

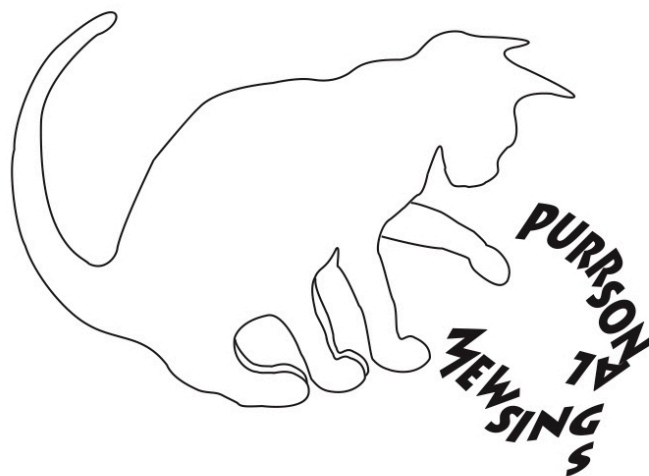
Purrsonal Mewsings #84



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

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#84

November 2021

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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

This is a last-minute production. One of Mike's nieces visited for about ten days in September; I spent quite a bit of time with her. There was also a convergence of a number of medical appointments that kept me busier than usual outside the house in October. In addition we decided, because of a great iPhone deal and because of problems with our current equipment (intermittent battery problems with mine), to go shopping for new iPhones and a new iPad for Mike to replace his very old iPad Pro and a new iMac for me. Unfortunately the only one in stock was the iPad for Mike. The iPhones were ordered; Mike's iPhone arrived; I ordered a different model and I am still waiting. I put off ordering the iMac, because an order we almost put through looked like it might arrive too close to the date for my Yucatan trip. I prefer to keep my calendar open for a week or two before my trips.

About mid-September our wildlife camera died, and we were unable to replace it until October. Our new camera is a slightly better model for less money than we paid for the old one.

We have had some rain since my last issue.

I didn't have a lot of luck finding someone to do yard work. I tried out two people. One did very good work but was way too expensive. The other managed to mow down some cultivated plants along with the weeds.

We both got our COVID booster shots, and Mike got his flu shot.

* * *

* Kritter Korner



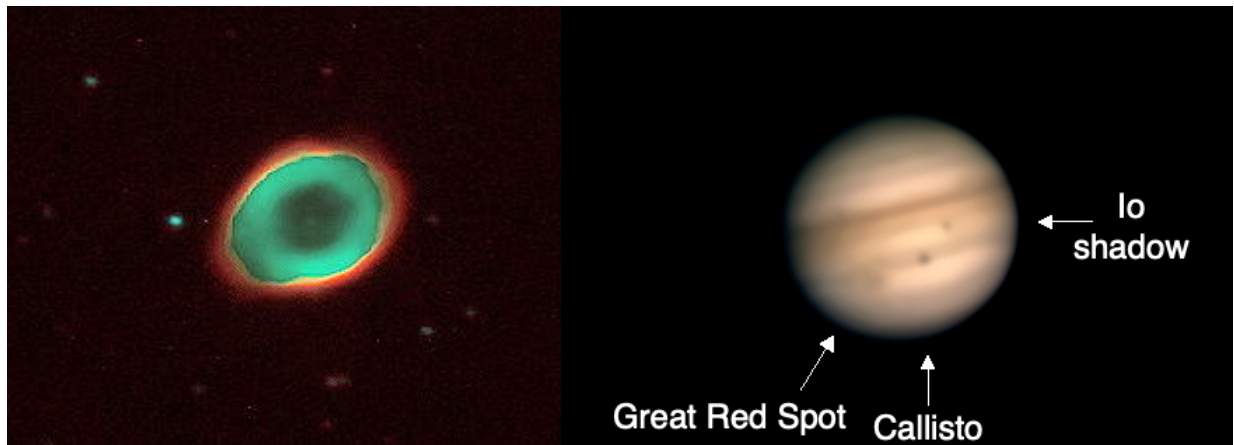
Here are two critters Mike saw as he walked to his observatory one evening—a bobcat

and a rattlesnake, possibly about to strike.

