

Purrsonal Mewsings #94



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

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#94

March-June 2025

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* Editorial / Introduction

I'm late again, starting work on this issue about the time I should be finishing it up. I just finished my physical therapy in mid-March. There were several weeks during which I depended on Mike to chauffeur me around everywhere. During this time I was also doing my grocery shopping using the scooters provided by the stores. (I wonder when that became customary at supermarkets?) For the last month or so, I've been driving myself. Soon after that I started walking in the supermarkets. Even though it was my back that was injured, the injury eventually affected my legs. Is it because everything's connected? Is it because I was so inactive for so long? It's probably a combination of both. Now I have exercises to do for the rest of my life. I can see incremental improvements, but I'm not back to my old self. I've been feeding Cato for quite a while now and cleaning his litter boxes for slightly less time. I also fairly recently started taking care of all the bird feeders and birdbaths. I felt well enough last week to take Cato to the vet for his annual checkup. In late March I started walking Cato outside again.

During the time I was getting physical therapy, I usually had two appointments per week; it takes at least half an hour to drive there. Also I didn't have a lot of energy.

The hoped for dental implant did not work out. Instead I have a new multi tooth crown. I also have appointments for cataract surgery in late April and early May. Speaking of which, they crept up on me and delayed this even further. After each surgery I was forbidden from reading and using my computer. Now it's mid-May, so I figure this is a combined March and June issue.

We had a little bit of rain in January, none in February, and about an inch and a half in March. Since then we've had rain but not enough to make much difference. Temperatures have fluctuated quite a bit, including a couple of snowfalls. Temperatures started rising in April, but temperatures fluctuate quite a bit.

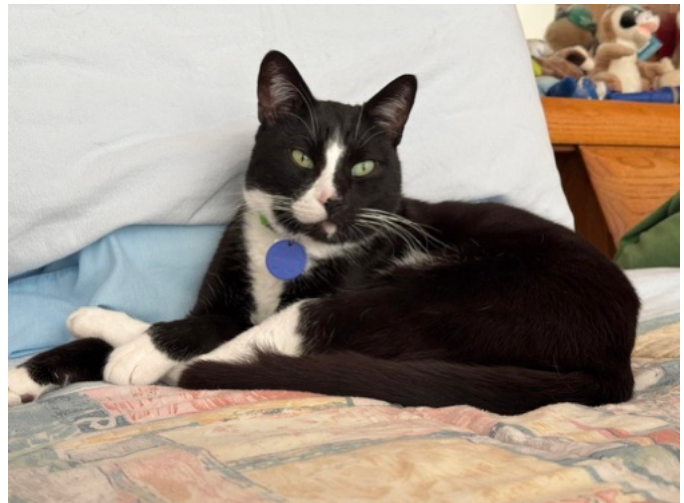
A note about the cover photo. I thought it was strange that the snake stuck its tail out from its hiding place. Mike thought the bulge in that part indicated it might have been digesting its breakfast. There is also a smaller snake that we see in the same spot sometimes.

* * *

* Kritter Korner

Cato has enjoyed a few walks outside, but he is too often disturbed by the barking of dogs or possibly coyotes. Aside from a couple of long walks, most of his walks are cut short by sounds he hears that sometimes are undetectable to me. Here's a recent photo.

As the weather warms, we have occasionally seen reptiles such as lizards and the snake on the cover.



