

Purrsonal Mewsings #73



Purrsonal Mewsings, formerly *Feline Journal* and *Feline Mewsings* is a personalzine by R-Laurraine Tutihasi, PO Box 5323, Oracle, AZ 85623-5323; 520-275-6511, Laurraine@mac.com, <http://www.weasner.com/>. I hope to publish every six weeks.

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#73

May 2020

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Contributions of art, reviews, articles, fiction, letters, even poetry welcome.
Publication not guaranteed, but all submissions will be given due consideration.

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

If you are reading this electronically and would prefer to receive a printed version, please let me know. Or vice versa.

* Editorial / Introduction

Covid-19 news is not great here. Testing is only now being ramped up, and there is no mention of generalized testing in our county as of yet. Sequestering continues through mid-May, at which point I expect the governor to make another announcement. As of the beginning of May, we are able to make doctor's appointments for non-emergency reasons. Some activities, such as golf, have also resumed with distancing guidelines in place. Barbershops could reopen on Friday, 8 May. Restaurants may open for inside dining as of 11 May. I'm not planning to visit either type of establishment until a couple of weeks after those dates.

We filed our Arizona tax at the usual time, figuring that the state needs the money, not that we had a lot to pay. I imagine a lot of people are waiting until the new deadline, which I hear had been extended a second time.

Good that we got rain during the first three months, since we saw nary a drop in April and nothing until 10 May, when we got about two tenths of an inch. That might not seem like anything, but it is in Arizona. Unfortunately it came close to noon, and most of it just evaporated.

* * *

* Kritter Korner

With summer effectively here, I'm refilling the bird feeders more frequently and the birdbaths daily. Mike managed to get a cute photo of two Harris's antelope squirrels: These critters are the size of chipmunks.

* * *



* Astronomy

Although Mike is not attending any in-person meetings, there are still conference calls and the like. He was also interviewed a few times for International Dark Sky Week back in April. One interview can be read here: <https://www.azcentral.com/story/travel/arizona/road-trips/2020/04/21/stars-constellations-arizona-dark-sky-week/5153879002/>. There's also a video at https://www.azfamily.com/video/check-out-the-night-sky-during-international-dark-sky-week/video_04c3a69e-08da-5333-9192-194ca17f8b9e.html that he has a few seconds in. There is a fairly long, over an hour, talk he did here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKx_yfH5Xpw about astrophotography with a smartphone. On Facebook there's a video of a talk he did about International Dark Sky Places: <https://www.facebook.com/>

[watch/live/?v=1593793140785251&ref=watch_permalink](https://www.youtube.com/watch/live/?v=1593793140785251&ref=watch_permalink) ; it's about forty minutes long.

He also got a nice photo of the Whirlpool Galaxy (M51) recently.



* * *

* **Reviews:** reviews without attribution are by the editor

TV

Penny Dreadful: the City of Angels, Showtime

This show has impressed me greatly, possibly because of my having lived in Los Angeles (which I consider to be my home town even though I wasn't born there). The show starts in 1938, just as Hitler is rising in power (Another of my interests is WWII). The show makers have taken many historical events and facts and warped them just enough to make the series a fantasy. For instance it's true that there was much friction between the whites and hispanics. The show has expanded this into a more serious issue. One of the leads is a hispanic policeman (It doesn't hurt the viewer that he's young and handsome.) It's also true that Hitler had a plot to take Los Angeles, and there were indeed Nazis in town. Two fantasy characters have a large part in these two plot elements. The mother of the hispanic police detective worships Santa Muerte, a goddess of death. The other supernatural character seems to be an incarnation of the devil played by Natalie Dormer. She appears in several different versions of herself. Another plot element is loosely based on the church founded by Aimee Semple McPherson.



a

I looked over the reviews on IMDB, and they seem largely negative, partly based on the fact that a previous show titled *Penny Deadful* was nothing like this show. I have no knowledge of the earlier show.

Personally I haven't reacted to a TV show in this way in a long time if ever. It just speaks to me on a really basic level.

We're only two episodes in, so anything can happen.

#

MOVIES

Lone Wolf and Cub: Sword of Vengeance, Lone Wolf and Cub: Baby Cart at the River Styx, Lone Wolf and Cub: Baby Cart to Hades, Lone Wolf and Cub: Baby Cart in Peril, TCM

These Japanese movies are about a disgraced samurai. He had been the lead Shogunate executioner. An opposing faction had tricked him into being dishonoured. Now he is a ronin wandering the country with his young son. Right after he had lost his position and his wife, he had given his son a choice between a toy and a sword. The boy had chosen the sword. The ronin built a robust and armed cart for his son. He travels the country seeking vengeance and also as an assassin for hire.

