

FELINE MEWSINGS

#3

February 2001

Feline Mewsings is a personalzine / newsletter published more or less quarterly by R-Lauraine Tutihasi, 29217 Stonecrest Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90275-4936, 310-265-0766, ltutihasi@aol.com, <http://members.aol.com/ltutihasi>. It is distributed through FAPA and 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: \$1.50 per issue or \$5 per year). A modified version will be placed on the web shortly after paper publication; please let me know if you prefer just to read the web version. Kattesmint Press #330. ©2001 R-Lauraine Tutihasi.

Editorial / Introduction

Welcome to the third issue of *Feline Mewsings*. The last issue was late, as is this one.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage those readers with Internet access to change over to that format to save me copying and postage money. It is in Acrobat format, and the readers are free. You will be rewarded with being able to see the photos in colour and even print them out that way if you have a colour printer. Here I must apologize for being tardy in putting the web version online.

Due to the lateness of this issue, I must apologize to the non-FAPA readers that it is bottomheavy with mailing comments to the APA. As I still did not finish catching up with comments to FAPA, my goal is to do so next issue. I have hopes of catching up, as I have recently reordered my priorities. There's still some tweaking to be done, but I think my method of accomplishing things is improving.

My health may also be improving since I have been treated for hypothyroidism. However, I'm not absolutely certain and don't want to indulge in wishful thinking.

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Reviews

We saw Puccini's *La Rondine* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown LA. Each year for the past several, I have been buying tickets to three or four operas of the Los Angeles Opera season in a Design Yourself Series. *La Rondine*, which means swallow (the bird), is one of his lesser-known operas. However, it may be becoming better known. I know I saw it several years ago on TV, and it was just on again a few months ago. The version we saw was the same one that was on PBS recently. The cast we saw was headed by Carol Vaness and Marcus Haddock. *La Rondine* takes place in the world of the *demimondaine* or courtiers that flourished in France during the Second Empire, beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, and lasted until the First World War. The story of *La Rondine* revolved around a young man, Ruggero, and a *demimondaine*, Magda, who fall in love. Ruggero, however, is unaware until the end of Magda's status. This new version has an ending a little different from the traditional version, but it still ends sadly.

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Each year for a number of years, I have gone to see the Capitol Steps at Caltech. Mike has been going with me since we met. The Capitol Steps are a group that satirizes politics in songs and sketches. This year we had an extra treat. I have been a member of a group called the Friends of Beckman Auditorium, where the performances are held. This year there was a dessert reception after the performance that we attended, and we had the opportunity to speak to some of the performers. The desserts weren't bad, either.

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Mike is a “Mission: Impossible” fan, so we went to see *Mission Impossible 2*. It wasn’t as bad as some had led me to expect. However, it definitely is not for anyone who doesn’t care at all about special effects, car chases, and the like.

* * *

Local Outings

On Saturday, 19 August, we went on an outing to Mount Wilson with the Friends of the (Griffith) Observatory. We met at Griffith Park to get on a bus. The driver was very good, negotiating the narrow, winding road skilfully. The drive takes about ninety minutes.

After we arrived at the observatory parking lot, we first broke for lunch, which was a choice between chicken or roast beef sandwiches with all the fixings, potato salad, a dessert bar, and either water or a soft drink. The waste bins there were constructed in such a way as to keep racoons out. They also kept me out, since I don’t have much strength in my hands. Fortunately, someone came along to help.

Mount Wilson has two solar telescopes, three reflectors, and a new array being built by the University of Georgia. Despite its proximity to Los Angeles, Mount Wilson is still a very active observing area for astronomers. The reason is the inversion layer that keeps the smog in Los Angeles. It keeps the air on Mount Wilson very still.

We were allowed to go inside one of the solar telescope buildings and see the instrumentation. The actual “observing” is done by instruments, but they have to be recalibrated twice a day. We were also allowed inside the dome of the 100-inch Hooker telescope. Our guides moved the telescope and dome around for us. As for the new array, it is composed of six telescopes of about a meter in width each. The sightings from each are funnelled into a building where they are calibrated to simulate sightings at the same distance. The signals are combined and will have the viewing power of a telescope a quarter of a mile wide. We were shown the inside of the building where the signals are combined.

The following day, there was a neighbourhood cookout. The first one was held last year when we were in Australia, so I was anxious not to miss this one. However, I was a bit disappointed. Apparently, I was not the only one. I heard several people saying that more people had shown up last year. I didn’t meet too many new people. Mike took his telescope with him and gave several of our neighbours a chance to see sunspots.

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Chicon trip

Wednesday, 30 August 2000, we were up early to finish packing.

The SuperShuttle picked us up a little after 10h00, on time. The driver had one other pickup. Then he must have taken the slowest and most scenic way to the airport. However, we got to our terminal on time. There wasn’t much of a line to check in. The flight started boarding early, and we took off more or less on time. The flight went smoothly except for a couple of bumpy periods.

