

Purrsonal Mewsings #69



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 #484. ©2019 R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

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#69

September 2019

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Art and Photo Credits

Cover illo—Mule deer by Mike Weasner
Title page header—Sheryl Birkhead
Photos—pp. 2, 3 by Mike Weasner; p. 22 by Amy Harlib; other photos by editor
Illos—p. 8 by Ray Nelson, p. 9 by Alan White

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* Editorial / Introduction

The discomfort from my fall back in March still lingers, but it's not really pain any more. The problems seems to be mostly in my right gluteus maximus and possibly one of the muscles in the rear thigh. The only time it was at all painful was after the first day of hiking at Arches National Park in July. The muscles got really sore, and I couldn't lift my upper right leg without helping the movement with my arm. That only lasted for one day, though the soreness lasted for several days. Generally I'm able to sit on relatively hard surfaces without problems. It's the ones with cushions that are a problem.

The implant that didn't take was a molar at the rear of my mouth, so a bridge is impossible without involving two other teeth. I don't really miss it.

Summer started out quite dry and relatively cool until about mid-June. Rain didn't come until well into July. August was iffy where rain was concerned.

My shelving unit is complete—sort of. I discovered that two of the movable shelves are a tad too long. I'll have to sand them down a bit.

The backup battery installation is complete, and we've had it tweaked a bit after seeing it in operation for a while.

* * *

* Kritter Korner

Cato continues to do well. He survived a stay at a kennel while we were away on our Westercon trip to Utah. In fact he seemed reluctant to leave the place.

One thing I've learned recently is the importance of taurine in a cat's diet, so I will be checking the taurine content of all the cat food I buy. Canned food is most problematical. Apparently the canning process destroys much taurine. The minimum taurine content should be at least .2 % or .1 % depending on the articles I've read. Taurine supplement is also available.

Below is a picture of Cato with a friend.



* * *

* Astronomy

Cloudy nights continue to be a problem much of the time, but Mike managed a few good photos.



Jupiter and 4 moons

M16-Eagle Nebula

NGC7023-Iris Nebula

* * *

* Trip to see some California missions, September 2019

This trip was organized by the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum.

On Monday, 17 September 2018, after a night of very little sleep, Mike drove me to the Phoenix Sky Harbor airport in the middle of the night. Due to excitement and anticipation, I was unable to sleep during the two-hour drive to the airport.

My flight was so early that I had to wait until restaurants opened at the airport before I could get breakfast. Since the flight to LA was relatively short, I didn't really sleep on the plane either. In LA I had a connecting flight to Santa Barbara. I took a taxi to the train station in town where I was meeting the group, most of whom took a train from Tucson, for the trip.

After the group all assembled, we had lunch at the Enterprise Fish Company.

Then we drove in two vans to Ballard a few miles north where we stayed at the Ballard Inn. This is a very small community with unreliable cell service, but it was lovely. After our arrival we were served wine and snacks. Then we took a couple of short drives to a lavender farm and a small organic winery where there is a fruit orchard. Both places were closed, but we were able to walk around the orchard and sample some fallen peaches.

Many of us went to dinner about 19:00 at a nearby restaurant.

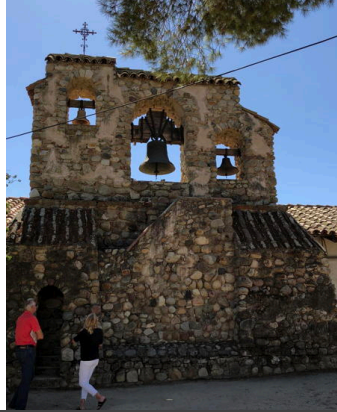
I slept well that night. Breakfast was served at the inn.

After breakfast we went to the mission of San Miguel, founded in 1797, and toured the place. It had a particularly nice chapel. It was founded by Franciscan father Fermin Francisco de Lasuen. The place is largely as it was originally, though part of it is still in

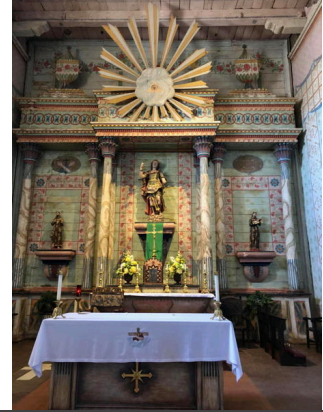
need of restoration.



Model of San Miguel



Exterior of mission



Interior

In the afternoon we went to Nacimiento Regional Interpretive Center (also known as the Lockwood Museum or the Nacitone Regional Interpretive Center), a place being built by a group of citizens of Lockwood. The museum covers the history of the area from the time of the Salinan inhabitants to Spanish and pioneering eras.

