

Purrsonal Mewsings #83



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.

It is distributed through StippleAPA and sent to other friends and family. It is available for the usual (a response of any kind, including letters, e-mail, and phone calls of comment; trade; contributions of illos, fiction, or articles; or even money: \$5.00 per issue). The zine will be placed on the web shortly after paper publication; please let me know if you prefer just to read the web version. I can also e-mail this in Word or rtf format. Kattesmint Press #507. ©2021 R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

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#83

September 2021

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Cover Photo—Puffin in Iceland taken by editor
Title page header—Sheryl Birkhead
Photos—p. 2, 3 Mike

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

I'm starting this just after putting the previous issue to bed. Unfortunately because there are so many photos I took in Iceland that I needed to sort through, I ran out of time to write my Iceland trip report. Please be patient until next time when I hope I will have the report done.

I'm also hurrying here, because one of Mike's nieces is visiting us for about ten days. I may not spend time with her throughout her visit, but I may be doing quite a bit with her. Mike hasn't bothered to plan things out thoroughly.

Our rainy weather continued through the beginning of September, but it looks like the monsoon is technically over for the most part. We got so much rain this summer that our yard looks like a jungle. Little has been done to tame the jungle, partly because of not having found a handyman until just recently and partly because the weather has continued to be hot and humid. Speaking of humidity the mosquito population is about a hundred times normal.

I had a skin test for food allergies, but it was inconclusive; the allergist said that skin tests were notoriously unreliable for food allergies. I had some blood tests run, but I haven't heard back about the results; apparently it takes about two weeks to process them. But she also said I could probably eat most of the food I'm allergic to in small quantities. The exception seems to be the skin of grapes; this explains the reason for my longterm problems with red wine.

I've had my seasonal flu shot and await word on the third dose of the COVID vaccine.

* * *

* Kritter Korner

I don't have time to do much here, either; but I'll give you a photo of a quail family recently taken by Mike.



* * *

* Astronomy

Our local state park had its first star party since COVID began. Despite partly cloudy skies, the night was quite successful.



The photo above that Mike took came out nicely. Above the musicians in the picture is the big dipper.

* * *

* Reviews

Soul, Walt Disney Pictures & Pixar Animation Studios; 2020; ;animation

This movie starts out in the usual Disney movie way, and I expected some lighthearted entertainment. Sometime before the end, however, a very serious theme emerged; and I ended up liking this a lot.

The story is about Joe Gardner. He's a musician in New York City. He teaches part time in high school but has dreams of making it big in the performing word. One day he auditions for a big part and gets it. Unfortunately he is so excited by this that he fails to pay attention to where he's walking. While he's in a coma at hospital, his soul has an adventure.

Much as I enjoyed the movie, I think a jazz music lover may enjoy it even more.

#

The City We Became by N. K. Jemisin, Orbit Books, 2020.

I've read other books by this author and enjoyed them, so I was expecting something similarly good. The city of the title is New York City, made up of five boroughs. In this fantasy world, cities become personifications. The main characters in the book include five people who identify as each of the five boroughs. Unfortunately there has been a recent development whereby cities are stillborn, so to speak. An entity from another dimension tries to destroy the personifications before cities mature. The book opens as one of these interdimensional battles begins.

Jemisin's style is undeniably very good. She brings the city and the characters to life. The boroughs' fight becomes our struggle.

Unfortunately for me I found the ending fizzled a bit. Everything was great up until the very end.

* * *

*** StippleAPA**

StippleAPA is an amateur press association. An APA is like a group pen pal publication. 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. Note to non-members: these are my comments to the other APA members.

MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #344

Jeanne Mealy (The Periodic Table of Variable Elements): I'm happy to welcome new member Amy Clark.

Amy Clark (Hello and Enjoy the Ride! #1): Welcome to StippleAPA!

If you don't have a smartphone, you used to end up jumping through a lot of hoops to get an appointment for a COVID injection. Even worse if you don't have an e-mail address. Nowadays, at least here in Arizona, you can get a COVID vaccination at many drugstores without even making an appointment.

My favourite artists are Salvador Dali and Rene Magritte. I also like most of the impressionists.

I was not a big user of the public library when I was a librarian; it was easy to request things directly from work. However I have been using them a lot since retiring. I've been keeping my purchases of books to a minimum; we already own more than enough books.

I learned touch typing when I was staying with an aunt who was a secretary. She had a typing book and a typewriter. I asked her if I could use

them, and she agreed. When electric typewriters came along, I could type as fast as 120 wpm, but my typing speed deteriorated when computers came along. Part of it is because of the touch of the keyboard. Another part is because it's too easy to correct mistakes.

