

Feline Mewsings #25



Feline Mewsings is a personalzine / newsletter published more or less quarterly by R-Laurraine Tutihasi, 29217 Stonecrest Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90275-4936, 310-265-0766, Laurraine@mac.com, <http://www.weasner.com/>. It is distributed through FAPA 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: \$1.50 per issue or \$5 per year). [] if this box is checked, I need to hear from you if you wish to stay on my mailing list. A slightly 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. I can also e-mail this in Word or rtf format. Kattesminite Press #354. ©2006 R-Laurraine Tutihasi. Permission is granted to reprint or forward any part or all of this newsletter created by the editor provided that it carries the following statement: "Copyright 2006 by R-Laurraine Tutihasi. Originally published in *Feline Mewsings* #25, <http://members.aol.com/felinemewsings/index.html>." All other material is copyrighted by their respective creators, and they should be contacted for any reprint permission.

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Feline Mewsings

#25

August 2006

* Editorial / Introduction

While I was printing my previous issue, our Epson colour inkjet printer gave up the ghost. I had to print some of the photo pages in black and white. In making a decision for a replacement printer, two people offered the best advice. One of them is our own Robert Lichtman. The other is an alumnus from my college who apparently has experience buying printers for business; he basically said HP is the only way to go. Robert owns a printer we looked at and told us about a new printer not yet then on sale that was coming out from HP that does duplex printing. We purchased direct from HP and got the printer at the beginning of June. It is great. The colour is at least as good as we had with our old Epson. The speed is phenomenal, even faster than our old HP laser printer. I was able to do a print run of thirty copies of my previous zine in just a little over an hour. Since the 2605dn can collate as well as do duplex printing, all I had to do was separate the copies and staple them. All this was accomplished in just a little over an hour. I used to spend days printing out the colour pages.

I am printing out the FAPA copies early, because we will be travelling from 17 July through 4 August.

* * *

* Mike

Mike made trips to our land in Oracle, Arizona, at the end of April and the end of May. The June trip was cancelled due to inclement weather.

* * *

* Local Activities

Movies

Mission Impossible III: Mike is really into this series of movies. We both watched the series on TV, but I don't find a lot in common between the series and the movies. The newest movie of the series is, as were the previous two, mostly an action movie. I didn't have high expectations, but I found the plot to be more interesting than I had anticipated. It's a good movie for an afternoon's entertainment.

#

Superman Returns: If you liked the original Christopher Reeve Superman movie, I think you'll like this. I'd have to watch that one again to decide which I like better. This is a movie I can watch over and over, so I'm likely to buy it when it comes out. The actors were all excellent. The story was solid and exciting. The character development was very good. The only thing I didn't care much for is the redesigned uniform, but this is really a minor complaint. The music used was mostly recycled from the first movie and still stirring. The plot was serious with none of the campy stuff that spoiled the sequels to the original.

###

Theatre

Jay Johnson: the Two and Only: For the last “play” of their season, the Colony Theatre gave us a ventriloquism act. This is the first time I’d seen a ventriloquist in person. Jay Johnson’s presentation was loosely autobiographical. This format really brought him closer to the audience and enabled us to identify with him. The skit included numerous ventriloquist acts embedded within it. The ventriloquism was very impressive. He even explained how it was done, but I still kept hearing the voices coming from the puppets. The show will be going to Broadway. Those of you living in New York City are encouraged to check it out. It’s well worth your time. He has a web site at <http://www.monkeyjoke.com/> in case you want to check out his schedule.

#

Capitol Steps: We saw them on the same day as Jay Johnson, and I have to admit that he beat them out on the humour scoreboard. However, the Capitol Steps will not disappoint. If you’ve never seen their political humour acts, you must check them out. They poke fun at all political parties. Their songs are available as recordings. Check them out at www.capsteps.com.

