

Purrsonal Mewsings #90



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 twelve weeks or so.

It is distributed to 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 #522. ©2023 R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

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#90

December 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial / Introduction—p. 2
Kritter Korner—p. 2
Astronomy—p. 3
Notable Books, etc.—p. 6
Loscon 48—p. 10
Letters—p. 14
Closing Remarks—p. 23

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Illo p. 8—clip art

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

My previous issue was in March. At that time I decided to separate my personalzine from the APazine. My apologies for taking so long to get back to this. A lot has happened. Most of April and part of May were spent Down Under on a trip that included a total solar eclipse. Catching up from that took much longer than I had expected. Then Mike decided it would be prudent to get hip replacement surgery many months before our planned driving trip across the country in April of 2024. The surgery was performed in mid-September. He is healing well, but it will take time for him to get back to his former level of activity.

As though we needed more time-consuming activity, our local bank let us know that the upcoming merger with a regional bank will do away with the kind of account we have enjoyed for over ten years. Time was spent researching alternative banking institutions. We settled on a credit union with a nearby branch. Opening that account was the easy part. Many hours were spent changing the deposit information for the institutions that deposit money into our account. I also had to set up bill pay accounts for about ten institutions. We are still waiting for the last of the changes to take place.

After a relatively dry spring, we had an unusually hot summer with only a nominal amount of rain. Autumn weather was slow in coming but lasted quite a while.

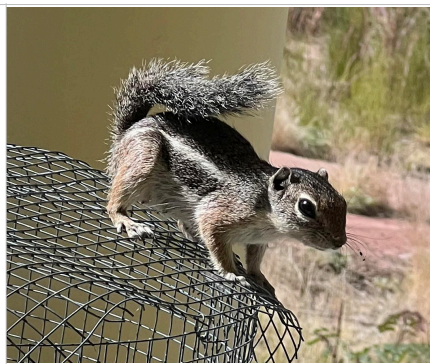
This issue is later than I'd planned due to unforeseen circumstances, which I may write about next issue.

* * *

* Kritter Korner



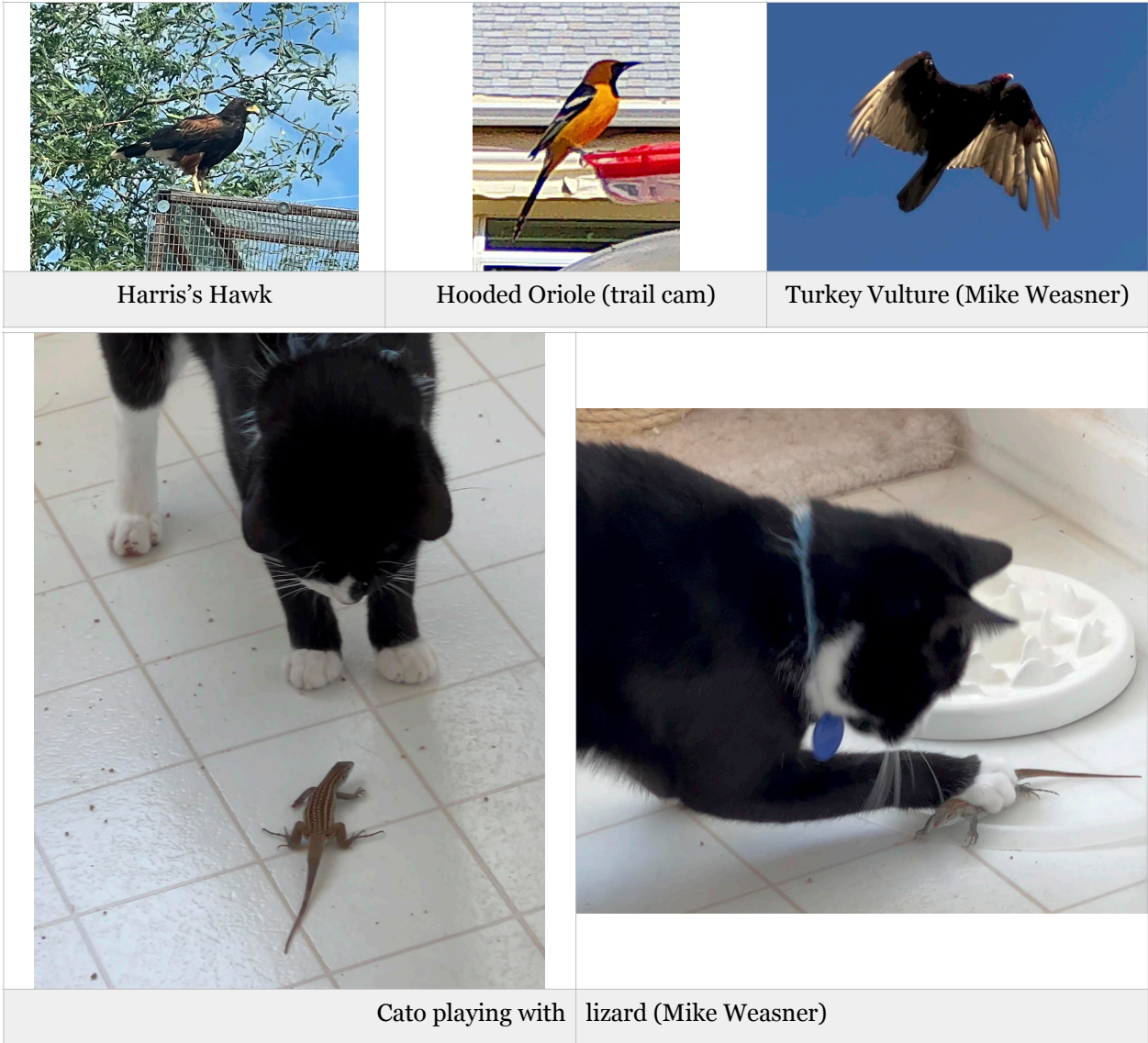
Allen's Hummingbird (trail cam)