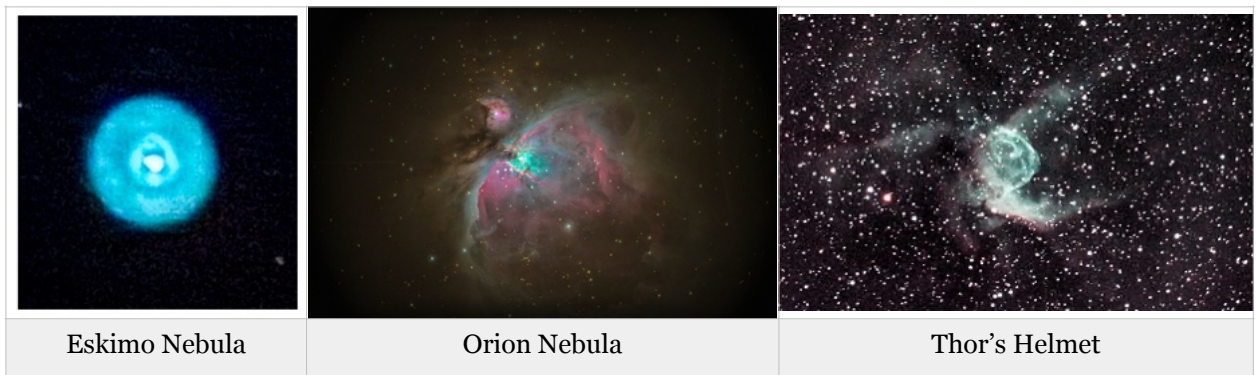
Recently Mike captured a hooded oriole using one of our hummingbird feeders. This particular feeder is attached to our bedroom window, which is probably greatly in need of cleaning. I've clipped a still from the video Mike took and tried to clean it up. It's the first oriole we've seen this season.



* * *

* Astronomy

This first quarter of the year has been marked by more cloudy (or dusty) days than clear. But there were a few notable photos.



Mike stayed busy giving talks at several events both in person and on Zoom or similar events. He also helped man tables at a couple of out-of-town events.

On the next page is Mike's annual event montage for 2024.



* * *

*** Thoughts:** My Opinions, Views, Etc. about Books, Plays, Movies, etc.

Until I Kill You, mini-series starring Shaun Evans, 2024. Seen on Britbox.

This is based on a true story about a woman attacked by a man, played by Shaun Evans, suspected of being a killer. I watched this because of Shaun Evans, who had starred in *Endeavour*, about the young Inspector Morse. The character in this show is just about the polar opposite of Endeavour.

It's not the sort of show that one would describe as "entertaining". I was impressed by the acting by all the actors involved.

#

Weathered, a continuing series about weather and other extremes that occur on Earth.

The show is presented by PBS and is also available in Canada. The show is available free on the PBS app. It started out as a ten-minute show in 2020 but lengthened to a half hour last year but shortened again to about ten minutes this year. If you're a meteorologist, there may not be much new information for you. For everyone else it is an eye-opening series that explains weather events and their causes and also explains other extreme events such as volcanic eruptions and tsunamis.

It explains such phenomena as the polar vortex that used to stay at higher latitudes and why it doesn't any more. I highly recommend the show to everyone interested in what's causing weather and other extreme events.

#

The Penguin, mini-series telling the origins of the Penguin character, one of Batman's enemies. Seen on Max.

As long as you're not too squeamish about violence on the screen, it's an excellent origin story. The title character is played by Colin Farrell, made up so much that he's totally unrecognizable.

His character's origin, such as his waddle, are excellently explained.

#

Marjorie Prime, seen at the Rogue Theatre.

This play is written by Jordan Harrison and is a story about the near future. The play starts out with Marjorie experiencing the first symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. To bring her comfort, she is provided with an AI representation of her late husband. The daughter is disturbed by this development but seems incapable of doing anything about it. For her, taking care of her mother is like being a nurse in a care home. She even has trouble communicating with her husband. As the play progresses, more of the people are replaced by AI versions. It's as though people have lost the ability to talk with one another. I found it very disturbing. Is this where many people's obsessions with their phones in preference to real conversation is leading us?

There is a movie version of the play. Based on the gross figure given on IMDB, it has only been in limited release.

#

The City and the City, 2018 miniseries based on the novel by China Mieville, seen on Britbox.

I read the book shortly after it came out, as it was nominated for the Hugo. I can't say I remember the book in much detail, but the basic concept of two cities being side by side but almost as though they were in separate dimensions is unique enough to be unforgettable.

