

Feline Mewsings #28



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Feline ~~M~~ewsings

#28

May 2007

* Editorial / Introduction

Stuff happens. Well not a whole lot has actually happened yet. However, a lot of things may be happening in the coming year. A few weeks ago, Mike announced that he is seriously thinking about retiring next year. I sort of went, "Gaahh!" Did I ever mention that I stress out easily? So I had problems getting to sleep for a few days after that. Why did Mike make this decision? Things aren't exactly copacetic at his company. And Mike thinks he has accumulated as much retirement money as he is likely to. Of course, if he stayed on, he could continue adding to his savings plan, which is something like a 401K. We have additional IRA accounts on top of that. Unless things change for the better at his work, he doesn't think he has a lot to gain by continuing to work.

Retirement for us means selling our current house and moving to Tucson, where we will build a new house on the land that we purchased a few years ago. A lot of planning must go into a move like this. Between the two of us, we have accumulated a lot of stuff. In a few months, approximately six months before the time when I think Mike will want to retire, I will drop a lot of current activities and start devoting time to going through our possessions, throwing out some stuff, putting some things aside to sell or give away, and packing up some things we don't expect to need in the short term.

I currently coordinate the reviews section of simegen.com. I am in the process of training my replacement. I had intended to retire in a year from that volunteer position anyway, so the process of training my replacement had already been discussed. Luckily we had located someone who was interested in taking over. I hope to continue working for the site, but my activities will probably be greatly curtailed while we are preparing to move and moving.

* * *

* Mike

Mike took his 2002 Prius in on Wednesday, 18 April; because his "check engine" light came on. The problem turned out to be that one of the cylinders was misfiring. The cause was apparently an ailing fuel injector. This was fixed. However, the dealer noticed that his car was making a funny noise. Mike told them that the dealer had "fixed" this problem earlier, summer 2006, by replacing his transmission under warranty. They replaced his transmission again at not cost to us. We also replaced, at our cost, the stuff that connects the transmission to the engine. The noise was still there. The dealer gave up and called Toyota, who sent a master technician to look into the problem. After nine days in the shop, Mike got a loaner. As of 1 May, this problem has yet to be resolved.

* * *

* Local Activities

Theatre

Stage Struck: This play by Simon Gray was performed by the Colony and directed by Rick Sparks. One reviewer compared this to *Sleuth* and *Deathtrap*, and in many ways it is. The play falls into the

comedy thriller genre. The plot revolves around an ex-theatrical stage manager, his actress wife, and a boarder. The boarder lives in a cottage on their estate. Although I found it enjoyable, I believe it tries to do too much and is almost too clever for its own good. As one reviewer said, it comes off as too cerebral at times. In many ways it's a play within a play with embedded references to itself. Reviewers seemed to vary wildly in their opinion of the performers: Louis Lotorto, Kevin Symons, Mary Gordon Murray, and Larry Cedar; but I found the acting to be up to the usual Colony high standards. Whatever shortcomings I might have felt it had, I think they were in the play and not in the production.

#

American Youth Symphony at 42: I won tickets to this event from our local NPR station. It was performed at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles. The orchestra played the overture to *The Barber of Seville* and Mendelssohn's Italian symphony. After the intermission, they played Beethoven's Emperor concerto with André Watts on the piano. We enjoyed this concert of familiar music.

#

Un Unruly Evening with Harlan Ellison: This was an evening about Harlan. A biographical film was shown. Then he did an interview. The film is scheduled to be released sometime on DVD with added extras, including readings by him. It ought to be a real treat for any fan of his works. We enjoyed the film, which included bits about his early years and many shots taken inside his house.

###

Cinema

Astronaut Farmer: Mike received free movie passes from his Toyota dealer, for being a loyal customer, that we used to see this. From the technical viewpoint, there are a million flaws in the story. But it is enjoyable in the way that some of the Heinlein juveniles are. The title character had dropped out of the astronaut programme at NASA to help out his father. However he's never lost his desire to go into space. Over the years he has scrounged the parts to build his own rocket. Various people try to dissuade him, but he recruits CNN to get the nation behind him. We left the theatre feeling good about the world.