When we got on the plane, Mike said he thought I had booked the larger seats, i. e. business class. I told him I thought flying anywhere inside this country was considered short enough for economy. Looks as though we’ll be flying business class except possibly

on the West Coast.

We reached Chicago more or less on time. We took a cab to the Hyatt Regency downtown. It didn’t cost as much as I’d been led to expect. We arrived at the hotel around dinnertime, as we ran into a large party of dinner going fans as we were getting off the cab.

After we unpacked, we went down to the convention area. Registration had closed up for the night. I put up my signs for the Carleton College (my alma mater) and RSFFA (Rochester Science Fact and Fiction Association) gatherings. We ran into Sheila Forrest from RSFFA and Andy Porter (editor of *Science Fiction Chronicle*). We continued talking to Andy as we went to the All Season’s Café in the

hotel for dinner.

After we were seated, I noticed Beth Friedman from Minneapolis eating alone, so I asked her to join us. She brought me up to date on Bruce Schneier (whom I had met in Rochester when he was just starting college), her employer.

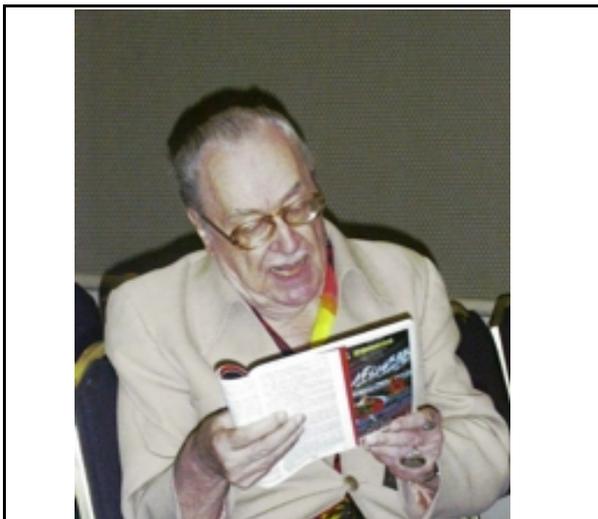
Then I checked out the Charlotte in 2004 party. Everyone seemed to be there. I ran into Jay Kay Klein, the Thayers, the Lynchi, Irvin Koch, Jan Howard Finder, Mark Blackman, Samuel Edward Konkin, III, Dave Clark, Neil and Cris Kaden, and possibly others. I had a chance to talk at some length with some of them. Beth Friedman arrived as I was exiting. We also picked up pre-support forms to fill out later.

Back at our room, I only had time to do e-mail before retiring. It was already midnight. I also filled out the breakfast order form for the next morning.

I had to get up at 7h00 the next morning, because Mike wanted to be at con registration when they opened. I guess it was a good idea since that would give us a chance to look over the programme. My breakfast arrived about 8h00. I had a full breakfast, since I didn't expect to have a chance for a full lunch.

After we registered and picked up our programme books and other paraphernalia, we returned to our room to plan out our schedules.

At 11h30, we both attended programme items. I did one about "GoH Programming: Ben Bova Deserves It: Why He Is Our Guest of Honour." Present on the panel were Elizabeth Anne Hull, Jan Howard Finder, and Elizabeth Moon. They each related their experiences with Ben Bova and their opinions of his writing and editing. When the panellists had finished and the session went into question and answer mode, I left.



Forry Ackerman

I went down to the level below to sign up for a kaffeeklatsch for Gene Wolfe the next day. I returned upstairs for a reading by Forry Ackerman.

I stayed in the same room for a reading by Nancy Kress. She read a story written for an anthology that was to be published in France first. I'd be interested in getting the French edition to compare with the American one. I was also curious about her contact lenses, which she took off in order to be able to read. However, I never did get a chance to ask about that.

After that, I went up to the FAPA party for a couple of hours. I met a few FAPAns I hadn't before. Peggy Rae Sapienza said she was taking notes, so I expect her FAPazine will contain an attendance list. Her husband, a non-FAPAn, was also in attendance. Besides Milt Stevens and Fred Lerner, the other members in attendance have not been recently active. I left before the party was over, however, so I may have missed a few people.

The reason I left was to get ready for a small reunion I had planned with a few Chicago area Carleton College alumni. Out of the possible eight people who had voiced a possibility of showing up, we ended up with five: Catherine Simmons, Dan Hall, Tim Preheim, and us. All were class of '71 except for Tim, who was class of '70. Catherine actually didn't graduate from Carleton. She finished her degree, I believe she said, in Chicago. We met at a nearby Italian restaurant called La Rosetta, and a good time was had by all.

We returned to the hotel sufficiently early for me to see *The Sixth Sense*, one of the Hugo-nominated movies. I sat next to a young Bay Area fan from Marin County and had an interesting conversation before the film started rather haltingly, as the projectionist had the wrong lens on at first. The Bay Area fan had seen the movie already but was obviously impressed enough by it to watch it again. I also ended up liking it. It's the sort of movie you really want to see again if you like it. Unfortunately, it was not fated to win the Hugo.