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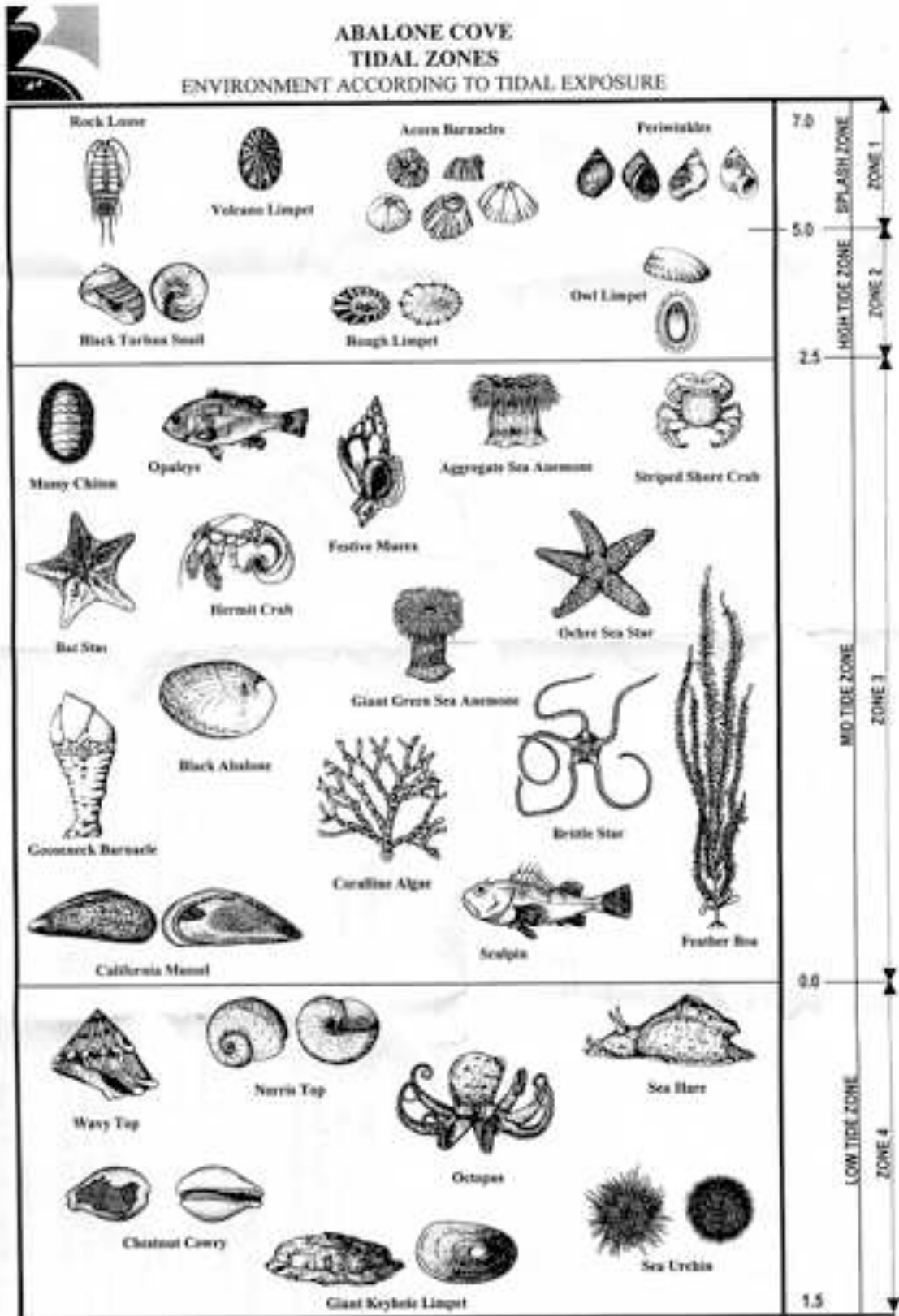
Billy Bishop Goes to War: The Colony opened its 2006-2007 season with this biographical work by John Gray. It tells the life of a Canadian who became the most decorated Allied flying ace of World War I. During the Second World War, he rose to the rank of Marshall in the Royal Canadian Air Force. The story was told as a series of anecdotes interspersed with song and dance. It’s practically a one-man show with actor Larry Cedar playing the part of Billy Bishop, as well as seventeen minor characters. The one other man on stage – Jeffrey Rockwell – mostly plays the piano and sings. There’s a great deal of humour in this show, which also has its touching moments. It was a rousing good show that got a standing ovation.

###



Other

Abalone Cove Tidal Zones hike: Abalone Cove is located just a couple of miles from where we live.



It looks west toward Santa Catalina Island. The hike leaders took us down a steep and strenuous trail; later we found out there was a much easier route, which we'll use if we go back. However, the hard work paid off after we got to the tide pools and we had a great time. To show you the kinds of things we saw, above is a chart that shows the kinds of creatures we can find there. We saw most of the plants and critters shown.



Sea Hare



Starfish

* * *



Sea Urchins

* **Westercon 59 – Conzilla – San Diego**

We left home about noon for San Diego on Friday 30 June after I left our black cat, Fluffy, at the vet. The reasons we left him at the vet are twofold. He has pancreatitis and needs medicating three times daily. When he doesn't feel good, he eschews the litter box and goes wherever he feels like around the house. The pet sitter doesn't really want to deal with the latter and we can't really afford to have her drop by three times each day. We arrived at the Marriott hotel in Mission Valley about 14h30, but our room was not yet ready. We went to the dog beach nearby and killed some time; there was a plaque there saying this was the first dog beach to be established in the country. We were able to check in at 16h00.

After we got our room, we had dinner. I hadn't had a real lunch. The dinner turned out to be problematical, but it took me some time to figure this out. I had been slowly eliminating glutens from my diet, because I suspect them of causing many of my gastrointestinal problems and possibly other ones. This was really the first time I was fully gluten-free or at least tried to be. It turns out I needed a lot more knowledge about cooking. I gained that knowledge in conversation later in the con suite and other places by talking to fans who were either gluten sensitive or knew people who are.

Afterwards we wandered around and checked things out. We also got registered for the con.

I ate a room service breakfast to begin the day on Saturday. Then I went to Steve Barnes's Tai Chi session. It was well attended, including some veterans of the art. Jacqueline Lichtenberg's husband was also there.

Then I checked out the dealers' room with Mike. I made some notes, but they were almost the only notes I remembered to make all weekend. Among other people, I talked to Jane and Scott Dennis, Marty Massoglia, Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Jean Lorrah, Deborah Wheeler, Alice Massoglia (who came to the room because her purse was missing – later found), Lee Gold, Jim Hays, and Tadao Tomomatsu. Jim Hays, who was in charge of programming for the con, was complaining that many of his panellists were cancelling out. So I offered to help. I looked through the programme book and chose one panel to participate on.

Then I went to the Opening Ceremonies, which introduced the guests of the convention in a somewhat humorous way. The guest of honour was Walter Jon Williams. The artist guest was Bob Eggleton. Los Angeles fan Bobbi Armbruster was the fan guest. The toastmaster was Kevin J. Anderson.

I was able to get lunch in the well-stocked con suite.

