

# Purrsonal Mewsings #89



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

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 #520. ©2022 R-Laurraine Tutihasi.

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## **PURRSONAL MEWSINGS**

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#89

March 2023

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Editorial / Introduction—p. 2  
Kritter Korner—p. 2  
Astronomy—p. 3  
Notable Books, etc.—p. 5  
Astronomy trip to LA—p. 7  
StippleAPA—p. 14  
Letters—p. 17  
Closing Remarks—p. 26

### Art and Photo Credits

Cover Photo—Photo of our backyard bird feeders taken 2 March 2023 by editor; Title page header—Sheryl Birkhead  
Photos—p. 2—bat photo taken by trail cam, other by editor; p. 3—trail cam; pp. 3-5—astronomy photos taken by Mike; p. 5—concert, the editor; pp. 7-10—editor; p. 9—Mike; pp. 13-14—editor; p. 18—friend of Tim Sullivan

Contributions of art, reviews, articles, fiction, letters, even poetry welcome. Publication not guaranteed, but all submissions will be given due consideration.

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

If you are reading this electronically and would prefer to receive a printed version, please let me know. Or vice versa.



\* Editorial / Introduction

Starting in late September and into October, I accompanied my husband and one of his nieces to Los Angeles for an astronomy event and also visiting friends and sightseeing.

In November I attended Loscon 48 in Los Angeles.

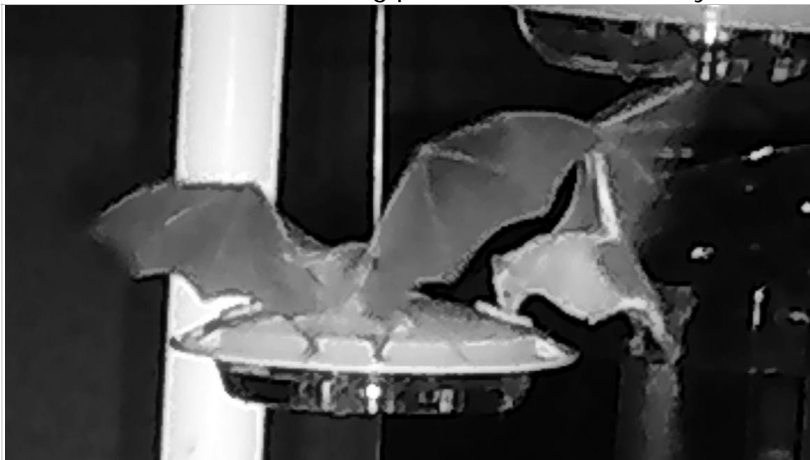
We didn't have our new replacement Internet router very long before Mike found out about a possible upgrade. When we went to the AT&T store, however, he found out that we couldn't get it for complicated reasons. On the other hand, we were offered a small business plan. It's actually much better. It's 5G, unlimited, and costs a little more than half as much as the other plan. It's not glitch-free, but at least we don't have to worry so much about using more than our monthly allotment. I've been streaming quite a few TV shows. There don't seem to be as much on the channels from DirecTV as there used to be. Of course I have plenty of unviewed DVDs, but I guess they will have to wait until I catch up with shows on Apple TV and HBO MAX.

We had a good amount of precipitation, including snow, through February and into early March. Temperatures have been much cooler than usual at this time of year.

\* \* \*

\* Kritter Korner

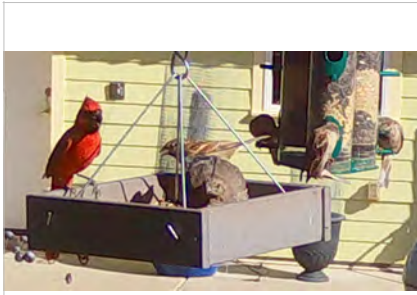
Here are five interesting photos taken since my last zine.



Two bats feeding



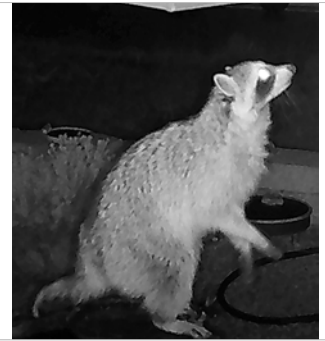
Black-chinned hummingbird



Cardinals & sparrows feeding



Cooper's hawk in flight

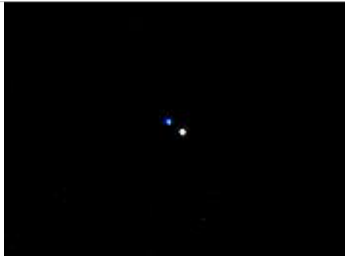


Raccoon at bird feeder

\* \* \*

## \* Astronomy

There are a lot of photos this time, including the 2022 montage.



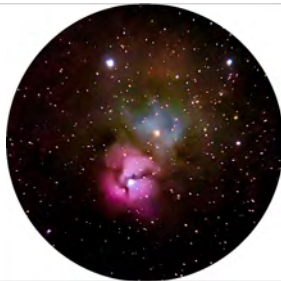
Albireo (double star)



Comet C/2022 E3



IC5146 Cocoon Nebula)



M20 (Trifid Nebula)



NGC598 (M33, Triangulum Galaxy)

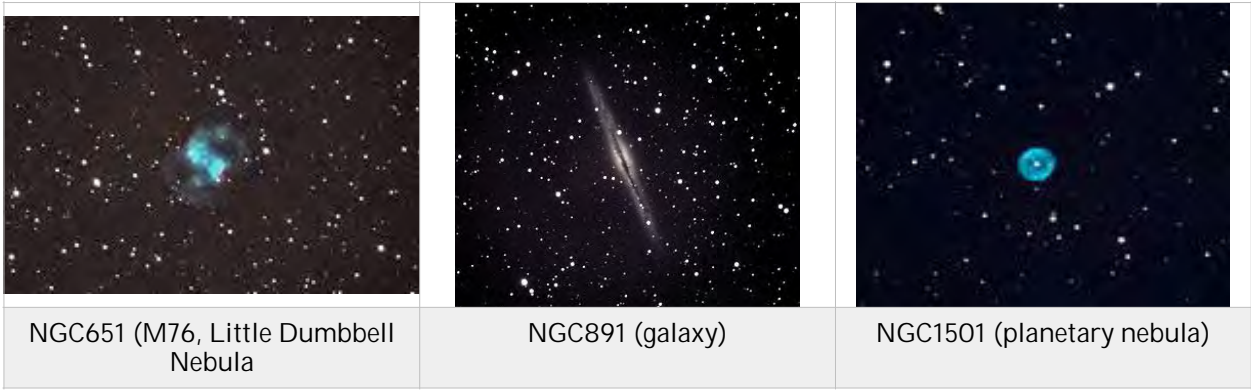


NGC613 (galaxy)

On the next page is the 2022 Montage.