We see red-tailed hawks in the sky, but the ones that we see on the trees are the Cooper's Hawk and the Harris's Hawk. I've never found rabbit or any other animal parts (Mike says he found rabbit parts years ago), but I realize that rabbits and other small animals are food for many predators.

I found your word search entertaining.

Dale Cozort (Space Bats & Butterflies): My sympathies on the loss of your cat.

There's no period in my name. Thanks.

As far as my nightshade allergy, it's not too bad. As long as I don't eat too much, I should be okay. The grape allergy turns out to be more about the skin than the rest of the fruit. This explains why I've always had problems with red wine and also explains why sangria is especially bad. White wine excludes the skin. Any amount of grape skin can bother me; it also seems to depend on other factors. I haven't experimented with cocoanut; I'm assuming that I can eat small amounts. My allergist ran a skin test that was inconclusive. A blood test is in progress now; the blood has been drawn—nine vials worth!

If I hadn't been around to help Mike when he fell, the Apple Watch would

have called 911. My Apple Watch went off when I fell in Iceland. Fortunately I was with a group and had immediate help. This is a feature that can be turned off. The first thing the watch asks is if you're okay; if you are, then you just tap a button on the watch and that's the end of the process.

Joyce Maetta Odum (Lambent Verge): So sorry to hear of your loss of Morris.

Justin E. A. Busch (Stipple-Ations: Sftan Views and Reviews): I found *Star Trek: the Motion Picture* so boring that I slept through part of it. I haven't tried to view it a second time. I'll try to give the director's cut a chance sometime; don't hold your breath.

Some animals don't want to be seen. However we've seen coyotes and bobcats in broad daylight. I guess predators don't really care. Same for javelinas, who are omnivores; they can be dangerous because of their sharp tusks.

Mike's book is self-published on Amazon. I don't know what Amazon's cut is, but my husband does get royalties.

Bill Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #42): I have a couple of leads on handymen, and I know numbers to call for a landscaper. I've just been too busy to give them a high priority.

Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #34): It's likely that I can eat nightshades in

small quantities.

Thank you for buying Mike's autobiography. Glad you enjoyed it.

Jason K Burnett (Why Are Titles So Hard?): Congratulation on acing your school project. Great that you get to present it at a conference.

Marge Sehnert (Mamma's Mutterings): Yes, Carleton College in Northfield, MN.

Cy Chauvin (Amazons & Swallow Forever! #84): My allergist expressed no surprise at my new food allergies. She was a bit surprised that I had never been tested for any before.

Sparrow (A Sparrow's Perspective): Technically we were lab rats, since the COVID vaccines were approved on a provisional basis because of emergency conditions. However they had been thoroughly tested for safety and effectiveness. I have read that combining two different vaccines may be of benefit, but we patients don't usually get much say in which ones we receive.

Condolences on your loss of Zöe.

I'm glad you received your first vaccination and hope you will have received your second by the time you read this. It's "Johnson", not "Janssen", that requires only one shot.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits): My sympathies on your loss of Rozzie.

Alexis Gilliland's title illo was submitted first. I cycle through all the submissions.

I got my answer about wine on my

first Icelandair flight. In first class we were each serviced with a small glass of prosciutto, which I drank kind of absent-mindedly. There were no ill effects. Subsequently I had a glass of Riesling on the cruise ship and another glass of prosciutto on my return flight.

I did make it to Iceland. Other travel is still up in the air. If I make it to Northfield, I would prefer to rely on public transportation rather than renting a car, which is very expensive. Perhaps you can arrange for a lunch meeting or party in the Twin Cities. I may decide to stay there for a couple of days to do some sightseeing.

The Zoom interview of the Trimbles went well and was followed by a chat afterward. The session can be viewed on FANAC.org.

Our wildlife camera is motion activated. Mike goes through the photos every morning and weeds out all the uninteresting ones.

Possibly I overemphasised the politics in *The Relentless Moon*. It is pervasive in the background, but it's not presented in lumps.

Mike was fine after his fall except for a small cut where he hit his head on a cardboard shipping box as he fell. He cried out when he fell, so I quickly went running to see what was wrong.

The ocotillo bloom lasted quite a long time—probably a couple of weeks.

I've read that it may be advantageous to receive two different COVID vaccines.

I hope Nixie successfully loses excess weight.

I hope to see you all next month.

* 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.

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

1 August 2021

This is my response to *Purrsonal Mewsings* 81.

I'm going to start commenting with the editorial. On food allergies, I am glad I don't have the ones you do. I don't know whether I would have the patience to test all sorts of foods to see what I can and can't eat. At one time I was tested for allergies, and the only one that tested out was a cockroach allergy. Even there, I don't remember any actual bad reactions to them.