###

Others

The South Coast Cactus and Succulent Show: This is an annual event and was in early April. I went just to take photos of a few of the more interesting specimens. These are among the kinds of plants I like a lot. I have several of them both in the ground and in planters.

* * *



Amy's Motley Media Musings

Reviews by Amy Harlib



***Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* by H. P. Lovecraft (Ballantine Books, NY, Reissue edition July 1996, \$6.50, mass market paperback, ISBN 0-34533-779-4) <http://www.hplovecraft.com/writings/fiction/dq.htm>, <http://www.randomhouse.com/BB/>**

Way back in the early 70s when I was a college student (dates me, doesn't it?), I was already a lifelong lover of all things fantastical. That I became an eager collector of the entire run of the late, lamented Lin Carter-edited, Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series, which burst upon the genre literary scene at that time, almost goes without saying.

Among these venerable mass market paperback volumes were two devoted to the early works of H. P.

Lovecraft: *The Doom That Came to Sarnath*, which collected short fiction, and *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath*, which contained the previously very rare titular short novel and five very closely related briefer tales. These first encounters with the imaginings of this master of weird fiction blew me away and compelled me to acquire every other bit of his writing I could reasonably afford, mainly the rest of Ballantine's general line of paperback gatherings of Lovecraft stories and short novels and soon many additional books of Lovecraft-inspired fabrications by others in his orbit: August Derleth, Robert Bloch, Brian Lumley, Colin Wilson, Clarke Ashton Smith, et al.

Ever since then and right up until now, while I have enjoyed all my readings of things Lovecraftian, his early writing, inspired by the otherworldly, poetic style of another of my favourites, Lord Dunsany (also readily available back then in the Adult Fantasy Series and in some reprints now), appealed to my deepest, passionate cravings for the weirdly exotic, magical and the unearthly. *The Doom That Came to Sarnath* and *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* fulfilled my needs to such an ecstatic extent that these books have remained two of my all-time favourites, re-read and best-loved with the lengthier (the more, the merrier), *Dream-Quest* taking the number one spot. I also admit great fondness for *At the Mountains of Madness* and *The Shadow Out of Time*, these running close seconds and all the rest of the oeuvre following swiftly behind.

Why such enthusiasm? I am not alone, for Lovecraft's fantastic conceptions have remained popular and in print for decades since his passing in 1937, while the efforts of other scribes of weird works have faded into (often undeserved) obscurity. For me personally, the appeal lies, with *Dream-Quest* being the exemplar, in Lovecraft's ability to combine unabashedly purple prose with wildly imaginative, gorgeous imagery, hinting at deeper darkness, to create emotionally intense feelings of awe and wonderment without ever descending to explicit gross-outs.

To follow *Dream-Quest's* protagonist, student of the occult Randolph Carter, through the Gates of Deeper Slumber into the vast gulfs of the celestial regions in search of Unknown Kadath, the mountain-peak dwelling of the godlike Great Old Ones is to experience the epitome of strangeness, a hallucinogenic, phantasmagorical adventure seldom equalled. Carter's journeys, packed with marvels described in deliciously dense and detailed prose conjure up vivid sensory impressions involving multifarious realms and entities that can be benign or malign. Many of these later became recurring staples in what developed into the Cthulhu Mythos, which chronicled long forgotten sinister and clandestine "Elder Gods" in age-old, cosmic conflict with the less threatening "The Great Old Ones", with human pawns caught in the middle.

The *Dream-Quest's* intricately imagined thrills include memorable, mystical encounters with (most notably) the inhabitants of none other than that hideous, haunted place of evil and mystery – the icy, high plateau of the forbidden monasteries of Leng!; the delightfully beneficent Cats of Ulthar; the once-human Pickman, now turned ghoul, and many of his ilk; enigmatic, sentient creatures called Zoogs and Gugs; the merchant galleys of Dylath-Leen; the magnificent city of Celephais in the kingdom of Ooth-Nargai, ruled by the renowned Kuranos; eagerly-sought, esoteric Pnakotic manuscripts; and a climactic episode involving the crawling chaos Nyarlathotep!

Serious collectors should seek out the Adult Fantasy edition of *Dream-Quest* from May 1970 with the exquisite Gervasio Gallardo cover painting that perfectly captures the ingenious blend of the beautiful and the creepy that pervades this splendidly eerie yarn. The current, readily available reprinting sports artwork with misleadingly horrific imagery.

