eighth Symphony. I checked our database, and we have absolutely nothing by Mahler.

**Catherine Mintz (A Postscript...):** Very few people realize that Japanese has a sound that is between that of an "r" and an "r." I didn't realize it myself until I took a Japanese course in college.

**John Foyster (Candiru, August 2000):** "Pucoming" is an on-purpose typo first used, I believe, by Marty Cantor.

**Milt Stevens (Alphabet Soup #27):** I should probably get copies of Brin's first Uplift series.

Your comment about Shakey's stirred a very old memory in me. I remember going to the one in Culver City. Not only is their pizza not the greatest, the place doesn't score on ambience, either.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Your encounter with Kareem Abdul Jabar made me realize that professional basketball players have one problem most other celebrities don't. When they find people are staring at them in public, they don't know whether it is because they are

famous or because they are seven feet tall.

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**Jack Speer (Synapse):** Over the years, I have used many different word processing programs. At home, I started with WordStar in various incarnations. Now I use Word '98 for Macintosh. I also have the last incarnation of WordPerfect for the Mac, but I have not used it. In between, I used other versions of Word, Ami Pro, and WordStar 2000. Each time I changed word processors, I translated files I wanted to keep into a format that could be dealt with by the newer word processor. The last time I did this, I changed the files into RTF files. Just about any word processor that I know of can handle those. The RTF format was created by Microsoft, so they did something right.

Sometimes I print something that is copyrighted by someone else. While it might be okay to distribute such things to a few people in print as such small print runs have been shown to be fair use, I have no idea how many people may access the copy of the zine on the web. If my zine contains such material, I would remove those items before I posted it.

Yes, the "else clause" has a specific meaning in a number of computer programming languages.

No, I did not write "The End of the Raven." It was sent to me by someone. The authorship is not known.

The server is a computer that can be accessed by other computers. You're thinking of an Internet Service Provider or ISP.

A word processor without WYSIWYG would show you the text that you had entered but would not show you the formatting on screen.

My definition of "soul" is the essence of an intelligent being.

**Howard DeVore (Grandfather Stories):** We saw Orson Scott Card at Loscon last year. He didn't look overweight to me, but perhaps he was much thinner before.

**Fred Lerner (Lofgeornost #60):** From about 1996 on, many, if not all, cars have had daytime running lights. I have a '96 model, and it has them. Mike's Aurora dates from 1995, and his car does not. I think they may be required in some locales.

I think driving a stick is like being able to ride a bicycle. Once you learn, you never really forget how.

**Arnie Katz (Corflatch Considered As a Helix of Semi-precious Stones):** Your report makes it sound as though anything worthwhile happened one in the smoking suite. A person who is truly sensitive to smoke would not even be able to stand in the doorway of such a room, let alone enter and stay. I guess I should just stay away from Corflus. I attend the one that was in LA. Not having entered the smoking room, I couldn't say whether I missed anything. That Corflu was combined with the Regency Assembly. I was attending both, so I was kept pretty busy.

I used to vote for TAFF (the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) until the big feud broke out. Then I stopped getting ballots.

Condolences on your disk drive meltdown.

**Jim Caughran (A Propos de Rien 252):** When I said, "The St. Petersburg State Ice Ballet is the only company of its kind in the world," I was quoting from the programme book. For people not acquainted with the world of figure skating, I shall elucidate. The company performs in the manner of ice dancing, though a few pairs skating techniques were also used. They skate on ice on stage. It is a permanent company. There have been other groups temporarily assembled to do similar performances, but the St. Petersburg State Ice Ballet is an on-going company. While some of you may think groups such as the Ice Follies are similar, they are different in that they perform in an arena and what they perform is more athletic than balletic.

**Ray Schaffer (Fanalysis 24):** Thanks for printing the Patch Adams excerpt. I didn't realize he was a real doctor. I must catch the film.