Harris's Antelope Squirrel



Nectar Bats (trail cam)

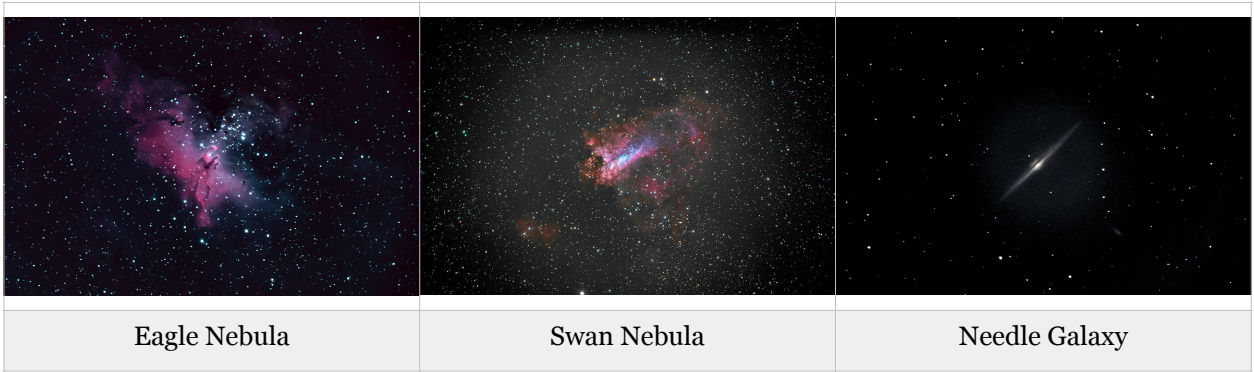


Cato snuck out one day when I went outside to take care of the bird feeders. Before I knew what happened, he'd caught a lizard in his mouth and wouldn't let go. I put him inside the house, where he released the lizard and started playing with it. Mike finally caught the lizard and put him outside. The lizard seemed physically unharmed and eventually went on his way.

* * *

*** Astronomy**

Since it's been quite a while since the previous issue, there are a number of astronomical images I can present here despite the dearth of observing days in summer.



On one occasion earlier in 2023, we saw a launch from Space Force Base, California.



Below is a compilation of lightning photos taken in summer.



We are in a period of maximum solar activity, as can be seen by the sunspots in the photo on the previous page.

Finally we were treated to a partial solar eclipse in October. Here is a composite photo.



* * *

*** Books Etc.** All material is written by the editor unless otherwise specified.

Total Eclipse Guide - Indiana: Official Commemorative 2024 Keepsake Guidebook, by Aaron Linsdau. Sastrugi Press, 2019.

Speaking of eclipses, there will be a total solar eclipse in 2024 that will cross some parts of the US. The best places for viewing are probably in Texas or northern Mexico. However, Mike wants to go back to Indiana to see the eclipse since it will be visible in Seymour where he's from. In preparation for this, he bought a book written for the occasion. The following is a review he wrote about this book. —ed.

I purchased the *Total Eclipse Guide - Indiana* since I hope to be in my Indiana hometown on the Path of Totality for the 8 April 2024 Total Solar Eclipse. There are Guides for each state along the Path of Totality available in the Astronomy Magazine Eclipse Store.

This is the guide's contents:

Introduction

All About Indiana

 Overview of Indiana

 Weather

 Finding the Right Location

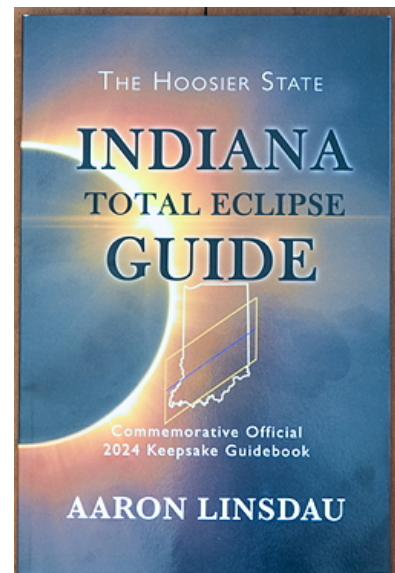
 Road Closures and Traffic

 Wilderness and Forest Park Safety

 Eclipse Day Safety

All About Eclipses

 Total vs Partial Eclipse



Early Myth & Astronomy
Contemporary American Solar Phenomena
Future American Eclipses
Viewing and Photographing the Eclipse
 Planning Ahead
 Understanding Sun Position
 Eclipse Data for Selected Locations
Eclipse Photography
 Eclipse Photography Gear
 Camera Phones
Viewing Locations Around Indiana
Remember the Indiana Total Eclipse

Aaron Linsdau is an established book author. He is also a motivational speaker and explorer, and some of that perspective on life comes through in this guidebook. As someone who was born and raised in southern Indiana, I can say that the “Overview of Indiana” section of the guide is accurate. I did note one discrepancy however; the guidebook says that the book's website has some digital forest maps available, but I found none there. Also, there is a comment to use the Wunderground smartphone app to check local conditions using webcams. But after this guide was published in 2019, Weather Underground stopped providing support for webcams.