\* \* \*

\* Notable Books Read and Events Attended

*Great Expectations*, by Charles Dickens, adapted by Jo Clifford.

This was a stage version of the book, condensed out of necessity. It was performed at the Rogue Theatre in Tucson. I saw it with a friend in early November. My friend and I are both familiar with the book and some cinematic adaptations. We found it enjoyable and touching. I won't go into detail since I'm sure most of you are familiar with the story.

#

*Oracle Chamber Music Festival Student Concert*, performed by students of different levels of ability.



Fortunately the least talented performed first. The first piece, "The Deserted Garden" by Florence Price, was performed abominably. It was embarrassing to witness, and I knew at least one of the performers.

After that the other pieces were performed acceptably or better. Music played were by Schubert, Beethoven, Dvorak, Lili Boulanger, Vaughan-Williams, and Schumann. Some of the groups included teachers taking the place of students who couldn't be there.

I don't usually attend these local concerts, but this one was free for me.

#

*Babette's Feast*, conceived and developed by Abigail Killeen, written by Rose Courtney, adapted from the short story by Isak Dinesen.

This play was performed by the Rogue Theatre in Tucson. A friend and I saw it in mid-January. I had seen the European movie version and was curious to see how it would be done on stage.

Babette is a refugee of the failed Paris Commune of 1871. As you may know, there was a lot of turmoil in France after the well-known revolution. Babette flees France and finds herself in the Puritan town in Scandinavia. She takes a position as a cook for two sisters whose deceased father had been the town pastor. As represented in the story, the entire town is Puritan, wearing plain clothes and living simply. Babette adapts to her new situation and learns to make the kind of foods the townspeople are familiar with.

One day Babette wins a lottery, and she decides to use the money to treat the town to the kind of Parisian food she used to make as a chef. She has all the ingredients sent from France. All the townspeople are invited to this dinner. There are also a couple of others invited. While the outsiders relish the food, the townspeople have decided to eat without conversation. Because the meal includes various wines, the townspeople find themselves loosening up for the occasion.

The story is relatively simple; but I found the emotional impact to be great, especially in this staged production. The film is made on location in Denmark, and everything is done realistically. In the play, the set is minimal and suggestive. There is never any real food. For some reason, I found the stage production much more moving than the film. I think the food in the movie was a distraction.

It might be interesting to read the original story.

#

*The Kaiju Preservation Society*, by John Scalzi.

This was a somewhat different sort of science book. Kaiju are the "monsters" that appear in movies such as *Gojira* or *Pacific Rim*. In the book these monsters are found on a parallel Earth with portals that open to ours. A group of people study and try to protect them from exploitation. Unfortunately some unscrupulous people take advantage of one Kaiju and kidnap it to our Earth where there could be catastrophic consequences. The book tells the story of the rescue.

It's an easy read and fairly enjoyable. It doesn't have a lot of depth, though.

\* \* \*



## \* Astronomy Trip to Los Angeles

Mike, Linda, and I left home about 08:00 on Thursday, 29 September. Linda is Mike's niece. We made a fuel/pit stop in Gila Bend, where the old quaint gas station has been replaced by a Pilot truck stop. Gone are all the knick knacks we used to enjoy browsing.

About 11:30 I ate the lunch salad I had packed.

Linda wanted to drive into California from Arizona, so Mike stopped at Quartzite to change drivers. They changed back about sixty miles later before traffic got too hairy. We reached our hotel, a Courtyard in Old Town Pasadena, about 16:15.

We regrouped and went out in search of dinner about 17:45. The first place we got to turned out not to be open for dinner. Walking further we found Mi Piacce, an Italian restaurant that Mike and I were familiar with, and had a lovely dinner there.

At night I organized stuff for the next day and tried to catch up with e-mail and Facebook.

Friday, 30 September 2022, I went down to eat the hotel breakfast about 07:00. It was mostly self serve and quite expensive, but I didn't feel like going elsewhere on my own.

After breakfast we drove down to the Palos Verdes Peninsula, where we used to live. We had time before our scheduled meeting with our financial advisor, so we took Linda to the Wayfarer's Chapel and to a viewpoint from where we could see Abalone Cove, which is a nice spot for tide pools when the tide is low, which, unfortunately, it was not. The meeting with our financial advisor went well. We learned a lot.

Then we met Liz and Muriel, our former neighbours when we lived in Rolling Hills Estates, for lunch about noon at the Bluewater Grill in Redondo Beach. We sat in an enclosed deck. I had a crab salad and crème brûlée. We had a good time. It's always nice to see old friends.

After lunch we drove up to Malibu and visited a state beach that looked like nothing at the top by the road, but a little walking revealed a path down to the beach with interesting rock formations and caves (see at right). We think we may have seen otters or possibly seals floating among the seaweed; too bad we didn't have binoculars. There were a lot of gulls and other birds.



For dinner we drove down to Marina Del Rey with one stop for very expensive gas and met a friend of mine from Hughes Aircraft days for dinner at Tony P's Dockside Grill in Marina del Rey; we had great conversation. I had a cosmopolitan and spicy New Orleans style fish stew. I couldn't eat all of it, so I brought half of it back to our hotel.

It was fairly late when we returned to the hotel, so I just read a bit of e-mail and updated financial records and my diary.

On Saturday, 1 October 2022, I had a breakfast of leftovers about 7:30.

We left the hotel for Griffith Observatory about 09:00. The observatory is a place built for the entertainment and edification of the public in Griffith Park. We reached the place with time to spare, which was good because we had some trouble finding the correct place to park. We saw the overview show narrated by Leonard Nimoy about the place and looked at a number of exhibits before joining a guided tour that we had bought tickets for. Griffith Observatory was renovated in 2004-2006. Leonard Nimoy was one of the people who donated a sizeable contribution at the time.

After the tour we went to the Restaurant at the End of the Universe; I had a chicken salad, while Linda had a snack and Mike only had a drink.

After lunch we mostly walked around outside and visited the telescope on the roof, where we saw the star Vega. Eventually we left the observatory and looked around outside on the lawn. There were a couple of solar scopes set up for public use. We drove to Redondo Beach to have dinner at Il Fornaio with Don and Lee, friends of Mike from his TRW/Northrop Grumman days. On the way I nodded off for a while. We arrived way early, so I was able to catch up with some e-mail.

Dinner was about 18:00. We had a great time. Linda and I mainly talked with Lee until near the end. Don, after some discussion, picked up the tab.

We eventually drove back to Pasadena. I did a bit more catch-up reading of e-mail until I got too sleepy.