* * *

* **Astronomy**

Here are a couple of gems Mike managed to take recently of the Ring Nebula (M57) and Jupiter.



* * *

* **StippleAPA**

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

MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #345

Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #35):

There certainly were many commercial media cons, but there were also quite a few fan-run ones. When I found fandom in 1973, I also found Trekdom. I was lucky to have a good guide. I attended a few large Trek conventions in NYC and a few small ones in Michigan. In addition I

attended an Equicon/Filmcon in LA. Later I attended one Doctor Who convention in LA.

We also had a cat named Shadow, who succumbed to cancer.

My apologies, but I don't have a backstory for the illo I ran. It was sent to me by a fan friend shortly before her death.

Justin E. A. Busch (Stipple-Ations: STFan Views and Reviews):

There are supposed to be raccoons and coatis in our area, but we haven't been lucky enough to see one. There were apparently raccoons in our old California neighbourhood as well. One ate the goldfish from a neighbour's pond. I never saw any raccoons.

Jason K. Burnett (Just Keep Swimming):

So sorry to read about your water leak problem. I hope you were able to find an affordable fix.

Amy R. Clark (Hello and Enjoy the Ride! #2):

Fall has set in here as well. Temperatures have been quite pleasant of late.

Mike has never sold his photos, but sometimes people have asked his permission to use some of them.

Erik Biever (Blue Ribbon):

Congratulations on your first place win at the fair!

I feed our squirrels along with the birds. They feed on the suet block I put near the ground.

As far as I'm concerned, Kim Stanley Robinson cannot do characters. The ones that appear in his work have little or no depth. I found his Mars trilogy interesting from a scientific viewpoint. To me his so-called novels, at least the ones I've read or attempted to read, are treatises thinly disguised as novels.

I've been to the Museum of Glass in Tacoma. It is very disappointing compared to the Corning Museum in New York State. We were at the

Chihuly museum during the day. Many of the exhibits are indoors, which is how you were probably misled.

Thank you for the info about Charles E. Hamilton, III.

Joyce Maetta Odum (Bagsy Ginger Sling):

I'm not sure what part of the coconut I'm allergic to, but I may have to stop using coconut oil. I think I will go back to Canola Oil. It may explain some of the minor aches I've been subjected to lately.

The only contact allergy I have (so far, knock on wood) is to sheep's wool.

Mercury died a number of years ago from cancer. When we got him as a kitten, he had a couple of seizures. I had a bunch of expensive tests run on him, but they were all negative. After that he stopped having seizures until near the very end when he had a series of seizures.

The Germans did not care if the Jewish people were religious or not. It was the lineage that interested them.

Somewhere along the way, I lost my stage fright completely soon after I started working. I had to make presentations at work.

Marge Sehnert (Mamma's Mutterings):

I liked science fiction almost as soon as I was able to read—sometime between the ages of three and seven.

You have confused meteorites and meteors. Meteorites are meteoroids that have fallen to the ground. Meteors are the visible streak in the sky. Mike doesn't seem to have much interest in photographing meteor showers, mostly I think because they

tend to be best after midnight; he doesn't usually want to stay up so late.

Chrystine (A Sparrow's Perspective): I'm happy to read you are now fully vaccinated against COVID.

Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits): Actually the incidence of blood clots is much higher from COVID than from the vaccines.

I enjoyed most of the Carleton

Zoom reunion events that I attended. If I had found it boring, I would have left.

Next time I get back to the Seattle area, I'll have to climb to the top of Tamanomus Rock. At least we know where it is now. If it hadn't taken so long to find the place, we may have done that walk.

The rain was enjoyed by all the plants, both cultivated and not.

I watched *News of the World* and found it mildly entertaining.

I hope to see you all next month.