These movies are based on a manga and are done in a stylised manner. If you don't mind copious amounts of movie blood (completely fake looking), they are fun.

#

Beauty and the Beast, TNT

This is the live action Disney version of their animated movie of the same name. I haven't seen the animated version since shortly after it came out, so I really need to see it again to make a comparison. I don't know why exactly, but I was very taken with this. Possibly it was the choice of actors: Emma Watson, Dan Stevens, Luke Evans, Josh Gad, Kevin Kline, Ewan McGregor, Ian McKellen, Emma Thompson, Audra McDonald, Stanley Tucci, and many others. The actors I named are the ones who stood out for me. Kevin Kline, who played Belle's father, impressed me most. Emma Watson did a wonderful job of playing Belle. Anyway I'm seriously considering buying the DVD if one is available; Disney is funny about releasing their DVDs. If the libraries reopen soon, I would prefer to watch it again first.

#

A Guy Named Joe, TCM

This is a Spencer Tracy flick from 1943. I don't generally care for Tracy, but I have to concede that he made some outstanding movies. This is one I hadn't known about. He plays a hotshot aviator in the Army Air Force during WWII and is killed on one mission.

He becomes an angel guiding young pilots. The one assigned to him is played by a young Van Johnson, an actor I always found attractive. The one snag in the story is that the young pilot falls in love with the same woman that the Tracy character had loved. I think the Richard Dreyfuss movie *Always* was a remake of it, except that in that one the pilots are fire fighters working for the forest service. Dreyfuss plays the older pilot.

#

RETRO HUGO NOMINEES

Partly thanks to the efforts of someone who signs as “Secret Panda”, I’ve been able to complete my ranking of several of the Retro Hugo categories. I’m only going to discuss the Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form. I’m still working on the written stuff. Who knows whether I’ll get to all of them, especially with the libraries being closed.

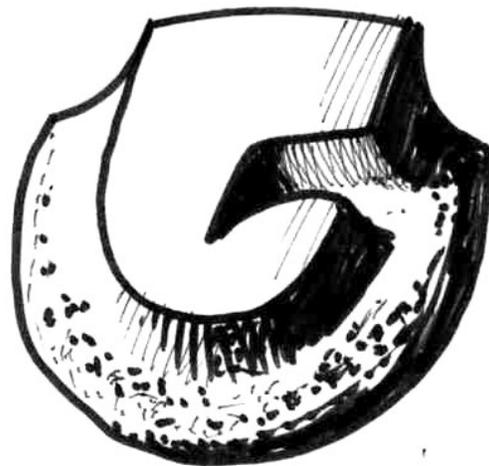
My first choice in this category is *The Curse of the Cat People*. The movie has little connection to the original Cat People movie, but I think the little girl star is supposed to be descended from the main character in the previous movie. Anyways there are no cats in this one. Instead it’s a sweet story about a little girl who doesn’t have any real friends and the people, imaginary or real, that she meets.

My second choice is *The Canterville Ghost*. This is the version with Robert Young in it. I’ve seen it a couple of times. It’s about a ghost that’s trapped in an English castle until a descendant performs a feat of bravery. It’s kind of a hokey plot but sweet.

My third choice is *It Happened Tomorrow*. It’s about a reporter who wishes to know the headlines in advance. One day his wish seems to be granted, but he finds that it isn’t always a good thing to know the future. It’s mildly entertaining.

My fourth choice is *Donovan’s Brain*. This is the radio version. It’s about a man’s brain that continues to live after the body’s death. I’ve never cared for the story. It seems too hokey.

My fifth choice is *The House of Frankenstein*, a sort of sequel to the original



RITUAL OBJECT. WR 86

Frankenstein movie. I can't say I ever really liked most movie versions of *Frankenstein* or its many sequels.

My sixth and last choice is *The Invisible Man's Revenge*. The novel of the original movie is probably my least favourite Wells novel. The idea always seemed stupid to me, and I don't know why anyone would want to make a sequel.

* * *

* **StippleAPA**

StippleAPA is an amateur press association. An APA is like a group pen pal. Each distribution includes a fanzine from each member, who usually writes about his or her interests and life and makes comments on the previous issues of the other members. If you're interested in joining, please let me know and I can get you in touch with the person who runs it.

MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #333

S. Rayne (Wight As Rayne): We had a prolonged and cool spring with a modest amount of rain until April, when it didn't rain at all. At the end of April, summer came roaring in early.