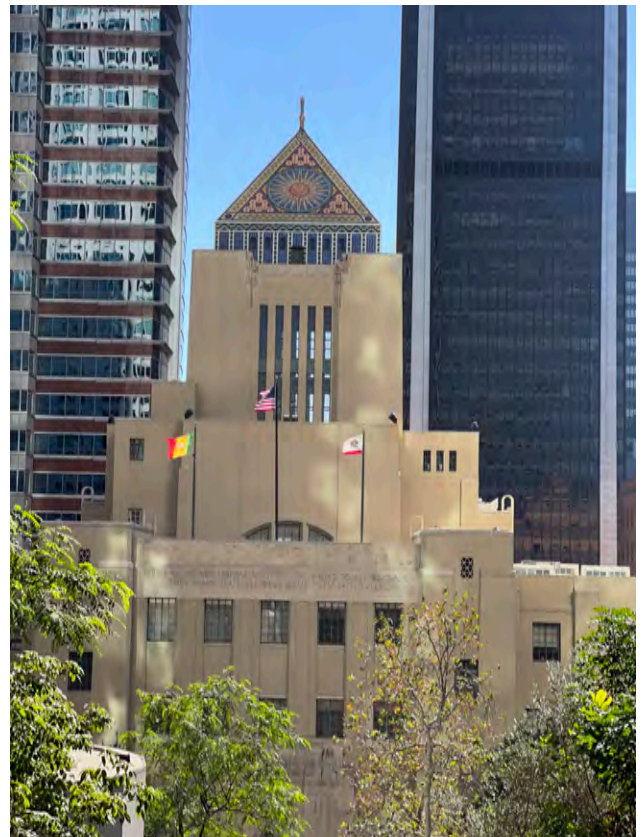
"June gloom" seemed par for the course this year at this time of the calendar. Every day started out "cloudy", but we had sunny afternoons.

We walked to Russell's for breakfast about 08:00 on Sunday, 2 October 2022.

After breakfast we returned to our hotel. Mike watched football, and I read e-mail and took a couple of short naps. About noon we left for the Los Angeles central library (see photo at right). During the entire time I lived in the area, I never made it there.

I had a snack bar lunch about 12:30.

We got to the library just before its opening time of 13:00. We looked around on our own for a while until shortly before the architectural tour at 14:00. The tour was led by a retired art history professor (Cal State Northridge) and was very interesting. The original building dates back to the early part of the twentieth century and is built of concrete. The original architect designed statues to go around the building. The newer part dates back to the eighties and nineties. After the tour we walked around looking for the entrance to the Biltmore Hotel, where I wanted to show Linda the interior. I think, though, the





current main entrance is not the same as it was.

For dinner we were invited by a co-worker of Mike's at their house, which has been added to until it's currently about three times its original size. The house practically fills their corner lot. They've done wonders with it, though.

We drove back to the hotel taking a strange route that took us through Monterey and Alhambra.

I had leftovers for breakfast again on Monday, 3 October 2022.

After breakfast I read e-mail until we left for the Los Angeles Zoo, which we reached several minutes before it opened. There was a lot of walking involved between exhibits, quite a number of which were not in evidence. But we saw enough that were. See meerkat photo at right.



We had lunch there. I had a naked hot dog and a couple of the fries that Mike got.

In the afternoon we finished seeing the remainder of the exhibits, including reptiles and amphibians that were inside. We returned to the hotel about mid-afternoon. I dozed on the way.

We left for dinner about 17:30 and walked a fair distance to Houston's. I had a grilled artichoke heart and ice cream for dessert.

At night I caught up with reading e-mail and touched base with Facebook..

Mike went down to breakfast with me on Tuesday, 4 October 2022.

After breakfast I caught up with reading e-mail. Then we left about 09:00 to drive downtown. We found parking easily enough, but finding a way into City Hall (used as the *Daily Planet* building in the old Superman series starring George Reeves—see photo at right) was harder. It turned out only the Main Street entrance was open. Visitors were limited to the observation deck, the level below it, and the third floor main entry. I had worked there for a little more than a year, and there used to be tours conducted weekly, but now it's just do-it-yourself.

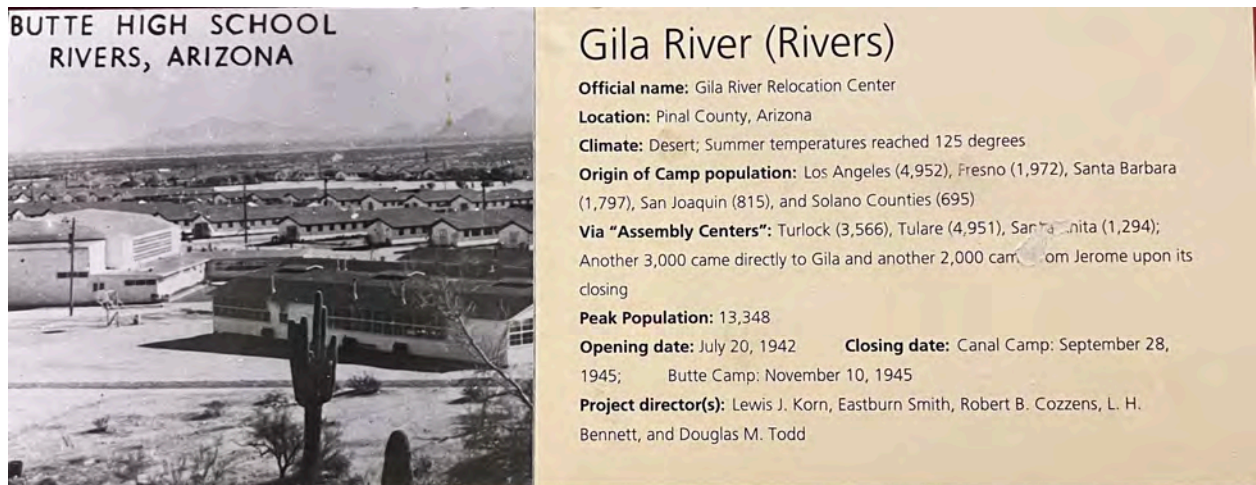


I had lunch about 12:00 at the Mitsure Grill on First on the way to our next destination. The



others weren't interested in eating.