I missed an early morning film on Friday, because it was in another hotel. It turned out that it was not as far away as it appeared in the maps I had seen, so I'm a bit sorry that I didn't go. I hope I get a chance to see it again sometime.

For the remainder of the convention, I ate only symbolic breakfasts in the room. I ate just enough to qualify as taking my vitamins with food, usually a roll or something similar.

I got up in time for a talk by Forry Ackerman. Most of his stories were ones I had heard before.

I met Mike afterward for lunch. We ate at a restaurant in an attached mall called The Urban Market. The food was not bad, but the waitress completely messed up the bill. This was straightened

out expeditiously, but this problem did not dispose us to eat again there.

We went to the hucksters' room briefly afterward. Mike had already scouted the place out the day before, but I only saw a small part that day.

At 14h30, I had a kaffeeklatsch with Gene Wolfe to attend. Most of the kaffeeklatsches were held in a spacious room. There were three kaffeeklatsches scheduled simultaneously.

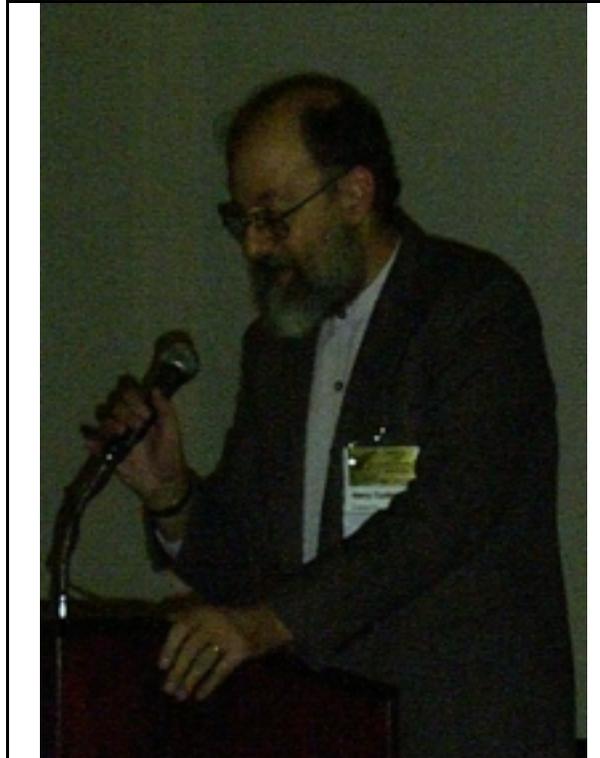
I had a break before the next programme item I was interested in, though I mistakenly went to the room for that immediately after leaving the kaffeeklatsch. It took me several minutes to figure out that the panel was not discussing anything I was interested in. I managed to take care of pre-support for Charlotte in 2004 and had a little time left over to look at a little more of the hucksters' room. There I ran into Tullio Proni, Renee Sieber and her husband, Henry Balen, and Paula Smith. We talked a lot, exchanged e-mail addresses, and took some pictures.

My next programme event was "Costuming on the Web." Aside from the moderator, everyone else on the panel was recruited from the audience, since the assigned panellists failed to show up. However, I believe all the facets of the topic were covered. I took notes about web sites and also got information about where I might get a copy of the Nolacon masquerade video. The source was the same as the one Kathy Sanders had recommended way back when. However, the address she had given me could have been wrong or my letter could have got lost in the depths of the USPS.

There was about an hour between that and the GoH speeches. That didn't give us enough time for a real dinner, so I munched some snacks in our hotel room. I also finally got my Avon order for this week ready to mail.

We met Forry Ackerman on our way to the speeches, and we walked together to the ballroom where it was scheduled. We found fairly good seats in the second row. Larry and Fuzzy Niven were in the row behind us, and Mike took a picture of them. All the GoHs spoke at this one event. I think this is a better idea than having separate events for each GoH. The chairman of Chicon 2000 opened the proceedings and handed the introductions over to Toastmaster Harry Turtledove. The speeches began with Bob and Ann Passovoy, who were the Fan GoHs. It had been about twenty years since I'd seen them, so they were quite changed from the way I remembered them. The last time I saw them Ann had long blonde hair and was very pregnant. Bob had dark hair and was very thin. Now Ann has short dark hair and has filled out a bit (not from being pregnant). Bob's hair has turned quite grey, probably, at least in part, a symptom of being a physician. Their speech

was entertaining and humorous in parts. The order after that is hazy in my mind. However, the speakers were Ben Bova, the writer GoH; Bob Silverberg; Jim Baen; and Bob Eggleton, the artist GoH.