*** Letters to the Editor**

The text of letters received will be in brown. My replies to the letters will be enclosed in double parentheses and will be in black. I will also routinely make editorial corrections in punctuation, spelling, and the like. I use Oxford standards of spelling and punctuation.

Gary Mattingly, gsmattingly at yahoo dot com

16 September 2021

First, I like the cover.

I found it interesting that you just discovered you are allergic to coconut. I don't eat that much coconut, so I suppose it would take a while for me to discovered something like that.

((I had started using a product called Vitacoco, which was recommended by someone as a healthier alternative to sports drinks, about a years or so ago. After I eliminated potato and other nightshades from my diet, it became obvious that something else was bothering me. Just recently I had to stop using coconut oil in cooking for the same reason.))

Also interesting about the antelope squirrels. Concrete can get pretty hot so my guess is that everything else in your yard is even hotter. My goodness.

((Note that the spots where they lay were in the shade.))

You do seem to get a lot of animal visitors in your yard. Our dogs usually chase anything away that visits the yard. We do occasionally have opossums on the telephone wires though. They quite annoy the dogs.

((Opossums, being marsupials, are not subject to the same kind of diseases as other mammals; so they are good animals to have around.))

Nice lightning photos.

I've read and enjoyed all of the "MuderBot Diaries". I would agree that they are not "great" or "classic" books but definitely entertaining.

I agree about *Birds of Prey* also. Entertaining but not great.

I have not read *Piranesi*. I'm currently reading *Black Sun*. Fortunately or unfortunately, my reading of books is rather slow, mainly because I do a lot of other things and rarely spend very long every day reading books. Exercising, walking the dogs, watching movies, etc. all take up a large part of my day.

((My reading time is similar to yours, and I'm not a fast reader.))

Your trip to Seattle. Fortunately I am unaware of having any food allergies. I enjoyed reading about your trip, and I liked the photos also. Although I am not allergic to any foods, as far as I know, I don't eat meat, no beef, no fish, no crustaceans, nope, a big no on all animal-based food. Well, I do occasionally eat milk, eggs, and cheese but that's about it. My point is, you seem to have had a much easier time finding things to eat than I normally do. I really don't drink much alcohol although it is not due to allergies. It just has a lot of calories and, if I drink more than a couple of glasses I usually don't like the effect. Over all of 2021, I've probably had a couple of glasses of wine, a couple of beers, and a couple of Pisco Sours. Almost all of those were during the period I was in Peru in May and June.

((I don't drink much alcohol, either. Because of the sinus headaches I suffered before I figured out my food allergies, I'd pretty much given up on alcohol. Lately I've gone back to occasional drinks.))

Not much to comment on for me with respect to your StippleAPA comments. I should do one thing that you do, go through and discard expired meds. I really don't have many meds. Mainly there are some I've received for my trips, like for altitude sickness (I took one and never felt the need for it. I've never really had a problem with high altitudes.) and some meds in case of extreme stomach problems that some travellers experience (I never needed them). Otherwise I have some pain meds that I have received when I have had kidney stones. I'm pretty sure all of those have expired. Ah, also some for sciatica pain that I had three or four years ago. Those are no doubt expired also. Otherwise, it is just over-the-counter meds and probably some of those have expired too. Other than my vitamins and supplements, I mainly only take

Excedrin, Aleve, sinus medication (with pseudoephedrine), and occasionally something for mild stomach upset. I am fortunate that I have no problems with high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, and so many of those other things that affect much of the population.

I play the piano occasionally. I didn't for a long time because we didn't have one. I bought an upright that was on sale at a garage sale but have not played it very much. I think it needs to be tuned, but I haven't gotten around to having it done. I used to play the clarinet and still have the clarinet someplace, but I haven't played it for many years. Otherwise I did play the drums for a few months in a small group of friends but not since that point. My non-playing has nothing to do with arthritis, just a lack of time and desire.