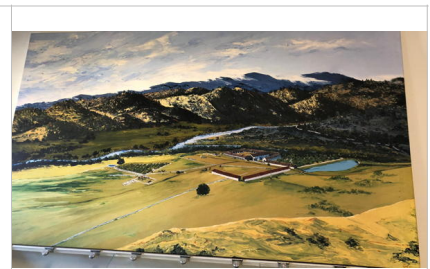
After that we went to the Mission San Antonio de Padua (established in 1771 by Junipero Serra), where we stayed in dormitory-like quarters for a couple of nights. The bathrooms were communal, but there were sinks in the rooms. There was, unfortunately no dresser or table. The window had a large sill that my roommate used for her suitcase, but I used half the bottom of my bed for my carryon; fortunately I'm short. In late afternoon there was a wine tasting from a local small winery. While I



Map of Mission San Antonio (the red areas are the buildings)



Interior of church



Painting showing mission and the surrounding countryside

found much of the wine fairly pleasant, I didn't care a lot for any of them.

Dinner was catered at the mission.

After dinner we tried to watch a video about the ranchers of Baja California. Unfortunately the mission's DVD player crapped out about halfway through. A few of us met the Siamese cat that lives there.

On Wednesday, 19 September 2018, we toured the mission after breakfast — the chapel, the rather extensive grounds, and the museum. The land and some building remains mark the places where natives were housed, a grain mill, and other facilities. Restoration work continues.

Then we had a mid-day outing to the San Antonio Olive Ranch, where olive oil is made. We had an olive oil tasting and a wine tasting. Then we had a tasty lunch of

chicken and other things.

After that we returned to Mission San Antonio for a rest and evening activities. Our fearless leader gave us a history of the early missions.

Then we had another catered dinner in the evening.

Thursday, 20 September 2018, we left the mission close to 09:45 and drove to the coast. Our first stop there was Limekiln State Park where we looked at and walked among coastal redwood trees. Then we drove south. Just north of San Simeon at Point Piedras Blancas, we stopped to look at elephant seals.



These are all females, so no snouts.

For lunch we stopped at a roadside restaurant in San Simeon.

Then we went to the Coastal Discovery Center where we learned about the offshore National Marine Sanctuary. After a talk we walked out onto a pier. Unfortunately there was not a lot of action there except in the distance. Then we checked in to the Cambria Lodge Hotel.

On Friday, 21 September 2018, we drove to Mission San Luis Obispo, where we were given an enhanced standard tour.



San Luis Obispo Exterior



San Luis Obispo Interior

In the afternoon we went to the Mission La Purisma just outside Lompoc. It's part of a state park, so restoration has been to how things looked when it was a working mission. In addition there is a fair size museum. This is one of two California missions

no longer under control of the Catholic church. We later checked into O’Cairns Inn & Suites in Lompoc.



La Purisma Map



La Purisma Exterior



La Purisma Interior

At night a few of us watched the video we’d had problems with a few days before.

Saturday, 22 September 2018, we went to the Mission Santa Ynez in Solvang, where we had a formal tour. It was founded in 1804 by Father Estévan Tapis of the Franciscan order.



Mission Santa Ynez exterior



Mission Santa Ynez interior

In the afternoon we drove to Santa Barbara to visit the natural history museum. We first had a talk given to us about the Chumash Indians. Then we were free to go through the museum before leaving just before 16:00 to check in at the Presidio Motel. After a bit of a break, we drove to the pier to have a farewell dinner at the Moby Dick restaurant.

Sunday, 23 September 2018, was our last day. We loaded the vans about 10:45 for a tour of Mission Santa Barbara. I didn’t manage to get very good photos there, mostly because it was so crowded.

I had to head to the airport too early for the afternoon tour of the courthouse. My return flight went through San Francisco.

* * *

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

***Record of a Spaceborn Few*, by Becky Chambers**

This book, which I understand is the third book in a series, tells the stories of some of the Terrans who left Earth and are living in space habitats. They have contacted alien intelligences and have obtained some high tech from them. This is a chronicle rather than a novel. The book follows the stories of a select few characters, some of whom decide to leave the habitat and settle on a planet. Although it lacks the excitement of a novel, it is well-written and holds a reader's interest.

This book was nominated for the Hugo in the novel category.

#

***All Is True*, directed by Kenneth Branagh; starring Kenneth Branagh, Judi Dench, and Ian McKellen**

This is a docudrama that was created to show Shakespeare's last days back in Stratford on Avon after he stopped writing. Very little is known about this period, so the movie is based on speculation by writer Ben Elton. The movie is true to the period and the known facts.

I found it interesting and thoughtful. The acting is excellent.

#

***Spinning Silver*, by Naomi Novik**

I've never read a Novik book I didn't like. This one cleverly blends two or more fairy tale story lines to come up with something original. It's written from the viewpoints of several different characters. Miryem, the daughter of a moneylender, knows how to turn a certain kind of silver into gold by using her skills as a trader. This silver comes from an icy cold country of winter. The people in the village where this story starts have noticed that winters have become colder and longer. The king of the cold country brings silver to Miryem and commands her to return gold to him. She does and ends up married to him according to the customs of his frozen land. In his country she can turn silver into gold just by touching it. The silver that she had fashioned into jewellery ends up the property of Irina, who is a plain-looking daughter of a nobleman. He doesn't care for her, but he'd like to see her in a good marriage. He is overjoyed when the tsar asks for her hand, but the tsar has a dark secret.