Next, I go to your review of the novel *The Relentless Moon*. There an Earth First Movement is endangering flight into outer space. The Earth First movement hit the spot in *Babylon 5*. It was placed far enough in the future for us to come into contact with lots of varied aliens. An Earth First movement worked. I doubt that an Earth First movement would arise to stop us from colonizing an uninhabited Mars and Moon. There's no conflict to stir up such sentiments.

((In the novel, the Earth had been devastated by a meteor strike. The space programme was a way of finding other places humans could live in case things got even worse on Earth. The Earth Firsters thought all the money and effort should be spent on improving things here rather than look for solutions in space. Both were being done, but the Earth Firsters just thought looking to space was a waste of resources.))

Of course, that does not mean the novel may not have other virtues beside verisimilitude.

From that review, I go to your Mailing Comments on Stipple-APA #342. At least, two people have fallen down in Stipple-APA: your husband Mike and Lucy Schmeidler. I've been doing exercises to prevent falls for several years now. Knock on wood, they work. At my age, 76, many of us often cannot get back up.

((Mike trip on a box that he couldn't see because he didn't turn his flashlight on.))

From Stipple, I go to the letters. First, as always, I answer your comments to my letter. About “Masterpiece Theatre,” maybe there have been some good productions. However, they finally succeeded in pushing me out with boring productions.

I also have comments for Trinlay Khadro’s letter. Knock on wood no one close to me has had Covid-19. Still I spent a lot more of the last year inside and in masks, so the pandemic affected me that way. I was not a happy camper, but I understood it was all necessary as opposed to a lot of people for whom wearing masks and keeping their distance could never be a necessity.

Another comment is for Gene Schneider. Yes, the *Ghostbusters*, based on the film, was a 1986 kid show. Also yes, there was a much younger crowd there that year. I was told the people who ran MediaWest Con were retiring in several years. To keep the con going, they were trying to convince a younger person to take it over. One year, she had a trial run and attracted a younger crowd. Alas, she decided against taking over.

Another comment still is for Lloyd Penney. I was walking around without a mask in my apartment complex, and I wondered why he couldn’t. Then it dawned on me. He and Yvonne had Covid-19. Also they believed other renters in their apartment complex spread it. So I can understand why they were twice shy.

A third comment is for Robert Kennedy. We’re still trying to figure out how safe we should make ourselves. Masks will make us safer, but how much safer do we want to be? I suspect getting vaccinated is enough.

((Unfortunately we know now that that is not necessarily the case.))

A fourth comment is for Maria Meldrum. She says she never gets good animals to see. I think it depends on the person. My wife, Heidi, loves watching the birds, squirrels, and chipmunks that occasionally enter her garden. She likes how different they are from us and how alike. Years ago, to improve her animal watching, she taught herself many different bird calls from a website.

A fifth comment is for Murray Moore. Yes I hear most Canadians live south of Maine. I was thinking that President Polk’s campaign slogan, “54 40 or fight,” meant he wanted to remedy that. However, he only wanted the Northwest of Canada up to Alaska. Even then, after he was elected, he decided that discretion was the better part of valour. The usual with 19th Century American threats to go to war with Canada.

A sixth comment is for Loyd Penney’s second letter. So you and Yvonne will probably get a second anti-Covid shot with a different company’s vaccine. I imagine that is due to a shortage of any one vaccine in Canada. On the other hand, I bet you’re right; it will be effective just like it would with the same vaccine.

That is it for this time, See you in #82.

#

Mary Manchester, 1297 Monroe Ave #2, Rochester, NY 14620-1655

5 August 2021

Thank you for P. M. #81. That cat on the cover says it all—just mellow out, man. Nothing much going on here despite the cooler weather. It's been humid throughout, whatever the temp. Lots of rain too.

Another new face—a wild turkey! The first I've seen on the property, and it's been fifty years. Just him, not a flock, so perhaps he was checking out a new territory.

Mike! Congratulations on the book. I don't think I've ever known anyone with a published autobiography before.

We're pretty much back to masks here as the numbers keep going in the wrong direction.

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

5 August 2021

Hello from hot Toronto, and thank you for *Purrsonal Mewsings* 81. Just finished an assignment today, so I can get back on with regular life (notice I didn't say normal or real), and get writing more letters of comment. Just like the one below.

Like I said above, we've had some heat too, but not like the heat the western half of the continent has had. Lytton, British Columbia, set three all-Canadian temperature records in three days, just shy of 40C, or 114F; and on the fourth day, it caught fire, and almost totally burned to the ground. The heat went away for a while, but I gather it is back. The interior of BC is not a good place to be right now.

I have been lucky in that I really don't have any food allergies, but I am picky in what I eat. Yvonne had a bad reaction to strawberries since she was a child, but now I guess she has aged out of it, and we can enjoy strawberries together. For other foods, she has gotten more tolerance for them.