With respect to toilets, I feel certain they sell toilets that use more water. I don't think our toilets are low flow but probably lower than the toilets from the past. The main difference seems that the seat is higher which is why I found something to put my feet on to raise them a bit. I have read that can be helpful. It certainly isn't harmful. I find the toilets with lights and water rinses or bidets or whatever, heated seats, talking, etc. all very interesting; but I don't think I would ever buy one.

I've attended a number of Zoom meetings but am not really that fond of them. I don't like meetings in general but much prefer the ones in person, not Zoom. I don't have a problem with Zoom, I'm just not fond of it.

I also would say that, for the most part, I prefer the destination rather than the trip there. Long plane trips to South America or Europe are particularly not to my liking. Occasionally I do like train trips though, not the whole trip but definitely bits and pieces of it can be entertaining. I had a sleeper room on a trip from Oakland to Portland (I think it was Portland, as opposed to Seattle). That was for a Corflu. I'd like to take a trip on trains like the Orient Express, but I know those can be rather expensive. I liked taking the high speed trains in Europe and Japan. I also liked the high speed ferry between England and the European continent. Hm, I have been on one cruise on a relatively small boat that visited various islands in the Galapagos. That was okay also. Again, I had a private room (more spacious than the one on the train), and I liked that. The meals were fairly tasty, and they had sufficient vegetarian fare.

I think you talk more to people than I do. I noted that you talked to people on the plane on your trip to Seattle, knew their reason for travel, even their occupations. I rarely talk to the people on planes for more than a minute or two. Fortunately on the Galapagos cruise when I sat with people for meals, I did find people with whom I could have interesting conversations and also who were at least moderately liberal. If I had had to sit with someone who was conservative, conversation would have either been minimal or non-existent.

My favourite history course was actually an independent study class in high school. Everyone in the class was invited to take the class. Basically it was made up of advanced placement students. As long as we did something, we got an A. For one entire semester

I studied South African history from around the time the Portuguese first were there to the Boer War. This was my choice and not based on any suggestion by the teacher. I studied not only the Portuguese, the Afrikaners, the English, etc. but also the various people who were actually native to Africa. A lot of them actually came from other parts of Africa and fought against the people who were initially in South Africa. A lot of those tribes were decimated.

We have Northern Pacific Rattlesnakes in our area. We also have gopher snakes and a lot of people confuse the two.

My sister and her two children, who are adults and living on their own, live in Phoenix. They are all vaccinated. They were vaccinated as early as they could be.

On to LoCs - I look forward to hearing about your Yucatan trip.



I also have a lot of places that I still want to see. So I exercise quite a bit, Bikram yoga four or five times per week, pilates/HIITs once or twice per week, hiking five to ten miles once per week with the dogs. I walk the dogs 1+ mile in the morning and 1+ mile in the evening, I occasionally (once or twice every couple of weeks) run 2.5 to 5 miles on the treadmill. I need to bring that back up to 2 or 3 times a week, which I did in the past. I do weight training 30 to 45 minutes four days a week. I do interval/intermittent fasting (fast 19 to 20 hours every day, eat 5 to 4 hours). I try to limit my calorie intake and try to maintain a reasonable weight and BMI (even though I know BMI isn't the best indicator, if I keep the numbers in the middle I should be okay). I also take quite a few vitamins and supplements. I want to be able to walk and move and run, climb ruins and stairs, and see all the things I still want to see.

I wish we would get some rain, actually a fair amount of rain would be good. Thanks for this issue!

#

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

17 September 2021

This is my response to *Purrsonal Mewsings* 82.

I bet more than ever the Southwest is suffering from a lack of rainfall. By contrast, we in the East are receiving more rain than ever. Also Europe is receiving more rain than ever. However, we, in the DC area, while receiving more rain, have more moderate

weather than outside the area. Some bigwig here must have exchanged crazier politics for more moderate weather with the gods.

In Kritter Korner, the big subject remains rain. You weren't getting enough in June. It must be worse for the animals. Or is it normal for two antelope squirrels to lie flat in the shade? I certainly sought a better climate. I spent the summer in air conditioning even though it spelled the end to my daily walks.