We passed Little Tokyo on the way to the Japanese American Museum. At the museum I learned some things about the Japanese concentration camps that I hadn't known. There actually was one near Oracle! (see photo below) Also I hadn't known how lucky the Japanese on Bainbridge Island had been. Although they were the first to



**BUTTE HIGH SCHOOL  
RIVERS, ARIZONA**

**Gila River (Rivers)**

**Official name:** Gila River Relocation Center

**Location:** Pinal County, Arizona

**Climate:** Desert; Summer temperatures reached 125 degrees

**Origin of Camp population:** Los Angeles (4,952), Fresno (1,972), Santa Barbara (1,797), San Joaquin (815), and Solano Counties (695)

**Via "Assembly Centers":** Turlock (3,566), Tulare (4,951), Santa Anita (1,294); Another 3,000 came directly to Gila and another 2,000 came from Jerome upon its closing

**Peak Population:** 13,348

**Opening date:** July 20, 1942      **Closing date:** Canal Camp: September 28, 1945; Butte Camp: November 10, 1945

**Project director(s):** Lewis J. Korn, Eastburn Smith, Robert B. Cozzens, L. H. Bennett, and Douglas M. Todd

be interned, they had a friend on the outside. He stored the belongings of the island internees, and he was able to act as a go-between. I stopped at the market in Little Tokyo afterwards but didn't find anything to buy. We returned to the hotel on the early side, and I updated my records and read e-mail.

We had dinner at the Cheesecake Factory a few blocks from the hotel with friends from the LASFS (Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society). I had gluten-free tacos with iced tropical tea and a cappuccino after.

We had to leave relatively early because of an early morning the next day.

On Wednesday, 5 October 2022, we left the hotel room about 06:00. Between traffic and Disney's parking and shuttle system, it was 08:00 by the time we reached the gate. After we parked in the parking structure, we descended by escalator, took a tram to the park, and checked in at the park gate and security check. We walked to It's a Small World and rode it.

Breakfast was a fruit cup at an eatery near It's a Small World. We later learned that full restaurant menus, including gluten-free selections, were on the Disneyland app.

After breakfast we rode the Storybookland boat. Then we rode the train that goes around the park a little over one circuit and got off at New Orleans Square where we rode on the Mark Twain steamboat and went to the Tiki Room.

We had lunch at a nearby restaurant. I had a gluten-free half chicken. It was very tasty but filling, and I was unable to finish it.

After lunch we rode on the Jungle Cruise and the Pirates of the Caribbean, which seems to have been modified to add more water drops. There was some free entertainment, including the story of Beauty and the Beast done as a play, which we watched. We also went on Mr. Toad's Wild Ride.

We had dinner at a restaurant nearby, where I had a gluten-free cheeseburger.



At night we split up. The last ride Mike and I rode was the Haunted House. The wait time turned out to be well over an hour, probably because they experienced periodic problems. I considered it worthwhile, since the ride had been redecorated à la *The Nightmare before Christmas*. Linda went shopping instead. Afterward we met near Main Street, not too long before the Halloween light show. Mike and I got ice cream. After the show we allowed many attendees with small children to leave first; then we slowly made our way out of the park. A mistake at the exit caused us to walk a lot more than we should have. After we found our car, my feet, especially the right one, felt terrible. I dozed in the car during the drive back to our hotel. We got back to our hotel about midnight. I showered before retiring; I felt too grungy to jump into bed. I got to do bed about 01:00.

I went down to breakfast a bit on the late side on Thursday, 6 October 2022, because Mike got up late.

We left shortly after 9:00 for the Science Center to see the *Endeavour* shuttle craft and other exhibits. The *Endeavour* is not in its final space. A new building for it is under construction.

We had lunch there. I had a gluten-free cheeseburger.

We left the Science Centre after looking through the shops. Linda wanted to go to a bank. There wasn't much time left after that, so we looked for the cemetery where Marilyn Monroe and many other celebrities are buried. A helpful librarian and a





construction worker were extremely instrumental to us finding the place. On the other hand, none of us looked at every marker. Although it's a small place, it's filled with many markers. We found Marilyn Monroe, Ray Bradbury (see photo), and others.

Because of trouble navigating inside UCLA, we reached the Plateia restaurant about half an hour before my friend's reservation. My friend had also arrived early. We were able to be seated right away. I had duck and pistachio ice cream.

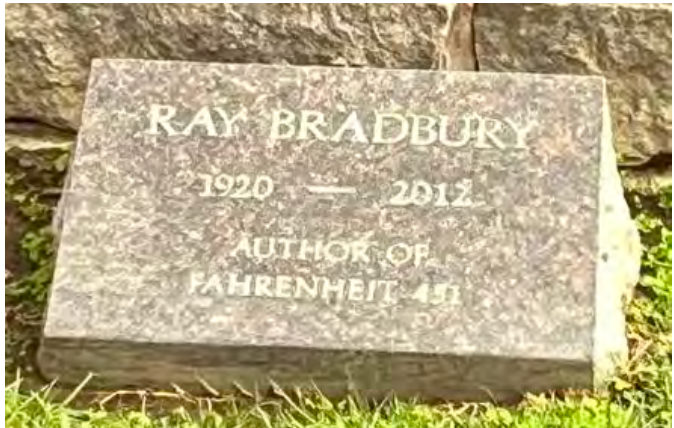
On the way back to the hotel, Mike stopped for gas.

I breakfasted on leftovers from the Cheesecake Factory on Friday, 7 October 2022.

I had time to read some e-mail before we left for Mount Wilson for an astronomical event. The road up was twisty and windy, so I had to stop reading, and eventually there were no more cell signals. We reached the gate to the telescope more than a half hour before it opened. Others of our party also arrived early. The gate opened about 10:05, and we all drove in to the public lot. Then someone showed up to take us to another parking area closer to the observatories. We gathered together for introductions and preliminaries. Eventually we walked to the museum. There we listened to three speakers introduced by our host, Scott Roberts. One speaker was Anshul Puri, an architect in LA who was bitten by the astronomy bug a couple of years ago and has been doing astrophotography ever since. Another speaker was Cameron Gillis, who talked about the 100-inch telescope, which was then out of commission.

The lunch served was from Panera Bread, so I had salad.

In the afternoon there were other speakers. The first speaker was Steve Edberg, who talked at length by Zoom about galaxies. The second speaker was cosmologist Chris





Burns who works at Wilson; he spoke about Planck's constant. Despite its name it doesn't seem to be constant. His next project is to study novae in their early stages. The third speaker was an astronomical artist named John Schwartz.

Dinner was a snack bar.

The evening was spent observing. Objects observed included Pluto, Saturn, Jupiter, a globular cluster, the Moon, an edge-on galaxy, and the Blue Snowball. It was after midnight when we drove back to our hotel.

I went down to breakfast about 07:45 on Saturday, 8 October 2022, and also picked up a banana and OJ for Mike, who had awakened with a sore throat.

About 09:30 we went to the Huntington Library and Gardens. Scott Roberts had our ticket bracelets. Don and Lee, with whom we'd had dinner were also there. Another of Mike's former co-workers was also there. She's a member of the gardens, and the three of us let her lead us in a tour of the garden. About halfway through the garden, Linda and Mike decided to go their own way. Mary and I continued through the gardens.