I've always like fairy tales, and this was no different. However, the novel does treat a more serious problem of anti-Semitism. This book was nominated for the Hugo.

#

***Trail of Lightning*, by Rebecca Roanhorse**

This novel takes place in a future when climate change has put much of North America under water. Dinétah is the traditional homeland of the Navajo. It is protected by magical walls that encompass parts of what had been New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona. Maggie Hoskie is a monster slayer. She has been living in isolation for a while when strange happenings bring her out to investigate them.

While I found the book interesting, I don't have a lot of interest in native American legends; so I wasn't motivated to read other similar books. This book was nominated for

the Hugo.

* * *

* **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 #326

Cy Chauvin (Amazons & Swallows Forever! #69): Yes, Cato has claws that I try to keep trimmed. Occasionally he digs in when he thinks he's slipping off my shoulders. Well that's part of living with a cat.

I guess the characteristic of *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore* that led me to like it was the fact that it was all about solving a puzzle. Perhaps it's the puzzle solver in me that led me to like it. I also identified somewhat with the geek culture in which the story takes place. It's also written very well, in my opinion.

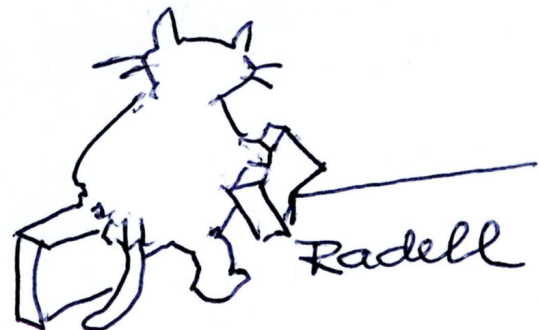
The eye gel shortage is vexing. I'm lucky that I don't need it. I occasionally use the kind of eyedrops that come in one-time use vials, as well as the ordinary type that I use daily.

Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #16): I hope you had your gallstones taken care of and that all is well again.

The Amy Harlib illo may have originally been done for a story. If so I don't know what it was.

I'm afraid I don't remember what

free books were given us at last year's Westercon. Apparently Mike and I both received the same books. When I got home, I was unable to find my books in my luggage. I will try to include that kind of information in future reports.



Bill Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #24): As you know now, we were in Layton this year; and you were on a panel with Mike.

Garth Spencer (Mission Creep #2): The Worldcons and Westercons I've

attended have used Robert's Rules of Order.

While you may be correct about blood donations, I have no personal experience. I've almost always been underweight as far as the Red Cross guidelines for blood donation are concerned.

Next year's Westercon will be in Seattle. Perhaps you will be able to get to that one.

The Sparrow and the 'Wolf (Not unlike a Sparrow's Perspective):

While type 2 diabetes may be curable with transplantation, there are less drastic ways of dealing with it. Type 1 diabetes appears to be an auto-immune disorder in which the body destroys the Islets of Langerhans that produce insulin. So far no one has discovered a cure for auto-immune diseases.

Generally I only have problems sleeping when I'm excited or anxious. I've always had anxiety problems with travel.

Marge Sehnert (Mamma's



Mutterings):

Although Mike has a fairly large telescope, many of the photos are taken with long exposure times and some are the result of a procedure called "stacking" in which multiple photos are digitally added together for increased clarity and detail. Also we live in an area where the skies are dark enough to see the Milky Way on clear nights as long as the Moon is not too bright.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits):

Our weather has also been unusual this year. Spring started late and lasted a lot longer than usual. Summer started late, and monsoon was therefore also late. I noticed at least some flowers blooming almost two

months late.

I believe the Bohnhoffs live on the West Coast. That may be why you've never heard of them while I see them frequently.

There was a plant that grew in Japan that may be related to rhubarb. I used to pull them up and chew on them.

MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #327

The Sparrow and the ‘Wolf (Not unlike a Sparrow’s Perspective):

When people say to me something like “We should do lunch sometime”, I don’t expect them to initiate the invitation. Rather I often take the initiative and invite them. They may be surprised, but I haven’t been turned down.

As I said above, a bridge would not work where the implant did not take, because it’s the last tooth in back.

Alas we had clouds for the August meteor shower.

Bill Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #25):

You misspelled my name. There’s no period in it. Thanks.

Lucy Schmeidler (Don’t Ask #17):

I don’t mind people hunting for food, but I absolutely abhor trophy hunting.

As I’ve grown older, my interest in reading and watching non-fiction has increased.

The rattlesnake photo was taken in our yard. We have three acres in a somewhat rural area. My first rattlesnake sighting was at Tohono Chul in Tucson; it’s a botanical gardens. I don’t know how common they are in populated areas.