The section "All About Eclipses" describes how eclipses occur. But one notable omission is the most commonly asked question about Total Solar Eclipses: why don't they occur every month at the time of the New Moon? (The answer is that the Moon's orbit is tilted about 5° from the plane of the Earth's orbit around the Sun.) There is also a short history of eclipses in various cultures over thousands of years.

The next section, "Viewing and Photographing the Eclipse", begins with safe viewing tips and the appropriate warnings about unsafe practices. It then goes into a good discussion of azimuth and elevation. But surprisingly, although this section notes the time of Totality at a few locations in the state, it does not provide the Sun's azimuth and elevation for those locations. The Sun's position in the sky during the eclipse is discussed in the last section, "Viewing Locations Around Indiana".

In the "Eclipse Photography" section, the author provides guidance on photography equipment and many excellent tips and reminders.

The section "Viewing Locations Around Indiana" provides information for 17 cities and towns and 4 unique locations in Indiana. The details are location overview, getting there (no road maps are included however), totality duration, notes (location website), and the Sun's position in the sky during the eclipse from that location. I was pleasantly surprised to see both my college alma mater city and my hometown discussed here. (For years I have been struggling with where I would view the 2024 eclipse. The decision was only recently decided in favour of my hometown when I was invited to be a guest speaker at their Total Eclipse Festival!)

The final section, "Remember the Indiana Total Eclipse", is where you can document who you were with at the eclipse, what you saw and felt, what other people thought, and where you stayed.

Although the *Total Eclipse Guide - Indiana* is billed as a "Commemorative Official 2024 Keepsake Guidebook", there is no indication of what makes it "official". That said,

the guidebook is an excellent collection of tips, reminders, and resources available for eclipse viewing in Indiana. I suspect the same is true for the other state guidebooks. The guidebook combines a lot of useful information for both the experienced solar eclipse chaser and the first-time eclipse viewer in one resource tailored for a specific state. I will be taking the guidebook with me when I go to Indiana for the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse.

—Mike Weasner

#

The Gone World, by Tom Sweterlitsch, 2018.

I read this for my book club, located in Worcester, MA, and conducting meetings via Zoom. This novel plays with time travel in a big way, which wasn't really clear to me until the end of the book. An initial time travel expedition has gone awry and starts warping what can be thought of as "current time". The story follows one time traveller who tries to unravel the source of the problem. I can't go into more detail without giving away too much. Highly recommended for people who enjoy challenging ideas.

#

Rendezvous with Rama, by Arthur C. Clarke, 1973.

I bought this book shortly after publication, but it sat unread on my bookshelves until it was chosen by my book club. Clarke always had unique ideas that hadn't been dealt with before he wrote about them. This was no exception. Even today the idea as he dealt with it seems to have a unique point of view. Astronomers discover an object that is obviously not natural moving through our solar system. A team of people are chosen to travel there to investigate it during the short time they have before it gets too close to the sun before leaving our system altogether. The book is like peeling an onion. As the exploration unfolds, we learn things bit by bit. *Rama*, as the ship has been named, seems to be uninhabited. Yet, as it approaches the sun, the atmospheric conditions within seem to be conducive to humans. There are artificial "lifeforms". There is an ocean of sorts that starts out frozen but that melts as the vehicle approaches the sun. There are still many unanswered questions remaining when they leave. The book has sequels that were written many years later.

#



Klara and the Sun: a Novel, by Kazuo Ishiguro, 2021.

This was another book club selection. The author, a Japanese born Brit, is famous for having written books such as *The Remains of the Day*. He was awarded the Nobel Prize

in Literature in 2017. This novel deals with AI, a very timely idea. Klara is an AI built to serve as a companion for a young girl. She doesn't know everything, but she is built to be able to learn. The book begins with her in a store wishing that she could be a companion to a deserving girl. One day her wish comes true. The girl she is purchased for is Josie, who is going through some difficult times. She has just become a teenager, and life is not easy. As the book unfolds, Klara learns more about Josie bit by bit as we readers also do. Josie's world is dystopian in many ways. It obviously takes place in some nebulous future when class differences have again divided people into the haves and have-nots. The book causes the reader to ask many questions about our world and where it's headed. The Klara character is developed in a very touching way that makes it easy for the reader to identify with her. It's an excellent, thoughtful, book.

#

Rama II, by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee, 1989.

Years after the publication of *Rendezvous with Rama*, Clarke decided to write some sequels. This is the first of these. Clarke developed the ideas for the book, but it was primarily written by Gentry Lee. This is much longer than the original book. Many years after the first book's events, a second alien object is detected entering our solar system. This book is much more character-driven than the original novel. That bothered me in the first half or so of the book. It seemed more like a soap opera than an sf book. However once the crew went to the foreign object, things became more interesting to me. There is some obvious subterfuge going on that bothered me. I couldn't really see a justification for putting so much of that kind of stuff into the book. Overall I enjoyed it. There are two sequels to it that I hope to get to sooner rather than later.

#

The Quiet War, by Paul McAuley, 2008.

I think this is the first novel I've read by this British author. It's part of a rather lengthy series. It takes place in the 23rd century when there are many settlements existing on the Moon, Mars, and many satellites of the outer planets. Wars and environmental disasters on Earth have changed the political landscape drastically. Brazil is a major power in the book. There are many ideas dealt with in the book, including genetic engineering. Our protagonist has travelled from Earth to a settlement in the outer colonies for work and gets caught up in political intrigue without understanding all the details. Other characters belong to various factions. It's hard to know at first which characters deserve our sympathy. The plot is complex enough that I'm motivated to investigate the other books in the series eventually.

#

The Spare Man, by Mary Robinette Kowal, 2022.