Delirious, bizarre, chilling, exciting, unforgettable – the stuff of sheer wonder – no surprise the *Dream-Quest* and its closely-related, Cthulhu-connected corpus inspired many others to play in such a vastly entertaining creation -- endeavours that Lovecraft so generously permitted. *Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* deserves to be read and savoured, not only for its own intrinsic value, but also for its seminal, inspirational role in helping to spawn an entire sub-genre of weird fiction that attracts a large cadre of aficionados.

#

***The Fast Runner (Atanarjuat)*. (Igloolik Isuma Productions/A Lot 47 Films Release, 2001). Directed by Zacharias Kunuk. Written by Paul Apak Angilirq. Music by Chris Crilly, photography by Norman Cohn. Running time: 172 minutes. Not rated. (In Inuktitut with English subtitles). (Available on video /DVD) <http://atanarjuat.com/index1.html>**

In a glorious paradox, it took 21st century DV (digital video) technology to make it possible to produce *The Fast Runner (Atanarjuat)*, the world's first all-indigenous Canadian Inuit full-length movie made by

Inuits speaking Inuktitut, about Inuits in their pristine far northern Nunavut Territory, and share it with the rest of the world. Local native American director Zacharias Kunuk and New York cinematographer Norman Cohn, both with copious credits shooting shorts and documentaries, teamed up with oral tradition expert, screenwriter Paul Apak Angilirq, to bring an ancient legendary tale to life and to recreate the nomadic hunting and gathering existence on the screen, to reawaken pride in modern Inuits, and to enlighten, while entertaining everyone else with what turns out to be a resoundingly enthralling and dazzling Arctic epic. It deservedly won numerous Canadian awards and the prestigious Camera d'Or Prize for Best First Feature Film at Cannes last year.

The all Inuit crew and mostly non-professional actor cast of *The Fast Runner* bring to life a story set some thousand odd years ago in Igloolik, beginning with a prologue introducing a small tribe that labours under a shamanic curse, this sequence serving to create a mythic underpinning for everything that follows. The audience and the succeeding generation of characters thus get a starting point and a frame of historical references that introduce certain repeating social patterns that must be altered in order to progress emotionally and spiritually.

The eponymous character Atanarjuat (Natar Ungalaaq) in childhood already gets acknowledged for being athletically gifted at running faster and farther than anyone in his extended family group. When grown to adulthood, he comes to love the beautiful and resourceful woman Atuat (Sylvia Ivalu), unfortunately betrothed to the protagonist's cousin Oki (Peter-Henry Arnatsiaq), the hot-tempered, arrogant son of the tribe's leader, Sauri (Eugene Ipkarnek). In a ceremonial challenge fight (trading ritual head punches until the loser falls to the ground), the hero wins the right to wed Atuat. This only motivates Oki, seething with resentment, to plot revenge -- the long-standing curse at work here, guaranteeing that folks will succumb to their most selfish impulses instead of behaving in ways that benefit all.

The following escalating internecine conflicts pitting the two lead men against each other -- the young against the elders and the women against other women -- threaten to destroy the group harmony necessary for survival. Besides the central plot antagonisms, important subplots involve Oki's schemes to dominate everyone and his seductress sister Puja (Lucy Tulugarjuk), who becomes Atanarjuat's second wife and who also beds his older brother, Amaqjuaq the Strong One (Pakkak Innukshuk), these antics stirring up general jealousy and making matters worse. Tension builds to a tragic and startling climax involving Atanarjuat, stark naked, racing for his life across the icy terrain pursued by the fully-clothed Oki and two cohorts armed with sharpened sticks -- a truly extraordinary sequence.

A satisfying conclusion does come in this riveting, absorbing nearly three-hour long saga endowing characters from a legendary source with complicated psychological motives and responses. This plus the fascinating setting makes an age-old love and vengeance plot fresh and new. The Inuit answer to Robert Flaherty's famous silent 1922 documentary *Nanook of the North*, *The Fast Runner* impressively and vividly depicts the traditional way of life -- carefully-constructed igloos provide shelter; animal skins get made into clothing; dog-sled mushing can get you nearly anywhere; the staple diet of caribou, walrus, and seal meat must be hunted; and all tools and household objects are the products of painstaking craftsmanship.