Keeping the bird feeders and birdbaths full takes dedication. In winter things are pretty slow, but food gets gobbled up fast as soon as the migratory birds return. I do my best to keep the birdbaths filled daily; that water evaporates pretty fast in summer. The food, depending on the specific feeder, needs filling every couple to few days. Laying in the supplies became a challenge during this pandemic. I've had to supplement with extra orders from Chewy or make extra stops at Walmart. Usually I get all my bird seeds at the supermarkets. I've heard that people who hadn't fed the birds before have started doing so.

Wobenzym N (I don't know why I keep typoing it) is OTC. I get my

supply from Amazon. I had got to the point where cutting my meat had become a challenge. It is no longer; indeed I had forgot that I had experienced the problem until recently when I was reading about someone else's arthritis problem.

Most of Mike's astronomy photos are true colours. They come through during long exposures. The false colour images you refer to are done by NASA and others to clarify planetary and other photos, especially those taken outside of human visual range (infrared, etc.).

I liked *Timeless*. It came to a nice conclusion instead of just being dropped. It combined my interest in time travel with my interest in history. The actors also clicked with me.

Very few places in LA, except the mountains, ever get snow. I don't recall if I ever saw any in any of the areas where I lived. Whenever snow was mentioned, it seemed to occur in

areas such as Malibu.

Well, I guess you know by now how well the US responds to big catastrophes.

Bill Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #31): We are still in the design stage of the fruit tree cage. It's true that squirrels can incur much damage to fruit trees. I'm considering whether to use chicken wire, which wouldn't keep out the small antelope squirrels, or use hardware cloth. The latter is more expensive, but the cage wouldn't be as large as some I've seen. We may consult with other people.

Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #23): On our road trips, Mike almost always drives. I have a tendency to get sleepy on long drives even when I'm driving.

I never did ask my friend why she loved the book that I found so disappointing. I may try asking her, but she may no longer remember. It was a long time ago.

Stephanie Meyer (Monkey Mind): My dental appointment was rescheduled three times; this time (June) I think it will take. We are waiting to make our eye checkup appointments. A few things have opened up in Arizona, but we want to see how things work out before going ourselves.

Ruth Odren (The Once and Future Zine): I'm in the habit of having at least one spare of everything. Sometimes I slip up, but generally we don't wait until we run out to buy

things. When we eventually needed toilet paper for the master bath, we still had a supply for the guest bath. When the first store I went to didn't have any, I ordered on Amazon. The Amazon order is not expected until June. But I was able to get toilet paper a couple of weeks ago at our usual supermarket.

Joyce Maetta Odum (Perplexed Perturbed Persnickety): Thanks for the clarification on the exercise.

As for judging the quality of figure skating, the TV hosts for each competition usually go over at least one aspect during their coverage. Two things stand out in my mind. One is edging. Skates have a blade that is basically a concave edge, so that there are actually two edges cutting the ice if the skater stands straight. In gliding a curve or other similar moves, the skater should be on one or the other of the two edges. The better the skater is at edging, the better the performance. The other has to do with completeness of jumps. There are half jumps, single jumps, double jumps, triple jumps, and quadruple jumps. The turns should all be completed in the air before touching down again. Skaters are dinged for incomplete jumps or downgraded to the next lower jump. Those are the two basic technical aspects that come to mind. Otherwise artistry is also judged.

It seems strange to be talking about an upscale Walmart, but I know what you mean. On road trips, I have a few times popped into a Walmart to get something. I have observed that those

stores all seem rather downscale, and the shoppers look rather shoddy. The Walmart where I shop is located in a somewhat upscale neighbourhood. When I shop there, it feels little different from other stores where I shop. Everything appears clean and neat, and the shoppers are generally dressed nicely.

Wow! That's an impressive-looking saw you bought.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits): All our travel plans have been upset. My sister was signed up for a European trip starting in June; that was cancelled a while back. I just learned that Westercon has been rescheduled for next year; supposedly all our hotel reservations were cancelled, but I'll double check that. I'm still awaiting word about my Iceland trip in late July.

With no access to barbershops, I've trimmed some hair around my ears and had Mike cut off the bottom of my hair up to the nape of my neck. With the warmer weather here now, it was just becoming too uncomfortable.

As I understand it, observant Jews are not allowed to use the elevator on the Sabbath unless someone else pushes the buttons. James Michener touched on some of this in one of his books, probably *The Source*. Basically they're not allowed to do any work on the Sabbath. Pushing buttons or flicking light switches is considered work.

All the organized events in our state parks were cancelled. People are still allowed to hike on their own.

The things to keep in mind about the combined microwave convection oven is that there are limitations on

both sides. In order to add all the control buttons for the convection oven, some of the microwave oven buttons are missing compared to our old microwave. The convection oven only goes so high. I think 425° F is the limit. Because it's fairly small compared to a regular oven, you still need to use the larger one for big items. I still have to use the regular oven to make pizza, for instance. My observations only apply to the GE Profile model.