In the afternoon we both attended "Behind the Cameras of Star Trek", a slide show presented by Michael DeMeritt, who had worked on *Enterprise* as an assistant director.

Then I went to "Human-Machine Interface: Neural WiFi and the Telepathic Internet". For most of the panel, only L. Blunt Jackson was present, and we discussed ideas that represented relatively accessible technology. Toward the end of the 50-minute hour, Jonathan Vos Post arrived with a story about why he was so late and presented a completely different take on the idea. He talked about technology that isn't yet known, and I guess we will find out if anything becomes of this.

Later in the afternoon, we both attended “The Science of Art” with Ctein, Susan Gleason, San Le, and April Lee on the panel. Art was looked at with a scientific eye, and there was also some discussion about exactly what art is.

Between some of the panels, I ascertained that the fanzine lounge was getting off to a slow start. At one point I was introduced to the librarians from UC Riverside who look after the fanzine collection there. I took some sample copies of eAPA on CDs for dissemination. Various problems prevented them from being in the fanzine lounge until about halfway through the con, and the sign I had made was mislaid. Only three discs were taken. I plan to take the rest to the WorldCon.

We had dinner in the hotel, as we did every evening. After my initial problems getting a gluten-free meal, I ended up having much more extensive conversations with the wait staff and had them check everything with the chef; they did a marvellous job.

At night there were parties on the third and fourth floors of the hotel. I managed to check them all out and stayed up way too late. As usual I got into a lot of conversations with all sorts of people that I have very little recollection of as I write this more than a week later. I probably remember the conversations pretty well but not the participants.

Sunday I woke up too late for a proper breakfast but was able to get something in the con suite. The con suite was excellently set up for people to grab a quick meal between panels.

The first programme item I attended that day was “The Art of Bob Eggleton”, in which he did a slide show of some of his work and told a running story of his career.

In the afternoon I attended the guest of honour interview (Walter Jon Williams).

Right afterward I managed to catch a little less than half of Heather Alexander’s concert. We first saw her in Phoenix two years ago. She does sort of folksy, Irish type music, which I’m only lukewarm toward; but she is a great entertainer and talented and versatile musician.

Sometime during the day, I managed to look at the art show.

At night we checked out the Regency dancing. My right knee was giving me trouble, so we didn’t stay long. I spent the rest of the night at the parties but managed to get back to our room early enough to get up for the morning panels. I do recall one party. I don’t remember the name of the group, but they had some strange foods and candy to try on people. If you did, you got a “Lab Rat” ribbon for your badge. I really liked the liquid candy I tried, so they gave me one of the several bottles they had. I believe this was also the night when I was made a temporary student of Ravenclaw (Harry Potter reference) at a different party.

Monday morning I attended the belly dancing session.

At noon I attended the panel on “Global Warming/Global Dimming” with Ctein, James Hay, Marc Matz, and Todd McCaffrey. The audience got into this one in a big way, and I believe a fight almost broke out. Some people have very strong beliefs about this issue. A lot of discussion continued in the hallway after the panel room had to be vacated.

In the afternoon Mike and I both attended the Spintronics Demonstration. It’s not actually a demonstration. It’s an industry-level talk with snazzy PowerPoint presentation. We also both attended the Cassini Project presentation, which was marred first by beginning late and then by the fact that the computer being used didn’t have Quick Time Player installed.

Then I did a two-hour stint in the fanzine lounge. There was not much activity, and I spent most of the time reading one of the Hugo nominated novels.

At night there was the masquerade. There were not too many entries, but the few present were all quite good. The half-time entertainment was Heather Alexander, so that made the whole evening worthwhile. Then I went to the parties.



Doctor Who entry



Another entry



Heather Alexander

I woke up in the middle of the night Tuesday with a horrible sinus headache, which made me suspect the feather bedding in the room. In fact I had a sinus headache almost every day of the con.

The first panel I went to in the morning was “Catastrophic Population Loss: How It Could Affect Society?” I believe only Lorna Freeman and Val Ontell showed up on this one. One thing brought up was the fact that the effects would depend on whether the loss was a slow one, as from a disease, or a sudden one, as from a nuclear war. A slow process, such as disease, would be much easier to handle.

After this one, I went back to our room to watch the launch of the shuttle *Discovery*. After being postponed twice this weekend, it went very well.

In the afternoon I attended a reading by Walter Jon Williams. I had to leave before he was finished, because I was due to be on a panel and needed a quick rest stop before then.

The panel I joined was “How Does How We’re Seeing Television Affect What We Will See?” The other two panellists present were Jean Lorrah and Janet Tait, who said, I believe, that she worked for a cell phone company. The various methods of seeing TV these days, including VCRs, DVRs, the Internet, cell phones, and iPods were

covered. Especially was mentioned the effect on advertising.



After my panel I managed to catch the second half of the Dramatic Hugo Nominees Presentation.



The two fan nominees were shown. I caught the last part of “Lucas Back in Anger”, which is a spoof of Star Wars. The other one shown was the “Prix Victor Hugo Awards Ceremony”, which was the opening speech and framing device for the Hugo awards ceremony last year. It was quite clever.

The convention ended with Con Talk Back. At night there was a Dead Dog in the con suite, which was quite lively and still going strong when I left around midnight.

Wednesday morning, I went down to the hotel restaurant for breakfast. Jules Dickinson, who had already finished eating, joined me for conversation. I found out she had moved up to Washington state about three years ago and was working for Bill Gates.