Photo below is of the Chinese garden at the Huntington.



We broke for lunch about noon and went to the Cafe 1919. I had a delicious poke salad and some fruit juice. While we were eating, Linda and Mike joined us.

After lunch Mary and I went to the library, which was only partly open. Then we went to the art museum. The AC started to bother Mary, so I finished the art museum on my own. I caught up with everyone at the Cafe 1919. Mary left to drive home and the rest of us went to the store. Shortly after that we returned to the hotel. Mike was feeling tired and took a nap. I washed my hair, napped for about fifteen minutes, updated my diary, and took a much longer nap (maybe a couple of hours).

We went to the Cheesecake Factory about 18:30, probably the worst time of the week. We had a long wait to be seated and a long wait after ordering before our food arrived. However it was a filling meal. Linda got antsy and left early.

Back at the hotel, I managed to catch up with a couple of days' of e-mail and weather record keeping. Mike got to bed early except for a leg cramp that interrupted his sleep.

On Sunday, 9 October 2022, I went down to breakfast about 07:45. Mike was feeling all stuffed up today and decided to stay in watching football.

Linda and I went to the Storrier Stearns Japanese Gardens in Pasadena (see photo at

right). It's very similar to the Japanese garden in Tucson in the way they've crammed a lot into a small space.

We had an early lunch at True Food, an interesting nouvelle cuisine establishment. I had butternut squash soup.

After lunch we went to the Norton Simon Museum. There was a film about the man and his collection that had been made since my previous visit. We returned to the hotel fairly early. Mike was still feeling poorly. I got five large chocolate chip cookies for him from the hotel store.

Linda and I discussed dinner and went to the Kabuki Japanese Restaurant. It was okay but not great. I had tuna sushi; it was rather stringy. The green tea ice cream was fine.

On the way back from dinner, I picked up French fries from the Cheesecake Factory and DayQuil at the hotel store for Mike. I did as much packing as I could before retiring.



The next day, we checked out of the hotel, packed our belongings into our car, and took Linda to LAX, from where she flew home to New Jersey.

On our driving trips, Mike almost always does all the driving. Because of his cold I took over in Gila Bend. About a third of my drive was after dark, so pretty stressful.

We picked up Cato the next day from his pet resort.

\* \* \*

## \* 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 #353

**Jacky Boykin, Rayne Sienna (Covers):** Really liked the covers.

**S. Rayne (Sahwain Again):** *Actifan* means someone who actively participates in fandom and doesn't

just read books or watch movies and TV shows. All the members of StippleAPA are actifans, since we all produce fanzines.

*AKICIF* usually means All Knowledge Is Contained In Fanzines (or Fandom)

*Femmefan* is a female fan, based on the French word *femme*, which means a woman or girl.

I believe all cockroaches can fly, although probably not long distances. They all have wings.

I found a good landscaper, but he suddenly stopped coming. Since it's winter, I haven't looked into the situation much.

Thanks for buying Mike's book. I hope you enjoy reading it

**Erik Biever (Pierre Has No Pants):**

Depending on atmospheric conditions, Mercury can be visible from many places. In fact it was because we saw Mercury in the evening sky in or around Long Beach, CA, that we named our cat Mercury. That was a number of years ago, and he is no longer with us, but we enjoyed his company for many years.

Enjoyed the Ole Lena joke, and I

LOLed the photo of your scarecrow.

**Bill Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #51):**

Sorry to hear you caught COVID. Glad it was such a mild case.

**Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #43):**

Self-publishing can have varying results depending on the book. My husband's autobiography is doing pretty well. He has sold a number of copies directly from the Amazon site, and he has also sold copies in person at astronomical events. The book was mentioned on my husband's web site, and I'm sure that made the initial difference.

**Chrystine (A Sparrow's Perspective):**

The English word for "evangélicos" is nearly identical—evangelicals.

**Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits):**

I hope your left knee and leg are doing better. The shows I watch on your viewing list are *La Brea*, *The Good Doctor*, the new *Quantum Leap*, and *Resident Alien*.

\*\*\*\*\*

**MAILING COMMENTS ON STIPPLE-APA #354**

**Jeanne Mealy (The Periodic Table of Variable Elements):**

So sad at Justin's passing; he had a lot of interesting things to say. Sorry also to losing Amy and Jason; perhaps they will return sometime in future.

**Kathy Sidles (Looking Around):**

I was in a play of *Cinderella* in grade school as a background extra. In junior high I was in a play as a Japanese doll; Japanese dolls don't



have movable parts, so I just had to stand still. In college I was in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*, as part of the chorus.

When I chose my first computer, I chose DOS. PCs were also the computers used by most of my friends. Later when Windows came out, I thought it made better sense to switch to the original GUI and changed to Apple computers, with which I was already familiar because of having used it at work. My first one was a used model that I got when Mike replaced his with a newer one. I have used UNIX at work but never have used it at home with one exception. The Apple operating system rides on a UNIX base. When really low-down things need to be done, we open a UNIX window. However I haven't had to do anything like that in many years.

Concussions can have longterm unpredictable memory effects. After suffering one in 1996, I have found all sorts of memory holes. This problem can affect memories from before, during, and after the accident.

**Jeanne Mealy (Quirky Bits):**

Although I'm saddened by Justin's passing, going in his sleep was probably the easiest way to go.

So sorry to hear about John's car troubles.

To photograph sunspots, one must use a special dark filter made specifically for photography. This filter protects the camera from the sun.

My regular travel shoes are slip-ons made specifically for travel. It allows me to slip them off while I'm flying, for example. Mine do have rubber soles, so walking for short distances is

not a problem.

The carryon I used is fairly thick, so the x-ray couldn't really make out the camera.

The late meals in Latin American countries work, because they have other smaller meals during the day. When I was in Mexico, we always had access to snacks between meals. Dinner is served late in many European countries as well.

I attended two Zoom parties on New Year's Eve and enjoyed them very much; it was much like attending a minicon.

**Jason Burnett (Swimming Away):**

So sorry to see you go. I hope you will be back again soon.

**S. Rayne (We Did Stuff):**

I'd be interested in seeing a trip report of your travels in Germany.

My African safari was on a trip organized by National Geographic partnering with G Adventures.

**W. A. Thomasson (Musings from the Gathering Dusk #52):**

So sorry to hear about the cancer. I hope it's something that can be easily taken care of.

I hope you're all set with new glasses.

I figured out the problem with printing Word documents. Somehow my settings got changed, and it had the wrong paper size. Once I figured that out and changed it back, it was okay.

Our retirement IRAs have been entrusted to a financial advisor. At least some of it is invested in stocks.

As of now, I have more money in my account that I started with.