Harry Turtledove

After that, we partied, the only night when we really did that. We went to a number of parties. Since our room was in the West Tower, we started in the East Tower and worked down. The first party we went to was Charlotte in 2004. They were serving barbecue, so I got my protein fix for the evening. Then we went to the UK in '05 party, where we got into a fairly lengthy conversation with Paul Allwood. He is one of the party that went up Mauna Kea with us. I know we went to the Toronto in 2003 party, but don't remember much about that one. We also stopped at the Japan in 2007 party, where, with the help of an interpreter, I asked a lot of questions about their bid. We stopped just long enough at the Costume Con 19 party to talk to Karl Mami about getting a tape of the Nolacon masquerade. Maybe this time I'll actually get it. By this time it was getting late, so we headed toward the Sime~Gen party. Jean Lorrh was heading out the door. Jacqueline had left ages ago. Mike decided to return to our room. I stayed on for about an hour and a half, during which several others came and went.

Saturday morning started out for me with a kaffeeklatsch with Nancy Kress. It was quite

interesting, and I still forgot to ask her about her contacts.

Bob Eggleton was working live all day, but somehow I managed to miss seeing him at all. Mike, however, saw him and took a picture.

I met Mike for lunch. We ate at Christie's, one of the restaurants in the little mall next to the hotel. Of the restaurants in the median price range, they were the best we went to with a fairly large selection and comfortable surroundings.

After lunch, I took care of site selection before heading off to a reading by Jean Lorrh. Jacqueline Lichtenberg and Joanie Winston were in the audience, and I took the opportunity to talk with Joanie after the reading. I had not seen her for about twenty-five years. When I had seen her last, she had just undergone a mastectomy. Since then, she has had more problems were cancer, which seems to run in her family. She said she was writing a book about that. I will probably buy it when it comes out.

I attended a David Brin reading after that in a room nearby. He proved entertaining, interesting, and informative. He began by sitting down and discovering that he'd forgot the reading material and ran off back to the Green Room. Once he settled down, he talked a little bit about his effort to increase awareness of science fiction in the schools. Then he did a series of readings from various works.

After that, I went to the fan lounge to meet the TAFF and DUFF delegates. The DUFF delegate, Cathy Cupitt, would later be staying with us when she visited the LA area. We also ran into a number of other fans we knew, including David Bratman, whose trip out to Chicago was apparently a last-minute decision. I also talked to Sue Mason, who was the TAFF delegate. Among her other talents is art that adorned many of the daily news sheets.



Laurraine and Cathy Cupitt

We returned to our room for a scheduled RSFFA meeting, in case anyone showed up. I knew that at least one person had been planning to attend. Steve Carper and Linda Saalman pleasantly surprised us by showing up. Dale and Anne Gulledge, who had shown up with their two young ones had to leave early. However, Steve and Linda decided to join us for dinner. As we were heading toward the elevator, Alice and Mike Bentley also showed up; but they had other dinner plans. Mike took some photos. We had dinner at Christie's, as we were interested in decent food that wouldn't take too long.

Afterward, we went over to the Fairmont with Steve and Linda to see how the line for the Hugo Awards was. There was no line, so we decided to stay. The downside of the Hugo presentations was that it was done in a flat room, so I couldn't see much even with a couple of video screens they had. We stayed also till the end but left the room before the mob, so I could get back to the Hyatt for *Being John Malkovich*. While it was an interesting movie, I didn't really consider it to be science fiction; and it didn't make a lot of sense.

Sunday morning found me headed toward the Swissôtel for a kaffeeklatsch with Jean Lorrh. As I was walking the underground tunnel over to the adjacent hotel, I found that Jacqueline Lichtenberg was following. At least I wasn't late. When we got on the elevator, I found that Jean Lorrh was also there, and I said, "Where did she come from?" And Jacqueline went into an explanation about turning Jean off to conserve her power. Jacqueline had been added to Jean's kaffeeklatsch. The room in the Swissôtel was not as good as the one at the Hyatt, being quite a bit smaller. Noise from the other tables impacted us quite a bit. Still, I think we all had a good time. The kaffeeklatsch is one the programming styles I list best. My second favourite is the reading.

I met Mike afterward to eat at a fast-food Chinese restaurant in the same mall as before.

I had about an hour before my next programme item, so I decided to convert our Toronto in 2003 membership to attending. Unfortunately, this process ended up taking about ninety minutes, so I was a bit late for the kaffeeklatsch for Walter Jon Williams. I don't know what I missed, but I still had an enjoyable time.

There was some time before the next scheduled programme I was interested in, so I took the opportunity to see more of the hucksters' room. The room was big with many, many vendors.

At 15h00, we watched a performance of Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* by the Moebius Players. This dramatization of Bradbury's collection

originally premiered in LA at a theatre where we are now subscribers, but this happened before I discovered the theatre.



Martian Chronicles

After the play, I attended a reading by Lois McMaster Bujold. The reading had been scheduled for one of the smaller event rooms but had to be moved to one of the ballrooms, so it was a little late starting. Because of the late night yesterday, I was really sleepy by this time and almost fell asleep during it.

Then we met Gerri Balter for dinner at Stetson's, the steak house in the hotel. We had a good time catching up with each other's news. It's a good thing we had made arrangements to meet, because we never saw each other any other time.

Although I had been interested to doing some other things after dinner, I was too tired and so called it a night.

