

Purrsonal Mewsings #81



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 #504. ©2021 R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

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PURRS **SINGS**

#81

June 2021

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

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* Editorial / Introduction

There's no question now that summer is here. The landscaper's son never showed up. I tried to call him but was unsuccessful. Since summer is here, and planting now is probably a bad idea, I don't feel in any rush to find a new landscaper. May turned out to be almost completely dry, but then May is usually the driest month of the year. Unfortunately I've also lost my handyman who was weeding and taking care of other yard chores; I'm still looking for a replacement.

June brought three digit (Fahrenheit) temperatures that lasted for about ten days. We're in the middle of that as I complete this zine.

New wildfires continue to start. Luckily so far none is close to us. We occasionally see plumes of smoke from fires in the distance. As I wrap up this zine, there has been various thicknesses of smoke in our skies as winds calmed. We'll probably have to wait until a major weather change for the smoke to clear.

In other news I've been discovering that I have food allergies that I didn't previously know about. My discovering it began when the nurse practitioner I saw at the allergy office recommended a liquid supplement for my sinus rinse. I bought some and tried it, but it stuffed me up pretty badly. I threw the unused portion away. That made me wonder if anything else was doing more harm than good. Several months before, the allergist had recommended adding two tablespoons of potato starch daily to my diet. As I usually do, I followed his advice. However my allergies had been worse rather than better since I started that regimen. I decided to stop taking potato starch and see what happens. My allergy symptoms slowly improved over the course of a couple of weeks. I went through my pantry to see what other potato products I needed to eliminate. Some were obvious, like potato chips. Others were ingredients in things I thought were okay, such as potato starch in my gluten-free flour and in the baked goods I bought at the gluten-free bakery. I need to read the ingredients list like a hawk from now on. Eliminating those things made me feel increasingly better. Then I remembered that potato is in the nightshade family and there are several other things in that family that I should probably eliminate, at least for the time being. The nightshade family includes tomatoes and related fruit, peppers except for tree peppers, eggplant, okra, white potatoes, goji berries, gooseberry, pepino, huckleberry, and naranjilla. Most of these represent things that I eat rarely or not at all. The hardest one to avoid are the peppers, since they are often used as ingredients. My symptoms appear to be stuffed up sinuses, sinus headaches, and arthralgia pain my my limbs. All these have practically gone away since I eliminated nightshades. Food allergies like this one can allow people to eat a small amount without symptoms. However, I figure I need to let my tissues recover from months or even years of damage. My arthralgia dates back to when I was twelve or thirteen.

The other allergy I identified is grapes. I normally don't eat grapes, because I don't care for them much. Back a few months ago, Mike had problems when he ate Raisin Bran. It seemed to be a good idea for him to try eating some grapes to see if it was the raisins. They're sold in bags, so you have to buy the whole bag. I bought some. He ate some without problems. I figured I'd eat the rest. Over the course of three days I ate them and gradually suffered sinus symptoms. There was a fourth dish of them that Mike ate up for me. Now I'm wondering if I can tolerate wine, but I'll wait a few months to try some.

On to better news. The COVID situation has improved. Our bank lobby is open again. Our insurance agent's office is open again. I really prefer to do business in person and chat with the people involved. The baggers at the grocery stores are back to filling our reusable bags. Most places only require masks if you're not vaccinated; of course, this assumes that people are honest. Some people still wear masks, because they don't trust other people. I figure it doesn't really matter. If I catch COVID, I will probably be asymptomatic. Of course this can cause problems anyway. One TV personality I watch regularly tested positive for COVID and couldn't do his show for two weeks even though he had no symptoms. I'm supposed to get a COVID test to qualify for my Iceland trip in August. If I test positive, I won't be able to go, again; the trip was originally scheduled for last summer.

My Carleton College reunion this year is on Zoom, and I have attended a few sessions. There will be a make-up in-person reunion for 1970 and 1971 classes next year, and I'm planning to go.

I also attended a FANAC Zoom interview of Bjo and John Trimble, who earned fame for saving *Star Trek* for a third season.