The tree cage is still in the design phase.

Mike can be talkative if you push the right buttons.

Each of the conventions that were part of last year's Westercon had some special programming.

If you read the text, you would know that the photo of us was taken along with the Trimbles. As for the costumers, I have no idea.

I've thought about watching all the Star Wars movies again, but I don't think I'm quite ready yet. On the other hand, Mike has watched them numerous times.

When I watch TV, I always pause if I want to make a note or look something up. This is the perk for using a DVR. Even with live TV, I can pause or even rewind up to about thirty minutes.

Did you know that the *Actors Studio* James Lipton is the same as the author of *An Exaltation of Larks*?

I think about two-thirds of my TV viewing is on PBS or TCM. PBS has a lot of nature and history shows, many which I watch. I also watch all the Masterpiece shows; currently I'm watching *World on Fire*, which takes place during the second World War,

and *Baptiste* about a French detective living in the Netherlands. I have most of *Sanditon* recorded, but I won't watch it until I have the first two episodes, which I missed recording.

On TCM I watch a lot of movies and a few documentaries. More than half the rest of my viewing is probably on HBO, Showtime, Starz, and a handful of other cable channels. Current series include *Penny Dreadful: the City of Angels* and *Real Time with Bill Maher*.

I watch very few network shows; I think they're all on hiatus now, but I was watching *The Good Doctor*, *Manifest*, and *Emergence*.

We did the census online, since we never received anything in the mail. This may be related to the fact that our postal address is a PO box.

Sorry to hear that your physical problems are taking so long to heal. I guess they're in the same class as my fall injury.

See you all in the June disty.

* 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. I use Oxford standards of spelling and punctuation.

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214

19 March 2020

We have survived a tornado and are currently dealing with the coronavirus. I will be writing about them in future zines..

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

29 March 2020

Many thanks for *Purrsonal Mewsings* 71. That's a beautiful great horned owl on the front cover. Yvonne just loves owls and has a collection of cloth and ceramic owls. More comments inside.

Mike does produce some great photos. I especially like the shot of the Orion Nebula. I have friends who brag about their astronomy equipment and homemade backyard observatory. We might not mind the brag so much if they'd invite us out to see it...

((Visitors are always welcome at Mike's observatory on clear nights.))

We haven't had much travel so far this year, but of course, the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic basically cancelled everything. Two of our big conventions in Toronto, Ad Astra and Anime North, have both been cancelled for this year; and other small events we were to vend at have been either cancelled or postponed to unspecified dates later on this year. I think there will be many more events cancelled before all of this is done.

Magpies! We spotted a lot of magpies when we were in England last year. A little smaller than crows, and of course, the white highlights, but just as bouncy and silly. Your comments to Jeanne Mealy... Indeed, we did save up our money to go to London. We had our memberships for the London Worldcon, but we didn't save enough to actually go. So, we just kept saving. Worldcon wouldn't be there, but London sure would...and no regrets. We had a marvellous time in 2016; and we did the same, saved like crazy, and went back in 2019. We would like to go again.

((Westercon in Seattle was recently rescheduled until next summer, but my Iceland trip later in July is still nominally on. My sister the doctor in the Seattle area has been seeing non-emergency patients for the past week or two. As for my tentative trip to Iceland, my return flight from Iceland to the US has been cancelled!))

My LoCs...I think we may be having an early spring here. We haven't had snow on the ground for two months, and today may have been the first really warm day. We may have to wait for a similarly warm day, but it is good to have. I recently finished the edit/proof of another issue of *Amazing Stories*, and I am looking for more books to edit. So much to learn, but I am also hoping this might lead to new employment.

((Our spring seemed cooler than average with a fair amount of rain; but now summer seems to have come roaring in at the end of April, which was totally dry.))

I guess you and Mike are already self-isolated and don't have to worry about social distancing. We have lots to do...Yvonne has been giving the whole apartment a good cleaning and clearing out of junk and stuff we don't need and will have lots of Hawaiian shirts to make. (Not as much pressure to get them done, now that vending opportunities keep getting cancelled. Still, once we can gather again, I think people will be looking for interesting things to buy.) I have LoCs to write and jewellery to make (again, less pressure), and Yvonne typed out her diary that she kept while we were in London last year; so I plan to present all of our pictures in London on Facebook, and we can all go on a virtual trip to London.

It's getting tough to keep my eyes open, so I will finish up. See you with the next issue.