**Eric Lindsay (For FAPA):** What is the new name of Cape Tribulation?

Nineteen degrees C chilly? I would consider it cool but not chilly.

**Michael W. Waite (Trial and Air, Vol. I, No. 3):** What wonderful print quality. Who did your printing?

Why shouldn't we mention "Space: 1999"? Mike just bought some episodes on DVD.

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## \* Mailing Comments on FAPA #253

**Murray Moore (Green Stuff No. 13):** One of my cats – Mercury – constantly chews on magazines and other things that are left out. I have to be very careful with knitted clothing.

**Ben Indick (Ben's Beat 61):** When my sister was working at the LA Children's Hospital, there was a McDonald's right next to the entrance.

**Robert Lichtman (King Biscuit Time, No. 37):** Congratulations on your marriage.

**Tim Marion (On East Broadway 3):** Welcome to FAPA. I have credit cards; but, like you, I don't believe in spending money I don't have. I have the credit cards for convenience and for the security they afford. If you make a mail, phone, or Internet order by credit card, you are protected. If you don't get your merchandise, the credit card company will help you. You can use the credit card as security when you rent cars. You give them the credit card number up front, but you don't ultimately have to pay by credit card when you return the car. I have a credit card that gives me a mile on my frequent flyer account for every dollar I charge. There are also occasional bonuses for patronizing particular establishments. About twice in my life, I took advantage of a credit card to spread my payments over a couple of months when I didn't have easy access to my cash. The only things I have ever borrowed money for are real estate and car purchases. For the latter, the only people I borrowed from were family.

**Arnie Katz (Jackpot #3):** People who own Macs don't even have to buy Acrobat in order to publish in PDF format. There is a shareware program that converts any document to PDF format; it is \$20.

**Brian Earl Brown (Fapamentary something-something, Fall 2000):** You can play DVDs on the Mac. That's how I watched our DVDs until we got a player.

I know that the "Menu" function is frequently disabled at the beginning of a DVD, but I believe you are mistaken about fast forward. Anyway, I've not had any problems with that. In order to bypass the crap at the front of a DVD, I frequently start it while I am still preparing dinner or whatever I plan to eat while watching. By the time I sit down, the DVD is either at the menu or has already started the show. If the show has already started, it's no big deal to use the "Menu" function.

The RTF format is the universal one for transferring documents from one word processing to another. However, most word processors will read Word documents. The problems occur when the versions are not compatible.

**Michael W. Waite (Trial and Air, Vol. I, No. 4):** I find that many painkillers have such bad side effects that I don't want to use them unless the pain is extremely bad. I've had the best luck with the over-the-counter analgesics Ibuprofen and Aleve. If the pain is bad, I just take prescription strengths of them. The only prescription painkiller I'll use is Darvocet.

**Gordon Eklund (Sweet Jane 30):** I also am receiving an anonymous gift subscription to *Playboy*.

The air is breathable at 14,000 feet. However, it is thin enough that it can cause hallucinations, dizziness, and other symptoms. Even at 9,000 feet, one of our party that went up Mauna Kea got altitude sickness.

**Joyce Katz (Western Romance #3):** The problem with "He scoffs at wounds that never felt the sword" is the syntax, not the punctuation.

**Tim Marion (On East Broadway 5):** The problem with using a paper notebook when one could use the computer is that the material in the notebook must later be transferred to a computer. We take my iBook when we travel. I try to enter my diary every day. That way, I have excellent notes for a con report or whatever.

**Jack Speer (Synapse):** "Slide show" is the term used by the computer programs that are used to create them.

The use of an ampersand to distinguish the more closely connected is sensible.

Shopping is not a recreation for me, either. I thought I was a woman, but I must have been mistaken.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Hercules just sort of faded away, into Andromeda.  
\*\*\*\*\*



**Robert Michael Sabella (Visions of Paradise #86):** What kind of food is cavatelli?

What are Outburst and TrOnimos?