I was able to sleep in a bit on Monday, so I caught up a little on my sleep.

In the morning, I attended a panel about non-profits. I attended mostly out of curiosity to see whether any of the rules might apply to Mike's ETX web site. I concluded that we probably don't have to worry about it now; it may be something we may have to look into in future.

We had lunch at Christie's again. Then we made our last run through the hucksters' room before it was closed. I bought a couple of stuffies and two books. Mike ordered a second tie from a dealer that hand-paints them.

Unfortunately, my camera battery ran out of juice at the beginning of the Closing Ceremonies. Now I know that the battery shows about twenty minutes when it needs recharging. Liz Lehmann and her husband, Dan ended up sitting next to us; so I asked her if she already had dinner plans. She did sort of, but she seemed amenable to having us join her.

I had earlier scheduled a reunion with the Mauna

Kea Tour group. However, I had not received any positive responses. However, I felt obligated to show up in the lobby, where I had proposed to meet. The only person to show up was Michael Mason. He had made alternate dinner plans just in case, so no one lost out. It turned out we would be eating at the same restaurant. While we were waiting, however, I had a chance to talk with Jon Stevens.

We joined Liz and Dan and Clif Flynt and his wife, Carol, for dinner at Stetson's. I hadn't seen Clif in about twenty years and had never met Carol. We had a very lively conversation over dinner about everything from politics to movies. Afterward, Mike took a picture of the group.



Clif and Carol Flynt, Dan Kinsella, Liz Lehmann, and Laurraine

Mike retired after this, but I wanted to check out the dead dogs. I went up to the Charlotte in 2004 party and discussed the issues of smoking with one of the bidding group. As I was heading toward the West Tower elevators, I noticed people in the Con Suite. I decided to go in to see who was there. I spoke briefly to Filthy Pierre, who was playing some old songs on the piano. As I was nearing the exit, I noticed a cute mouse stuffy on a table where two fans were sitting. I made a remark about it, and that turned into a long conversation. The woman was Annette from British Columbia. We talked about a lot of things ranging from the armed forces in our countries and humour. Her friend was a Japanese fan named Kazuhiko. He left for a while to get information about his departure time the next day. Another Japanese fan joined up just as I was getting ready to leave. His name was Daisuke, and his English appeared to be better than his friend's. (I hope I got the names right and apologize if I've made a mistake.)

I had ordered room service break for Tuesday morning, but no one had picked up the request. Fortunately, I was still able to get the breakfast after I made a phone call.

As I was heading to the registration desk to check

out, I ran into Joyce Scrivener; and we talked briefly. At checkout, I saw Fred Lerner and exchanged a few words with him.

We left the hotel earlier than planned, so we reached the airport quite early. The flight home had seats farther apart than the plane we took before. However, the films were shown on screens in the front of each section. Since we were at the back of a section, we wouldn't have been able to see much without damaging our necks. Fortunately, I had no interest in what was being shown. This flight, we had a choice of meals. Service was generally better, I thought. Once we were on the ground, the story was different. Whoever designed the new United terminals at LAX did a lousy job. There are no automated walkways, and the walks are long. Also, we had to go to the terminal next door to retrieve our

luggage. Actually, I waited outside while Mike went to get our one piece of checked luggage. The temperature outside was comfortable.

I have to insert here that with the meals served on United comes a little brochure that brags about their improved meals and free movies.

We waited quite a while for SuperShuttle to send one going our way. It was almost full. Usually, they only make three stops per trip; but this one had to make four. As is the case most of the time, we were the last to be dropped off. However, I had an interesting conversation with one of the other passengers, who was from Ireland. I also chatted for a short while with a man travelling on business. It sounded as though he was travelling most of the time.

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Mailing Comments on FAPA #251 continued: Note to non-FAPA members: FAPA is an APA of people in science fiction and fantasy fandom. It has a large membership, currently about fifty. There are openings right now. If you are interested in joining, let me know and I can send you the relevant information.

Dale Speirs (Sansevieria 33): "15° to 20° C" may be room temperature for some. I'm okay at about 21° C, but my husband likes it warmer, so we have our thermostat set higher. In summer, it is set higher still.

I realize that videophones have been around for a while, but they do not seem to be sold widely or at prices affordable to most. Videophones may be handy for screening callers in the same way as the Caller Id boxes. One would wonder why someone would not want to be seen.

Do you by any chance know if the Frank Benford of Benford's Law is any relation to Greg Benford?

I learned years ago to be very attentive when *Business Week* announces that a company is about to go under. I got caught out when an airline for which I had tickets went under just a few weeks after a mention in that magazine. I think a weak company will be undermined by a mention there, as shareholders will likely liquidate their assets in the company after reading about it.

Ben Indick (Ben's Beat 59): Sorrento sounds in many ways like Los Angeles. On clear days, you can see the snow on top of the mountains surrounding the basin usually even in the middle of summer.