#

John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St, No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057
30 March 2020

More fine Mike photos, thanks. I was particularly impressed by the Great Horned Owl and the Orion Nebula. Annotations of the p. 5 composite would've helped.

I'm glad you noted the characterization in Heinlein's *Rocket Ship Galileo* (1947), as we discussed it in a Classics of SF talk at Spikecon (combined Westercon LXXII + 13th NASFiC + two others, named for the Final Spike completing the Transcontinental Railroad 150 years earlier, 50 miles away). The book is too often read superficially and then underrated. Since you live in Electronicland, you can see my con report at <<http://file.770.com/spikecon-spoonfuls/>> (2 Sep 19). The non-electronic can always write to me for a paper copy.

Analogue clock-faces give me a sense of what might be called the space of time. I can see half an hour, a quarter of an hour, halfway to midnight. Digital ones have other merits.

Ctein can, I suppose, seem intimidating with or without a laptop. His mind is quick. I've always liked him.

#

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

11 April 2020

I realize I'm incredibly late so you may not publish this letter. I've been too busy getting my Distinguished Toastmasters Award. Still, I want to show I'm still interested.

((Congratulations on your award.))

First, I will comment on your editorial. You're more active than I am. You're still hiking in the local state park. I bet I could still do that. If I was with other people, however, the problem would be the pace. I'm very slow. Of course, right now, the coronavirus means my only exercise is lifting weights in my apartment for an hour three times a week.

((I'm a pretty slow hiker myself, always have been.))

Now on to Westercon. Ah, a seminar on "robots before Asimov". Didn't the word robot come from Karel Čapek's play "RUR"? However, Čapek's robots were more like androids. They were biologically human except bred in vats. All I can say is I know less about how "robot" became synonymous with mechanical man. Nothing.

Also at Westercon was an analysis of Heinlein's *Rocket Ship Galileo*. I found it in a very small local library decades ago and read it. John Hertz was right. If I remember correctly, the personalities weren't too bad. However, it certainly didn't show the world-building Heinlein was later famous for. In fact, I am wonder whether the plot wasn't a cliché even in 1947. Boys go to the Moon with an adult and thwart Nazis plotting to return and conquer the Earth.

Furthermore, at Westercon, an acquaintance claimed to be related to Butch Cassidy. Whenever someone claims kinship with the famous, I take it with a grain of salt. My mother claimed we were related to a famous Russian violinist. According to his

autobiography, he was neither related to us nor, despite her claims, could he have performed before any Czar.

Tuesday you visited Salt Lake City. Among the sights an exhibit of dinosaurs at the Natural History Museum of Utah. It reminded me of the dinosaur exhibit at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in DC. Once, temporarily, it showed mechanical dinosaurs that supposedly made authentic sounds. My wife Heidi didn't care for them and referred to them as creak-o-sauruses.

((The dinosaur exhibit in Utah is the largest I have seen. I have been to the Natural History Museum in NYC and the Smithsonian but many years ago.))

Now I get to your reviews. The first concerns the play *Silent Sky*, which you saw in Tucson. It concerns the lady astronomer Henrietta Leavitt, whose discoveries, you said, led to the theory of the Expanding Universe. No doubt, she made discoveries based on stars' luminosity. Did that have anything to do with the red shift, the basis of the Expanding Universe ?

((Exactly.))

You also review the movie *Terminator: Dark Fate*. I saw a good part of it. I will say it was action packed, and I could follow it – sort of. In the end, the indestructible Terminator got melted down. Since he disappeared into steel, did he end up as molten steel?

Next, I go to the Stipple APA #329 comments. Bill Thomasson talks about the scariest movies he has seen. I remember one, which shouldn't be the scariest movie, *Psycho*. And its scariest moment shouldn't be the scariest either. It occurred after Norman Bates was put in a straitjacket, and you looked inside his mind. While some movies and moments revolted me more, they were the scariest.

StippleAPA #331 has an interesting comment. Cy Chauvin believes it is easier to correct manually than use Microsoft Word's correction feature. At first I found that feature a nuisance, but with practice it is far more useful than correcting manually. You can go back to the old wording; and, if it was someone else's wording, ask him/her to correct it.

Next to the Letters to the Editor, which publishes my letter. There I complain about being forgetful. One example was misreading time on a clock. You suggest that it must have been an analog clock because it's easier to misread them. No, it was a digital clock. My memory has its problems.

Now I will answer two letters to the editor in one sentence: I wish both Amy more gigs and Lloyd a job as a book editor.

Having said that, I will call my letter a day.