Back up in our room, I finished packing. We took everything to the car. Then I checked us out. We left the hotel about 11h00. We stopped in La Jolla about 11h30 to check out the tide pools. For once we managed to hit low tide. I didn’t find these pools to be as interesting as the ones in Palos Verdes.

We got home about 14h30. I picked Fluffy up from the vet at 15h00. Both of our cats seemed to be okay being on their own. Mercury had stayed home with the pet sitter stopping by once a day.

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*** Mailing Comments on FAPA #275:**

Keith A. Walker (For FAPA): Your essay on time shares reminds me that I was almost taken. This happened while I was unemployed, and I didn't have a lot to do. I figured I might as well attend those sales sessions. I did get coupons for a free meal for two at one of them. However, the next one was not so good. I don't recall getting anything, and I ended up signing contract for a time share. In California there's a three-day cooling off period, which means that a potential buyer can change his mind within three days without any penalty. So I was able to get out of it. I never attended another session.

Robert Lichtman (King Biscuit time #47): We didn't pay quite as much as you guessed for our house; we paid eighty percent of your figure. I'm not really sure how much faith to put in the Zillow.com site. Ours is the smallest house in the development. It wasn't originally that way, but the other houses of the same model have had additions made to them.

I don't recall my first movie. The earliest I can recall is seeing *Dumbo*. Since my sister and cousin were also with us, I must have been at least five at the time.

I also have met twenty of the current FAPA membership, with a lot of overlap with your list.

Dale Speirs (Opuntia 60.1): I post *Feline Mewsings* on the Internet. But since it's first done for printing, it's not formatted for reading online particularly, though I did get rid of the columns so that you don't need to scroll back to read it online. I suppose I could reformat it before I post it, but most readers of e-zines seem to print the zines out. On the other hand, most of the contributors to eAPA do format their zines for online reading.

Arthur Hlavaty (Nice Distinctions 13): It seems to me that it would be difficult to give a fair appraisal of Honoré de Balzac if you read him in translation. I read *Père Goriot* years ago when I was studying French. Although I've not read anything else by him, to the best of my recollection, I believe all his works are pessimistic. His characters are certainly not ones you'd sympathize with. Some of them are definitely evil, and others seem to be caught in webs they're unable to extricate themselves from. But I don't get the impression that you disliked Balzac's writing merely because you didn't care for the characters. You make specific mention of the quality of writing. That's why I wonder whether you read him in the original French.

Einstein's theories are, after all, easier to understand. - Dale Speirs

[illegible]

Bob Silverberg (Snickersnee): Actually I believe there are only four electronic APAs at the moment, and I believe they are all on the small side compared with FAPA. I think people are just writing less, at least on paper. Things such as blogs are sucking in people who might in the past have written zines. Even there, a lot of people start them and end up abandoning them after a few months.

In a comment to Gordon Eklund, you mention your match-lighting trick; but some of us are ignorant of what that is. Would you care to educate those of us who are in the dark?

Dale Speirs (Opuntia 60.5): I greatly enjoyed reading about your life on a ranch.

A. Langley Searles (The Annex #22): I imagine that, even today, being poor in the country is much easier than being poor in the city. At least you always had a home, unlike the homeless, who seem to crowd some areas of Los Angeles.

Gordon Eklund (Sweet Jane #47): On my numerous crossings of the border with Canada (I used to live in upstate New York and crossed so many times that I lost count. I've also crossed over a few times from Washington state and at least a couple of times by plane.), I've never been questioned about weapons or drugs. The usual question I get when I enter Canada is whether I'm going for business or pleasure. Sometimes they ask me to elaborate. The usual question I get coming back is whether I was born in the US, where I live, and whether I'm an American citizen. They also ask whether I bought anything in Canada. The easiest crossing I experienced was when my parents and I took the ferry from Port Angeles to Victoria; I don't recall anyone asking us anything.

Ben Indick (Ben's Beat 84): John Hertz runs most of the Regency events in southern California and teaches at many of the Regency dances at conventions.

Roger Wells (Voice of the Habu, Vol. IX, No. 2): I'm always impressed by your optimistic attitude even when things don't seem to be going very well. I'm glad you have found good employment with Boeing.

Jim Caughran (A Propos de Rien): I've not yet read *1984*; I've just seen the movie version.

What a coincidence. I, too, just started reading *A Tale of Two Cities*, which I'd previously only read in an abridged version.

Since we will be moving out of southern California when we sell our house and will be building rather than buying a house, I think we will do well with the profit on our house. Southern California has some of the highest real estate prices in the country. The Tucson area, where we will be moving to, isn't even close.

Tom Feller (The Road Warrior): We have an Oreck vacuum cleaner. I like it because it is very light and easy to carry.

Janice Morningstar ('snice To Snow You): I didn't realize that we could see seals in La Jolla. We were told that on our peninsula, one can sometimes see seals; but we didn't know this until recently. We just wanted to see the tide pools.

The illo on p. 13 of *Feline Mewsings* #22 is by Bill Rotsler, so your guess is as good as mine what it's supposed to be.

The comments you made to me regarding Asperger syndrome should have been addressed to Nate Bucklin. You were responding to things he said in his LoC. By the way, what's OCD?

We buy regular white paper by the case. I believe one case contains ten reams. I did buy one ream of Astrobright to use in my correspondence. However, coloured paper doesn't work well when you're printing colour photos. I usually buy paper at Staples.