This movie also spectacularly depicts the far northern environment in all its icy grandeur, with subtle variations in frozen terrain and a breathtaking yet brief efflorescence in the fleeting summer season. The cinematography magnificently makes the most of this scenery: the light reflecting off snow, ice, and water; illuminating clouds; and igloo interiors with the warm orange glow of seal-oil lamps.

Despite some confusing time-shifts in the initial sequences, *The Fast Runner*, with its splendid, mostly non-professional, cast delivering intense, natural, unmannered performances while adorned in stunning hairstyles, tattoos, and meticulously hand-made animal-skin clothes; its gorgeous score combining pan-Arctic elements of Siberian, Central Asian, and Inuit traditional music; its riveting depiction of indigenous rituals and survival strategies while telling a thoroughly entertaining tale -- represents a phenomenal film. This unique cinematic experience, unfortunately deemed esoteric by distributors and limited to the art house circuit, immerses the viewer in the awesome Arctic world of the complex Inuit people. Run fast and see it if you can!

* * *

* Carrizo Plain National Monument

This was an outing of the Nature Conservancy Legacy Club. This monument, located in San Luis Obispo County, was created by Bill Clinton during his last days in office. The management focusses on



maintaining native animal and plant species while conserving unique natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities. We had a good day for our tour of the place in early April. There is a small visitor centre with exhibits. Our group was driven around in two SUVs, and we saw a lot of different animals and birds, among them pronghorn antelope, Tule elk, a coyote, rabbits, and ground squirrels. There is a lake on the monument, but it was dry this year and filled with alkali salts that made it look like snow. Because of the arid weather this year, there were very few wildflowers. We also saw some

Amerindian rock paintings dating back hundreds of years.

* * *

* Mailing Comments on FAPA #278:

General Comment: A while back there was some discussion about the disposal of prescription medication. Recently there was a short article in the *AARP Bulletin* about this very topic. There are currently no government guidelines. However pharmaceutical experts generally make the following recommendations:

1. Find out if your local pharmacies take back medications.
2. Check to see whether your area has a community household hazardous waste collection programme.
3. Go to www.epa.gov/epahome/state.htm for local numbers

A few other tips for disposal of unwanted medicine were to add a small amount of water to pills or an absorbent material, such as flour, to liquid medications to discourage use of discarded medication. Put the containers in a paper bag or other opaque container to conceal them before putting in trash.

Fantasy Amateur: I'm sorry to see so many people leaving us, especially to the grim reaper.

Tom Feller (The Road Warrior): For me the problem with escargot was the texture, not the flavour. The best way I can describe it is soft erasers.

Dale Speirs (Opuntia 62.5A): Although I have no specific comments, I enjoyed your report of the philatelic convention. I collect topical stamps but I've never had any desire to attend a convention. I can't think of anything I'd say to other stamp collectors. I think my stamp collections are just extensions of the subject areas I'm interested in. I'm not interested in stamps *per se*. In my opinion I spend enough on stamps without going to a convention to spend even more.

Eric Leif Davin (A Different Drummer, No. 8): I looked at findyourfate.com and took the quiz. Some of the questions were difficult to answer, because the answers would have varied from today's answers if I'd taken the test earlier in my life. The answers will be different again if I take the test in a few years. Anyway my mortality number that I got was okay, not spectacular. What I don't understand is why it didn't ask me about my parents. Both of them are now older than the average age of my grandparents when they died. As medical care was much more primitive when my grandparents were around, I would think the age of my parents would be more relevant than the age of my grandparents.

If the memoir you've written has any focus on conditions existing in Phoenix when you were growing up, the book may be of more general interest.

Keith A. Walker (Théâtralité 3): In what way is Brian Blessed your alter ego?

I met Richard O'Brien at Seacon in 1979 and remember talking with him about a sequel to *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Assuming he was talking about *Shock Treatment*, I was not impressed.

The Los Angeles Opera did *the Makropulos Affair* a number of years ago. I found it interesting but not terribly impressive.