#

Timothy Lane, TimothyLane51 at gmail dot com

12 April 2020

I live in a nursing home (Elizabeth, unfortunately, lives in a different one), so the Wuhan virus panic hasn't affected me much. They did close down the lunch room, but I never ate there anyway. They also don't allow visitors, but I don't have many anyway. So far I know of no cases here. My temperature is usually below the standard, so definitely no fever.

I had cats for over thirty years, but I certainly never wished to be a cat. For that matter when I was young we had a dog, and I never wished she was human. But then I'm obviously not exactly either a dog or cat person, though I found cats more convenient when we took trips to conventions.

#

Cathy Palmer-Lister, cathypl at sympatico dot ca

12 April 2020

Please congratulate Mike on his photography. What wonderful skies you must have!

((Actually we seem to have far fewer clear nights here than in the past. Other astronomers have said the same.))

Here in Quebec, social distancing became law fairly early, but the death rate is still high. There is a huge problem in the care homes and senior residences, which is heart breaking. In my town there are 38 confirmed cases, and I suspect many more so far undetected.

Stay safe!

((Oracle has only recently had a confirmed case of Covid-19.))

#

Joy V. Smith, pagada at aol dot com

13 April 2020

I loved the Arches photo--and Mike's astronomical photos also; and I hope the observatory does get built at your local state park. I enjoyed your Dark Sky Star Party report; I'm glad you got to one since so many have been cancelled now.

I did share the Henrietta Leavitt (female astronomer) info from your last issue--with the appropriate credit--here and there. Facebook--and probably Twitter--and in my media blog: <http://pagadan.livejournal.com/>

Thank you for all the info and photos!

#

Amy Harlib, amyharlib at e-activism dot com

13 April 2020

How are you? Hope you are well. I've been so bummed out over the whole Coronapocalypse thing I could not respond to your zine until now.

Loved Mike's photos and the Westercon and Trip to Arches Park reports. Loved Cato updates too! Look for more detailed response to *Purrsonal Mewsings* #72.

The virus wiped out all my gigs, which has been devastating.

#

Amy Harlib, amyharlib at e-activism dot com

13 April 2020

Glad to get *Purrsonal Mewsings* # 72. Glad to find out you are doing reasonably well in the time of Coronapocalypse.

Here in the NYC epicentre, my basic survival needs are covered by social safety nets. I can get most of what I want in local stores or by ordering online, although deliveries are delayed and slower than before.

What I cannot get are gigs, which is devastating. Gigs make me very happy, give my life meaning, and I can earn that extra cash I cannot get by other means. I do not have the set up or the right tech to stream online; and even if I could, it is meaningless – I cannot Spread the Yoga Love without the energy exchange with and the cheers and applause from live crowds. I work out in my living room harder than ever to be ready to perform the moment performing for live audiences can happen again.

For the curious, here is a link to a video of a performance from Feb. 28 , 2020 which I hope will excite the genre nerd enthusiasms we all share: Amazing Amy! Jedi Yoga! Yoda Yoga! Stretching From a Galaxy Far, Far Away! The Force is Flexible With This One! The Only Star Wars Themed Yoga Dance in the Cosmos performed in Borne Dance Company's Eating Disorder Awareness Show, Sat. Feb. 29, 2020, 7 PM, The Secret Theatre, 44-02 23rd St., Long Island City, NY 11101. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzHu3ZTSexI>

Astor is growing into a very adorable fluffy boy and his antics truly save my sanity!

I find all the political/social issues



swirling around CoVid-19 so upsetting that I have not been able to distract myself with internet frivolity very much, too busy doing online activism trying to save the world from my computer!

Enjoyed Mike's photos and the Dark Sky Star Party Report very much. I love the 1990 version of *Cyrano* with Gerard Depardieu.

((My favourite will always be the live one I saw starring Derek Jacobi.))

#

Radell Nelson, 333 Ramona Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530-3739 13 April 2020

I have mixed feelings about tourism these days. If people didn't travel, a virus wouldn't spread. I personally have not travelled for decades. When I got back from France, I bought a house and walked a lot. Mostly the rule was if I can't walk from here to there, I didn't go. Here I sit with no rent to pay, nor any mortgage payments to pay. More, I don't need to find anyone to babysit Hunter, a black tomcat with a bad temper. I was not thinking about any kind of virus when I adopted this lifestyle, but today I find it really fits the modern world.

Indeed it seem to me that if you pub a zine, there is no reason to ever go beyond your city limits. The fact that cars contribute to global warming was on my mind when I sold mine. Electric cars are not the answer unless you are rich. Bikes? Yes. Scooters? Yes. Roller skates? Yes.