Joyce Maetta Odum (Plastic Sick Sisters):

Prednisone can have horrible side effects when taken for

any length of time.

Cy Chauvin (Amazons and Swallows Forever! #70):

I was in college when the Moon landing took place, but I also hadn’t discovered fandom yet. I think we had a colour TV then, but the Moon pictures were mostly black and white as I remember.

The Moon landing in *Calculating Stars* was a minor plot point. It takes place in an alternate Earth where politics went a little differently. A meteor strike then changes everything, as it starts an escalating chain of events that’s expected to result in a situation similar to “nuclear winter”. One of the proposed solutions is to start a colony on the Moon. Another group not actually covered in the book is building an underground community. The author spends a lot of time exploring issues of inequality, especially as it affects women and Blacks.

I store my passwords in a passworded file. The password to open that file is really the only one I need to remember.

Erik Biever (One Small Step):

At the house we rented while we were building the one we now live in, we once heard then saw a woodpecker busily pecking away at the outside of the house, which was stucco.

The Science Fiction Outreach

Project sounds like a great idea. However, so far I've donated unwanted books to the library for their sale events. They also offer books for sale in between the events.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits): I always thought you had naturally curly hair!

I like super-bright bathroom lights. I complain all the time when hotels don't have adequate lighting, especially in the bathroom.

What's a Juicy Lucifer?

The Concierge Lounge at the Marriott is for members of Marriott's club who have earned a sufficient number of points. Points add up as long there are frequent enough stays. It's sort of like mileage points on airlines. Because I like Marriott (they were the first chain to go smoke free, for instance), I try to use their hotels and motels as much as possible. Not all their hotels have concierge areas. And yes, the Lynchi were also at the same hotel.

Alan Winston was only at the Worldcon for a couple of days. I had contacted him before the con and made arrangements to get together.

The green dish has "spikes" that come up from the surface, so Cato has to navigate around them to get the food. That particular dish is made of soft plastic, but there are other similar dishes made of hard plastic or ceramic.

A friend of mine clued me in that whenever the cat appeared in *Alien*, the alien was about to appear; so I didn't suffer any of that jumping out of the seat phenomenon. Before I was willing to see *Poltergeist*, I had a friend give me a blow by blow account of the movie.

Mike had planned to see *Men in Black International* until he read some bad reviews.

Those bony spikes at the backs of some people's heads turned out to be totally unrelated to them tilting their heads down. Apparently it's just something some people have.

See you all in the October 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 37214-0937

27 May 2019

I really liked your pictures from Africa.

Your comments to Cy Chauvin about putting children on a leash reminded me of a story told to me by a woman who used to work in my office. She had always been appalled by parents who did that until she lost her kid in the largest mall in Houston. Fortunately the kid was all right, but the woman immediately became more sympathetic to such parents.

#

Rich Dengrove, rdengrove at cox dot net

1 June 2019

Once again I am writing you about *Purrsonal Mewsings*, so I can get the next issue. More precisely, about #67 so I can get #68. I hope this letter amuses you. I can't hope it ah-mews-es you, however.

First, I would like to comment on Amy Hartlib's cover. I love it. It has Art Nouveau style mixed with surrealism and SF. She can do contortions. Is she a good artist too?

Next, travelling to Westercon 71 in Denver, you talk about a drug with a side effect; you were tired. So far, knock on wood, I haven't had any drugs backfire on me like that. The closest I have gotten is a friend who tends to be very sleepy since his radiation treatments. Recently a physician told him that he should take a certain medicine in the evening rather than the morning. He was dubious about that advice because the label says it should be taken in the morning. I hope he's right and he isn't sleepy all the time because of that drug.

While describing Westercon, you talk about a panel your husband attended concerning life on other planets. That reminded me of what an acquaintance said recently. Both Mars and Venus could have had life too, but something happened to them. The theory is that Mars's core turned from liquid to solid. This meant that solar storms took the oxygen away. On the other hand, on Venus, it became hot enough that the oceans boiled off. In short there is no guarantee that a planet like Earth will have Earthlike conditions and be the home to life.

((When Mars lost its molten core, it lost magnetism that kept the solar wind at bay. This is how much of its atmosphere was lost.))

On the other hand, I wonder if life can arise under conditions quite different from those on Earth? We're not certain of the biology yet. Or would it be biology? There is talk of intelligent life arising in the plasma of stars.

Let's go from the stars to restaurants. A leap of seven league boots? Of three stars? You talk about eating at one of the Maggiano's Restaurants in Denver. I remember eating at

a Maggiano's in Atlanta. When I wandered onto the second floor for the men's room, I found the restaurant had a Corleone room, i.e., from the movie *The Godfather*. A young fellow was about to run out the door when a shot rang out; and he fell down. Then a Mafia-esque looking fellow walked out the door with a smoking gun and closed it. He roused the supposed victim and told him to take a break. Both ended up walking away.