Does your seventy-seven year-old neighbour use a power mower?

"Chocolate cake loaded with whipped cream" sounds yummy. Mike doesn't care much for chocolate cake, so I don't get it much any more.

What is a risograph?

**Mark Manning (Out Loud #1):** My sympathy on your problems with chronic fatigue syndrome. I was also diagnosed with it and fibromyalgia. However, it appears the doctors were wrong about the CFG. Since I started taking thyroid supplements, I no longer have any fatigue. Unfortunately, I have not found any comparable cure for the fibromyalgia. On the other hand, it is not as debilitating as the fatigue. I may not get back to my previous level of health completely, but I feel at least semi-functional now. I just updated my resume.

I'm glad to hear you are also doing better and hope you will continue to improve.

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## \* Mailing Comments on FAPA #254

**Joyce Worley Katz (Smokin' Rockets #2):** I have placed the electronic copies of my zines at my web site, because I had a web site. I imagine it would be a lot of work to create a web site just to post zines to it.

Speaking of fans moving to Vegas, I recently found out that Steve Brust has moved there. Has he made any contact with you people?

**Eric Lindsay (Gegenschein 89):** Beef and burgundy pie sounds a lot classier than steak and kidney pie.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Jean decided we were having a rest day, free of work and care. So how did the laundry get done?  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Ben Indick (Ben's Beat 61):** I'm sorry to hear that L. Sprague de Camp has passed on. I hadn't heard.

The play *Kit Marlowe* sounds very much like a play written by Francis Hamit of the LASFS. I believe it was performed at a theatre in LA sometime during the late 1980s.

**Dale Speirs (Sansevieria 41):** Blacks and women may have made strides in society since the original "Star Trek." Unfortunately, there still seems to be quite a bias against Blacks in the television industry. Aside from science fiction, it is still rare to see Blacks being cast as just plain folk on TV. Hispanics and Asians also have similar problems.

Robert Sawyer as Canada's answer to Harlan Ellison? Surely, he is not so bitter. Perhaps David Brin would be a better comparison.

I recently read that the rise in ocean levels resulting from the melting of the polar ice caps and glaciers would not be uniform around the globe. This is because the existing ice masses have a gravitational effect on the world's ocean levels.

In Netscape, you would not need to close the window of a site that doesn't allow you to back out. There is a dropdown menu under the "Go" button that shows the last several sites you have been to. You can just choose one of those.

You may be right that e-mailing a porno site to unsubscribe may be a bad idea. However, the telephone works. A few months ago, I found a mysterious charge on my credit card bill. When I called the number on my bill, I discovered that it was for a subscription to a porno site. Not only did they reverse the charges, but also they agreed to block my credit card number from being used again there. Since nothing similar has happened again, it may have been an honest error as opposed to credit card number theft.

**Arnie Katz (Jackpot #4):** My sympathy on your unemployment. I, unfortunately, have a lot of experience with same.

**John Davis (GHU FAPAlament 1200):** The poor quality of the photos is one of the reasons I will no longer be using the commercial copy places.

"Dogs have masters; cats have staff."

**Harry Warner, Jr. (Horizons, Vol. 63, No. 1):** I once locked myself out of my car when I got out to lock the garage door. Locking the door is such a habit with me, and I left my purse inside as well. A neighbour was able to get my car door open for me with a coat hanger. My sister, though, had an experience where the car door locked itself. She turned on the car engine and then got out to scrape the ice and snow off the windshield. While she was doing this, the car door locked itself. I don't remember what she had to do. Possibly, a fellow student was able to help her. It happened while she was in medical school.

If the local PBS station showed the Steppenwolf production of *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, I missed it. I hope they show it again or for the first time if they didn't show it before.

In the past several years, there have been one or two versions of *The Mill on the Floss* on TV. I think one was on "Masterpiece Theatre" and the other on A&E.

Are there Wagner operas that are not Wagnerian?