This is one of the books nominated in the novel category for this year's Hugo Awards. Of the four books I've read or attempted to read so far, this is only one of two that I've enjoyed. I have two more to try. I wasn't able to vote this year, because the Chengdu committee never got around to recognizing the fact that I had voted in site selection. I didn't waste a lot of time or energy to get recognition for that.

I found the book to be sort of like "The Thin Man in space". The detective couple has

a dog, although it is a therapy dog and not just a pet. It takes place in a space ship. The detective couple are taking their honeymoon trip. The space ship is constructed so there are three gravity zones: Earth, Luna, and Mars. They are headed to Mars. From the start things start to go wrong. The husband is accused of murder. The plot is very convoluted in a way I found very enjoyable.

#

Angel of Europa, by Allen Steele, 2011.

This is a novella-length book I read for a book club. It's a sort of "why done it". In exploring the moons of Jupiter, two scientists die during a bathyscaphe descent. The pilot explains that they were attacked by a large creature, and she had no choice but to eject the section containing the two scientists. It's a quick read and entertaining.

* * *

* **Loscon 48**

I attended Loscon 48 on Thanksgiving weekend in 2022. Canadian author Tanya Huff was the Writer Guest of Honor; she writes fantasy and romance. The Artist Guest of Honor was Dave Kellett; he is mainly known for his web comics. Alexander James Adams, formerly Heather Alexander, was the Music Guest of Honor; his music, as did her music previously, strikes me as charming and enjoyable. The Fan Guests of Honor were Susan Fox and Gene Turnbow; this was my primary motivation for attending. I met Susan years ago in LASFAPA, and I met Gene through Mensa.

I flew in Thursday afternoon and arrived at the LAX Marriott in time for dinner. My first impression was the hotel decor. Although things were mostly in the same places as before, everything had been redecorated and looked very different. There are still three restaurants there. The sports bar is now called Hanger 18; JW Steakhouse is still there, though slightly remodelled; and breakfast and dinner are still served in what is now called the Social Market & Eatery. That first night I ate at Hanger 18, mostly because it was the first place that caught my eye. I was able to get a gluten free Thanksgiving dinner. Author Todd McCaffrey was also having dinner there, and I spoke briefly to him.

Backtracking a bit, I want to mention my flight from Phoenix. I had planned to read on the plane, but my seat mate was so interesting that I didn't read a word. He lived through the Rodney King riots in the middle of things. As in the Daniel Craig movie, *Kings* (2017), it was every man for himself. The police wanted no part of it. I was also affected by the riots, but I was just on the periphery. We also discussed the Japanese internment and other things; he was of Asian descent. He's worked in the Industry, so we talked about TV and movies and various actors. He was flying to LA to attend a friend's funeral. His friend was an organ donor, so I learned a lot about the procedures involved. I don't want to go into details, but interested readers may ask.

I had successfully registered for the convention before dinner, so I returned to my room after dinner to plan out my convention. About 20:00 I went in search of the LASFS meeting. Gavin Claypool was also looking and thought he heard it was on the 16th floor. That turned out to be true. It was a very traditionally-structured LASFS

meeting. After the meeting I learned that there would be a panel about Greg Bear, who had recently passed on. It was on the online schedule.

On Friday morning I had an enjoyable breakfast with Robbie Cantor. Ulla, the European waitress I remembered from years ago, came to say hello. After I finished eating, I went over to talk to Norm Cooper (a former workmate from Hughes Aircraft) and his writer friend Jim Doty, who lives in Oro Valley, where we lived while our house in Oracle was being built! I stood around for a long time talking with them.

Afterward I wandered around the Ballroom floor, where most of the convention activities would be. I spent time talking with LA fans Heath Row, Mike Frank, and Chris Marble and Lisa Harrigan, who is from the Bay Area. I also started a tour of the dealers room. I spoke to Dave Clark, a book dealer from the Bay Area, who complained of not having had the chance to set up the previous night. I spoke to a couple who published a book about Star Wars. Then I found out that Heather Alexander has been a man for the last fifteen years! Sue Fox bought me his latest CD; lovely woman! I also spoke briefly to author David Gerrold. One table in the hallway was run by a group that makes robots, such as the R2D2 in the photo.



Then I left to attend panels. My first panel was “Arthur C. Clarke: Unlocking the “Impossible”; John Hertz, who was supposed to moderate, was late. The other panellists (Bradford Lyau, G. David Nordley, and Seth Potter) started without him. In my mind John’s moderating was too heavy-handed.

Then I attended John Hertz’s discussion of *The Paradox Men* by Charles Harness. There was only one member of the audience who had read all of it, so John did most of the talking. This was the book I had expected to finish reading on my flight over.

After that I went to “SciFi Radio with Sue Fox and Gene Turnbow”, which was done in an interview format. Then I attended the “Opening Ceremonies” (see photo below).



At that point I decided I needed to eat and went to dinner. I joined Laura Brodian Freas Beraha and her husband, as well as Larry Hansen, John DeChancie, and a woman whose name I don't recall. I had a light meal, as did many of the others.

After dinner I went to Sue Fox's "Drum Circle and Dancing". Following that I attended a very enjoyable concert by Alexander James Adams (see photo at right). It was quite late, but I went up to the seventeenth floor after that to check out the parties. I had interesting conversations with Elst Weinstein, Sue Fox, Michael Siladi, Alison, and a few people whose names I don't know.



After Saturday's breakfast, I ran into Cheri Kaylor, whom I hadn't seen in years, and had an extended conversation.