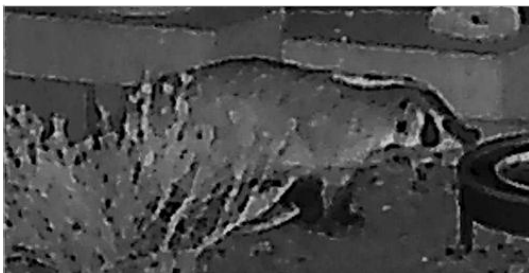
June has given us a bit of excitement. We awoke in the middle of the night a couple of weeks ago to find that the power was out. Mike called the electric company, and they hadn't heard about it. It turned out that a packrat had chewed through a wire; they found its body. Once they knew about the problem, they fixed it within about an hour.

The other excitement I had was experiencing tooth pain and finding out from my dentist that I needed a root canal. The endodontist was able to take me right away, so I just drove there from my dentist's office. This is one I hadn't seen before; the one I'd seen before seems to have left the area. Anyway the endodontist was quick and relatively painless. The area was a bit sore for a couple of days, but all I need now is to see my dentist again for a permanent filling for the hole in the crown that the endodontist had to make.

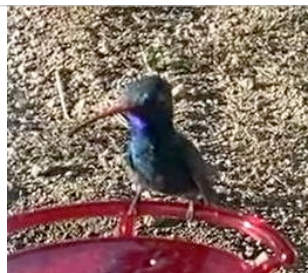
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* Kritter Korner

Here are the best of the wildlife photos taken since last issue.



Badger (wildlife camera at night)

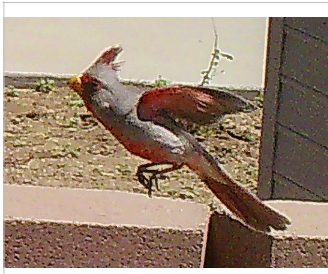


Broad-billed Hummingbird
(iPhone by editor)



Cowbird (wildlife camera)

Notice the bit of blue in the plumage of the hummingbird.



Pyrrhuloxia



Scott's Oriole



Western Tanager

The photos above were all taken by the wildlife camera.



Rare Daylight Coyote Sighting



White-winged Dove

Both photos above were taken by the wildlife camera.

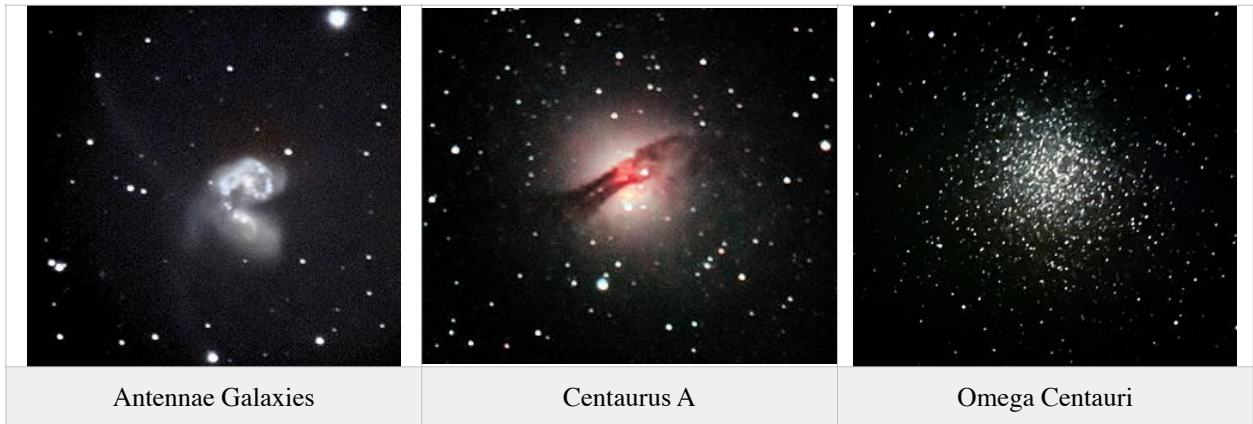


Desert Cottontail/Rock Squirrel Stare-down (taken by wildlife camera)

* * *

* Astronomy

Here are some astronomical objects Mike took since last issue. We had a lot of days that were cloudy or too windy to use a telescope.