By the way, great photo shots.

Not even in Astronomy, could you get away from the heat. Because of smoke from fires, Mike could not get good pictures of the heavens. Better luck for Mike next year.

Now to comment on the Reviews. The first book was the *Network Effect*. If it's like the James Bond novels, it's entertaining. However, they rarely hit anything deep. By contrast, the third novel reviewed, *Piranesi*, sounds like it might hit something deep within us. Then again, it might be, as Shakespeare said, all fire and fury signifying nothing.

Now for your "Trip to Seattle". You mention you're a caeliac and have to be gluten free. A top person in my government agency for many decades, when I was working, recently told me she was a caeliac too; and she was astonished that people embraced her diet who didn't have to.

((There are people who aren't caeliac who are helped by cutting gluten out of their diet. They are sensitive to gluten in other ways.))

As for your trip to Washington State, that reminds me that it's been decades since I went to the Smithsonian Mall in Washington, DC; and seen all the museums there. I bet they have been changed too. I remember the Air and Space Museum, the Natural History Museum, the National Gallery and many others. Although things must have changed over the decades, I am sure there is still a lot of walking. I think next time, I will take the tourist bus if they still have it.

Now we get to your StippleAPA comments. In your comment to Jeanne Mealy, you mention you have a daily list of things to do. I have a daily list of things. The problem is that I get seduced by fun things and ignore the things on that list. As a fun thing, I include writing my erstwhile book.

In your comment to Margaret Sehnert, you tell how, at one time, you could play three musical instruments. I hear the Japanese schools teach their kids to play three musical instruments. Of course, I don't know whether you were ever in a Japanese school. Also, there is another subject here. You have had to give the violin up because of arthritis. I had arthritis in my fifties. Age has rolled it back. I hope it rolls back yours.

((I went to Japanese schools for kindergarten and part of an academic year. After we moved to the US, my mother recruited a friend to teach my sister and me to play the

piano. Later one of the schools we went to let us pick instruments to get free lessons in. We both continued beyond that but not much. Although a German herbal supplement called Wobenzym N has helped my arthritis lot, it hasn't unbent my fingers enough to enable me to play musical instruments. Even playing the piano is a challenge.))

Last, I will respond to the letters. The first letter I will do that with is a letter by Tom Feller, ironically his first one of several. He talked about his jury duty. He said the cases he dealt with were civil law rather than criminal law. Wasn't his job before retiring in finance, a kissing cousin of much civil law? Others' jury duty had nothing to do with their job and more to do with the need for jurors. There have been too many people in my county eligible for jury duty. For that reason, I never served on one. On the other hand, a friend of mine was on jury after jury in the District of Columbia. There, too few people were eligible to serve. In fact, he once served as jury foreman.

The next letter I would like to comment on is Cathy Palmer-Lister's. I didn't realize the coyotes in the east are larger. People are certainly scared of them when they hear of a sighting.

The next letter is Hope Leibowitz's. With old age, we're all having problems with our minds. For instance, my memory for recent things is shot. I have to write a lot of them down. Plus I remember things that didn't happen. Periodically, the time isn't what I think it is. Periodically, I think places are where they aren't. I'm going to have to watch the time and read the map better.

The next letter is John Hertz's. Laurraine, I didn't realize Mike published his autobiography. Good for him.

#

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

3 September 2021

I was told all the days of my childhood and youth that I'd outgrow my sneezy allergies, and so I did. But your food allergies seem to be getting more extensive and hence harder to avoid. Is that the general experience that one type tends to fade and the other increases?