I watched the miniseries at least in part out of curiosity. I thought it was done very well. If you haven't read the book, the two cities exist side by side; but one needs special permission to legally pass from one to the other. The main character is a police detective investigating the murder of a woman from the other city.

* * *

* **Eclipse Trip April 2024**

There was a total solar eclipse taking place in parts of the US, and Mike wanted to see it from his home town of Seymour, IN. We began preparations early since eclipse locations often are booked up far in advance. In Seymour's case, this was not so. The only thing that we got for our trouble was higher hotel rates for early booking. The rates closer to the event were more reasonable.

We started our trip early on Tuesday, 26 March, because I wanted to make stops on the way to Seymour. Since Mike wanted to be back home a few days after the eclipse in order to attend an event at home, any stops had to precede the main event. We got on the road about 08:30. Our first overnight stop was in Albuquerque, NM, where we seem to stop on every trip anywhere east of where we live in Oracle, AZ. The weather was freezing there. At least the heat in the motel room worked well. The same, unfortunately cannot be said about the nearby Denny's where we had dinner.

Free breakfast the next morning was provided by the motel. It was filling, but that's the best that can be said about it. We drove to Yukon, Oklahoma, home to one of Mike's boyhood friends. We got together with him and his wife for dinner at Chili's and had a very enjoyable time. The food was good enough to save the leftovers for the next day's lunch.

On Thursday we drove to St. Louis. We had dinner with one of my girlhood friends and her husband.

The next day we planned to visit the St. Louis Zoo, but traffic made this impossible. The street design to the zoo is appallingly poor, and traffic problems apparently happen a lot. Unless one gets to the zoo well before it opens, there is almost no chance of being able to get there. Luckily we had a backup plan and went to the Missouri Botanical Gardens, which were lovely, even though spring had barely arrived, Here are a few

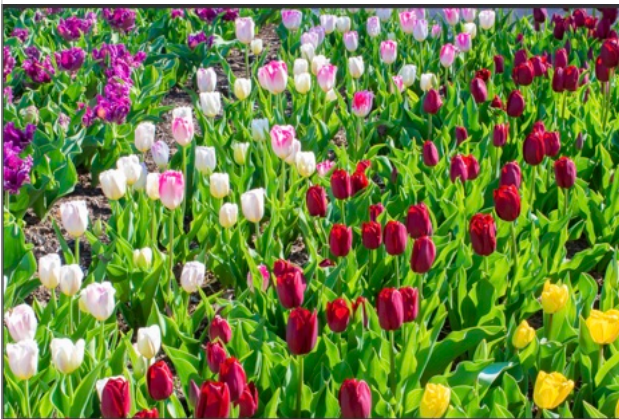
photos we took there.



The gardens included a fairly large lake



Field of hyacinths and daffodils



Field of tulips



Lake



Lake with waterfall



Me sitting on one of the decorative sheep



Lake with Canada geese



Robin

The drive the next day was relatively short. We went to Chicago. We had a party invitation from one of my college classmates, but Mike had caught a cold and wasn't feeling up to it. Chicago traffic was terrible. At our hotel, there was much disorganization. After much consternation, we got checked in. The hotel restaurant served Asian food and was fairly good.

The next day I walked to the Field Museum. It's a large place with many interesting exhibits. The highlight was Sue the dinosaur (photo of it and a couple of other dinosaurs follow). The Sue exhibit had sound effects and an animation of the way life might have been when Sue was alive. Dinner that night in the hotel restaurant was so large that it served as my breakfast for the following two days.



Overview of main hall in dinosaur section



Flying dinosaur



Sue (skull is recreation)

The next day I walked to the Shedd Aquarium, located in the same park as the museum. I lucked out at entry, being only one person. Larger parties had to wait. Shortly after entering I was able to see a show featuring Beluga whales. It was quite impressive. I hadn't known that Beluga whales were so intelligent. Their accommodations seemed ample. When not performing they have their own quarters. On the following page are a couple photos from the aquarium.