Now onto Mailing Comments on Stipple-APA. "The Sparrow and the Wolf" commented that much visual SF doesn't stand up to close scrutiny. I don't think anything fictional does, really. The only thing that will stand up to close enough scrutiny is reality. Writers or scriptwriters are deviating from that when they make up incidents. On the other hand, if a writer or script writer doesn't make up incidents, characters, etc., what they are writing is nonfiction.

Next the letters to the editor of your zine—you. Robert S. Kennedy, Jr., writes about having 2.8% Neanderthal blood. That will cause another short tirade. I suspect what killed off the Neanderthals was not a lack of game but a lack of children. When Cro-Magnon arrived in Europe, their large and more fecund population overwhelmed the low and less fecund Neanderthal population. In fact, the amount of Neanderthal blood in our veins has been diluted even more over the years until recently it is 2.8% for Robert.

((It's actually a similar number for all people descended from ancestors who left Africa.))

Robert Kennedy talks about his ancestors 35,000 years ago; and Murray Moore talks about his relative of a mere 300 years ago—Andrew Moore. My relatives are a blank slate. Apparently Nazi bombings and the Cold War have wiped out any chance of finding out who my ancestors were. The Leibowitz part of my family does have a new relative though—a woman in France. Before my Uncle Lou died, he wanted the descendant of his French girl friend from World War II to be made a member of his family.

I don't know my ancestors. However, I do know O'Hare airport. I have to disagree with Mary Manchester on it. I had a very bad experience there. Because of a rain storm, I missed my connection. That left me stranded in O'Hare in the middle of the day. When I asked Delta what I should do, they told me to rent a hotel room and come back the next day. I will say they eventually saw fit to schedule another shuttle to my destination. Unfortunately, that was not until 9 or 10 PM at night.

Probably I shouldn't end on complaints about O'Hare. However I guess, after all I've said, that's about it for #67. Bring on #68.

#

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

20 June 2019

Cato certainly does make his mark on your world.

It's been a cool, wet spring, but nothing like the extreme weather other places have gotten. Again, lakefront properties are more lake than front, with high winds and high water causing lots of flooding and erosion.

Great photos, Mike, as always.

#

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937

22 June 2019

Sorry to hear about your fall and your teeth.

I don't know when we will get back to attending Worldcons. Perhaps DC.

((Alas, I probably won't be there.))

I was rather surprised when the 1943 version of *Phantom of the Opera* was nominated for the Retro Hugo. It is a good movie, but there are no fantasy elements in it.

((Good point, but I always felt it had the feel of a fantasy.))

#

Timothy Lane, timothylane51 at gmail dot com

23 June 2019

Well, it's good that you seem to be recovering from your physical problems. My leg wounds are a lot better now (though the skin remains fragile); but unfortunately my joints, especially on the left side, are another matter.

I recently started receiving daily updates from a site called phototropolis, which sends a daily photo (so far always astronomical). It reminded me of yours, and in fact a recent one of Pluto was very similar to your photo of the Moon.

It's nice encountering names I actually recall from my days in fandom. In fact, I met Ctein at a panel on ozone depletion when we were both on at Conadian. I certainly received material from Jeanne Mealy and probably met her sometime. (I went to a lot of Worldcons for a couple of decades.)

We had artichokes on very rare occasions when I was young; and our method of eating was the same as Robert Kennedy's, except I don't recall eating the heart, or even being

aware that it was edible until I saw artichoke hearts in stores decades later. They were pickled in jars, and I bought them at least once. I don't recall, but they were probably eaten in salads.

((I didn't realize until recently about the heart, either.))

#

Joy V. Smith, pagadan at aol dot com

24 June 2019

I'm glad you're feeling better and mostly recovered from your fall.

I enjoy your con reports. You certainly covered a lot of territory at Worldcon!

I love all your photos, especially the ones of the cactus with flowers and Cato and Mike's photos, especially that beautiful one of the full moon.

I haven't seen *Black Panther*, but I want to; and *A Quiet Place* has such an interesting premise; I'm sure it is really suspenseful.

Speaking of cat toys (from a LOC), I have a Roomba-type toy; it moves around on the floor with a laser light. Be careful when you pick it up; because when that light goes up a wall, so will the cat! I also have a couple noisy animal-type toys, among others, though the puppy is enjoying them too.

So, I enjoyed your con report, the reviews, photos and illos, and the LOCs. Well, everything!

#

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

26 June 2019

As usual Mike's astronomical photo are swell. I guess the picture of Westercon LXXI fireworks must be his.

((Correct))

I don't remember deciding *Glory Road* wasn't a classic on the grounds we were too close to E. C. Gordon's world. I remember raising the question. Normally this point ("too close") would only leave me feeling I couldn't yet tell if a work was classic. *Glory Road* is still very carelessly read. Of course Gordon is a real hero, or the satire would have no edge. But it cuts in deeply into masculine fantasy. I've called it a feminist tract.

#

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

27 June 2019

Thank you for *PM #68*. Wonderful photos, especially the cover and Cato.