You seem to be as much of an authority on Shaw as anyone I know. I don't recall the name of the play any more, and it may not be important. It took place in England during World War I. There was one scene in which an allusion was made to a church that had been bombed by the Germans. I thought that kind of thing had happened during the Second World War, not the first. Can you help? I wasn't born until after both wars, so I have no first-hand knowledge. Did the Germans engage in aerial bombing during the First World War?

My parents went on a tour of Europe that combined the pleasures of being part of a group and being able to drive around and see the countryside. The tour had definite meeting points for dinner and overnight stays. However, during the day, the members of the tour either drove or motorcycled to each day's destination. There was enough time to choose optional sightseeing on the way. I don't know that my parents would be doing any more of this, though, as my father is becoming increasingly unsure about his driving skills. My mother stopped driving on her own a few years ago after totalling their almost brand new car.

Thank you for the lovely photograph.

Michael J. Lowrey ("Real Futuristic – I Dig the Fins!"): There are MacWorld Expos in places other than San Francisco. The other domestic site is New York City. It may be easier for you to reach.

You must just have spoken to the wrong Canadians – healthy ones, for instance. I have heard the Canadian health system highly criticized by people with health problems.

Actually, a university is an institution that grants higher degrees. Colleges just grant baccalaureate degrees.

I filled out the long census form for our household. When I asked my husband what ethnic background he wanted to be recorded as, he said "American"; so I checked the "Other" box and wrote in "American." It's nice that we have that option.

Robert Michael Sabella (Ride the Lightning): In my opinion, "Star Wars" is not even science fiction. I believe that even Lucas doesn't claim it to be such. It is what I call science fantasy.

Rats are fine with me. I almost brought my lab rat home in college. They can only be used once. Then they are euthanized. There were three reasons I didn't take it home. 1. I would have had to smuggle in onto the plane. 2. I didn't think my mother would approve. 3. I couldn't be certain that our cats wouldn't torture or kill it.

I don't know that the term "postal mail" isn't derogatory in light of such phrases as "going postal." I use the term snail mail, which I don't think is really derogatory unless you happen to have something against snails.

I don't think I've ever read *The Glass Menagerie*. When it comes to plays, I'd rather see them performed than read them. Tennessee Williams happens to be one of my favourite playwrights. Besides *The Glass Menagerie*, I've seen the following either on stage or on film – *Summer and Smoke*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and probably others whose titles escape me at the moment. For me how much I like the play depends a lot on the particular performance.

The impression I get from reading articles about longevity is that it keeps increasing even for those us who are not new-borns. Possibly, this is because those of us who were going to die early already have. However, there are many medical advances that are allowing people to live longer at the end of their lives. Many diseases that, in the past, might have killed people, are being cured or at least being slowed down in their degenerative effect.

I liked *The Matrix* okay until the end, when the whole story seemed to become a warning rather than something that had really happened. Unfortunately, I missed seeing *Dark City*. It was shown at Chicon but at a very late hour in a different hotel. I liked *The Iron Giant* quite a bit and vote for it in first place, because I hadn't had the chance to see *The Sixth Sense* before I had to send the ballot in.

It's nice when buying on-line or by mail means not paying sales tax. Some in-state sites will lure customers by providing free shipping in lieu of not paying sales tax. I have found that mail order companies that add on-line ordering have a bumpy track record. Some companies do it successfully. Some have lots of problems, and I go back to phone or mail ordering for about a year to give them time to straighten out their problems. Some never seem to get it right and stop offering on-line ordering.

I can think of at least two books I've read more than twice; they are *Johnny Tremain*, whose author's name escapes me at the moment, and Heinlein's *Time for the Stars*. There may be a few others, but I'm not absolutely certain.

I will get a mobile phone when they make one that works from our home as well as from most countries on Earth. Mike recently upgraded from analogue to digital service, but we still cannot use it from home.

Although I cannot think of the title, I'm pretty sure there was a good Dostoyevskii adaptation shown on PBS a couple of decades ago. It starred John Hurt.

When I was in high school, I, along with two other girls, amused ourselves by counting the number of times two of our teachers used the phrases "you know" and "it's obvious that."

If you count the books contributed by Mike, we have thousands of books I haven't read. Even without taking his books into account, I've probably bought more than a thousand books I haven't had the time to read yet.

When I was young, I was a "cup half empty" person. I believe the "glad game" I adapted from *Pollyanna* helped change that. I was feeling so depressed that I forced myself to find one good thing about life every day, even if it was something as simple as that the sky was blue that day. Eventually, I believe it became a habit. I still prepare for the worst for hope for the best. Usually, the outcome is something in between.

Frank Herbert isn't the only author who taught himself to write by analyzing the writing of others. Jacqueline Lichtenberg, who is one of my favourite authors, learned to write that way. She has many protégés that she has taught in the same way.

Robert Michael Sabella (Visions of Paradise #84): My copy of your zine was flawed. The top left-hand corner of p. 31, where you were discussing Feynman's book was partially obliterated. I might have had something to respond to, since I have read the book and seen both the play and the movie based on the book as well as seen a biography of him on TV.