The usual development of thinking in children is to transition from non-verbal to verbal thinking. Apparently, though, some of us do not make the transition, at least not fully. I always wondered what the implications of this might be for telepathy.

There is a limit to the speed with which one can type into a computer. The speed depends on the buffer memory that a computer has. Nowadays, though, computers have so much memory that I doubt any human could type faster than the computer can process.

**Robert Michael Sabella (Visions of Paradise #87):** I didn't read *A Tale of Two Cities* in school until ninth or tenth grade, I think tenth.

**Tim Marion (On East Broadway 8):** Sympathy on your loss of Tennessee Tuxedo. We lost one of our cats last year to abdominal lymphoma after many months of chemotherapy.

Some of us live in areas serviced only by one cable company. If we were absolutely dissatisfied with our cable service, we'd have to switch to satellite or do without.

**Moi (Feline Mewsings #3):** Well, I'm still looking for a Nolacon masquerade video.

I managed to catch *Dark City* recently on cable. It was on a commercial station late at night, so I taped it and was able to fast forward through the ads. I enjoyed it, but I didn't think it was great.

Recently, Mike was able to get service from our house on his mobile. Since he hadn't replaced his phone again, the service must have added more cells.

**Nic Farey (Sing Sing, Issue Two):** Welcome to FAPA.

The toll roads in Southern California work only with smart cards. Thus, they are not open to casual users.

I, too, preferred Landau over Nimoy in "Mission: Impossible."

**Ray Schaffer (Fanalysis 25):** Though I don't go to the cinema very often any more, I believe commercials are pretty standard in the Los Angeles area. There are two kinds that I can think of. The first are ones similar to ads seen on TV. I know the Los Angeles *Times* have those kinds of ads. Then there are the slide show type, shown before the lights dim. They are interspersed with trivia questions about film. Local companies, such as restaurants, seem to run those kinds of ads.

**Michael M. Waite (Trial and Air, Vol. II, No. 1):** I didn't think *Twelve Monkeys* had a happy ending. Can you explain?

We pay about \$40 for our cable modem, so that seems to be about the going price.

**Gregg Calkins (The Rambling Fap 117):** Great to hear you made it safely to Costa Rica. I checked out your web site. Don't expect to see me except on a visit. I don't really care for all the little critters that abound in the tropics. I also don't get along with high humidity. However, the place looks very scenic. I look forward to reading more.

**Jack Speer (Synapse):** Mike says there are many ways to photograph rich star fields with basic equipment.

Yes, we flew into Honolulu and flew out from an airport on Maui. In the old days, only flights from Honolulu went elsewhere than other islands. This has changed.

Each junior high is different. My junior high had seventh and eighth grades. Our high school started with ninth grade, and we were freshmen.

The sound fading on "Andromeda" must be an artefact inserted by your local station. I have not noticed that here. On a general note, you certainly watch a lot of TV. I don't consider most of the TV fare worthy of time spent critiquing

them.

**Ken Forman (Self Guided Tour of Hoover Dam's Architecture, Art and Design):** I guess we missed our chance for a personally guided tour by you and will have to rely on your booklet.

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## **\* Letters of Comment (For the uninitiated, these are letters commenting on previous issues of my fanzine [newsletter])**

My replies to the letters will be enclosed in double parentheses. I will also routinely make editorial corrections in punctuation, spelling, and so forth.

**Leslie David ldavid\_@hotmail.com**

**5 March 2001**

Just checked out *Feline Mewsings* #3. My only complaint with the PDF format is that with the two columns, you have to keep scrolling back up to read the right hand one. Yeah, I know, how lazy can you get?

It was nice to read your Worldcon report -- it saves me the trouble of going. Ha, ha! I did recognize a few of the people you spent time with, though -- where are the Lynchi these days?