I don't have attendance numbers for any Westercons. However I know that attendance numbers for Honolulu were the smallest up until recently.

**Lucy Schmeidler (Don't Ask #44):** Having no heat sounds terrible. There's probably a law against that.

I'm sorry you haven't found people to walk with.

Good luck finding a new place to live.

There are exercises other than walking to strengthen your legs.

**Cy Chauvin (Amazons & Swallows Forever! #90):** Sorry to hear about all the problems with your new home.

**Joyce Maetta Odom (Frowsty for the Nonce):** I thought StippleAPA was started because of the long waitlist for Minneapa. At least that's my memory of it.

There are special filters for cameras to take photos of the sun.

It turned out that my throat problem is eased with daily (or at least

\*\*\*\*\*

frequent) sinus rinses. I had been doing that until my nosebleed problem about a year ago. Then I stopped, at least at first because I couldn't do it until my nose healed. I just never got back to it until I had the throat problem.

If pet owners insist on leaving their pets outside without supervision, it isn't surprising if pets are attacked by wildlife or are run over. Such people should not be allowed to have pets. There are easy solutions if people want their pets to be outside, such as catios and dog runs.

**Dale Cozort (Space Bats & Butterflies):** According to a biography of Elon Musk, his family were wealthy, at least until his parents divorced. Sometimes you don't have to be wealthy to have rich tastes. My father was born into a wealthy family. Even though he was no longer wealthy when I was born, he still had many of the attitudes of the wealthy. I inherited many of those attitudes through osmosis and had to overcome them.

I hope to read all your zines again in six weeks.  
\* \* \*

\* 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.

[Mountain lions] are definitely around Reno. I've never seen one, but I've seen the remains of their hunting (deer) up the arroyos near my house. I've seen tracks in the area where a friend got that picture. Every once in a great while a young one wanders into town!

((Photo of cougar taken by a friend of Tim's is on the right.))



One of the more famous incidents:  
<https://nevadagaminghistory.com/2012/08/25/100-pound-mountain-lion-leaves-harrahs-reno/>

((The article tells about a cougar that got into Harrahs.))

My brother's front yard in Carson City is often full of deer, but no cougars so far.

#

John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St, No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 9005731 October 2022

Swell photos as ever—the rainbow front cover, the Cepheus galaxy (only 75 million light-years away), and the critters. I could hardly make out the sunspots on p. 4; speaking of the Sun, we'll discuss Harness's *Paradox Men* among the Classics of SF at Loscon XLVIII -- or, considering when this letter could be printed, we (*Deo volente*) already did. The road-runner (p. 3) reminds me of the first time I saw one, indeed running along the road next to a car I was riding in—gosh.

About your Carleton College re-union, I don't understand why some dorm rooms have no mirrors. Do you? You mention two windmills and show a photo of one. Are they really mills or did you just use the word loosely for wind turbines, as your text and photo suggest? Inquiring minds want to know, mine anyway. I'm impressed by how much gluten-free food you found, despite none at a Subway shop.

Hurrah for the Alexis Gilliland drawing.

You mention Mike's books. I hear one is a memoir. You remind me to look for it.

((Mike's most recent book is a memoir. As it is a self-published Amazon book, you'll have to buy it there.))



Ed Zdrojewski's LoC wonders about late dinners in Argentina; during a 1990 visit a Rosario restaurant hadn't begun serving dinner at 10 p.m. Isn't that due to the siesta custom?

((I'm sure the two are connected, though I don't know which came first. It was the same way in Italy.))

Lloyd Penney's LoC reminds me of sorrows facing me as a lawyer when I learn people have signed documents they didn't read. *Purrsonal Mewsings* readers! Don't do that! Discourage people within reach from doing that!

#

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937      2 November 2022

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* #88. I am enclosing my latest SFPazine in trade.

I did not find the mixing of genres in *Light from Uncommon Stars* satisfying and ranked it number six on my Hugo ballot. I liked *The Galaxy, and the Ground Within* much more and ranked it number two.

I have actually been to the Carleton campus. I attended Ripon (class of 76), which was in the same athletic conference; although it is hard to believe now, I was on the cross country team.

I have occasionally posted reviews on Amazon and rarely rate anything five stars. They have to be flawless for me to give such a rating. I would not even give *War and Peace* five stars.

#

Heath Row, 4367 Globe Ave, Culver City, CA 90230      8 November 2022

It's been a while since I've corresponded with you—especially outside of apa mailing comments—and I recently read *Purrsonal Mewsings* #56-58. This LOC is in response to #58. Having recently returned to the pages of the Neffer Amateur Press Alliance, N'APA, I miss your presence within its pages; but I'm glad you've gotten involved in StippleAPA. It looks like a great group of people, though I'm sure Justin E.A. Busch will be missed. I appreciate receiving PM in my in box, regardless of whether we participate in the same apa, or whether it arrives every six or 12 weeks. We apahacks do what we must, where we must!

I am curious whether you'd be open to reprinting your book reviews in *The N3F Review of Books*. I lightly agent other writers' reviews—to help diversify the voices in the *Review*—and credit where reviews originally ran. You'd receive a byline, and we could use a credit line similar to "This review was previously published in slightly different form in the StippleAPA apazine *Purrsonal Mewsings* #TK" or your requested credit line of "Copyright 2022 by R-Laurraine Tutihasi. Originally published in *Purrsonal*

*Mewsings* #TK, [http://www.weasner.com/Purrsonal\\_Mewsings](http://www.weasner.com/Purrsonal_Mewsings)." Let me know what you think.

((I'm open to that. The second format looks good.))

Thank you for your weather reports and "Kritter Korner" updates. Your nature photography is one reason I read *Purrsonal Mewsings*. Now that you've lived in Arizona for some time, your understanding of the land and its inhabitants is increasingly interesting to me. The photograph of the antelope squirrels is particularly wonderful, as are the trail cam photos of various birds in flight. That western kingbird is absolutely beautiful!

But what I am most envious of in your no-longer-so-new environs is Mike's observatory and astronomical photography. What a joy that must be for you two. It's a favourite aspect of your fanzine.

Your trip report on the college reunion in Minneapolis was interesting, particularly that the reunion featured convention-style panel discussions, talks, and other programming! What fun—and what a neat idea.

How interesting that you joined ANZAPA in addition to StippleAPA. I'm sure you've encountered and exchanged comments with Perry Middlemiss; I reprint his book reviews in the *Review*—you'd be joining good company. And ANZAPAn Leigh Edmonds is also active in the Spectator Amateur Press Society, which I also recently joined. Small world, getting smaller! I'm planning a new edition of *Blue Moon Special*, my decade-plus inactive directory of apae, for 2023 and appreciate your sharing David Grigg's e-mail address. I shall have to get started sending out queries for the update soon.