Mike also published his autobiography, *Finding my Way to the Stars*, in May 2021. The book is a very personal story of his journey through the Universe. Readers will experience his lives and his loves of people, astronomy, music, flying, and teaching, along with life changing decisions, twists and turns, ups and downs, challenges, failures, and successes. The book is available in paperback and Kindle versions from Amazon. More details about the book are available at <http://www.weasner.com/bio>.

* * *



* Reviews

The Relentless Moon (a Lady Astronaut Novel) by Mary Robinette Kowal. Tor, 2020

This is the third and final book in the “Lady Astronaut” series. The first was *The Calculating Stars*, in which life on Earth is drastically changed when an asteroid slams into the Atlantic near the East Coast of the USA. In the second book, the programme to colonize the Moon is well on its way and Mars is being colonized. This third book is about the same length as the first and second books combined. It tells about the events on Earth and Moon during the time that the first colonists are heading to Mars. There’s a lot of politics, much of it involving a group called Earth First, who oppose and try to sabotage space efforts.

This is the grittiest book in the trilogy with a lot of suspense and political shenanigans. The protagonist of this book is an astronaut and the wife of a politician. She has learned to juggle things in her life, but she also has a psychological/nervous problem that few people outside her family know about. When events become very dangerous, she has to learn to control her reactions in order to be able to continue to function.

The book is pretty exciting and somewhat nerve-wracking. There's a lot going on that keeps the reader reading. This is only the first book I've finished reading for Hugo consideration, but I'm inclined right now to vote for this in first or second position. I'm expecting another book to be in first position; but there seems to be a long line of people at the library waiting for that one. At least we have a lot of time to read everything this year, since the worldcon won't be until December.

* * *

* **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. Note to non-members: these are my comments to the other APA members.

MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #342

Eric Biever (Inching toward Normality): People who have Apple Watches and iPhones no longer need an alert pendant. Recently Mike tripped over some boxes in the foyer and fell down when the power went out in the middle of the night. His Apple Watch asked if he was okay? If he hadn't answered, it would have called 911.

Most of my fruit trees are cold hardy. The only one that isn't is my orange tree, and I cover that one if it's expected to get cold.

Jason K. Burnett (Insert Clever Title Here #1): Welcome back!

Joyce Maetta Odum (Velvet Hand Lizard): I'll have to check out Tubi.tv; according to the webpage, I should be able to see it on either of our TV sets. I'm still busy, though, watching shows

on satellite, HBO Max, and Apple TV.

Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #31): Sorry to hear about your recent falls. Please take care.

I had to look it up, but apparently the name antelope squirrel came about because of the similarity of its white tail to the white rump patch of the pronghorn antelope.

I hope you found *Sanditon* to be worth the \$4 you paid for it. Incidentally there is to be at least one more season of the TV version; perhaps it can still be redeemed to some degree.

Ruth Odren (The Once and Future Zine): When I check into a motel or hotel, if the tub doesn't have anti-skid features or a bath mat, I call the front desk and ask for one.

Garth Spencer (Mission Creep #17): Congratulations on getting your stories published.

I'm familiar with Bugs Bunny, Warner Bros./Hanna-Barbera cartoons and the Dr. Doolittle stories, but I'm not familiar with Enid Blyton. I just looked her up, and she was an English author of children's stories.

Justin E. A. Busch (Stipple-Ations: Stfan Views and Reviews): Nice write-up of my favourite Trek movie.

Cy Chauvin (Amazons & Swallows Forever! #82): I seem to have missed the *American Experience* episode about L. Frank Baum. Maybe they will rerun it. I remember a show about him a number of years ago but don't really remember much about it.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits): As I mentioned in a comment above, the combination of an Apple Watch and iPhone now serve as an emergency button. The Apple Watch can sense when the wearer falls.

The yo-yo weather has indeed settled down as summer starts here. It is now somewhere between very warm and way too hot.