Eric Lindsay (Generic APA Zine 1): If you drop all your APAs, you will be missed. Would you consider joining an electronic APA?

There's a fair amount of overlap between your sf DVD collection and ours but not much overlap with your non-sf collection.



Ben Indick (Ben's Beat 87): I'm happy to hear you also enjoyed Jay Johnson.

If I recall correctly, when I saw Weber's *The Phantom of the Opera* in LA, the chandelier hung over the audience. When it fell, it glided down sideways and stopped short of dropping on the audience. It was pretty scary the first time, though. I saw the play twice. There was a gasp from the audience when this happened.

From your description of *Wrecks*, it sounds like something I'd enjoy.

It sounds really exciting that your son is enjoying so much success. Maybe someday I might have the opportunity to see some of his work.

Milt Stevens (Alphabet Soup #53): I've never seen a toaster that toasted a whole loaf of bread at once, but one motel we've stayed at had a toaster that works on a sort of conveyer belt. Successive slices of bread may be fed in, so the guests don't have to wait for one slice to be done before adding another one.

I've studied both French and German, and French never sounded guttural to me. I can understand, though, someone saying that Americans sound like they talk with a mouthful of mush. Many Americans definitely talk that way, what I call mumbling.

I get the philatelic catalogue from the postal service. They used to label the self-adhesive stamps. Now, though, that the self-adhesive ones are the rule, they instead label the water-activated stamps.

Congratulations on paying off your mortgage. We hope to be able to build our house in Oracle with the proceeds of selling our house here so that we won't have a mortgage. I didn't realize there was a tax deduction for being old. My parents were able to own a house without a mortgage because of an inheritance.

cover! This is the sort of art that fanzines are made for nowadays, now that it's so easy to print in colour with a laser-jet printer. Too bad Foster couldn't have done a cover like that for me when I was still doing zines!

#

Ron Clarke, somewhere in Australia

25 February 2007

Thanks for sending *Feline Mewsings* 27 - I enjoyed reading it. I've been busy lately doing up the grounds of the house and haven't even done any book reviews - thus haven't read any SF or fantasy books lately.

Keep enjoying yourselves...

#

Jon Mann, Santa Monica, CA

25 February 2007

Thanks for the bio. I don't know if you knew that my father was stationed in Japan during the occupation between 1954 and 1960. My stepmother is from Sapporo. For a while we lived in a pagoda house in Yachi, a small village near Sendai and would give English lessons at the local high school. We travelled all over Japan in our 1949 Plymouth, and that experience forever shaped my life.

I'm glad your health has stabilized somewhat; it is no fun dealing with medical issues.

#

Brad Foster, Irving, TX

27 February 2007

Got in *Feline Mewsings* #27 this week. (It might have even arrived last week, but been rather busy around here, and I hadn't been able to get over to the post office for the past week!) I really like how the cover turned out; the colours here are softer than my own printout had been -- an affect I like very much to the artwork. Thanks! (I think you still have the three small fillos on hand I sent a ways back to use; hope you can find a home for those in an upcoming issue.)

I've spent most of the past few weeks working on the website. Most of the "business" portion is done at last, so I've been having fun looking through old photos to post up and old art to add colour to for use on the site. I'm hoping to be able to put up a section devoted exclusively to things fannish. Kind of getting caught up in this web stuff, can keep adding pages and pages and pages...ack!



Thanks again for running my art.

#

John Purcell, College Station, TX

7 March 2007

Many thanks for letting me know about your latest issue. There were a couple things that caught my interest. For one, I recognize the name of Amy Harlib from the days when I was running *This House*; Amy had sent me some little pieces of artwork for my zine, so it's really good to see her name still floating around. Unlike you, I have never met Amy. Sure would like to, though. She has always come across like a really interesting and nice person.

Amy's column certainly covers a wide range of interests. My wife and two daughters are learning French, and Valerie has been slowly building up a video collection of French movies (with English subtitles) not only for practice but to enjoy as well. I have watched a couple with them, and they are actually quite interesting. I will pass along these animated French film reviews to her to peruse; she might find some of them worth checking into.