Then I attended the panel "Has Science Fiction Changed the Course of Relationships in America" with Glen W. Olsen, Terry Lee Brussel-Rogers, Mark Merlino, Rodney O'Riley, and Craig Brussel Rogers. Topics such as polyamory and LGBTQ+ were discussed.

My next panel was "Seeing Beyond: The Imagery of NASA's Space Telescopes" with Varoujin Gorjian and Robert Hurt. The idea behind "false colour" was discussed. There's a web site, astropix.org, that describes for individual photos the spectral equivalents for each colour used.



After that I went to “Science Fiction and How It Relates to the World Today” with Bradford Lyau, Glen W. Olsen, Alvaro Zinos-Amaro, and J. L. Doty (see photo previous page). This panel kind of meandered and didn’t get to any conclusion.

When the Q & A of guest of honour Tanya Huff started, I got hungry and had a snack bar. Her story was interesting and crossed paths with Rob Sawyer’s. (See photo below.)



This was followed by a Q & A of Alexander James Adams. For most of his life, he was Heather Alexander, whose performance at a convention in the past I had found highly entertaining. He had some inkling early on that she was really a he. His music doesn’t seem to have changed much. His music last night was just as entertaining, though it was somewhat limited by upcoming surgery. The music he played is on the CD Sue bought me.

Then I attended a panel about the “James Webb Telescope” with Alfred Nash, Chris Nash, G. David Nordley, Melora Larson, and Varoujan Gorjian. One important point was that even if it wasn’t located so far from Earth, it is not repairable because of the way it was assembled. It has no replaceable parts. Besides it would be more cost-effective to build a newer better scope when the time comes.

I took a dinner break about 18:45 and went to the sports bar. I was invited to join Michael Siladi and Alyson and their friend Tabitha. I had a bacon burger.

“A Memorial for Greg Bear” was scheduled for 20:00 but was a half hour late. This gave me a chance to do some catching up on my diary. The panellists were David Brin, Greg Benford, Michelle Pinkus, and David Gerrold. Larry Niven was a late addition. Each shared some memories that they had of Greg Bear. Everyone in the room also signed a condolence card for Astrid.

After that I went up to the party floor, where, at various parties I talked with Genny Dazzo, Carole Weinstein, Michael Siladi, Karen Schafer, and Colleen Crosby.

On Sunday I had breakfast with Cheri Kaylor about 08:00. We were joined later by Beverly Warren.

Then I managed to see what was left of the art show, since people were already picking up pieces they had bought. I talked with Mary Jane Jewell and Norm Cooper. Then I finished going through the dealers room and also talked again with Alexander James Adams. I ran out of time before I got to the special exhibit, so I missed out on that.

The first programme item I went to was “The Three Flaws of Robotics: Artificial vs. Organic Intelligence” with Jim Doty, Greg Benford, David Brin, Larry Niven, and Ashish Ahabal. They kind of skirted around the main question, but it was still a good discussion.

Following that I got lunch with Lisa Harrigan. We had an interesting conversation about various things. She thanked me afterwards for a nice relaxed lunch instead of takeout.

After lunch I went to “Gene Turnbow’s Instrumental Jam”. Unfortunately no other musicians showed up, but he kept me entertained with some interesting guitar work.

Then I went to “I Wrote a Book, Now What?” with Todd McCaffrey, Brian Fitzpatrick, Jim Doty, Matt Conant, and Mike Robinson. It was basically advice on getting your work published. I was tired and not personally interested, so I had a tendency to nod off.

Fortunately I could leave early, because I wanted to go to the Closing Ceremonies. The guests all said final words except the artist guest who’d had to leave early. The gavel was passed to the next Loscon. A few more words were said. Afterward I did a no-no (for medical reasons I’d forgot). I walked up to Alexander and asked if I could give him a hug. He knew he was breaking his doctor’s advice but let me hug him. Later I gave hugs to a few other friends. This was a good thing, because very few people showed up to the Dead Dog Party, which ended early in any case.

I flew home on Monday.

* * *

* 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.

David Bratman, dbratman at earthlink dot net

23 March 2023

You get a lot of interesting animals at your place. Bats? I don’t recall seeing any of those when I visited.

((Bats are around in summer. The nectar bats that I feed arrive sometime in July or August and stick around through October. The insectivore bats seem to arrive sooner. I think most of the bats migrate back to Mexico in winter.))

I've been to the Los Angeles central library, even though I've never lived in the area. I was doing some research in 1930s newspapers. The interior architecture was very impressive, especially the grand staircase.

I haven't been to Disneyland in nearly half a century, so I'm not sure how much to rely on my memory that the Pirates of the Caribbean originally had two water drops. But I rode it a great number of times back then: best ride in the park.

Tom Feller mentions not liking *Light from Uncommon Stars*. I just read that,;and while it had some clever bits, I found it unpleasantly chaotic. Chaos can be fun, but I don't think this succeeded in making it so. I felt exactly the same way about the movie *Everything Everywhere All At Once*, so at least I can recommend the book to people who liked the movie and would like to read a novel that's like that.

((I found neither chaotic. The movie left me unimpressed. I think, as a longtime sf reader, I found it wasn't particularly novel.))

#

Robert Kennedy, The Terraces of Boise, Apt. B306, 5301 East Warm Springs Ave, Boise, Id 83716-6205

14 April 2023

Thank you very much for mailing a copy of #89 when for unknown reasons I was unable to print it from my computer.

Magnificent cover and other pictures.

Your Astronomy Trip to Los Angeles was quite interesting. Your going to Mount Wilson reminded me of a couple of stories.