Sorry, there's no written version of Mike's Leprecon panel. It was set up as a question and answer session. Mike asked the questions. As far as we know, it was not videotaped either.

The deposits under the lunar surface are called mascons (short for mass concentrations). They were only discovered fairly recently during our lifetime.

I hope your cats are okay.

*** 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.

Trinlay Khadro, 1734 S 56th St, West Allis, WI 53214-5281 7 May 2021

Everyone here is doing pretty well. Dave (housemate) & I were able to get our shots; 2nd Moderna on my birthday.

Re Jeanne Mealy, Jackson Galaxy has a You-Tube channel and includes chunks of *My Cat from Hell*. He really understands cats and cat needs.

In this pandemic people I care about have died horribly or been disabled by this disease. People who would *not* have died if not for COVID. Folks I know in their twenties and thirties are unable to return to work six months to a year after being sick due to long term damage.

((I heard a news report today that some people were so damaged by COVID that they need lung or other organ transplants.))

I've mourned thirty somethings who have suddenly dropped dead. At least one marathoner has left behind a spouse and young kids.

Blown off as "just a flu" or "just a problem for the elderly and sickly" is both unrealistic and eugenicistic.

We would all like our "lives back", and *none* of us should have been left economically adrift.

We *could have* safely put the economy on "pause"; but because we as a society couldn't/wouldn't cooperate or assist with simple, health measures, we're still seeing overwhelmed health care and funerary services.

Those of us relying on gigs (me!) aren't going to see people widely attending large craft/art fairs, concerts, cons, especially when there aren't assurances that masks and other safety measures will be required. Is con security *really* going to assure Mr. Anti-Mask isn't going to be maskless, wearing it wrong, or coughing directly into the faces of other attendees?

Until there's better/good safety compliance, we're going to see spikes and lockdowns.

((Also there are some communities that are still waiting to be vaccinated.))

If anyone's been fortunately enough to be unaffected and not lost anyone, not seen friends disabled by this disease, I hope that good fortune continues.

((I saw a news story on TV about violent, non-compliant airline passengers having to be restrained by other passengers. I sure hope that doesn't happen when I fly to Seattle at the end of June.))

#

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

7 May 2021

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* #79.

Glad to hear you got your COVID vaccinations. Anita and I got the Moderna in February and March.

Who was Bettie Page? You might check out the 2005 film *The Notorious Bettie Page* starring Gretchen Mol as the title character.

#

Gene Schneider kaires52 at gmail dot com

8 May 2021

Richard Dengrove mentioned MediaWestCon in Lansing, Michigan. That brought back a lot of memories about attending with my dear friend, Cloud, and visiting with Jean Lorrh and Susan Moore, who both had booths there every year. He mentioned a panel about kids' shows, reporting that a favourite among both panelists and audience was *Ghostbusters*. They must all be significantly younger than I, because the kid's shows of my era were *Mighty Mouse, Fury*, and (oh, rats! I had it earlier. The one with Clarabelle Clown. Oh, yeh) *Howdy Doody*.

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

13 May 2021

Many thanks for issue 79 of *Purrsonal Mewsings*: I am always loving one of Ray Nelson's cool cats on the cover, but I must look forward to the real stuff inside...

Up here, we are just today enjoying some warm weather, and we got out to enjoy it. We had our COVID-19 vaccinations as well in March, but we may have to wait until July or so to get our second ones. Earlier today, the premier of the province extended the lockdown in Ontario to June 2, over 300 days; but we are bringing our daily COVID-19 caseload down gradually. If only we could get our premier to listen to the scientists and doctors; but he won't, which is why we've been in lockdown as long as we have. Now, kids as young as 12 can get their shots. At least we can go out for a little fresh air here and there, and we are planning a picnic soon.

I did a search for Starwolf myself a while ago. He has cut himself off from all of fandom, even to disconnecting his phone and e-mail accounts. I am told there is a number he can be reached at, but it is through a friend, and that number is unknown to me. I think we should just say he is totally gafiated, and give him the privacy he wants.