((I don't remember whether I already gave you David Grigg's e-mail address. He can be reached at david.grigg at gmail dot com.))

In Murray Moore's July LOC, he mentioned the formal endangered status of the monarch butterfly. Last week and this weekend, I was thrilled to see a single monarch—perhaps the same one—fluttering around our driveway, backyard, and lemon tree. I will see them through more attentive eyes knowing their worsening status. They have long been a favourite of mine, since growing up in southern Wisconsin.

((Actually this past year was a good one for the monarchs.))

I found John Hertz and Richard Dengrove's comments on the idea of common knowledge thought-provoking, even if I missed the initial discussion. As the media we access—what we watch, what we hear, what we see—continues to fracture, I would imagine that "common" knowledge is changing, as well. More sources, more isolated sources, and a growth in less truthful sources could very well lead to a multiplicity of information (of varying quality) about the same world. While we still live in one World, there seems to be less of one, common, shared Reality in recent years, and more opportunity for multiple, competing, perhaps contradictory understandings of that

Reality. It might be the case that there are now more, smaller commons—rather than one Common—and that those multiple commons have less in... common.

As a firm believer in Truth, I am pained by discussion of “alternative facts” and worry about the risks of a pure or strict relativism. While I believe there are certainly multiple approaches to, understanding of, and responses to Reality—and that we need to understand each other’s perspectives and interpretations with empathy, kindness, and patience—I also think that there is still a singular underlying Reality despite any fracturing or fragmenting of human perception or understanding of that Reality as a whole.

So there might have once been a more unified understanding of common facts, figures, and truths—more widely held common knowledge. As people become more polarized politically, more isolated socially, and perhaps even more focused on the immediate family or home as the social unit that matters most—rather than your block, neighbourhood, school, church, fraternal organization or service club, town, state, country, region, profession, etc.—this fracturing increases, perhaps leading to more, smaller pockets of what might be considered shared or common. We might now have multiple common knowledges (plural), which might not always overlap.

For example, among a local astronomy club or Sierra Club chapter, there might be common knowledge. Within a community, there might be common knowledge—depending on the size of the community. Within a profession, there might be common knowledge. Within a science, there might be common knowledge—but as we’ve seen in climate science, that might not always be the case. And when we scale to the country, continent, or planetary level, common knowledge might weaken or break. However, that could even occur within something like our own science fiction fandom.

In fandom, we have sf fen, fantasy fen, horror fen—their common knowledge might be different. We have fanzine fen, club fen, con fen—their common knowledge might be different. We have literary fen and media fen—their common knowledge might be different. We have offline fen and online fen—their common knowledge might be different. We might even have printed book fen and ebook fen—their common knowledge might be different. Even now, do we have a shared sense of common knowledge among fen?

Interesting food for thought—though I’m not sure what my thoughts might contribute. Oh! And I just thought of something else. Is what is common knowledge determined by people and groups somehow, or does common knowledge just happen? That makes my brain hurt a little.

#

Ed Zdrojewski, ed at grainnet dot com

13 November 2022

In issue #88, I really liked your animal family photos, quail and antelope squirrels. There may be some semi-domesticated quail being raised in Illinois for the state fair,



but that's about it. I've never seen antelope squirrels. There are a few towns that have a population of black squirrels.

I'm a big Kenneth Branagh fan, so enjoyed *Belfast*. I do think, though, that in many cases, a director goes with black and white film for no other reason than to announce to the world that this is a "serious" film.

I never sleep well on the first night away from home, either. Much of my business travel these days is driving, so I've taken to having my own pillow along with me. (My teddy bear got into a snit with me in Sioux Center, IA, and ran away with a traveling circus.)

Having just gotten back from a short trip to Iowa, your photo of the wind turbine at Carleton College reminded me of Iowa, where turbines are just about everywhere that's not in a city. Personally, I think they're butt ugly but do understand the necessity of having them.

My first wife, Donna (died in 1993), had a goat as her totem animal. They can be remarkably cute. She particularly liked it when two of them would butt heads like a Klingon party game.

I still use ancient paper maps like the Rand McNally atlas. Siri has a pleasant voice, but she's better at providing sports scores than at driving directions.

One of the most unpleasant aspects of being an astronomer, so I've heard, was the need to work in extreme cold temperatures inside the observatory, necessary to maintain the mirrors without the distortion caused by temperature changes.

((When Mike goes out to his observatory in the winter, he wears long underwear under his jacket and other outer clothing.))

I probably should set the record straight on what I do for a living. I don't actually report on farming per se. *Grain Journal* is a trade publication for people who run grain elevators and feed mills, hence a lot of grain elevator photos in the magazine plus articles on how to run them profitably, etc. However, since our industry depends on farmers, we do spend a lot of time following farm news, as well as eavesdropping in small town diners and coffee shops.

Donna's magical name was "Iris Appleseed" and irises were her favourite flower. I try to keep some around the yard, and the nicest ones are some purple and white variety growing around the mailbox.

((The purple and white irises grow wild in Oracle. Although I planted some of those in my yard, the bulb varieties seem to have survived better. Most of the ones that keep coming up every year are a sort of faded orange colour.))

Note to self: I got my third COVID booster in October. That's as many as they'll let me take. Still need the flu shot.

Note to Lloyd Penney: When the local ADF (druid) group began holding public gatherings again after all the lockdowns and people just being too scared to come out of their smallest closets, they required attendees to provide proof of vaccination and wear masks. I suppose some people might have taken offence at that, but I thought they were being fairly reasonable. (A lot more reasonable than some of the crap that went down during the lockdowns.)

#

Richard Dengrove, richd22426 at aol dot com

21 November 2022

Editorial. It's time for me to replace some things too. I have been using Wordperfect. I'm one of the last holdouts. It looks like I'm in need of a new version. Also, my colour printer gave up the ghost, and I bought a new printer. Unfortunately, I found I'll be able to use my new printer only when I get Windows 11.

Kritter Korner. The quail and her chicks and the antelope squirrel and her kids. They're so cute in their way.

Astronomy. I love the shot of NGC6951. A galaxy with lots and lots of stars?

Notable Books and Movies. *Light from Uncommon Stars*. A weird mixture? It's what we want to believe in – both the devil and extraterrestrials. Thus we need a way of not choosing one or the other. *The Galaxy and the Ground Within*. You need large wormholes to travel faster than the speed of light. Unfortunately, all the worm holes we know are too small to fit us. I gather string theory gives us a better chance of traveling faster than light. Of course, readers are used to wormholes. Anyway, the interest is more the humans and aliens in the novel.