((When you live in a town as small as ours, there is no way to get everything without driving. Our nearest grocery store of any useful size is about fifteen miles away in another county no less. Our nearest doctors are about twenty miles away in that same county. Plus I still enjoy attending plays and movies (nearest cinema about twenty miles away). Theatres are about forty miles away, though I've never actually measured.))

But the best answer is a really good pair of walking shoes. In my walking shoes, I can walk to the mailbox at the end of the block.

((Our mailbox is about three miles away.))

And that's the world.

((He also sent a number of fillos.))

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Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214

17 April 2020

I am sending you my most recent apazine in trade. It has my report on the tornado, but I did it just as the Covid-19 coronavirus was starting to-affect us. Anita and I are doing OK except for going stir crazy.

I have become the designated grocery shopper for the duration of the emergency and have often gone at 7 AM on those days reserved for seniors. It is much easier to find toilet paper than at 2 PM.

((Our area's designated senior shopping time is 05:00, which is before my wake-up time. There's no way I'm getting up that early.))

When I was into convention running, I found the gamers to be one of the easiest special interest group to work with. All you needed was someone running the room who organized tournaments and lots of caffeine products in the con suite.

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David Bratman, dbratman at earthlink dot net

18 April 2020

The deliberately overexposed picture of the new Moon was very neat to see.

Did I mention that I went to Kartchner Caverns on my visit to Arizona? I think that was after I saw you and Mike. I liked the caverns very much, especially for being unspoiled by exposure to outside air as most public caverns are. I heard about it on the enthusiastic recommendation of my cousin in Phoenix, whom I had dinner with when I first arrived.

#

Robert Kennedy, robertk at cipcug dot org

24 April 2020

Thank you for #72.

The 300 or so of us old people who live here are still ok and no one has caught the Wuhan virus. The organization that owns this facility and the people who work here are taking very good care of us. We are mainly confined to our apartments although we can go out and walk around. If we do run into anyone, we try to stay six feet apart and just say hello. They have distributed face masks to everyone. All meals are delivered to our apartments. When I go downstairs to get my mail, I usually do not see anyone except a few employees. We are very lucky.

Once again great photos.

Your commentary about the David H. Levy Arizona Dark Sky Star Party reminded me of something that I think I mentioned some time ago. Even if so, here it is again. Back some 25 years or so ago when I lived in Camarillo, California, which is where I lived before coming here in 2018, I went to Santa Barbara for a presentation by David Levy. As a result I have framed three photos of Comet P/Shoemaker-Levy 9 (1993e) that are autographed to me by David Levy. I treasure them greatly.

Let me here put in a plug for an outstanding DVD. I just watched the opera *Cinderella* by Alma Deutscher. It's magnificent. She started composing it at the age of 8 and apparently finished when she was 12. She is now 15. The DVD I have is of its performance in San José, California, in apparently 2018. She "started improvising melodies on the piano when she was four. At age six she completed her first piano sonata." When Alma was asked how she felt about being called the new Mozart, her response was that she would rather be called the first Alma Deutscher. Good for her! Obviously, I highly recommend this opera even, if like me, you are not a big opera fan. She has some parts in the opera and, having watched her in other performances, it is obvious that she takes great joy in what she creates. She is incredibly mature for her age. Look her up for complete information about this prodigy.

#

David Schlosser, schloss17 at suddenlink dot net

28 April 2020

Kay and I also got a nice hefty tax refund that was boosted by the credit for our solar installation. (That part of the refund went to paying down the HELOC that we drew on to pay for it.) The initial inspection had an issue with our breaker panel - not from what they did but from what was there from some of the previous work - I was a bit surprised that it wasn't noted by any inspections done for either of our other two renovations even though there was some electrical work involved with both.



Happily we didn't have to deal with a check to the state since we got a bit back from them too.

While I'm still working (essential job and all), we're obviously not doing any entertainment stuff since everything got shut down last month although we were able to get some last minute items in before the SIP order. Reduced Shakespeare Company was at the local university's stage, and Kay went with a few of my female coworkers to Thunder Down Under at a local casino (and we have pictures to prove it).

So, at least for now, the yard and garden are getting a lot more attention. Partially from her but I also have more spare time - doubly so as I had two one-week vacations scheduled that I couldn't get back so a bit of time on my hands. Having hopes that things will ease up locally fairly soon but no official word as of yet.

((Our SIP has been extended until mid-May at least. Our handyman isn't currently working since he has extenuating health conditions. Although he gave me the name and number for another handyman, I have so far not tried calling him. Mike and I managed while the weather was still reasonably cool to get a bunch of yard stuff done, including transplanting my orange tree into the ground.))

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Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

2 May 2020

Thanks kindly for *Purrsonal Mewsings 72*. Time for a letter on a quiet, self-isolating, nothing- happening Saturday afternoon. This would have been the weekend of our local convention, Ad Astra; so lots of us are busy looking for things to do. Might as well write!