Beluga whales



Magellanic penguin

Mike was interested in seeing the nearby planetarium, but apparently he wasn't able to go in unless he bought a ticket for one of their events. He didn't find any events of interest to him, so he returned to the hotel.

Tuesday was rainy as well as windy. Every day was windy. We went to breakfast at a nearby restaurant. I had thought to visit the Art Institute, but it was closed on Tuesdays. The weather was not conducive to going to the zoo. We were both feeling a bit tired. Mike was still recovering from his cold, and I'd been wandering around like there was no tomorrow. We both needed the rest. In the evening one of my college classmates drove in to have dinner with us.

I had leftovers for breakfast on Wednesday, 3 April. With difficulty we got our luggage down to the lobby; we had to make two trips as we were unable to find a luggage cart. After the first trip, I stayed with our luggage by the front door. Retrieving our car from the valet took a while, but that gave me ample time to check out from the hotel. It was snowing, though none of it was accumulating since the air temperature was above freezing. We were on the road about 09:00. We stopped for gas, and I brought a bag of Doritos, which I later ate for lunch. We had an uneventful drive to Columbus, Ohio, with occasional sprinkles of rain. The area looked like it'd had a lot of rain. We arrived at the Fairfield Inn near the zoo about 16:30. The room was mostly satisfactory. We had dinner at the IHOP in the hotel parking lot. I had a cheeseburger without the bun with a fruit cup and hot tea with a hot chocolate for dessert.

About 09:00 the next morning, I left for the zoo. There were very few guests when I arrived, but more people eventually showed up. I saw many animals and took many photos. I took a lunch break about 13:00 and had a Caesar salad. I saw more exhibits in the afternoon but soon began to tire. I left the zoo about 14:30. Following are some photos from the zoo.



Freshwater aquarium



Sting rays



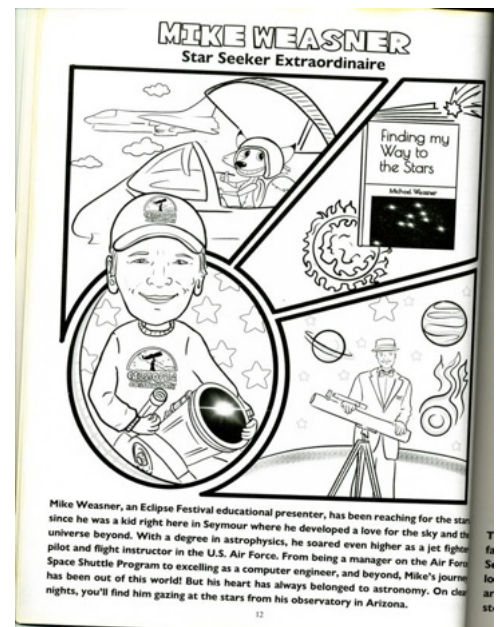
African penguin



Koala

We thought we'd have dinner at a Cheesecake Factory nearby, but we couldn't find it. We were about to choose between two other places, but then we saw an Outback almost right in front of us. We ate there and had a delicious meal.

I got down to breakfast on Friday about 07:45. Back in our room, I packed. We checked out of our hotel about 09:00 and were on the road to Seymour, Indiana. We reached the Fairfield Inn in Seymour about 13:00. After resting for a while, we went out about 13:45. Mike drove around town for a while before stopping at a pizza place near his old house for a party. The hosts graciously got me a separate gluten-free pizza. They had published a special colouring book for the eclipse that included a page for Mike (see right).