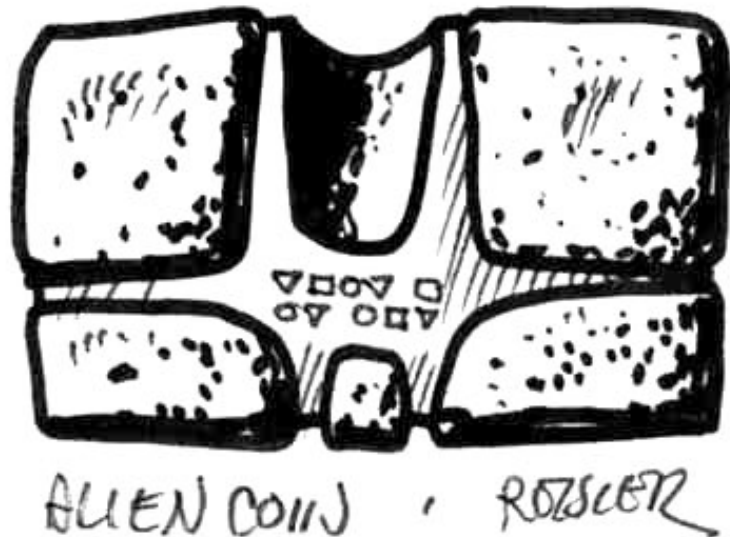
((I think it varies a lot from person to person. One old doctor I went to for a while told me that his allergies were gone when he returned home from the Korean War. My allergies didn't start, as far as I know, until I was in my mid-teens. Those were the sneezy pollen kind. The first set of allergy shots mostly did away with them. I had a second set of allergy shots after I developed noticeable asthma after moving to California. Those also cleared up after six years of shots. Just before we moved to Arizona, though, the asthma slowly returned. I've been getting shots ever since we moved, and they didn't seem to be going away. Without my knowing it, the rise of food allergy symptoms only made the other allergies worse. By the way all the foods I've developed allergies to were ones I didn't grow up with. My diet during the first several

years of my life when we were in Japan was quite different from standard American fare. I think I started developing reactions to some of them not too many years after we moved to the US. I just didn't realize they were allergy symptoms, and neither did anyone else. I think allergies developed after childhood are different from the ones people have as children.)

I do remember eating in the restaurant atop the Space Needle and a monorail, but there's a lot more to see in Seattle than I ever did in the late '60s (I think it was). It sounds like Mimi gave you the Full Treatment.

Oh! I see it's off to Yucatan (the Yucatan?) next. Central America ✓.

((Actually, since the Yucatan is part of Mexico, I think it's still considered North America.))



#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot net

23 September 2021

Purrsonal Mewsings 82 is here, and a response is overdue. So much to do, so I gave myself a vacation from writing, and now I can get back to it.

I have always liked squirrels...we have the usual black and grey squirrels here, the same species, I gather; but we also have smaller red squirrels and chipmunks. There's been the odd report of white albino squirrels, too. Love all the other critters you got there, too.

We have never stopped wearing masks. We usually double-mask, not only to protect others, but to protect ourselves from those who have never worn a mask, and are not likely to ever do so. If it weren't for the anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers, we might have been done with this whole thing a long time ago.

For a couple of years, I lived in Victoria, British Columbia, a ferry ride away from Seattle. Our family were getting ready to go to Seattle when my grandmother arrived unannounced from Toronto. My father's instant fix was, "Okay, you stay at home, we'll take Grandma, and you can come the next time". And, of course, the next time never came. I would have liked to go to Seattle, but I don't think I ever will.

From Murray Moore...yes, we did go to the Paramount Fine Foods Arena in Mississauga for our second shots. Yes, I can see Cloverdale Mall from our balcony. And from Hope Leibowitz...Trufen, I haven't been there in many years.

Might be getting some more work coming up as we all recover from the pandemic. I could use the regular schedule of work again, and the paycheques always help. I have become reconnected with a company that supplied registration staff for conventions and conferences; so I might as well keep going with it, seeing all the convention experience we've had. Yvonne should be getting on with them too, so the financial pressure should ease a bit.

#

David Bratman, dbratman at earthlink dot net

13 October 2021

Re your comment to Justin, you know the alternative name for that movie? *Star Trek: The Motionless Picture*.

((Yes, I usually refer to it that way, since I slept through part of it.))