Reading your Worldcon report, I was right there with you.

#

Rich Dengrove, rdengrove at cox dot net

8 July 2019

Ah *Purrsonal Mewsings #68*, and I have a letter published in it. Thanks. In addition, of course, there is a lot more to comment on.

For instance in your *Editorial/Introduction, you talk about an implant not taking and losing a tooth. One of the less used teeth, I hope – if there are less used teeth. I don't have any teeth at this point; I long since opted for dentures. They are kept in place by implants so that I can chew with them like I did with my regular teeth. It is thirteen years since I switched over. Given what had been going on, I am glad I no longer have my natural teeth.

For Saturday, August 22, 2018, you talk about photos. Teeth I had to give up, not photos. I used to have a lot of interest in taking them. Somehow I lost it. I no longer take them with standalone cameras. Periodically I use my iPhone's camera; and on special occasions, my iPad's, which takes much better photos. Even so, as I said, the spirit doesn't move me to take too many. Fortunately I have what seems like a thousand photographs saved on my computer from yesteryear.

((I probably inherited my interest in photography from my father. My second camera was one of his old ones. Back around 2000 I switched to using a video camera and did that for many years. When I was in Africa, one of our group leaders had a versatile still camera that impressed me greatly. My current camera is a similar one, and I'm back to taking stills again. I still have over ten years of video to edit! My new camera can take videos, and I occasionally do that. When I don't have a camera on me, I use my iPhone. Mike is also very interested in photography, especially astrophotography. He has a much fancier camera than I have ever had.))

For Wednesday, August 22, 2018, you talk about using Maps in California, not your Lexus's GPS; and the Maps voice has a British accent. I have needed GPS for a year or two now. I just can't remember the route on maps or from directions. I was getting lost too much. I hear there's some movement now to get away from GPSes. Something about them rotting your brain. No can do.

((The Maps I refer to is an app that comes on iPhones. I have all my electronics set to British English.))

In Reviews, you review *Spider-Man into the Spider-Verse*. So comic books characters are getting their own universes these days. I wonder if, in the next generation, will tales about them, in their way, become the new mythology. I hope, unlike the Ancients, people do not try to use that mythology to prove hypotheses true. A number of Ancients used theirs that way. Even Aristotle did but only after he cut out a myth's more fantastic aspects.

Also you review *The Glass Bead Game* by Herman Hesse. I really liked *The Glass Bead Game* when I read it. It was more than it being by Herman Hesse, who was very popular then. I liked the idea you could string the arts and sciences together and unify all knowledge, which, if memory serves me correct, was the objective of the game. I loved the novel in my 20s. I don't know how much I would like it at seventy-four. I suspect the bead game appealed to the semi-hippy me, because the idea appeared the height of intellectual stimulation. Today I might want the author to mention specific revelations that came out of the game.

Now we come to Letters to the Editor. We will start with mine. We go from Herman Hesse to airplane terminals. I can't sleep on a plane, bus, train, etc; but I shouldn't have presumed you couldn't. Apparently you can but not when you're overexcited. Each person has his or her quirks to bear.

Another mistake. I mistook the brown type for the black type. And your words for Bill Thomasson's. I guess I will eventually get in the swing of things.

After making that comment, I will comment on real estate too. It's expensive where I am in Northern Virginia but certainly not like California. I know someone who had to leave San Francisco for Arizona because of the rent. I gather that was several decades ago. Also I don't know what my sister is going to do when she loses her inexpensive digs and will have to look for others on the housing market in Los Angeles. I hope her boy friend helps her out.

More misinterpretations? Yup. The Monkey Head Nebula is gas and dust. Constellations are random stars that, together, may or may not look like something to you. With nebulae, you can see a form and maybe even colour. From the photos I have seen, I have to agree with Tim; the Monkey Head Nebula doesn't look like a monkey head. Tim ventures that people are seeing it upside down. According to The Science Daily site, however, you see a monkey head only if you look at wide-field images of it. <https://tinyurl.com/y497ur84> .

Now we go to Jerry Kaufman's letter. You respond that something is a Steam Punk object. I was going to say Steam Punk objects have the virtue of not working. I take that back. They can work. However, they should look like they were fashioned in the 19th Century, or thereabouts. I have seen personal computers made to look like they were fashioned in the 19th Century.

That's it for now. Finally, we get to the end. All I can say is I am looking forward to issue #69.

#

John Purcell, askance73 at gmail dot com

13 July 2019

It has been way, way too long since I last wrote to you about your personalzine. Er, I mean, purr-sonalzine. For that matter this is also your StippleAPA contribution. Whatever. Here come a few comments about its 68th iteration.