During World War II, my father (a veteran of France in WWI) would go up to Mt. Wilson to be a spotter for possible Japanese planes. Of course they never showed up. But after Pearl Harbor the fear was great. There was an attack on the oil fields near Santa Barbara by, I believe, firing from a submarine. There was also an incendiary bombing near Brookings, Oregon, by a sea plane brought on the back of a submarine. Minor damage because they didn't realize why the area was so green. The same pilot also made an attack further up the Oregon coast with little or no damage. After the war some residents of Brookings searched for the pilot and found him still alive. They invited him to visit which he did, more than once. But that's another story or stories.

In the 8th or 9th grade my life-long friend, Richard Willets, and I hiked the Toll Road through the snow to the top of Mt. Wilson. The Toll Road was/is as far as I know the original road up Mt. Wilson. It's not paved and is just dirt. There's a chain at the start, so unauthorized vehicles can't get to it. Part way up is a flat area where we sometimes camped. Coming back we didn't use the Toll Road. We hitchhiked back down the regular road which would be the road you used. Thinking back some 75 or so years later, what we did may not have been very smart. We did it alone, and no one knew

where we were. If something had happened to us, it would have been a long time before we were found. Well, Richard and I are still alive—Richard and his wife in San Francisco and myself in Boise.

Your trip to the Huntington Library also brought back a memory. I was born, raised, and lived in Pasadena until I was in my 40s (with time out for the Navy and College). I had never been to the library which is right next door in San Marino. But one day my wife said she wanted to go to the Huntington Library so we did and it was a real pleasure.

Yes, *Resident Alien* is an outstanding show and I look forward to its return.

I miss going to LosCon and remember a number of years ago sitting next to you at one of the sessions. Living here in Idaho, not walking well, and pushing a walker, I just do not do much traveling.

By the way, I pass *Purrsonal Mewsings* on to my niece Sheilah.

((I hope she gets some enjoyment from it.))

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

15 April 2023

Many thanks for *Purrsonal Mewsings* 89....quite the snowy scene on the cover. Recently, we've had record early heat, going up the mid-80s, unheard of for our area this time of the year. The cold is coming back, but the heat will return.

Yvonne and I have been talking about the idea of returning to Loscon when it hits number 50. We had such a good time there when we were FanGoHs in 2012, we'd like to return, and we know the 50th Loscon will probably be a huge event.

Great space photos throughout the issue. Did they come from your trip to California the end of last September? Last time we were in California by ourselves (no convention), we went to the California Science Centre. I remember there being a beautiful rose garden close by. Actually, we didn't know about the cemetery.

John Hertz's LoC reminds me of the travails Yvonne is going through. We have sold more than 500 tables for our local anime con's vendors' hall, and our greatest problem is getting people to read the e-mails they are sent. Now Yvonne puts PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE EMAIL! at the top of each e-mail she sends out to our vendors, but they still don't read the entire thing. As John says, many of them sign the contracts they receive without bothering to read what they are signing. And these people call themselves businesspeople???

I still think that vaccines and masks are more than reasonable; people are still dying from COVID-19, and many state and provincial governments are now failing to report

on cases and deaths connected to COVID, which means some assume the pandemic is over, and it certainly is not. Yvonne and I have our fifth shots each, and we would like to get our sixth.

A lot of people are still working from home, and my situation is hybrid. I go into my office a couple of times a week now, and that may change. Sometimes I am sent a folder of articles that need to be proofed. And, with *Amazing Stories*, it is all done at home.

I think I can wind it up for tonight...it has finally gone dark, and I need to take it easy; I have been busy all day. Thank you for this issue, and please send me more!

#

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

12 July 2023

I've been too busy for my own good. I found I didn't respond to your March issue. Many apologies. I'll miss out on the May or June issue and hope I can get that some way or other. In addition, I won't be angry if you don't publish this letter.

((You didn't miss anything. After my last issue, I decided to split my personal zine off from StippleAPA. Then I didn't publish for a while—too busy. This latest issue is aimed at a December publication date. I hope to go quarterly, but we shall see.))

Editorial/Introduction. You seem to have done a lot of traveling. I didn't do any this year due to circumstances. Usually I go to several conventions. Not this year. Better luck for me next year.

I haven't been watching much TV recently. Someday I will get back to it, I bet. Right now, I'm watching lots of stuff, though, on my computer and its 27 inch screen. I'll probably get a larger screen although I don't think the 85 inch will fit into my apartment.

Our winter was warm for a Virginia winter, and our summer so far is turning out to be a cool summer. I remember when Virginia summers were notoriously hot.

Kritter Corner. Does your Kritter Korner have better colour than previous? It sure seems it. Really great birds.

((There's no reason for the colour to have changed, though our printer has been on the fritz and we hope to replace it soon.))

Notable Books Read and Events Attended. *Great Expectations*. If memory serves me right, it is about a boy nicknamed Pip, who got a good education. He wonders who paid for it. All his relatives laugh that anyone would. Ultimately, he finds that a convict he once helped escape paid for it. The convict was transported to Australia where he was freed and became wealthy. Ultimately Pip marries the ex-convict's daughter. Of course, my memory is bad and the book may have been about something else.

((There's nothing wrong with your memory.))

Oracle Chamber Music Festival Student Concert. I'm glad there were some good musicians among the students.

Babette's Feast. I hope the townsfolk liked her feast. Since they were puritans, they might have trouble cottoning up to a Parisian meal. That is unless they were tired of their puritan fare.

((They enjoyed it just fine, though they probably wouldn't admit it.))

The Kaiju Preservation Society. I bet people who love monster movies loved that novel.

Astronomy Trip to Los Angeles. My sister lives in Los Angeles. Of course, it's a big city. She's a semi-retired comedian.