#

Bill Wright, bilwmahail at gmail dot com

16 October 2021

This is from Melbourne, Australia:

Hello, Laurraine. Thanks for posting your StippleAPA zine in the Trufen email list. Loved the cover photo of the Puffin Bird in Ireland. Reminds me of the Gubru Suzerain of Propriety in David Brin's master work, *The Uplift War*. There are three of them:

- the Suzerain of Propriety [Ethics];
- the Suzerain of Beam and Talon [War]; and
- the Suzerain of Cost and Caution [Accountancy].

A rattling good story, with some interesting things to say about the human condition, anthropology, genetics, evolution, and our relationship with other species. Like much of speculative fiction these days, meaty stuff in a candy wrapper.

((Actually the puffin photo is from Iceland, though it is the same species that nest in Ireland.))

The rest of the zine is easy reading, especially the mailing comments that reminded me of my visits to Twin Cities fandom , first in 1972 (when I toured North America in the wake of LACon, 30th Worldcon in Los Angeles, where I joined Robin Johnson in drumming up support for Aussiecon, the 33rd worldcon in Melbourne in 1975); and then in 2013 as the DUFF laureate representing Australia and New Zealand at LoneStarCon3, the 71st Worldcon in San Antonio, Texas.

Preoccupation with the COVID 19 pandemic permeates the zine. It's a global concern. I live in Melbourne, Australia, currently suffering under its sixth long-running COVID lockdown since mid-2020 that will end five days earlier than anticipated on Friday October 22, 2021, as we race to an interim 70% fully vaccinated target. From then on, if all goes well, there will be no lockdown, no restrictions on leaving home, and no curfew. But we will still be living with a minimum of nearly 2000 new cases of reported Delta variant infection and half a dozen deaths per day in a population of four million. After eighty days of lockdown, I can hardly wait to get out and about, although at age 84 I am in the riskier cohort courting intensive care ventilation and death should I contract the virus. I will take the risk, but not very often. These days, one has to court death to engage life.

Pictured is a sky surfer off the St Kilda foreshore a block away from where I live.



Chances are that international travellers will be allowed to fly to Australia by November, but their movements outside the New South Wales and Victoria bubble are likely to be restricted until vaccination rates in Australia's other five states and territories ramp up to over 80 per cent fully vaccinated. That said, this is a risky part of the world with our populous neighbours to the north, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, less than ten per cent vaccinated. We are Fortress Australia for a reason, except that I would like to see us doing more to help neighbouring countries boost their vaccination rates to nearer ours.

#

Ed Zdrojewski, ed at grainnet dot com

2 September 2021

Sorry to take so long to get back to you with a LoC. This will be mostly a LoC to #81, which is the first zine you sent me. Toward the end, I'll have a couple comments on #83, which I just received via e-mail a few days ago.

Thanks for putting me on your mailing list. I particularly enjoyed the wildlife photos. Since I'm new to this, I'm presuming you use some sort of motion-sensor setup? I could try that here but would get mostly squirrels and bunnies. You have a nice selection of wildlife out in Arizona.

((Yes, we use a trail cam.))

We received an amazing amount of smoke here from the wildfires on the West Coast, some 2,000 miles away. It probably helped keep the weather relatively cool all summer. The worst was one morning on my way to work having picked up a protein bar for breakfast and taking an overpass across I-72 in Decatur. There was no fog that morning, but I could see and smell a haze of smoke hovering over the interstate. It set off my respiratory allergies badly enough that I had to stop and take an extra antihistamine.

((That kind of thing has happened here as well.))

Speaking of allergies, thank you for your excellent commentary on your food allergies. No rants, no histrionics, no assumption that the reader doesn't believe you – just straightforward reporting about your situation and commentary that shows you have an excellent understanding of the topic. That was so refreshing to read.

I feel for your red wine allergy, especially. I would hate to have that one. I don't know how many times I'd be spotted with a glass of merlot in my hand, and some excruciatingly well-intentioned person would swoop down on me to warn me about sulphite allergies. In recent years, I've taken to giving a response such as, "In my 66 years, I've drunk enough red wine to float a small Navy destroyer. If I had a sulphite allergy, you'd think I'd have figured it out by now."