We did have our COVID-19 vaccinations on July 1, Canada Day; but instead of the promised Pfizer shots, they gave us Moderna shots. Those shots put us back in bed for a day or so, and there was more weight loss. We both double-mask, because we live in a building where most tenants don't mask at all. That Zoom with the Trimbles was fun, wasn't it?

COVID-19 has killed millions worldwide, and who knows how many it has crippled with long-term illnesses. Yet there are so many who will not wear so much as a mask, let alone get a vaccination. I think it comes down to empathy. Why should I get vaccinated? Why shouldn't you? Some places do not require a mask, but I am not so sure. We caught COVID and recovered, and we each got two shots, but I keep hearing

about how people with both shots still have a chance of catching the Delta variant. I really don't want to take a chance, and I think I will keep my mask on for a while.

Hello to Mary Manchester! Yvonne and I have plans to go to Astronomicon 13 in Rochester at the end of October, assuming the border will be open and also assuming that the US border guards will allow us in with an Astra Zeneca vaccine in us, which is not yet approved by the US government. They might just turn us around. If we get there, it will be our first con since 2019. If not, local cons should start up again in 2022.

My second LoC...we use a wifi booster that connects directly to our cable hub, plus two additional boosters that plug into the wall. Even with all that, the computer will stall with no wifi, on occasion. We got our haircuts, and we have returned to our monthly Third Monday pub nights, eating in the restaurant. Just for the record, the Moderna vaccine, once it was done with us, brought my weight down to 194. That's a loss of 13 pounds during this pandemic.

#

Brad W. Foster, jabberwocky2000 at hotmail dot com

17 August 2021

Got issue #81 almost a month ago, surprised and flattered to see you put my little doodle-cat on the very front of the issue! Thought of that one more as a "in the corner inside somewhere" but glad you liked it.

It's a bit slow getting my drawing chops back up to speed; the last couple of years with so much going on, but working at it. Started on a small but more detailed piece to send you when that issue came in, and realized it has been years since I put pen to paper doing one of my jewelled animals. Way too long. So fun to work on one again, and the results are attached here for your use.

In fact, started on a second one. Maybe if I set myself the deadline of having to do at least one new one each time I get an issue of PM, it will get me moving more on the art, and get my output back up. If you like these, will try to keep sending you a new one each time you use the last one.

If you don't care for this style (and some people don't) just let me know, and I won't send any more like that.

((I'm in too much of a rush this month to use your latest, but maybe next month.))

#

Amy Harlib, amyharlib at e-activism dot com

28 August 2021

Enjoyed *Purr Mews* 81 and 82, esp. the photos and the reviews and trip reports.

Am dealing with injuries, recovery and severe depression and cannot write much.

Please keep sending me your zines.

#

Trinlay Khadro, 1734 S 56th St, West Allis, WI 53214 2 September 2021

I always enjoy your wildlife photography.

We all got vaccinated as soon as we could; we're watching the reports and feeling that as usual when we were in school that we've done our work the the group project and will get a D or F because the rest of the group slacked off or threw their part together at the last minute.

The quail families are lovely. I don't think we have them here.

((According to the information I found on the web, there's a slight likelihood that you have a related bird called the Northern Bobwhite.))

I've been continuing to wear masks any time I leave the house.

#

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937 3 September 2021

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* #82. I am enclosing my latest SFPazine in trade. I really enjoyed your trip report. I've been to Seattle twice.

I've been reading the Hugo Award finalists as well, although I do not plan to attend this year's Worldcon. I've read *Network Effect*, as well as at least two of the previous stories in the series. At this point, it is my first choice, although that may change as I read more of the finalists. I haven't gotten to *Piranesi* yet.

((I currently have no plans to attend this year's Worldcon.))

I went to the Wisconsin state fair several times while growing up; growing up on a farm, our local county fair was one of the big events of our summers. Since living in Tennessee, I've been to the state fair once and one county fair in an adjacent county once. For me the highlight of that county fair was touring an exhibit of antique tractors and spotting three that we used on our farm. They were the McCormick C, H, and M models. They made me feel old.

When I was in high school, two years of American history were required to graduate. In college, I only took one proper history course taught by a history professor but several historical survey courses, such as history of philosophy, history of music, history of science, etc.

Here at McKendree, one of our residents recently was infected by the Covid, although she was vaccinated with the Moderna at the same time as Anita and me. They think she was infected during an outing with family members. Fortunately it was a mild case, and she was allowed to quarantine in her apartment and have her meals and other supplies delivered.

* * *

*** Closing Remarks**

I'm rushing to finish this up before we become busy entertaining our houseguest. I hope to work on the Iceland trip before the next issue.

Laurraine

15 September 2021