The idea of Dolt45 disbanding a department to cope with pandemics sounds very familiar...we had a provincial lab that would make vaccines to order, but a past premier of our province sold it to foreign interests, and much of it was moved to Europe. We sure could use that lab to make the COVID-19 vaccines, but we were forced to buy from other countries with more visionary governments.

My letter...we recovered from COVID-19, and we each lost about 10 pounds. We've each gained about 3 or 4 back, but that's okay. We figured that we caught COVID from the many idiots in our building who would not wear a mask, or self-distance, or even wash their hands. We now double-mask to make sure we don't catch it again. We each got an Astra Zeneca shot, but we'd take the second shots in a heartbeat.

As opposed to some others in the letter column, I need to say this COVID is ****NOT**** a scam. Just ask any of the 590,000 Americans who have died, and I am sure they would love to have had the chance to answer you. The worldwide death toll is over 3.2 million. Sure, all these scientists have spent their lives in medical studies, just to try to fool you. Pull the other leg. Our long-term care homes have also had their share of deaths, and the worst LTC homes are privately owned and for-profit; and in Ontario, the worst chain of homes is run by a former premier of the province.

There's enough in the news to anger me these days, and I shouldn't let it overflow into my letters, and I apologize. Makes for good discussion, though. Thanks for this issue, already waiting for the next.

#

Robert Kennedy, robertk at cipcug dot org

15 May 2021

I am a bit confused regarding the comments in Stipple-APA as to whether they are the individuals indicated or your responses.

((The mailing comments are my responses to the individuals indicated.))

Anyway, in the commentary with Jeanne Mealy, mention is made of Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. That reminded me that my mother was born in Two Harbors, Minnesota, and basically raised in Northfield. In 1920 she was scheduled to attend Carleton. But at the time, they were living in Santa Ana, California, and she went to Pomona College. I have ancestors who lived in Northfield back prior to the James and Younger gangs' raid - Bonham and Hulberg families. At the age of 12, my Great Uncle Johnny Bonham thought he knew what trail Jesse James would use to escape. He took his rifle and hid planning to shoot Jesse. Luckily for Uncle Johnnie he was wrong. My second cousin Elvin Heiberg still lives in Northfield. He is a retired dentist and, I believe, his father was also a dentist. Both of them in Northfield.

((The man who drove the taxi in Northfield sometime between 1967 and 1971 told me that his grandfather, IIRC, saw Jesse James.))

In the Joyce Maetta portion, it is indicated that the favourite Star Trek movie is the one with whales. My favourite is *The Wrath of Kahn*. But the one about whales is a close second.

Here in the CCRC where I live, we are doing fine. Most of us have received the two shots. No one has died as a result of the virus. A while back seven of us went up into the mountains to Idaho City and had lunch. A crowded restaurant and obviously no masks. Also, a couple of weeks ago, we went to another town for lunch. Two days a week, I play bridge and no one wears a mask. On Friday I play chess, and for this we do wear masks, although I don't know why since we do not for bridge. There is a general rule here that if we are wandering around the building, masks should be worn. Outside no masks are

necessary. There is no problem with going to stores although inside one should wear a mask.

((Here the masking rule was never a state-wide mandate. The county where I shop has rescinded its mask mandate. However, some establishments still require masks.))

#

Brad Foster, jabberwocky2000 at hotmail dot com

16 May 2021

Yes, it's been WAY too long since I responded to your ongoing mailings; thanks so much for keeping me on your mail list. I have been reading each issue but been one hell of a crazy time around here for...well, quite a while. Started way back before we were hit by the tornado in late 2019, and lots of changes and such since. But, am trying to get back into some sort of regular life again, including even being an artist, and keeping up with mail. Miracles will occur again!

Owe you more than this, but have done up a new small kit-cat drawing just for PM, and have attached that here. Hope he can find a home in a future issue. I've gotten out of all my good drawing habits, maybe starting a couple of "deadline" things, like making sure I do a new cat drawing for you each time a new issue shows up, will get the juices going again. Deadlines always have helped in the past.



((Thank you for the drawing. As you can see, I've already used it.))