Coronavirus developments here are disquieting as well. Our numbers are down, but they are up on retirement homes. One of the worst hit ones in Toronto, I can see from our balcony. The toilet paper section of our supermarket is cleaned out regularly, as is our local Costco; and all we can do is crack jokes about it. Our tax deadline has been extended too, but it is coming up in a month. Our federal government has offered some level of financial assistance, and I have applied and gotten it, but now to determine if I truly qualify for it. There may be hell to pay if they decide that I do not qualify for it.

Spring has finally made it here. The buds are bursting on the trees, the cherry blossoms are out; and the orioles, robins, blue jays and red-winged blackbirds are easily heard just about everywhere, especially with reduced traffic on the highways. All we need now is some warm temperatures to enjoy.

Just saw at the end...I may have missed the deadline for your upcoming issue. Sorry about that, if you can stuff it near the end of the next issue, that would be great. Thanks again!

#

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

3 May 2020

I received *Purrsonal Mewsings 72* and I had a few comments to make. Skip over where I've gotten too pretentious or told you stuff you already know.

About your editorial, I am skeptical that store shelves are empty because of fearful people hoarding for their own needs. I suspect, amid Coronavirus fears, speculators are trying to corner the market and make a killing on toilet papers, surgical masks, etc. My reason is the amount hoarded would have long since sated people's needs, and be coming out of their ears.

((Undoubtedly there are multiple reasons for shortages experienced during the current pandemic. When people are at home rather than working, there are certain things they

use more of, such as toilet paper. I'm sure there is some amount of hoarding. I recently found out that freezers are in very high demand. A friend of mine needed a new one when his old unit died. When he called to get a new one, he was told there was a long waitlist. I'm assuming that many people who didn't have one previously got one and stuffed it full of frozen products and meats. Of course they can only consume so much food at one time. This explains the initial scarcity of bacon that I experienced and why it gradually became easier to get. I also found out that yeast was hard to get. A lot of people who normally don't bake decided to do so. I'm not one of them. When store shelves suddenly became empty of certain commodities, the suppliers could not keep up with the demand. I've noticed that the paper products now available are often not the familiar brands.

((On the other hand, suppliers who usually sell to large companies, restaurants, etc., suddenly found they couldn't get rid of their wares fast enough. I've read that some farmers are giving away produce that would otherwise rot. The toilet paper used in commercial bathrooms is not the same as the ones used in most private residences. And so on.))

Going on to the next comment, in your Kritter Corner you bemoan that the road runners are chasing other birds from your bird feeders. My wife Heidi likes to feed squirrels and they too are being chased away. In our case, the problem is foxes. Cats too but they chase away vermin as well.

Next you talk about the Arizona Sky Star Party. At one point, you mention fantasy voyages to the Moon. My first thought was Cyrano de Bergerac, circa 1650, who wrote about such voyages. However, my second thought was Lucian of Samosata, circa AD 150. Both's tales were crazy satires. Lucian's Moon men had giant ears and only one toe. Cyrano's best tale does not concern a fantasy Moon but a fantasy Sun. While exploring the Sun, his hero is caught by intelligent birds, tried and sentenced to be pecked to death. However, the birds let him go because he had been nice to a parrot.

During the Arizona Sky Star Party, you attended a presentation on the life of the astronomer David Levy. For those who, like me, didn't know, Levy-Shoemaker Comet 9 was named after him and Carol and Eugene Shoemaker. It got too close to Jupiter in 1993 and the tides pulled it apart. Then in 1994 the fragments fell into Jupiter at a high speed and the effect outdid the giant red spot for many months. That must have been something to see.

Of course, you probably know more about this than I do.

In Reviews was one of Rostand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. The book I read about the original Cyrano contained contemporary portraits of him. They don't reveal a particularly large proboscis. Also the author considered him a carouser rather than a lover. That doesn't mean I disliked Rostand's play.

In Letters to the Editor, I like what Timothy Lane says about horror films. He quotes Stephen King that one of his novels included an adult fear of bills. They sure can be a fear. I remember when my bills were.

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I Also Heard From: Keith Walker, Jan Weasner

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*** Closing Remarks**

We continue to stay at home except for necessary trips to the grocery store, the PO, and the allergist. The stay-at-home order is currently effective until mid-May. A few things have eased, and I have a couple of doctor's appointments coming up.

I hope all of you out there are continuing to do the prudent thing and limiting contact with others. Stay safe.

Deadline for next issue is expected to be on or about 11 June.

Laurraine

10 May 2020