Now the Japanese animated films are my cup of tea. Daniel, our son, also is very much into anime, so he might be interested in these as well. I have heard of "Cat Soup" before, and I think it might have been nominated for a Hugo Award. I will have to check the Internet to verify this, but it sure does strike a familiar chord.

I also want to thank you, Laurraine, for running your autobiography. Some of this I have learned from you over the years, but it is still good to refresh the memory banks from time to time, and I enjoyed reading this. It still amazes me that you had such a near miss with the early years of Minn-stf when you were attending Carleton College in nearby Northfield. In the early 90s, I was a school representative when working for Schmitt Music out of their Edina, Minnesota, store; my duties were to deliver ordered music scores; books; and new, used, and repaired instruments to Carleton College and St. Olaf in Northfield and also to Northfield High School. That was a fun job that combined my love for music and education.

Cool pictures from the Internet to accompany your Kitt Peak travelogue. Space pictures are so awesome and just make me appreciate what I have here on this earth. Some day I'd like to visit a real observatory. Been to a couple planetariums over the years but not a real observatory. That would be fun.

Your Loscon 33 report was fun reading, but that photo of William Tenn on page 15 sort of reminds me of Marty Cantor! I think it's because of the goatee, the glasses, and Mr. Tenn's posture in this photo. Oh, well. At least it certainly sounds like the con was a lot of fun. Here is another convention that I would love to get to someday if given the chance.

I always enjoy reading *Feline Mewsings*. Remind me to include some photos of our cats in either my LoCs or zines. Take care of yourself, say hi to Mike for me, and have a fun time no matter where you are.

#

Ed Meskys, Moultonboro, NH

10 March 2007

Thanks again for a very interesting zine.

I have seen *Camelot* three times. I saw the original Broadway production before I moved to California June 1962 and then saw a touring company in San Francisco with two friends from Palo Alto (Joe and Felice Rolfe; they separated in the late 60s; he is no longer in fandom and wants to have nothing to do with any former friends in fandom; she has been Felice Maxam for about thirty-five years now and is just on the fringes of fandom. She had been co-editor of *Niekas* for a number of years until shortly after we got the Hugo in '67 and the zine went into suspended animation in '69). I was sighted at the time (becoming blind Nov '71), but vision was so poor that I was croggled when Felice commented on Lancelot's facial expression when he performed the miracle.

About fifteen years ago, wife Sandy and I saw a local amateur production done by a women's club about twenty miles away. The pacing was so slow that the play was tedious to watch. It was taking so long that we left after three hours, when they were only two-thirds of the way thru.

I do have the original stage cast recording, which I have listened to many times, but not for many years now. You say they have updated it. I wonder whether I would notice the differences. Did I understand that they added some new songs?

((As to added songs, I don't know, as I am unfamiliar with the stage version. The music differences might be the difference between the stage and movie versions.))

A number of years ago, I heard an interview of the lyricist on NPR; and he commented on the major gaff

in Henry Higgins's opening song, the use of "hung" for "hanged." He said he didn't know that hung was never used about people but didn't seem to care. Now if *anyone* were to use the correct word, for heaven's sake, it *would* be Henry Higgins.

((Poetic licence can be taken for lyrics; but, as you say, in the case of a character such as Higgins ...))

In your bio you mention living in Rochester, NY, for a while; and a letter hack mentions going to Astronomicon there. My son lives there, so I used visiting him as an excuse to go there and attend Astronomicon in '05 and '06. A very small con, about two hundred attendees; but I found it very enjoyable. Regulars I enjoyed seeing were the Penneys and a few other fanzine fen who attended, plus old friend but new author Carl Frederick (I first met Carl in 1955 at an astronomy club in Brooklyn.) In '05 it was great to talk with Spider & Jeanne Robinson, and in '06 the Trimbles (I first met them at Pittcon in 1960.) Stanley has his house up for sale and plans to move out west, probably Seattle, later this year; so I will lose the excuse to get to the con. But if it is going mega-media, I won't miss it. But I don't blame them for changing it. They must have lost lots of money both years I went, with under two hundred attendees and guests flown in from great distances.

I enjoyed reading about the French and Japanese animated movies, tho' I would not go see them even if they were to show up. A foreign movie with subtitles? I would get nothing at all from it, since I am not only legally blind, but totally blind. I also enjoyed the book reviews and am thinking of looking for the books in con huckster rooms.