#

The photo above is one of my ocotillo. It's the first time it's bloomed.

Mary Manchester, 1297 Monroe Ave #2, Rochester, NY 14760-1655

25 May 2021

Thank you for *P. M.* #79. I expect Mike is gearing up for some major lunar photography. Here's hoping for cooperative weather.

((Unfortunately the weather was not very cooperative, and he only got some mediocre shots of the eclipse between clouds.))

I *had* the the appointment: phone #, nice lady, good location, date and time of my choosing... Full stop. Her computer wouldn't *let her* finalize it without an e-mail address. I checked other #s that had people answering: same thing. That's when I gave up (mid-April). Then a friend went on-line & discovered that my local CVS was having

walk-in appointments, no computer needed. So in I went and out I came, one jab to the good. The media go on about rewards/bribes/free stuff for tax hold-outs, and you'd think there were nurses going door-to-door with tanks strapped to their backs; but I, with the best will in the world—*thwarted*.

#

Cathy Palmer-Lister, [cathypl at sympatico dot ca](mailto:cathypl@sympatico.ca)

30 May 2021

What a gorgeous cover! I always look first for your wildlife and astronomy pictures.

I was trying to log on to Mike's session titled "Impacts of Satellite Mega-constellations". I am an amateur astronomer, too; and these strings of satellites are a real problem that is only going to get worse. I don't do astrophotography, so it does not impact me the same way, but I can see earth-bound telescopes becoming obsolete in the near future if this goes on.

#

Marcia Meldrum, [mlynnmel at gmail dot com](mailto:mlynnmel@gmail.com)

2 June 2021

I always love the photos in *Purrsonal Mewsings*.

The only wildlife I get to see are sparrows, crows, and crawly bugs, although I hear people in the area have met coyotes and even bears.

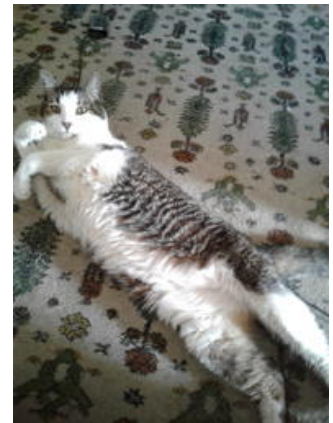
((My first ever coyote sighting outside of a zoo was in Hollywood.))

Sometimes hummingbirds.

And I love the astro photos.

Tolly wanted to say hello.

((Tolly is her cat, and here is the photo she sent.))



#

Richard Dengrove, [richd22426 at aol dot com](mailto:richd22426@aol.com)

3 June 2021

First, the "Editorial." So you didn't quite get on a jury; not that you necessarily wanted to. At age 70, not only could I give up my jury duty; the county wanted me to. There are too many people eligible for jury duty here. So many, in fact, I never got on a jury. Not even to the point of *voir dire*. On the other hand, I have a friend who lives in

Washington, DC. He was on juries many times. In fact, he was the Foreman once. The reason was there were not enough people in DC eligible for jury duty.

In the “Kritter Korner,” I liked best the deer. Too bad that you weren’t able to photograph the other two. However, with only one deer, it was still great. In the “*Astronomy” section, I liked the Flaming Star Nebula best. Very colourful. I confess no astronomer I.

Now for the “Reviews.” Character is why you liked the three films you review. However, it’s obvious you like science fiction motifs too. Two out of three of the media you discuss have them. About the film, *Libel*, I never saw that picture even though it has a very recognizable cast. I will keep my eyes peeled for it.

Now for your “LepreCon Report.” I don’t understand either why they made logging onto Zoom so difficult. I have always been able to go to any Zoom website there is, click something, and I’m there. Of course, some people can make unscrewing a cap impossibly hard.

Now, for Stipple-APA comments. I just have one. Thanks for summarizing for Garth Spencer how you got into fandom. This is how I got in. I read an article on APAs in the *Comic Buyers Guide*, which a friend was passing on to me at the time. The author mentioned three APAs, and I immediately inquired about them. I remember participating in two, the Dallas Area-APA and the Southern Fandom Press Association (SFPA). Over the years, while participating in SFPA, I found out about cons. At first, I only participated in SFPA’s convention, DeepSouthCon, which piggybacked on other cons. Then, I started going to still other conventions fannish friends invited me to.