Jack Speer (Synapse): It is definitely conceivable that someone could do the equivalent of ballot stuffing with reviews on amazon.com. At least one author has asked me to post a positive review of her book there. Whether I did or not, I don't recall; but I wouldn't post a positive review unless I liked the book.

The virtual masquerade at Loscon is basically a video. They started during the years when Loscons did not feature masquerades. Even though masquerades have been back for a while, they are still showing the virtual masquerades during the time when the judges go off-stage to make their decisions. I watched one that I thought was entertaining, but the one the following year was poorly edited and quite boring and the video quality was poor. The virtual masquerade is basically footage shot at Loscon, and I suppose there is not much time for editing.

Mike and I store data on a server, but it's a server in our home. Mike uses a commercial server for his astronomy site. The space is basically donated, but Mike usually sends in a small payment from time to time.

In Australia tipping is not *de rigueur* in restaurants. This was given by a friend of ours as the reason that service is frequently not good. I don't recall running into any bad service in a restaurant there, though.

I think the reason for all the Deltas and Epsilons in *Brave New World* is that Huxley did not predict automation. If he were writing the book now, he may not have any Deltas and Epsilons.

Must one justify changing one's name? I have changed my name twice - once when I became a citizen and recently when I actually filed papers in court to change it. No one either time asked me why I was doing this.

* * *

* Letters to the Editor

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

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, ON

19 April 2006

Thank you for a paper copy of *Feline Mewsings* 23. There's never enough time to get the job done properly, but a few minutes present themselves, and the time management skills come to the fore. Here's a loc on this issue...

I participated in Worldcon masquerades in the 80s, and I enjoyed myself, but I also found that the egos involved made it nearly impossible to want to stay. Our last masquerade in which we participated was at LACon II; we worked the masquerade at the 1986 Worldcon in Atlanta; but thanks to a screaming stage manager, it was unpleasant to say the least. By the end of the 90s, we were out of costuming entirely; the raging egos drove us out. ((My participation in masquerades was just to help Kathy Sanders. The ideas were all hers, and she made all the costumes.))

It sometimes looks like Regency dancing is a regular fannish activity everywhere, but I'm thinking it's more of a SoCal fandom phenomenon. I haven't seen Regency dancing at a convention outside of Worldcon, and then not every Worldcon offers space for it. ((I think the first time I saw Regency dancing was at a Boskone.))

We're all pulling for 4E, and I am still hoping that I can meet him one last time. Eighty-nine is a precarious age, but he seems sensawunda-fuelled. I'd very much like to see the Freas memorial. I wish I'd been able to see Kelly at Torcon, but failing health allows for very little. He'd been a guest at two Toronto conventions in the past, and I wish he'd been at Torcon. ((The Freas memorial is located at Oakwood Memorial Park Cemetery in Chatsworth, which is in the San Fernando Valley.))

What aerospace company does Mike work for? Yvonne works for Optech, a Toronto firm that specializes in lidar and other laser products. Optech's space and atmospheric division has been a supplier to NASA in the past. (Hmmm... does Oracle have an aerospace division?)

Loscon...how was John Hertz's fanzine lounge? I am looking forward to Milt Stevens' lounge at LAcon IV. We had doubts that we'd be able to make it, but we will be there. (In fact, Yvonne will be at LAX next month at the 2006 International Space Development Conference. She is part of a bid to bring the ISDC to Toronto for 2009.)

We had our annual litcon in Toronto the beginning of April; and seeing it was the 25th anniversary of the con, there were plans for big guests, most of which cancelled out pretty much at the last minute. Still, it was a good time, and that's where Yvonne and I announced our retirement from SF convention running. Twenty-five years is a good run, I think. Yvonne wants to get her pilot's license, and I want to write more for fanzines and see where it takes me.

Laurie Chapek-Carleton, with her husband Gordon, run MediaWest*Con in the Lansing, Michigan, area. She produced many Trekzines; unfortunately, none of the titles come to mind. It has been some time. I met Gordon in 1982...he staged one of his entertaining voice plays, *Supraman*, at Ad Astra II. ((That is certainly the Lori that I used to know.))

Avery Brooks is a fine actor; and, if I recall, a lot of his initial training was on the stage in classical plays. I got the feeling that doing *Spenser For Hire* and *Deep Space Nine* was more for paying the bills than anything else. (I was amused when Brooks shaved his head and grew a beard during *Deep Space Nine* so he could also do *Spenser For Hire* movies at the same time.)

Our current computer problems...I have McAfee VirusScan and Webroot anti-spyware on our hard drive. When first installed, they did their job quite well without interfering with the usual operation of the computer. Now, after lots of updates to each, both programmes are so bloated they slow the computer down to a crawl. I purchased enough RAM to quadruple what I had in the CPU, and that has eased the situation, but either or both programmes doing their job nearly stop the computer in its tracks. We've been told that with a few new components added in, we won't need to buy a new computer, even if it was purchased in 1999. The corrupted modules were replaced, and we are told it's working pretty well for a seven-year-old computer.

I am informed that Momcat is doing well and is starting to fit into the household and feline pecking order again. We might go down and visit again this summer and have a lap full of Momcat for a weekend.

Gone through it all, enjoyed every page, but all done now. I need to take a few days off to do nothing but

write LoCs; I'm that far behind. Take care, and I look forward to the next issue.

#



Jon Louis Hall/Stevens/Mann, Santa Monica, CA

12 June 2006

Thank you for all your efforts in keeping this zine up and wish you the best with your health problems. For those of you on the disty list who are acquainted with me, I am changing my e-mail address back to net_democracy at yahoo.com.