Carlton College Reunion. I wish I could remember my classmates in college like you can. I'm sure it helps if you attend reunions. I remember remembering a bunch of high school mates when I attended a class reunion. By the same token, I don't remember people in my library school class and those in my sociology/anthropology masters program because I didn't attend any of their reunions.

((I've only attended one previous college reunion. It was the fifth reunion, and I decided it was too soon. I decided then to wait until the fiftieth reunion. I've only attended two high school reunions. As with the college reunion, I decided that the first one was too early. I was invited to reunions at two other high schools but didn't attend for various reasons. I went to three different high schools. I haven't had any invitations to any graduate school reunions. I remember select people at each school I attended. I probably never knew all of them because of class sizes.))

Stipple-APA #351. Your answer to Jason Burnett's question made me think about myself. I'm afraid I get to bed very late. However, I sleep well rather than badly. Now, I have a question about Mike. If he likes to get up at the regular time, how did he handle the late late hours of astronomy?

((If Mike knows that he will be up late, he usually tries to take a nap beforehand. If that's not possible, he naps away much of the next day.))

In answer to Bill Thomasson about changing the viewpoint in a story or novel, may I suggest that the writer should let the reader know the viewpoint has changed? To do this, they should identify the new narrator. Maybe tell something about him or her.

((Unfortunately too many authors switch viewpoint characters without any explanation, leaving many readers confused.))

Stipple APA #352. You are truly trying to keep the works of mankind from killing off other species. You're a cat owner, but you tell Bill Thomasson about all the animals killed by cats. In addition, you tell Jeanne Mealy that you have a special feeder for hummingbirds because other birds discourage them from eating at their feeder. In short, you're a thinking woman.

((I have a cat, but he never goes outside unsupervised. Hummingbirds don't eat seeds like other birds that use my seed feeders. They only sip nectar and eat small flying insects. I try to provide a variety of food for different birds and animals.))

Jeanne Mealy. You tell her that you have a problem with your router. I haven't had one since I got my last one. ...Or is it that I have a problem and don't realize it?

((The routers we have had trouble with are the Internet routers. We have a new one now, but it still seems to require rebooting from time to time.))

Now for the letters.

Murray Moore. He may be right. Instead of grass for their lawns, people should plant native plants. They would require less watering. Also, it might be better if chipmunks feared humans rather than do tricks for them. Lots of humans don't like chipmunks. .

John Hertz. If someone says there's no reason not to commit suicide, they probably believe no amount of happiness is good enough. I don't demand that high a price from life.

Tom Feller. I remember reading Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* but I can't remember what it's about beyond English men and women talking.

Ed Zdrojewski. I'm glad I'm not allergic to any foods I know of. Bring on the coconuts. I have another comment too. I had four COVID shots. Three were Pfizer and one was Moderna. That day, I had another shot in addition to the anti-COVID shot, That resulted in a not-so-good reaction.

Myself. I have several comments on your comments in my very long letter. Thanks for allowing three months to write letters of comment back. Another comment concerns the butterfly effect. I think minuscule acts, like a butterfly flapping, are often overcome



by counter forces long before becoming tsunamis. A third comment concerns first class air fare: despite finding out how good the food is, I still won't pay the extortionate amount for first class either. A fourth comment concerns Amy Harlib's act: it sounds like a contortionist's act; can she still do it at her age? A fifth comment concerns life that breaths methane: I do remember there is life on Earth that survives methane. Can intelligent life do it? That might be the rub. ...Maybe not.

((Up until COVID at least, Amy was able to do her contortionist acts.))

Lloyd Penny. The politics of COVID have changed things. A lot of people didn't go back on the job markets, and he is finally getting gigs. Also I hear evolution has made it so COVID isn't as dangerous. In fact, I hear flu kills more people right now. It's a strange world we live in.

((Actually COVID has not become less dangerous. Fewer people are dying from it, because of immunity. Flu has seemed more dangerous, because the measures taken during COVID protected against flu as well. As soon as the masks fell away, people started catching flu again.))

#

Roslyn Willis, 200 Westfield Dr, #704, London ON N6H 2M4, Canada  
1 December 2022

I always love to get *Purrsonal Mewsings*. Yours and Mike's photos are beautiful and interesting and things I wouldn't otherwise see or know about. And the rainbow cover on your last issue was absolutely spectacular. I'm so glad you had a good time at your college reunion. I've never been to one of mine, even though Western is right here in London.

Our weather hasn't been too bad so far—only some snow and mostly rain and mild temperatures.

I've just had my 5th COVID 19 booster shot along with a flu shot.

I hope everything went well with your star party and your trip to Mt. Wilson. I envy your being always on the go.

#

Lloyd Penney, Penneys at bell dot net  
10 December 2022

Many thanks for *Purrsonal Mewsings* 88, and I realize I have left this very late. Good thing your issues are so far apart! Today has been a very busy day, and this will be my activity pre-dinner.

Sometimes having a wifi hotspot is difficult. Yvonne and I had flipphones in the past, but she got a smartphone so we could still have some internet access when wifi is

doubtful, or even impossible. When we do craft shows or conventions, we have a smartphone and a tablet, so we can make our sales from either.

I saw stories earlier this year about a massive sunspot forming; and once it exploded, a massive wave of radiation was heading our way. I guess that was clickbait, or it wasn't nearly as serious as was promised.

My high school had a couple of reunions, and then it was torn down. Grads from that school still get together, but it's usually for drinking binges, so I am not interested. Being on the grads' Facebook page is enough. As for my university, it changed its name altogether.

The LoCcol and MCs...valedictorian Justin Busch. He was just appearing on everyone's radar here, outside of the N3F, and now, he is gone. Having a doctor close by is a good thing. We used to have to travel a huge distance to get to our doctor, but now our doctor is literally across the street from us in a small office building.

COVID continues on...it seems we were actually lucky to have it early in 2020. We recovered and lost some weight, which we have been able to keep off; and we now have five shots each, plus our flu shot. We have every intention of surviving this. We also mask up regularly, and we are in the minority in doing this. Ed Zed wonders if proof of vaccination is required here...in some places and circumstances, yes, but with the current range of variants of COVID, masking up seems to be okay. I wonder how much this society has forgotten about its history...remember when the idea of vaccination was a modern-day miracle? Vaccination got rid of polio, and other diseases are virtually extinct...when did vaccination become such an invasion of privacy and rights?

My thanks to Rich Dengrove. Yes, some luck finally came my way with being a professional editor, now making some money on book and magazine editing, much needed as I am about a year and a half away from retirement; but now I have the ultimate editorial volunteer job...editor-in-chief of *Amazing Stories*. (I still can't quite believe I can say that.)

#

We Also Heard From: Evaline Auerbach and Andrew Porter

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\* **Closing Remarks**

Deadline for next issue will probably be mid-May.

*Laurraïne*  
2 March 2023