The first thing that really caught my eye was all the astronomy photography. Mike really has a great set up, and being out in the Arizona desert definitely is a huge advantage for taking such clear images of the night sky. I am impressed. Here in our part of Texas (a quarter-million people live here), there is a lot of ground glare that blankets out most of the stars and planets; but we still get some very good clear nights where I can spot the ISS floating by overhead - I have the ISS tracker app on my phone that gives forecasts of when the space station will be view-able in our area - or identify various stars and planets. But Mike's photos are crackerjack, and I really appreciate your printing them in your zine.

I am also gladdened by your news that you are recovering nicely from that nasty fall. It takes time to fully heal, but it definitely sounds like you are doing well. I have never seen *Cats* performed, but I do like the music and T. S. Eliot's original poems. And I see that by now your backup battery should be installed. How much of a savings do you and Mike get with your solar cells? Rooftop solar panels are one of the fastest growing businesses here in the College Station-Bryan area. If all goes well, we might be installing them on our house in another two years.

((Since we installed the solar panels when the house was built, there's no way to tell how much money we are saving on our monthly bills. The only comparison I can make is the house we rented while we were building this one. That had gas to heat the water. It was slightly smaller than our house, but it had two storeys to our one and was poorly designed for efficient heating and cooling. The monthly electric bill on our all-electric house is about half what it was with that rental. You should know that most of the hot water heating here is done with solar heat.))

Thank you for your remembrances of the San Jose Worldcon! Did you get a chance to meet the 2018 TAFF delegate, Johan Anglemark? This tall and friendly Swede stayed with us for a while during his trek across North America in July and August last year. Sadly Valerie and I won't be attending any world sf conventions until 2021 when it most likely returns to Washington, DC. Oh, well. If you're in Columbus, Ohio, in 2020 for the NASFiC, we will probably be there. Planning ahead is A Good Thing.

((I did meet Johan Anglemark, though very briefly. He used to be in StippleAPA. Sorry I have no plans to be at the Columbus NASFiC or at the DC Worldcon.))

Well, it is good to see familiar names in your StippleAPA comment section. My APA days are long gone I'm afraid. No interest in that kind of thing anymore. However, I still enjoy producing my fanzines. Which reminds me, when this letter is done, I will be working on *Askance* 46 again (getting there!) and then the Corflu 37 PR#1. For everyone's information, if they are not aware of this already, I am co-chairing the 2020 Corflu, the fanzine fan's annual convention, next year with Pablo Miguel Alberto Vazquez. It will be held in College Station, TX, over the March 13-15, 2020, weekend at the College Station Hilton Hotel and Convention Center. General and membership information about this convention is available at www.corflu.org; attendees should be able to start making their room reservations in September.

((I tried just publishing my fanzine outside of any APAs, but I found that I needed the pressure of an externally applied deadline.))

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

16 July 2019

I have been so far behind in many things, especially after spending a month planning for our three-week vacation in England. I have two issues of *Purrsonal Mewsings*, 67 and 68; and you are probably workin on 69 right now. Here goes anyway, with a fast loc.

((No one is as far behind as I am with things. I am over two years behind with my periodically reading; this includes fanzines. I am also almost that far behind cataloguing our book, DVD, and CD acquisitions; Mike keeps nagging me about it but refuses to take on household chores that would free up some time for me.))

67...we can love our cats, but we have to be reminded every so often that they will never truly be domesticated. They will still hear the call of the wild and escape as best as they can. Sometimes I see cats roaming the neighbourhood, and I do hear of feral cats here and there. I wonder how many of them were housecats who were happy inside until they saw an open door.

((In Cato's case, he panicked when he realized he was outside; and I had closed the front door, so there was no way back in. Because he hadn't been with us very long, he didn't respond to our calls. Since then he once went outside on his own when I had the back door open briefly to bring out some bird feeding supplies. He only went about two feet before he went back in.))

Sounds like the Westercon was lots of fun. We don't have regional conventions here as such; but the closest to it is Ad Astra, which was just this past weekend. For the past few years, we'd go for the Saturday only (last year, we had other commitments in Michigan); but this year we went for all three days; and were rewarded with good panels, good times with old friends, and a most enjoyable weekend overall. We hope to return next year, but as always, we will make the decision about one day versus three.

My letter...we went on our trip to England on May 29, and we returned June 19, so we are back about a month. We did all we planned, or attempted to, anyway. We did all of our homework, but you can't predict what might happen...one museum we found was closed with a reopening date of July 1. We did get to Liverpool, Stonehenge, Bath, and Lincoln; and we had wonderful stays at each. I took over 1100 photos; once we've had our own look at them, I plan to put them up on my Facebook page. I have tried to find Yvonne opportunities to be Queen Victoria again, with this year seeing her 200th birthday; but interest is lukewarm. She plans to retire the Queen at the end of the year. For those LEGO fans, Bricks in the Six takes place in Toronto mid August.

Jerry Kaufman's name reminds me that we lost Andi Malala Schecter a couple of days ago. Wallace Simpson once said you know how old you are by how many friends you lose, and she is too correct for comfort.