About the crab salad you ate there, I probably would have loved it.

Saturday, October 1, 2022. Good idea, you saved your leftovers from a restaurant, and ate them for breakfast. When I was fat, I ate everything on my plate at restaurants. However, now that I'm thin, I've saved my leftovers a number of times.

Leonard Nimoy. So he was interested in popular astronomy. Good for him. And he didn't make noise about his likes the way William Shatner does.

What can I say. I made it to the Library of Congress a lot at one time. Unfortunately, I haven't made the short trek in years. You did the opposite. You lived in Los Angeles many years and never went to the public library there. Then you visit Los Angeles, and you have to go to the library.

I guess people have forgotten the George Reeves Superman and the building where the *Dailey Planet* supposedly operated out of, the Los Angeles city hall. It is just another building.

A Japanese woman I knew gave me a book on the internment of the Japanese. It took a while but a person sympathetic to the plight of Japanese American citizens took over, Dillon Myer. He allowed those interned to make decisions and work temporary jobs outside the camp; and pressed to end the internment. Furthermore, he was a member in good standing of a Japanese American association for the rest of his life. ...Once again, I hope my memory is right about this.

The Astronomy Event. Cameron Gillis talked about the 100 inch telescope. I only know about one, the Mount Palomar telescope.

The Japanese Garden. Would a Japanese garden in Japan have a lot in a small space?

Drive to Arizona. I hate to drive in the dark too. However, you don't see as many drivers when you drive really late.

STIPPLE APA MAILING COMMENTS. #353. S. Rayne.. I'm wondering how long the old Fannish jargon will be recognized when old fans die out. There is a chasm between younger fans and older fans.

Lucy Shmeidler. At least your husband was able to finish his book. I can't seem to have much progress on my book. I am too much of a perfectionist.

ON STIPPLE-APA MAILING COMMENTS #354. Kathy Sidles. I am thinking of getting an Apple for my next computer. I don't like that they locked my computer and it took some time to unlock it. I also didn't like that, for grunts like me, Microsoft sends you to petty con artists when you ask for support.

Dale Cozort. For many years, my father felt I had failed him because I hadn't become a psychiatrist like my brother. Ultimately, he decided I was happy with my life and that was all that mattered.

John Hertz. Yes, why do the dorms at Carleton College have no mirrors? Inquiring minds want to know.

((I was just referring to one dorm building.))

I got the impression since Spaniards and Italians sleep during the middle of the day, they don't need as much sleep at night. Under the circumstances, 10:30 PM wouldn't be a late time to be up.

Tom Feller. You don't look like a runner right now. I don't either. And I can't run at all at 78. Our youth is another thing. You were actually on a team, a cross country team. I never belonged to a team, but I ran a lot in my thirties.

Heath Row. I suspect that we as a nation are more split in our view of things. In fact, Conservatives and Liberals fight more than they used to. I remember when senators and congressmen were friends with the other side. You don't hear that anymore.

Heath then goes on to discuss the nature of truth. I don't know if I have a different view of the truth than he does. I may be misunderstanding him. For me, moral truths are different from scientific truths. Moral truths come from the feeling something is right or wrong. Scientific truths are found by testing, preferably in a laboratory. In turn, moral truths differ from political truths, which tell us which side will best represent our moral truths.

As to whether disagreements in politics have increased, it depends. Compared to the '50s, you bet. Compared to the time of the Civil War, our political disagreements are midgets.

About fandom, it appears to be breaking up, I'm afraid. More and more, some activities and some genres of books and media are no longer considered fannish.

Ed Zdrojewski. I am sure film directors often want to show they are serious by filming pictures in black and white. On the other hand, I hear Alfred Hitchcock filmed *Psycho* in black and white so that he could use chocolate for blood. He had often done that when all pictures were black and white. He believed chocolate in black and white looked more like blood than any substitutes used in colour.

So his Teddy Bear ran away with a traveling circus. How many traveling circuses are there these days?

I'm sure grain elevators need a journal like your *Grain Journal*.

MY LETTER. Your comments. I somehow got thwarted from attending my 60th high school reunion. This year has not been a good year for me making trips.

So, in your feeder for hummingbirds, you have nectar. Flying insects too?

((Flying insects are attracted by the nectar. Most of them are thwarted by the bee guards. Since I don't use bee guards in the feeders I put out for bats, the insects are more likely to get in; on the other hand, most of them end up drowning.))

So Amy's problem wasn't old age but no audiences during COVID. I don't know if zoom could have helped. Probably not.

I agree that COVID was less deadly because we got vaccinated. The Chinese are still suffering from it. I seem to remember it is because their vaccines are not as powerful as ours. Correct me if I'm wrong.

Lloyd Penney. I too have a cellphone and tablet. They're helpful little things. There was a lot of drinking when I went to my reunion. However, a lot of people avoided it. On the other hand, the ones running the reunions were doing a lot of the drinking.

Lloyd, vaccines are a modern miracle. However, some people have claimed they're bad for you and they have advocated quack cures.. On the other hand, I'm sure some truck drivers decided that the best thing to do was ignore COVID, or they stood to go bankrupt. Their motives, I can understand.

About the good luck that came your way, Lloyd, you deserved it.

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Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave, Culver City, CA 90230

26 July 2023

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* #89 in March. Members of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society recognized your birthday and talked about you briefly (all good

things!) during a club meeting in mid-May, so folks in Los Angeles have been thinking about you in recent months. It was good to see you last fall at Loscon. If we do Losconzine again this year, hopefully you're able to submit something to the conzine! (If you attend again, of course. My presence is still to be determined given the holiday, though I plan to help staff Gallifrey One for the first time early next year—and hopefully participate in Corflu in Las Vegas.)