Fred Lerner (Lofgeornost #59): I'm glad to have seen you at Chicon. I'm sorry that my husband was otherwise occupied and wasn't with me. On hindsight, I wish I'd taken a group picture of everyone at the FAPA gathering. My video camera does have a still picture function; but Mike tells me that he can only download in Windows, which is a pain. I should have taken a video. Next time, for sure.

In your zine, you mentioned two books, *The Reign of George VI, 1900-1925* and *L'an deux mille quatre cent Quarante*, that I must try to get. I've read at least one future-looking book written in the past and find them fascinating.

Since my musical tastes tend toward opera in the classical arena, I don't suppose I follow the so-called natural progression in musical tastes. I didn't start to like opera until the late seventies or early eighties when I tuned into an opera broadcast on TV simply because it was being introduced by Derek Jacobi. I ended up watching the entire programme. That was an opera by Monteverdi. My favourite composers are Puccini, Mozart, Prokofiev, and Wagner. Outside of opera, I like some Beethoven but prefer Mozart. My tastes are very eclectic. I like a little of this and a little of that. I can't think of any composer whose entire output I like.

Jim Caughran (A Propos de Rien 251): I don't think I had any algebra at age eleven. My first exposure to higher mathematics was in seventh or eighth grade. I don't think it was algebra. We learned things like set theory, Venn diagrams, and Boolean logic.

Gordon Eklund (Sweet Jane 28): Re *Star Wars: the Phantom Menace*, perhaps a teenage girl was elected Queen as part of a political manoeuvre. After all, if the Senator was trying to set things up to take over as Emperor, it would be much easier to overcome a young girl than a wise leader.

Tom Feller (The Road Warrior): Ever since I saw the musical stage version of *Sunset Boulevard*, I've been trying to catch the movie on TV but without any success, so far.

Murray Moore (Green Stuff No. 11): In your discussion about Robert Sawyer, you used the phrase "affectionate fannish nomenclature." What do you mean by that? Did I miss something here?

Could you supply more information about the Memory Hole Mailing List?

Ray Schaffer (Fanalysis 23): 1. My favourite colour is green, specifically chartreuse. 2. If the United States were an animal, it would probably be an elephant in a china shop. 3. I don't know what a Pauly Shore movie is, so I guess I would give that a try. 4. I guess I would have to say that Jesse Ventura has the weirdest hair. I don't know too many politicians by sight. 5. I don't live in a small, insignificant state; but we probably do have low voter turnout. Ideally, I would have voted for Nader for president. However, because of the way the electoral college is assigned, I voted for Gore. My single issue is the environment. Although Gore isn't perfect, he is better than Bush and was chosen by the League of Conservation Voters. 6. I consider rabbits to be primarily pets. 7. The US government shouldn't force anyone to eat or not eat any given amount. 8. I believe Providence is the capital of Rhode Island. 9. I don't think the US can or should sell any states. 10. I have never been to Rhode Island. 11. I can't say I'm tired of questions about Rhode Island. There haven't been that many. 12. I can't say I find turtles amusing. 13. The nastiest thing I've ever done to another human was to play with my sister's toys so that mine would remain pristine. I've never committed a felony. 14. I would spell it *pyncidium*. My spelling checker doesn't recognize it, and I have no idea whether it's a real word and what it means. 15. No. 14 could be a trick question. 16. I never thought Al Gore resembled a tree, but if I had to choose, I guess I would choose the stately oak. 17. I don't know what the best movie of all time is. I haven't seen all of them to be able to choose. 18. I never thought George W. Bush looked particularly like Alfred E. Neuman. However, he does remind me of a prune. 19. I know that a copy of LASFAPA was used as evidence in a lawsuit, so I'm aware that any zine could be so used. 20. Sorry, I didn't answer the questions while I was eating supper. I usually watch TV or read while I eat. I don't eat anything except snack food while I am typing.

Brian Earl Brown (Fapamentary 2000): Once you have made a good faith effort to secure a legal copy of something, you are allowed to make a copy for yourself.

Joyce Katz (Western Romance #1): My sympathies on your eye problems. I hope they are eventually

corrected to your satisfaction.

Mailing Comments on FAPA #252

Jack Speer (Synapse): According to *California Place Names*, 4th edition, by Erwin G. Gudde, *Simi*, as in Simi Valley, “is from the ‘Ventura dialect Chumash *shimiyi* or *shimii*, a place or village.’ The name is recorded in its present form in 1795.”

The fanzine *Ansible* is available on the web.

Nuclear waste is definitely a problem. The half life for the radiation is thousands of years or more.

In New York State, it was very easy to pay utility bills. You could take the bill to any bank and pay it. There are some places you can do this in California, but it is not anywhere near as universal as in New York.

Yes, my husband and I bought our house together, though we were not married when we bought it.

I don’t know if “carrying the one” is the proper description for the way I do subtraction. If I illustrate as you do,

$$\begin{array}{r} 52 \text{ resolves into } 50 + 12 \\ -14 \qquad \qquad \qquad -20 + 4 \\ \hline \qquad \qquad \qquad 30 + 8 \end{array}$$

Vertigo is a medical term with a precise definition. Any qualified doctor can make the diagnosis after listening to the patient’s description of his symptoms.