I will be changing my name back to Hall; Stevens was my adopted name.

...

Hope to see some of you at Westercon.

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Leslie David, Reston, VA

13 June 2006

Got the latest issue of *Feline Mewsings*. I have trouble remembering what I did three months ago. ((I keep a diary, so I don't have to remember.))

You have my sympathy on your dental work. I hope you are able to be successful with your implants. I just finished replacing a crown and a few old amalgam fillings. I thought about trying to find a dentist closer than Richmond, so I went to one who was in the plan and only about a mile from my house. This woman acted like I was some kind of hillbilly who had never even seen a toothbrush! She told me all my fillings were cracked and leaking, that I'd need scaling, and that the crowns would need to be replaced. In short, she wanted to overhaul my mouth and crown all of my teeth. Well, this freaked me out so badly that I faxed a copy of the treatment plan to my dentist in Richmond. The hygienist called me and told me that unless my mouth had gone to Hell in a hand basket in the six months since she'd seen me that I didn't need scaling. Needless to say I didn't change dentists, so I still drive the ninety miles to Richmond for dental work. My dentist is conservative; she believes in if it's not broke, don't fix it. She explained that to drill to replace all of my amalgam fillings (some are quite large and old) could cause micro fractures that could lead to cracking of the teeth, which would then require crowning. I did need to replace a crown that had chipped, and after discussion we decided that we would replace two old fillings and fill/bond some exposed roots that I had due to recession. Other than that I still have the twenty-four teeth left after orthodontia and removal of my wisdom teeth. ((I'm sure there are good dentists located closer to you, but finding a good dentist is not an easy thing.))

Again, sympathies on your dad's stroke. I hope by now he's back home. Why is it that people don't want to go to the hospital? I'm sure your father had some symptoms before he went. The same thing happened with Rosemary, who founded the Wiccan group I studied and practiced with. She didn't feel well, went to the ER on a Saturday (4 March), signed herself out (against medical advice) and died Sunday (5 March) between 1 and 5 while watching television, which I guess isn't a bad way to go. The cause of death was a

heart attack. Maybe if she'd stayed, it could have been prevented, although she had told her daughter she was the same age as when her husband had died two years earlier; and she was ready to go. So far my parents are doing OK at 83. Mom had arthroscopic surgery on her knee, and Dad has had a series of tests. He hasn't been feeling well; but so far the tests have all been negative, which is good. They've had to cancel two cruises they'd scheduled because of health—the first cruise they were going to take through the Panama Canal was cancelled because Dad had bronchitis and his doctor told him not to go. The second cruise they were going to take to France and Denmark, and they cancelled because Dad was afraid of being sick outside the US. ((My parents had just renewed their season opera tickets. They gave away one pair to friends. It hasn't been decided yet whether my mother will go to the second one with my sister. My father had been making slow but steady progress toward recovery. Unfortunately he has suffered a second urinary tract infection and has had to have surgery to remove a blockage in his small intestine.))

I didn't see *The Pink Panther*, although any movie with Steve Martin and Kevin Kline and Clive Owen (who sure is pretty) is worth taking a look at. I guess I'll have to rent it. Movies I've seen lately were *Black Orpheus* (1959) at AFI, *Thank You for Smoking*, *The Promise*, and *An Inconvenient Truth*. *The Promise* was Chinese and had some of the most beautiful effects I've seen in a long time. It reminded me of the other two movies I've seen and liked because of the incredibly beautiful photography—the 1979 remake of *Nosferatu* and *Legend*. ((I think Clive Owen is just tolerable looking.))

An Inconvenient Truth was definitely an eye-opener. The message was very clear—we can't go on destroying the environment in which we have to live and depleting our resources. Al Gore was amazing. If only he'd been this relaxed and comfortable with himself during the campaign instead of being as wooden as he was, maybe he would have done even better in the election. ((I think the reason Gore comes across well in *An Inconvenient Truth*, is that the movie is about a topic he feels really passionate about. There weren't too many other issues in his campaign that he felt so strongly about.))

I saw *The Glass Menagerie* when the Kennedy Center presented three of Tennessee Williams' plays: *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Sally Field played the role of Amanda. I've always liked Tennessee Williams and the role of Tom. His last lines, "I didn't go to the moon, I went much further," is one of my favourites. If I ever got to play a character, I would want to be Tom. Did you ever see the television production? It had Katherine Hepburn as Amanda, Sam Waterston as Tom and Michael Moriarty as the Gentleman Caller. I don't remember who played Laura. To me she's such a nonentity, overwhelmed by the stronger characters. I also saw *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Keegan up at Dupont Circle. ((I saw the TV production of *The Glass Menagerie*. I don't recall who played Laura.))

The citrus tour sounds fascinating. I didn't know that about navel oranges.

Based on your review, I guess I'm also going to have to rent *King Arthur*. As I previously mentioned, Clive Owen is really pretty--I wish they had chosen him for the next James Bond.

Who is Sheryl Birkhead? I've never met her and she lives so close by, but then so do the Lynchi and I never see them either. Yes, John Purcell did get in touch with me. We've corresponded some and I sent him a copy of a picture he'd sent to me all those years ago. ((Sheryl Birkhead is a very shy fan artist. She's also a veterinarian and has cats.))