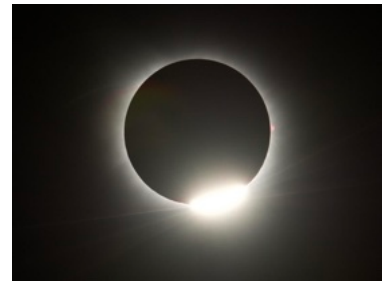


Mornings were cold, but it warmed up quite nicely later on. We went down to breakfast about 08:00. We headed out about 12:15 to the museum. Sales of Mike's autobiography were scheduled for 14:00-16:00, but Mike was worried about parking. Crowds did not develop, but he sold seventeen books. A few people bought more than one copy. I talked to a bunch of people. Three of Mike's nieces, one from out of state, arrived. After 16:00 we returned to the hotel for a bit of rest. In the evening we rode in Linda's (Linda is Mike's niece) rental car to a restaurant in a town about an hour's drive away. The place was designed after a fifties ice cream shop. I had a bacon cheeseburger without the bun and a fruit cup of strawberries. It was pretty late when we got back, leaving just enough time to prepare clothes for the next day. I got to bed about 22:30.

The next day, the hotel breakfast was a big flop. The person in charge didn't show up until after breakfast was scheduled to start. I got tea and OJ and ate part of a granola bar back in our room. This was a big fail. About 8:45 we left the hotel and headed toward the Knights of Columbus hall. We got a prime parking spot by the front door. After putting the book selling stuff inside, we wandered the stalls behind the building; the space is usually a parking lot. I bought two naked hot dogs and a bag of popcorn as my brunch and ate most of it before the speeches started.

About noon speakers started giving presentations. The first one was Mark Wilson, a sidewalk astronomer. The second one was a graduate student in astrophysics, specifically radio astronomy. Then Mike spoke for what seemed like forever. After that Mike sold a few books. Then Linda wanted a series of photo sessions. Eventually we left the K of C. Linda wanted to see Mike's old house, and they both wanted photos. After that they drove by the air field where some eclipse observing would be set up. Finally we returned to our hotel. We rested a bit. Then we drove to the nearby Mexican restaurant, El Nopal, about 18:30. They had a large menu. I had fish and brought leftovers back to the hotel.

On eclipse day we went down to breakfast about 07:45. The breakfast area was overflowing, and we ate in the front foyer. I had last night's leftovers for lunch about 12:00. After lunch I read until it was time to go down to the hotel parking lot for the total solar eclipse. I made it just a few minutes before first contact. Kathy was with us, and Nancy joined us later. This time I saw the first diamond ring. There were also a couple of prominences. My eyes weren't focusing very well, so I couldn't see many details. I tried using a new eclipse photo app Mike advised me to get, but the results were disappointing. I also saw the second diamond ring. The photos below were taken by Mike.



After the eclipse we had a pow wow with Linda and Kathy about dinner. We went to Applebees for dinner about 18:30. I had ribs, but I couldn't finish it. Kathy took home my leftovers. Back in our room, I did most of my packing and got to bed about 22:15.

The next day was completely clouded over. I got down to breakfast about 07:45. Linda helped us with our luggage. I checked us out, and we were on our way to Tulsa. It was almost 19:00 when we arrived at our hotel in Tulsa.

The following morning we went down to breakfast about 07:45. It had the best OJ of the free breakfast places we stayed at this trip. There was no yogurt until later, and I didn't bother to take any after it appeared since I'd taken a banana. The quality checker was going over everything in the area. The front desk person was very friendly. We were on the road to Albuquerque by 08:45. In Oklahoma we got quite a bit of rain; it helped to clean the windshield and get some road salt off the car. We stopped at a McDonald's to get lunch to eat as we drove. When we stopped for gas in Tucumcari, we switched places and I drove the rest of the way to Albuquerque, reaching our hotel a little after 18:00. It was about 18:30 when we went to eat at Mariscos Alta Mar, a Mexican restaurant close by. I had shrimp and rice and a frozen strawberry margarita.

We got underway about 08:30 the next morning. Our first stop was a Chevron station on the corner. We drove nonstop until we reached Globe. We reached home in mid-afternoon. I managed to get mostly unpacked.

* * *

* 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.

I discovered after I finished my last issue that I'd left out a couple of letters that I'd received by mail, so those are presented first.