Just got back from a business trip to Atlanta; unfortunately, it was work, so we didn't have a chance to see any of the sights, although we saw a lot of panhandlers around the hotel. The norm was twelve-hour days since the presentations started at eight. If you were presenting first thing, you usually had to be in the room to check set-up by seven. Since it was a training conference, the training team was on the hook for most of the presentations. Aside from the hours (since I am not a morning person), it wasn't as bad as I'd been led to believe. The stories told about last year's conference included users who hunted you down like a dog, to the point of following you into the rest rooms to ask questions about the applications. Thankfully, we didn't have that this year. The flight home was uneventful, although Delta cancelled my flight because of mechanical difficulties. I had an early flight out, and by going on the next flight, I flew home with some of the people from my office. Still, we logged about sixty hours last week, and most of us are zombies today.

Max was very happy to see me Friday night. The worst part about these trips is that it's a strange bed, strange pillow, and no kitty. I never sleep well away from home. Of course, I'm still not sleeping great at home, so this month I need to get the referral to the sleep clinic. The local news did a story about sleep disorders about two weeks ago, and they showed one guy who was hooked up for monitoring because of sleep apnoea. If they put all those wires on me, they're just going to see me not sleep at night.

How are you doing healthwise? Any chance that you and Mike will be heading to the East Coast? If you do, let me know.

((You're not the only one to complain about having to scroll up and down to read columns. Arnie Katz also publishes in PDF, and he has had at least two readers complain about that. We're not changing our formats, though.

The Lynchi are practically in your back yard -- Gaithersburg. I'm hoping to visit with both of you when we do our travelling before the upcoming Worldcon in Philadelphia.

I'm used to training classes starting 8h30 or 9 and wrapping up between three and four, even though they are usually scheduled to end later.

I had a sleep study last year. Those wires do make sleeping somewhat strange, but I managed to sleep. The rough part for me was that they make you leave after six hours of sleep, and that was far from enough for me at that point in my life. I'm doing okay with an average of seven and a half hours a night these days.

(My health is generally better since I've been taking thyroid supplements.))

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**Kathleen Laskowski, 2466 Valleyview Drive, Troy, MI 48098-5317 (danielcamargo@prodigy.net)**

**1April 2001**

About a year ago, I was very surprised to find myself on your mailing list to receive your newsletter, *Feline Mewsings*. ... It has been over a year and a half since George's passing, and I have finally comes to terms with it.

...

...

Initially, I was contacted by Tom Barber from Ann Arbor. He wanted my permission to publish a memorial edition of *Lan's Lantern*, which I readily gave. However, as the months went on, I heard less and less from him, and

it is my belief that the project has been abandoned. That is very unfortunate, since another fanzine editor, Tom Sadler, had asked for the project just shortly after I had given my consent to the other Tom. Perhaps I should have done it myself. But at the time, the possibility of that was overwhelming; and I knew that mentally I couldn't cope with it. ...

...

George left me with a very large sf book collection. Since I could not possibly ever make use of it all, I have gradually been selling some of it off to both dealers and collectors. If you know of any interested people out my way, please let them know. I also spent a lot of time inventorying the fanzines. I'm sending you a flyer we had made up before, concerning back issues.

I have several Special Author issues of *Lan's Lantern* available for postage and production costs (\$4 each): Poul Anderson, Clifford D. Simak, Bob Tucker, Hal Clement.

In limited supply, I have some other ones as well: Theodore Sturgeon, A. E. Van Vogt, Fritz Leiber, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, Jack Williamson, and Robert A. Heinlein.

As for General issues, I have a number of them available, #31, #39, #40, #41, #42, #43, #45, and others as well. These contain reviews of books and articles about SF, fans, and fans' travels.

I would appreciate if you passed on the word that these are available, too, to anyone interested.

\* \* \*

## \* Closing Remarks

I apologize for the lack of illustrations or photographs this time around. There was so much text material that I wanted to fit in that there was no room. Now that I'm caught up with the mailing comments, however, I should be able to get illos and photos in next time.