By the way, I spotted you at the recent FANAC Zoom interview with Bjo and John Trimble.

Now for the letters. First, in answer to your comments to me. You doubt that your injury made you ambidextrous. Can I say your injury encouraged you to be ambidextrous?

((That would probably be more correct. Until then I had no reason to do things with my left hand that I was used to doing with my right.))

Another comment you made was that unintentional weight loss could be a sign of a medical problem. I answer this in two parts. The first part is I have had unintentional weight loss without any medical condition at all. At least any known one. The second part belies this. It’s obvious this unintentional weight loss is a sign of a condition. Too many signs in fact. Wish me luck.

Finally, among the letters, a response to John Hertz’s comment on *Masterpiece Theatre’s Sanditon*. I abandoned Masterpiece Theatre years ago for the very same reason— running down the characters in the classics. After a while, it not only didn’t

shock me; it bored me. They decided to excise everything that made the characters great.

((There are a lot of shows on “Masterpiece” created by different people. Some are excellent, others less so. I don’t remember being so upset by one as I was by “Sanditon”. By the way there is to be another season of it, so maybe the creator can redeem himself somewhat. We shall see.))

#

Jim Caughran, caughranjim at gmail dot com

7 June 2021

I looked at your cover and marvelled. Ray Nelson! Early Nelson, I guessed. Great!

((I don’t know that it’s early Nelson. He only sent it to me in the past year or two.))

I have resolved to do fanac, regularly. These resolutions--perhaps to write a loc each day--rarely last longer than 24 hours. But you benefit, possibly because P and M are at the top of the alphabet. Or not.

30th of May, looked outside and discovered it was snowing! We live on the 33rd floor, so perhaps it melted before it hit the ground, and nobody knew about it.

Your comments to (Mealy): The lockdowns and general outlook are depression-inducing events. Janet went through a couple of bouts in the last year, where I could only hold her and assure her that things would be OK.

As the pandemic goes on, still people reject its existence or its cures. Canada finally has a larger portion of people inoculated than the US. The US (and Europe) was holding on to all its injections; Canada was late getting them and thus late protecting anybody but essential health workers.

Oops. I thought those were your mailing comments to Stipple.

((They were.))

If you can't rely on air conditioning, higher ceilings are more comfortable. This is, I know, an obsolete observation.

((Not necessarily. We can usually depend on AC, but one never knows.))

Our Maine Coon fits your definition of bobcat. He's exactly the size of very large domestic cats, being one. And his name is Robbie, which seals it.

I've gone through a turmoil here, losing the fanzine, losing my comment, losing my mind. I'll quit now while I'm even.

#

We too, in the Great White North, Laurraine, have a flowering cactus. Ours is the Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus (*Opuntia humifusa*). Its quarter-size yellow flowers bloom for three-four days.

((I've known for a number of years that prickly pear grows in every state of the US. It's not surprising to hear it grows in Canada as well.))

We in Mississauga are less North than most Canadian communities. Latitude westward goes through northern California; eastward, we are between Boston and New York City and, further eastward roughly equivalent to Florence, Italy.

Re-invention of our backyard is imminent. Last year I suggested to Mary Ellen that we hire an exterior designer (=garden designer) who specializes in native plants, and bushes and trees. A few days before Christmas, Ellen, for Ellen is her name, presented us with a plan of four gardens.

Ellen will make a garden plan for a customer who will have minimum 60 percent native planting. We said we wanted 100 per cent.

((I wonder if I can find a landscape designer like Ellen here. I know someone who will design but not plant. Perhaps I should ask him. The landscaping I had done last fall doesn't seem to have worked out completely. The fact that he seems to have died doesn't help.

((Everything except my fruit trees is meant to be drought tolerant. I may have confused drought tolerant drought resistant in choosing plants last year. Many of my plants are natives.))