Oh, I correspond with a dozen or so friends who are great movie fans and hope you do not object to my forwarding them the movie reviews from thish.

#

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, ON

1 April 2007

Hello from Toronto! No April Fool's today, just a letter of comment on *Feline Mewsings* 27. I'm enjoying a few days of freedom before I become extremely busy with a three-week assignment working as the assistant to a trade show manager.

Brad Foster's been producing a lot of great colour art lately. Awfully stretchy neck on this one, Brad – someone get fed up with it, and try to strangle it? :-)

We have power outages at 24 Eva on a regular basis. It's a relatively old apartment building, having been built to open in 1967 for Canada's centennial year. So, it is forty years old, and it shows it. It has electrical and water problems that management doesn't care to fix but rather patch until they fail again. It took government threats to get management to upgrade the elevators that were breaking down about three to four time every month. Every so often, we discuss moving; but we're hoping that money will allow us to do that within the next few years.

((Our house is the same age as your apartment building.))

Yvonne had a wide-spectrum food allergy test done recently, on the recommendation of her chiropractor. The results are in; she cannot eat anything with corn, oats, wheat, barley, and many other foods. She is now in effect gluten-intolerant herself. There are certain leafy veggies she can't eat; and most kinds of potatoes are out, too. Anyway, she has a list of foods she can't eat; and with being on Weight Watchers, she also has a list of foods she can eat. I told her you're gluten-intolerant, too; so she proposes trading recipes with you, if you'd like. She has some gluten-free cookie recipes.

I did not know you when you lived in Rochester, but I knew of you. Yvonne and I were members of the Star Trek Welcomittee right up to the time when Shirley Maiewski shut it down. Torcon 2 took place four years before I got any kind of awareness of fandom, although I did hear something about a big Trekcon in Toronto in 1976. I think you might have gone to some of the early MediaWest*Cons in Michigan. We were never able to go, but we were supporting members of the second MW*C. We also went to some of the Trekcons in NYC in the late 1970s; we might have passed each other in the hallway.

Your Loscon 33 report -- hey, there's a picture of Chris Garcia not mugging for the camera! A rare shot indeed. I'd like to go back to LA for a convention.

Yvonne is the main breadwinner right now, and she has been able to save up money to get her to the International Space Development Conference in Dallas in May; with a little extra cash from me, we can now both go. I expect this will be somewhat different from an SF con, so I am prepared for differences. However, I might be able to help with organization; we will be working for our memberships and might be able to institute a few features of cons. We've tried to get the conference in touch with Dallas and Houston fandoms, and I hope they can provide some of the labour in making this conference work. We will be meeting up with John Purcell, as he makes the big drive to Dallas from College Station.

Wrapping up time. Yvonne has finished up a long-term temp assignment with Castrol Petroleum Canada, so we have two more days together before I start my trade show assignment. Take care and stay cool, because the spring is here, and summer is not far behind.

((We've had a cool, sometimes cold, spring.))

#

Arthur Langley Searles, Bronxville, NY

2 April 2007

On reading p. 11 of *Feline Mewsings* #27, I noted that one of your cats has been afflicted with inflammatory bowel syndrome. Earlier in his life, one of our pair was, too, but was successfully treated with Prednisone (for the IBS), Buspar (for anxiety and pain), antibiotics, and a special diet (chicken, turkey, duck -- no beef, pork, or fish). It was quite a siege. I'd be interested to know what your vet recommended.

A nice issue of *Feline Mewsings*.

((Fluffy's vet has him on Prednisone, Metronidazole, and Pepcid AC. The Metronidazole is for nausea. He seems to be fairly stable on that. It's not a lot of fun, though. He tends to avoid me when he knows it's time for his meds. The pet sitter is unable to cope with that, so he gets to stay at the vet's when we travel. Considering that's he fairly young, we look forward to many years of chasing him around trying to medicate him. HHO1/2K Fluffy is also on a special novel protein diet -- duck.))