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

8 October 2024

Your rattlesnake photo reminds me of an incident we once had in our back yard when we were still living in our house and had a birdhouse. We had several inhabitants over the years, including sparrows, bluebirds, and tree swallows. Then one year a snake moved in. I forget the species, but it was nonpoisonous. After it moved out, I cleaned the birdhouse using bleach and other disinfectants. Unfortunately, no bird ever moved in ever again.

#

John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St, #409, Los Angeles, CA 90057

11 October 2024

Swell sky photos by Mike in *Purrsonal Mewsings* 92 as ever.

Have you said why your supervisor is named Cato? For me, that's either of two Romans in classical times~ more exactly, it's a kind of nickname, meaning "has good sense" that is the result of natural wisdom combined with experience". Or did you leave out a hyphen, the name actually being Cat-O?

((I don't remember if I explained his name or not in this zine. However, he is named for the trainer character in the original movie *The Pink Panther* starring Peter Sellers. Cato would periodically jump out at the Sellers character—inspector Clousseau, as part of his training programme.))

You mention a CoKoCon program item "Hidden Figures" e.g. Katherine Johnson (1918-2020; received the Medal of Freedom). I recommend Margot Lee Shetterly's book *Hidden Figures* (2016; haven't seen-the movie). As I understand, they weren't really hidden -- they were in plain sight just inadequately noticed. A lesson for all.

((The movie is excellent.))

I apologize for the wretched English all too many of my fellow lawyers use. There's no excuse for it. David Mellinkoff's *Language of the Law* (1963) was published decades ago.

The Buffalo NASFic was fun. I arrived late but did manage to build the Fanzine Lounge, helped by Nickie & Rich Lynch, put up the Rotsler Award exhibit, conduct my three Classics of SF book discussions, and find & contribute to conversation. I've said a general-interest SF con is where you meet people you didn't know you wanted to meet.

#

Marcia Meldrum, mlynnmel at gmail dot com

29 January 2025

Thanks for sending such an interesting zine. I'm sorry to hear about your back and hope it continues to improve with physical therapy. I know it can make your whole life more difficult.

((Thanks for the sympathy. My back is much better now, and I'm building back up my strength elsewhere, recovering from too long a period of not enough activity.))

#

David Schlosser, schloss17 at suddenlink dot net

4 February 2025

A few first thoughts.

- 1) Have you considered some chiropractic along with the PT for your back? It doesn't work for everyone or everything but it may be worth a try.
- 2) Beautiful shots of the comet, aurora, and Jupiter.
- 3) So could Mike's tale be subtitled "The Krell are back and we're gonna be in trouble"? (Hey na, Hey na, the Krell are back)

((I did think about chiropractic, but my sister (a paediatrician) talked me out of it. In any case I lucked out with a really great physical therapist.))

#

Jeanne Mealy, jmealy-in-mn at comcast dot net

8 February 2025

Thanks for PM #93! I liked the Woodstock sticker on the envelope.

That cover illo took my breath away. My first thought was it's a weird astronomical photo from Mike.

You had a lot of medical issues last year. Back problems are especially tough. Good that Mike could assist you with some of your usual duties.

Adorable photo of Cato curled up.

Any idea why the javelina are showing up in the daytime? I'd look outside and say YIKES!

((Your reaction wouldn't be out of place. The adult javelina have mean-looking tusks, and they know how to use them.))

Congrats to Mike on the turkey vulture picture. The Cooper's hawk and white-crowned sparrow are very nice.

Thanks for all of the pictures in the Astronomy section, starting with you and Mike by the welcome sign. Cool aurora photos. I'm always stunned to see pictures of Jupiter and its moons.

Mike's article about what really happened in *Forbidden Planet* shows what a good writer he is. He brought up many good points and theories about the movie. Now I would like to see a sequel to the movie.

Thanks for writing up your experiences at Tuscon two years ago. A cold room would have somewhat ruined my stay.

Loved the photos of you and friends, and hearing about the panels and video you went to. I don't see any mention of parties.