She at our request left space for a pond. We took her recommendation and hired Bobby and Rachael to create our pond. Twenty to twenty-five per cent of our pond will be bog, by our request.

I became interested in native plants perhaps as many as ten years ago. We saw natives and we bought them and we planted them, haphazardly and without a plan.

Along the way I became a volunteer with a group, the members of which collected native plants' seeds and sowed the seeds and kept the resulting plants until the plants were tall enough to be planted, at a former-estate now city-owned property, Riverwood Conservancy <https://theriverwoodconservancy.org/>

More recently, three years ago, we learned of a non-profit Mississauga group of volunteers going by the name Blooming Boulevards. Join for \$10 or \$15 a couple and you can apply for 50 native plants, ready to go in ground at the front of your property.

Three years ago we were garden 13 of 13. Last fall I joined the board of directors. This year Blooming Boulevards is supplying volunteer-grown plants for 75 gardens. The plants are chosen for their usefulness to native pollinators, e.g. insects and butterflies. <http://www.bloomingboulevards.org/>

Preparation for planting in our back yard involved the spreading by yours truly of 15 cubic yards of shredded cedar bark over paper. Plus, much removal by myself, digging of non-natives e.g. lily of the valley and allium and daylily, also native ostrich fern, plus bushes and one tree.

I believe the combination of stretching and kneeling and lifting and chopping with our axe made me more limber, low impact exercise. I might have lost a kg or two, too.

((Unfortunately I need someone to do the planting. Mike can no longer bend very much because of arthritis. I'm just not strong enough to do that kind of work.))

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

14 June 2021

Thank you for *Purrsonal Mewsings* 80; and with a cool, rainy day outside, it's a good day to stay inside, and get lots done on the Frankenputer. Here goes...

We haven't had any major power outages, or outages of Internet or TV service; but there are days when they are all iffy, and yesterday was a day when our internet connection couldn't decide if it wanted to go or not, even with wifi boosters on. Today is much better, but we always have the service number for Bell Canada handy.

((What do you use for wifi boosters?))

Weather here went from cool at the start of May to unseasonably hot by the start of June, and only now are we starting to get weather a little more suitable for spring. Our weather has also been very dry; and while the farmers' markets have started up here, there isn't much produce available just yet.

The province changes its policies on COVID-19 every few days, but one thing Yvonne was able to do is arrange for us our second shots on Canada Day, July 1. Our first shots were Astra Zeneca, but it looks like we will get Pfizer shots for our second, and we will get them at an arena in neighbouring Mississauga. I keep reading that the mixing of vaccines like this is beneficial, so we'll get those shots, be done with all of this fuss, keep the masks on, and hope for a return to normal activities real soon.

As of this week, many businesses can reopen to a certain extent. Patio dining can resume but not in-restaurant dining, not yet anyway. We desperately need haircuts, and we should be able to get them in about three weeks.

The letter column...if you did not get my letter of comment on issue 79, let me know. I wrote it up on May 13. There are still discussions here and there of Trump's role in the January 6 invasion of the Capitol and threats that Trump may run again for the presidency. I sincerely hope he's not able to do it, for I suspect it would be impossible to campaign from a jail cell. Biden has renewed old friendships, and made the US look friendly and competent again.

For the most part, I did keep most of my weight loss after my bout with COVID-19. I weighed 207 lbs. when I caught it, I weighed 196 when it cleared up, and I am just under 200 now. I just can't pig out the way I used to, and I will try to lose a few pounds as the summer goes by.

Time to go, afternoon commitments are close by. Enjoy your summer, and I hope to hear from you again soon.

* * *

* Closing Remarks

As I finish up this zine, it's the middle of June and we're in our dry summer. Daytime highs have been hovering in the 90s and 100s Fahrenheit. Nighttime lows frequently don't go below 60 or 70 Fahrenheit.

I have my first trip since before COVID coming up the end of the month. It was originally scheduled for Westercon, but that con folded for various reasons. However, I will, instead, spend a week with my sister, who lives in a Seattle suburb.

Laurraine

18 June 2021