As always, I appreciated the nature and astronomy photographs, particularly the 2022 montage. I'm glad you've been able to go to local music and theatre events recently. It's been a while since my wife and I have gone to a school concert or play, probably since our son graduated from high school and went to college in Tokyo. Sometimes in the fall, I'm able to hear the marching band—of which he's an alumnus—rehearsing on the athletic fields nearby. Your remarks on the stage version of Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* and the stage adaptation of Isak Dinesen's *Babette's Feast* reminded me of recently watching the 1988 movie *Crossing Delancey*. It wasn't until after seeing the film that I realized it was based on a stage play by Susan Sandler. I ordered the script from a bookstore in Connecticut to see how the source material compares to the adaptation. It's been a while since I've read a play! Your commentary on John Scalzi's *The Kaiju Preservation Society* resonated with my own reading experience. (*Telegraphs & Tar Pits* #13); I described it as “a quick and breezy read.”

Your trip report from your time in Los Angeles was wonderful. I'm always curious about landmarks such as the Central Library that might not be frequented by many locals. When I lived and worked in the Boston area, I worked with an older man who'd spent his entire life there. He'd never gone to the Harbor Islands, which boggled my mind at the time. Inspired by such experiences, I sometimes like to spend weekends living like a tourist. What's a place I'd go to if I were visiting that I don't go to because I live here? It's an interesting exercise. I had been unaware that Los Angeles City Hall was used as the Daily Planet building in *Adventures of Superman*. I'll have to watch more attentively! Since moving to LA, my wife and I love watching television shows and movies set here so we can look for the street corners and landmarks. I'm glad you were able to share time and table with members of the LASFS while here.

While I haven't watched *Resident Alien* for some time (*T&T* #49), I've enjoyed what I've seen—as well as the comic book on which it's based (*T&T* #50). More recently, however, I've been binging on *Travelers*, discussing two episodes a week with several other members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. My episode reports have also been showing up in *Brass Hat Mind* #3, *Faculae & Filigree* #20-21, and *T&T* (#61-68, 70-71, and 75). It's a really good show!

Fancylopedia 3 backs up your recollection about Stipple-APA's founding: “[C]entered in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota[, t]he founders included Judie Cilcain and Matthew Tepper. It began in 1980 as the MinneAPA waitlist that didn't want to wait to pub its ish.” Nick Smith and I have been organizing and packing the fanzine collection and books of Marty Cantor, who died in April, for donation to the LASFS and the University of California Riverside's Eaton Collection of Science Fiction & Fantasy. Among Cantor's

apae materials were multiple mailings of MinneAPA, as well as an apa with which I was unfamiliar: AZAPA, which was active in Arizona for several years.

((I was in AZAPA for a while.))

Thank you for the permission to reprint your book reviews in *The N3F Review of Books*. I passed on the news to George Phillies in April. Thank you, also, for David Grigg's contact information. I've decided not to update *Blue Moon Special*, my apae directory, this year because Garth Spencer has been working on his own apae directory! Instead, I'm working on The Los Angeles County *Fanac Guide*, a local directory of cons, stores, fanzines, historical sites, and other items of fannish interest. If you or anyone else would like to contribute your fannish LA favourites, folks can do so at <https://tinyurl.com/LA-fanac-form>.

Rereading our exchange about monarch butterflies was serendipitous; I saw one while walking to work this morning! I enjoyed learning that Ed Zdrojewski works at *Grain Journal*. My father's career was spent editing *Hoard's Dairyman*, an agriculture trade publication founded in 1885. We would go to a local grain supplier to purchase rabbit pellets for our pet rabbits. My second job out of college was at an information technology trade magazine. Trade magazines can be fascinating. I remember enjoying reading *Parking Today* and *Progressive Grocer* even later in my career.

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Frank Wu, qar1099 at hotmail dot com

20 September 2023

In your last issue, your lovely photo of those bats reminded me of this crazy story propagated by the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Culver City -- about cryptozoologists and the "Deprong Mori of the Tripiscum Plateau." There were reports from the locals of small demons flying directly through solid objects -- like the walls of houses, and even a child's arm. The cryptozoologists thought it might be bats, so they said they set up five (5!) walls of solid lead in the middle of the jungle -- 8 inches thick, 20-foot tall and 200-foot long. Did I mention this was in the middle of the jungle? That seems unlikely and technically not feasible, but their later claim is even more outlandish. The cryptos said they registered a small impact on one wall and looked at the area with X- rays, only to find a bat FROZEN FOREVER INSIDE THE SOLID LEAD WALL. https://www.mjt.org/exhibits/foundaQon_collecQons/depmori/depmori.htm

If you wander over to the museum's gift shop, you can also pick up a laser-engraved crystal souvenir of the bat trapped in lead. <https://www.mjtgcishop.org/collecQons/sundries/products/deprong-mori-of-the-tripiscum-plateau-laser-crystal-cube>

Anyway, Laurraine -- I hope you're doing well, healthy and happy despite the lingering pandemic.

I'm writing as I recently had my first book published! *ESPionage: Regime Change*, written with Tom Easton (long-time *Analog* book reviewer), and pub'd by Amazing Stories. https://www.amazon.com/dp/BoCCS86MJZ?ref_=pe_3052080_276849420

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We Also Heard From: Bruce Gillespie and Ed Zdrojewski (who unfortunately has passed since he wrote)

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*** Closing Remarks**

I hope to make this quarterly and hope to have another issue ready sometime in March 2024.

Laurraine