((I always thought that was what I had, since almost every type of red wine gives me a spitting headache. Now I know it's something else. Strangely enough I've been able to tolerate merlot pretty well., though I don't think I will try it any more. I wonder if the variety of grape is a factor? I'm fine with white wine, my favourite being Riesling.))

So far as I know, I have only one food allergy, and it may not even be a true food allergy: pine nuts. They're not used all that much in Midwestern cooking, which is probably a good thing. The way I figured it out dates back to my teenage years. Every December, my parents made it a chore for me to decorate the Christmas tree. Dad always insisted on having a live tree, the kind with the long needles that shed and bury themselves in the carpet, so you're still getting stabbed in the bare foot with them from time to time the following April. After completing the job and again taking the decorations down after New Years, I noticed that my hands would itch incessantly, sometimes for weeks afterward.

Flash forward nearly 20 years. I like the scent of pine, so I bought some pine-scented shampoo, with pine oil providing the scent. After about a week or so of using it, I noticed that my scalp itched terribly, almost burning with intensity. Then I developed lines of rash down my body from head to foot. I'm kinda slow sometimes, but eventually figured out that the rash corresponded to the streams of water running down my body when I rinsed the shampoo out of my hair. It was a pretty severe skin allergy to the pine oil. So really, it was a skin allergy rather than a food allergy. Nevertheless, I decided it would be a good idea to avoid pine nuts (and a pine oil-flavoured Greek concoction called retsina) because taking pine oil internally seemed like a really bad idea.

((For similar reasons I won't use wheat-based kitty litter. I don't know if inhaling dust from it would set off my caeliac, but I'd rather not take the chance.))

Anyway, good luck with your food allergies and getting your dietary balance right. And don't listen to the nannies who claim to know better than you what's good for you. Especially not those fanatics who write books about how wheat is poison and should be outlawed like crack cocaine. (Yes, caeliac disease is real. Yes, gluten allergies are real. Not everyone has them.)

I saw the episode about L. Frank Baum on PBS. Very fascinating – he reminded me a lot of some science fiction fans in personality. Didn't know he was such a racist, though – probably not so unusual around the turn of the 20th century.

I use the Associated Press style book for standards of spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. Like good little journalists everywhere.

((American journalists, anyway.))

I saw a wild coyote once outside one of the windows of my office in Decatur. At first, I thought it was just a really ugly dog, until a coworker identified it. Yes, they really do have really long tongues that encircle their snouts when they are hungry or imitating Gene Simmons. They also use mail order a lot from Acme Corporation.

((The ones around here are very doglike and not at all ugly.))

On to just a couple of remarks on #83. I'm very much looking forward to your report from Iceland, Laurraine.

((My apologies, but it won't be in this issue. A bunch of medical appointments converged this month and left me little time at home. The next issue won't be until January, so I'm hoping I can write up all the trip reports and spread them out over three issues.))

I've been COVID vaccinated (Moderna) and contracted COVID-19 anyway. It must have been one of those breakthrough cases. Worst Labor Day weekend ever – the disease was a mild case, but the quarantine really sucked. I'm sure the vaccination contributed to keeping my case mild. I do wear a mask in public places indoors. I never double-mask – the Faucist can push me only so far.

((I don't double mask, but I have a supply of masks with filter pockets and have been using the filters.))

Lloyd Penney probably knows this by now, but when the U.S. border opens to Canadians on Nov. 8, proof of vaccination with the Astra Seneca vaccine will be accepted.

((That's good to know. But my question is will Canadians let *us* in? I'm considering attending a Corflu in Vancouver, BC.))

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

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IAHF: Cathy Palmer-Lister

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* Closing Remarks

Well I guess I didn't get to the Iceland trip report—again. I can't imagine not being able to write up all my trip reports before my next issue.

Laurraine

28 October 2021