#

Jason K. Burnett, somewhere in Minnesota

3 April 2007

I just finished reading FM#26 (an extended bout of unemployment, likely accompanied by moderate depression, completely threw me off fanac for most of last year; and I'm just now starting to catch up) and wanted to write to tell you how much I enjoyed it. Your travel writings were extremely interesting, more so than usual because I now have a possibility of seeing those places in the fairly near future: This fall I'll be applying for the Rand Corporation's graduate school in Santa Monica; and if I'm accepted Angel and I will be packing up the boys and moving to LA.

I also greatly enjoyed the Worldcon report; I've never been to a Worldcon and don't expect to be able to until the boys are quite a bit older, so in the meantime I enjoy them vicariously through people like you who are generous enough to write about your experiences.

Count me in as another endorser of HP printers. Angel and I are still using an ancient LaserJet 5 that we picked up second hand. I know it saw some heavy use before we got it, and we give it quite a workout, and it's showing no signs of giving out. The only problem with it is that it requires a parallel port to connect; we just upgraded Angel's computer and discovered that parallel ports are a dying breed. I suppose this gives me that much more incentive to keep my computer alive. I suppose even when it's too old to do anything else with, we can still use it as a print server and a little bit of backup storage.

Here's hoping this finds you well, and expect more LoCs from me in the future.

#



I love Brad's cover; someday I wish I could find out how to do such nifty colour; guess it helps to have the talent to back up the desire, but one out of two isn't too bad! As a not too appropriate aside, I went to the Adobe website to see what Photoshop is all about; and everything seems to proceed as if you already know about the program. So, I called them to see if they had any suggestions. Nope, they just suggested that I pony up the almost \$700 and see; somehow I do not like that logic. I want to

find out beforehand if I want the software. The good news is that this all prompted me to take a look at the software I have used for years (FreeHand) and never used even a small portion of its functions. I think, I just think I can already do a lot of what Photoshop does; but I just have to find out how. Sigh, oh for the ghoo-old-days-of-the user-manual! I am waiting for my most recent purchase from Amazon to figure out how to use all the bells and whistles that have been added over the years and which I have merely overlooked! We shall see.

((I believe some stores will let you try out some software.))

Ah yes, colonoscopy. The ghoo news is that as they increase the interval between normal scopings, we all just might drag out getting the second one for well over a decade! You are right in that the prep for the procedure is...uh...unpleasant. I have heard people say they prefer the pills over the liquid. I guess that means there is a way to achieve the same results without the gallons of liquid, but maybe you still have to tank up to take the pills...?

((A pill would make it slightly less unpleasant. At least you wouldn't have to take vile-tasting liquid. But that wouldn't have any effect on what the stuff does to your body.))

Pardon me if you have already mentioned this, but do you intend to make the Worldcon? Just curious. I was surprised that there were no Japanese nominees; I thought there might be at least an artist or fan artist. The fan categories do not require very many nominations, so I thought those areas might be where the native talent would shine. I know there is a revised ballot to be sent out, and I am guessing that there is only the one change to the movie category. So, while I may have missed getting in my slate of nominations, I will take time and get my ballot in before the deadline.

((There's no way we will make it Japan for the worldcon unless we win the Lotto before then.))

I have managed to see most of the movie nominations (via Netflix) but have yet to see the short nominations and have not seen two of the fanzine nominees (shame on me).

Looking at the house plans, how many square feet? It looks so open and uncluttered.

((Way too many square feet; I'm working on a revision to reduce the size.))

Spring has supposedly sprung, but I am anticipating snow today; we shall see.

Gorgeous issue; keep 'em coming, and thank you!

#

John B. Speer, Albuquerque, NM

15 April 2007

...

What does WIYN in the telescope's name stand for?

((WIYN is a consortium made up of the University of Wisconsin, Indiana University, Yale University, and the National Optical Astronomy Observatory.))

...

I'm afraid I don't know what PCPs are. The initials look more chemical than medical.

((PCP stands for Primary Care Physician.))

#

Amy Harlib, New York, NY

22-23 April 2007

... I thoroughly enjoyed the latest *Feline Mewsings*. The astronomical part was my favourite, but I appreciated all of the zine.

...

I should also mention how much I liked your life story in the past two issues of *Feline Mewsings*.

* * *



* Closing Remarks

Before my next issue, we have some travelling planned. We may also go to Westercon, but that is currently up in the air.

Laurraïne