((Tuscon doesn't have many/any parties. I don't remember noticing any in 2023. The 2024 one had one party that I was aware of, but I didn't make it.))

Good to see my LoCs on #91 and #92 with your answers to my questions. I've never experienced business class or first class on long flights. I was tired enough on flights to and from the last Aussie con that I was able to sleep mostly sitting up. I walked around as much as I could, too.

I've seen dogs at a few cons, never cats.

#

Lloyd Penney, penneys at bell dot com

11 February 2025

Thank you muchly for issue 93 of *Purrsonal Mewsings*. I've been so busy with editing work, I haven't had much chance to catch up with fanzines. This might be a short letter, depending on time, but I will try my best.

Really, life is busy for all of us, I suspect. I am hobbling around on an injured foot. I am not sure what I did, strained it or sprained it, but I am pretty sure it is age-related. To Mike, great photos, both birds and astronomical. So far this year, just about every day has been cold and cloudy, and we are promised another 8 inches or so of snow. This is the snowiest winter we've had in some years.

((As we age, we are more prone to injury. Regular exercise goes a long way to improve the odds.))

The idea of Eddie Redmayne playing an assassin (*The Day of the Jackal*) is a little strange to me. I've only seen him playing Newt Scamander in the Wizarding World movies. I did see a short video of him using a small piece of plastic under his upper lip, and somehow, that's supposed to make him look much younger. I don't see it myself...

((I've seen the Wizarding World movies, of course; but he also co-starred in the movie version of *Les Misérables*. I also saw him in *The Danish Girl*, in which he plays a transgender character. I have admired his acting for quite a while, and there are others of his movies I want to see.))

Hello, Jeanne Mealy! I am glad you liked Tom Easton's and Frank Wu's *ESPionage*, and I can tell you a sequel is in the works! Great to see you, Jeanne, at the NASFiC. We will not be going to the Seattle Worldcon, given the madness emanating from Washington; but we do hope to be at LAcon V in 2026, and with luck and enough votes, Montréal in 2027. I hope the exchange rates improve between now and LAcon V.

My LoC...the vendor whom I used to sell tables to, and is now a published author, is Elizabeth Creith (elizabethcreith.com). She recently released her second novel.

I think I am done! Yvonne is getting some dinner ready for us, and I am hopeful that I can get a few more things done tonight before I have to get up at an extraordinarily early time (5am) so that I can get to work for 9am. I do not trust our local subway to not breakdown. Take care, and see you with the next issue.

((I remember those days of getting up in the middle of the night to go to work. I'm glad those days are behind me.))

#

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937 13 February 2025

Mike's proposal for a sequel to *Forbidden Planet* is quite interesting. Has he considered writing some fan fiction without the slash?

((I suggested that to him, but he wasn't interested.))

I am sure that any panels on Neil Gaiman these days would be quite different from the one you attended.

((Sadly yes.))

#

Murray Moore, murraymoore at gmail dot com 25 February 2025

You attended Tuscon in Tuscon.

((The city is spelled Tucson.))

My understanding, the -con of the city named Tuscon is pronounced -saan, the whole being Too-saan.

Convention names ending in con, -con is pronounced kon.

Am I correct to believe that you attend Tuss-con in Too-saan?

Explaining you are going to Too-saan in Too-saan would be confusing.

((Sorry to spoil your joke. I doublechecked my previous zine, and I spelled both Tuscon and Tucson correctly.))

#

We Also Heard From: Evaline Auerbach, Mary Manchester, Heath Row.

* * *

*** Closing Remarks**

This zine was delayed due to events described at the beginning of the zine. Also Cato bit me hard on my right cheek in a state of panic about something I could not detect. I was trying to calm him down, but he thought I was attacking him. I had to go to emergency, where the service was excellent. I had to take antibiotics for about a week.

I'm recovering well from the cataract surgeries. I expect to see my optometrist about new glasses in a few weeks.

See you all next time.

Laurraïne