Yes, your backslashes are very clear separators. Thank you.

Transcribing printed works into a computer is quite simple. You use a scanner. They are not perfect, but the results require only that they be proof-read and minor corrections made. They don’t have to be typed in from scratch.

Lightning and *lightening* are two different words with different meanings.

Arthur D. Hlavaty (Derogatory Reference 95): Vicodin made me sick to my stomach. I don’t remember whether it had any helpful effects.

I enjoyed John Sladek’s *Roderick* and *Roderick at Random*. I was sorry he hadn’t been able to write more in the series.

Dale Speirs (Sansevieria 35): I always enjoy reading your descriptions of the parklands in your neighbourhood. You must spend a lot of time researching the history that you include in your write-ups.

Ben Indick (Ben’s Beat 60): Your wife does very nice art work. I especially admire the sculpture, as I never got very far in 3D.

I saw Samuel Ramey in Los Angeles. We usually go there for the opera. Yes, you are right that he appeared in formal eveningwear in *Faust*.

I’m jealous. I’ve never seen Melissa Gilbert on stage and didn’t even know she did stage work.

Soma is a muscle relaxant. It is available with codeine for treating the pain from muscle spasms. I prefer to take the Soma alone. I don’t like codeine; it gives me constipation.

* * *

Letters of Comment (For the uninitiated, these are letters commenting on previous issues of my fanzine [newsletter])

My replies to the letters will be enclosed in double parentheses. I will also routinely make editorial corrections in punctuation, spelling, and so forth.

Eric Lindsay, eric@wrevenge.com.au

27 December 2000

Thanks for the zine.

All fanzines are late, and it is traditional for the editorial to excuse it. We should just assign a number to each

excuse, and then we should shorten the editorials to #56 or whatever.

The Acrobat Reader doesn't run on even a majority of platforms. However some substitute for it is often available. Why not do the web version as an HTML file, since that is the standard format for web files?

We could probably read the web version either way, and thus save you some postage money, especially if you are putting it through FAPA.

Glad that you had a good vacation in Hawaii and at Westercon.

Why are you festooned with all manner of straps and camera bags and the like in the photo on the second page? You are looking like a pack mule. Is Mike doing that to you? If he is, he should stop. If you are doing it, you should stop.

Are macadamia nuts all that special? I know they are grown in Hawaii, but are they not readily available in the USA as well? We can get them at the local market here each Saturday (all warm and really aromatic).

I've had better views of the fireworks here in town from our apartment. I'm hoping for another bunch at New Year, and again in February for the opening of the new lagoon, when the annual FantaSea fireworks will combine.

The telescope tour sounded wonderful. I'd love to see the big mirrors, having heard so much about their design and building.

Nose clips don't usually work with snorkelling and so on. Getting your own decent fitting mask would be a good idea if you plan to do much diving.

Consider coming to Australia in June 2002. There is a chance of the New Zealand NatCon, the Australian NatCon a week later, and maybe a bid for a Corflu; and we would put on a relaxacon here if fans were coming. And your dollar buys more here.

#

Kim Huett, P. O. Box 679, Woden, ACT 2606, Australia

4 January 2001

I expect the black and white birds you saw were magpies, assuming they were magpie-sized. If they were small, no more than 4 – 5 inches in length, I would guess mudlarks instead. ((They were quite large.))

Given what you wrote, I can only conclude I was right about that fellow who told you Australian schools were mostly same-sex. The education system here is administered in different ways by both the state and federal governments. What this means in practical terms is that the basics of the system are uniform but subject to minor variations according to state. This system doesn't allow for differences as large as a state of single-sex schools. He almost certainly was indulging in a bit of wishful thinking and perhaps misremembering his youth as well. I know my father doesn't mind a little creative editing to improve his childhood in Sydney.

That's a strange notion of Eric Lindsay's (at least from your comment, I assume it is his) that it is necessary to have published a fanzine to be fanzine fan. I think it's obvious that anybody with an interest in fanzines and a willingness to contribute to fanzine fandom must be a fanzine fan.

#

Tom Feller, TomFeller@aol.com

23 January 2001

I saw Kareem Abdul-Jabbar a few times in person when he was playing for the Milwaukee team in the National Basketball Association (NBA). He was the best high school and college basketball player of his era as well as a star for twenty years as a pro. Six of those twenty years, he was named the Most Valuable Player in the NBA. He was already seven feet tall when he was fifteen years old, but before him no one had seen anyone who was so tall and yet graceful in his movements.

* * *

Closing Remarks

I hope to finish comments to FAPA mailing #252, as well as do those for #253 and #254, next time. Sorry for the lack of illos. This was a last-minute rush job with little time to give thought to illustrations. At this time, I would like to thank Franz Miklos, who sent in some wonderful art; I hope I can do justice to them soon.