Max is still doing well—he's thirteen now and my beautiful middle-aged kitty boy. My friend Sam had to put his cat, Edison, down a couple of months ago; and he was just a couple of months older than Max. I guess he just has good cat genes. ((My sister's first cat lived to be something like twenty-one and died of old age, though he did have some problems with his urinary tract toward the end. He was also practically blind, deaf, and arthritic. Fluffy had been vomiting a lot lately, and he has been diagnosed with pancreatitis of unknown cause. He has responded pretty well to medication.))

Ross and I are going to see *Love's Labour's Lost* at the Shakespeare Theatre on June 24th. We're also trying to choose dates for seasons' tickets to the Shakespeare Theatre and the Folger for the next season. The Shakespeare Theatre is doing *Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Hamlet*, and Ibsen's *Enemy of the People*. The Folger is doing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. The

Shakespeare Theatre did *The Tempest* this year, so I don't see the need to see another production of it so soon. ((We are planning to go to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, in July. You won't read our report on the trip until the November issue, since we'll be getting back too late for me to get the report into the August issue.))

Other things going on in my life, current and past: Leslie and Judy's birthday bash, Leslie's date from Hell and the company big fancy black tie party, Leslie meets the man of her dreams, Leslie buys a new (sort of) car, Leslie and Elizabeth go to the Brattleboro Dawn Dance, and Leslie finally has the Intacs procedure.

Leslie and Judy's Birthday Bash

Judy Gibson and I share the same birth date (March 6) and have held joint parties together for the last few years. The first was held in Columbia, MD, in conjunction with a friend's return from a six-month assignment in Qatar. The second was held last year at Judy's new townhouse in Reston. This year, because Judy is in grad school, the party was held at my apartment. Invites went out, responses were received, and things were off to a good start with the exception of waiting for Judy to bring the coolers and ice for the drinks. We had a small but good crowd, mainly pagan friends of ours but also including my theatre buddy, Tim; Penni, whom I met at Trader Joe's; and my former high school classmate, also named Leslie Joan. We'd run into each other at the twenty-year reunion in 1994, and at the time she was married and living in Vermont. Shortly afterwards she divorced and moved to Centreville. We had gotten in touch via classmates.com, and she attended the party last year. We took pictures, which I still need to get developed; and if we don't look like total geeks, I intend to post them on classmates.com to say, "See, we really do, too, have a life." Also invited to the party was the guy I was going to the company party with. See the next paragraph for details.

Leslie's Date from Hell and the Company Big Fancy Black Tie Party

SRA has a big company party every year; and to avoid all the PC and conflicts (and I also suspect cost), they decided not to hold it during the holiday season but to hold it in the spring. The Spring Fling (sounds like a prom, doesn't it) was April 1st, which should have been an omen, since the time change also went into effect that night. Since my gay theatre buddy already had a commitment and couldn't go with me, I had posted on Craig's List that I needed an escort to go to the party and the requirements were that he like to dress up, be capable of making conversation, and dance. I had gotten several responses, including one from a trial attorney in DC who sent me a pic of himself on a bike with a bunch of balloons attached. In his response he said he had a tux and would travel, had a sense of humour as dry as the martinis he liked to drink, and didn't believe there was any occasion that didn't call for champagne. Well, I thought this was my guy. I invited him to my birthday party in March, so we could meet before the big night. He came; and I thought OK, so he's older than I thought (60) and heavier than the picture, but I'm not exactly model material myself. The Big Day arrives and I pamper myself with a massage, manicure, and pedicure (I did say this was like the prom except we're older, better dressed, and we can drink) to get ready. The party starts at 7, we're supposed to have our picture taken at 8 (the money goes to charity), and he's supposed to show up at 6 so we can have a drink and chat before heading out. He shows up an hour and a half late, and he looks like a ragbag, and I wonder what part of big fancy black tie party he didn't get. After all this was not a last minute invitation, so he had plenty of time to take care of things. We don't get to the party until 9. For him, things went downhill from there—someone jostled him and got red wine on his tux shirt (moral of the story—only drink white drinks in formal dress); and after he left my place, he ran out of gas on his way home. Truly fitting for the trickster gods on April Fool's Day.

Leslie Meets the Man of Her Dreams, or At Least a Guy She Really Likes

You'd think that after the debacle with the office party with a guy I'd met through Craig's List that I'd swear off it forever. Nope. I answered a posting from a guy who had listed reasons why women should date him. I don't remember all of them, but in my response I told him I liked numbers 4 and 5. Number 4 was four hours of foreplay, and number 5 was he was a damn good liar. Since he listed visiting national parks and hiking as some of his interests, I suggested we go on a Meetup hike that was going to be held at Manassas Battlefield. This way there would be other people around; and if we didn't click, it would be

easy to say adios. Not only did we click, but also Ross and I have been dating since April. He's forty-seven, has degrees in math and chemistry, works for NIH, and is working on his doctorate. Since then we've gone to dinner and movies, a road and ferry trip to Cape May, NJ, a 20-K hike, a wine festival, the Fairfax Fair, and several pagan events. While he's not pagan, he's pagan-friendly and likes my friends; and that's all that matters. I just want to know, why did I have to wait until I was fifty to meet a man who is kind and considerate and treats me like a queen?

Leslie Buys a New (sort of) Car

I recently traded in my Honda CRV for a 2005 Ford Focus with everything on it. Considering my CRV was seven years old with 123,000 miles on it, I got a fair trade-in. Things I liked about the SUV—it was the most fuel efficient in its class; I sat higher off the road; and because of the height, I didn't care if they ploughed our parking lots when it snowed; it was good when there was a lot of standing water, and the real-time four-wheel drive kicked in when it was needed. Things I didn't like about the SUV—it had a lot more blind spots, which caused me to have several accidents; the fuel efficiency sucked compared to a sedan; it was harder to park because it was wider than a sedan; and the turning radius wasn't as tight. I'm enjoying being back in a sedan—the Focus is fun to drive.