68... When we went to England, we researched what the weather would be like and packed accordingly. But yet...the first couple of days we were there were warm. I got my first sunburn of the year on the Thames River. But after that the weather turned cool. It never hit more than 19C (66F) the rest of the time we were there; and when we'd buy souvenir t-shirts, we'd wash them and use them to keep warm. Yvonne bought a sweatshirt for the same reason.

I always have trouble with sleeping on planes. It's often too noisy; there's at least one crying baby or child, and people are never careful enough when walking past. I often have insomnia, but I slept well in England and have slept well since returning.

The trip to England is done, and so is Ad Astra, so now our next big event is a steampunk event in the heart of rural Ontario north of Toronto—the Coldwater Steampunk Festival, and we will be vending there and with luck doing well. We will also be assisting with the set up, so once again it's a big event for us with some rewards we hope. Other smaller events will keep us busy for the rest of the year, but in 2020 we will have to see if we can continue as we have been doing and shut down our little business or carry on as we have. We will have to make that examination every year from now on I think.

Time to fire this off to you, and see you with the next issue.

#

Robert Kennedy, robertk at cipcug dot org

1 August 2019

Thank you for #68.

Excellent photos as usual. For some reason the full moon reminded me somewhat of my two framed 16x20 photos of the Earth. One is three-quarters Earth taken from the Moon and the other full Earth from space.

Your report on Worldcon 76 in San Jose was very enjoyable. Sadly I had to miss it, and it would have been my last Worldcon. I noticed that at a dinner you had a scallop. Just one scallop? I love scallops and have never been able to eat just one.

((It may have been a very large scallop. I no longer recall. I think I was using the term to refer to the name of the entree.))

John Hertz's covering of *Sword of Rhiannon* must have been interesting. I always enjoyed his discussions and will miss them. I was sorry to read that Mike had a poor peach cobbler. Here where I live, we sometimes have peach cobbler; and they are always enjoyable. Your being able to have a tour of the Lick Observatory must have been very enjoyable.

Comment to Timothy Lane – I still remember your excellent fanzine. Currently, in addition to *Purrrsonal Mewsings*, I receive *Alexiad* and *The Reluctant Famulus*. Interesting that next to your commentary is an Illo by Patsy King that mentions *The Reluctant Famulus*. I am truly sorry to learn that you and Elizabeth are in different facilities, and that the situation is such that you may never see each other ever again. After all the years that you were together, that is horrible.

Laurraine – My niece Sheilah and I thank you for your clarification regarding eating an artichoke and that you eat it the same way as do we.

In each issue you always indicate that you “use Oxford standards of spelling and punctuation”. I’ve noticed that you sometimes “correct” my letters, and that does not cause me a problem. I have always had some problem in using commas. My normal procedure is to sound out a sentence and, if I pause, then a comma. If no pause no comma. Back in the 90s, I mentioned this to my mother. Her response was: “When in doubt, leave it out.” A couple of years ago, I mentioned this, on separate occasions, to two retired English teachers with whom I played bridge. They both agreed that it was good advice. I notice on at least one occasion you inserted a semicolon. I never use semicolons because I’m unsure in their usage. I am, however, a serial comma fanatic. I have two excellent books that made it here unlike about a thousand that didn’t. Sadly, they do not seem to have made it to my aging brain. I’m going to have to read them again. The first book is *The New Well-Tempered Sentence-A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed* by Karen Elizabeth Gordon (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993). The other (the title of which I really like) is *Eats, Shoots & Leaves-The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* by Lynne Truss (Gotham Books, 2003). It’s my understanding that the latter book was a best seller in Great Britain and here in the United States. Personally, in my serial comma fanaticism, I would probably have inserted a comma after the word Shoots. That would not have changed the meaning, it’s just me.

((The serial comma is *de rigueur* in my book. I think the meaning is indeed different.))

I’m sure that most of us are aware of the sentence that goes something as follows. “I owe everything to my parents, God and Ayn Rand.”

((Exactly.))

Well, that's enough of that. I look forward to Issue #69.

#

Amy Harlib, amyharlib at e-activism dot com

18 August 2019

Responding to *PM* # 68, a very enjoyable issue as always with lovely cactus flowers on the cover.

So glad kitty Cato is doing well.

On July 31, Fiona went to The Rainbow Bridge to join The Cat Goddess and all the beloved companions who have gone before her. She was 16 1/2 and had suffered anemia and CRF. She was my fluffy fur baby, and I am in grief and mourning. Shall miss her forever along with all my other fur babies.



Still catless – looking for the right long-haired solid black beauty (that colour gets adopted less than other colours and long-haired because I love fluffiness and love grooming cats).

Liked the World Con report, always glad to read those since I cannot afford to go to cons anymore.

That is about it, I've been so depressed about lack of gigs and then Fiona dying, I have not seen any films of note recently.

* * *

*** Closing Remarks**

Next time I hope to have a report on my trip last October to Seattle and environs to watch figure skating and visit my sister.

Deadline for next issue is expected to be on or about 3 October 2019.

Laurraine

29 August 2019