I wish I could only put 3,000 miles a year on a car—for me it's more like three months. The only place I've ever lived and worked that didn't involve a 30-mile commute was Raleigh, where I was about a mile from the office. What pisses me off is that all of the companies I've worked for have offices closer to my house than the ones I worked out of, and I can't telecommute even though the application I support is supposed to be available from any computer in the world. ((Congratulations on your new car. The only reason I don't drive very much (and I think the 3,000 miles a year might be an overestimate) is because I don't have a job. And also because when I go anywhere, it's almost always with Mike and we usually take his 2002 Toyota Prius.))

Leslie and Elizabeth Go to the Brattleboro Dawn Dance

This is a condensation of something I sent to John Purcell. Elizabeth is my best friend and lives in Richmond. We actually lived in the same apartment complex for three years and didn't meet until I got out of the Army in 1987 and went to work for the same company she did. She and I started contra dancing in 1990 and got hooked. She branched into English country dancing, which is how she met her husband. They have since divorced. Whenever I travelled on business, I always checked to see if there was a contra dance group in the area; and if a dance was being held while I was there, I would attend it; so I became what we refer to as a "dance gypsy." I've also attended several dance weekends, which are sort of like cons except they're usually held at camp facilities where you bring your own linens, and there are dance workshops during the day with dances at night. There are several places that hold all-night dances, with the closest to me being Charlottesville; and I attended two of them. An all-night dance is just that—they book several bands and callers and usually run from 8 at night until 6 or 7 the next morning. One of the best known is the Brattleboro Dawn Dance.

I had known about the Dawn Dance in Brattleboro, VT, for several years. I decided to check online and found out it was being held Memorial Day weekend. I immediately e-mailed Elizabeth the details of the dance and asked if she wanted to attend. When she said yes, I looked into things and saw that flying Southwest from BWI to Albany was cheap and feasible and would save us gas, tolls, and ten hours of driving on a holiday weekend.

We flew to Albany Saturday, spent the night there, and visited a friend of mine from Sunday school and high school that I hadn't seen in thirty-two years. We had a wonderful visit, reminiscing over some of the things from high school, since both of us had been on the fringes and out of the mainstream. Sunday I drove Elizabeth around and showed her where I'd gone to junior high and high school, as well as where I'd lived.

The drive to Brattleboro was beautiful. There are no Interstates so the entire trip is on secondary roads, Rte 7 to Vermont, then Rte 9 to Brattleboro. The mountains were green and beautiful, duh, which is what gives Vermont its name. One thing we did see was more bikers than the scene in *The Rocky Horror*

Picture Show. I don't know if there was a biker event going on, or if they were all just taking advantage of the spectacular weather we had.

We got into Brattleboro and had a couple of hours to wander around, look in the stores, and eat dinner before the 8 pm session started.

The schedule of events was:

Contra: 8 pm – midnight, Rick Mohr caller with Nightingale

12:10-12:30 am – Couple Dancing

12:30 am – 3:30 am, Nils Fredland caller with Lift Ticket

3:30 am – 7:00 am, Beth Molaro caller with Taconic Tonic

The first two groups and callers were excellent. Lift Ticket is the first contra group I've seen with a percussion section; and not only did Nils call, he also played the trombone. Since I hadn't danced in a while, I knew there was no way I was going to dance every dance; so I paced myself, although I didn't turn down any of the men who asked me. I made it through the first two sessions; but by 3:30, my feet had had it. By 4:30 I had showered and changed into what I'd planned on wearing on the plane; and by 5:30 it was light enough to see, so Elizabeth and I drove back to Albany.

The flight was an hour and five minutes. Having only carry-on bags, once we deplaned we went outside; immediately were picked up by the shuttle to go back to parking, and by 12:15 were on our way back to Reston. We were home by 1:18.

Leslie Finally Has the Intacs Procedure

Back in 1985 I was diagnosed with keratoconus in my left eye. Keratoconus is a progressive eye disease that causes a thinning of the cornea. It's an irregular astigmatism where the cornea is shaped like a cone. As keratoconus progresses, the quality of vision deteriorates and contact lenses or glasses no longer become a satisfactory solution for most people. I needed a rigid lens to flatten the cornea to correct my vision; and the best vision I could achieve in glasses was 20/80, which left me with no depth perception and difficulty driving at night. Because of seasonal allergies and dry eyes, I wore what was called a "piggyback", consisting of a rigid gas permeable lens on top of a soft lens, which provided a better surface to fit the lens to. This was annoying, because it meant I had to cart around two contact lens cases as well as cleaning/wetting/soaking solutions for two different types of lenses.

While Lasik and other procedures were available to correct myopia for other people, I couldn't have it because of the shape of the cornea. In short, I was told to suck it up and live with it. For many an invasive corneal transplant was the only option, but my vision wasn't bad enough to require that. Because of this I monitored the keratoconus web site to see what, if any, progress had been made in treating it. A few years ago, a procedure using a device called Intacs was used to correct mild myopia. It entailed placing two pieces of plastic around the exterior of the cornea to reshape it. The beauty of Intacs vs. Lasik was that it is reversible. Someone realized that this technique could be used to stabilize the cornea and to correct nearsightedness and astigmatism of patients with Keratoconus when contact lenses and glasses were no longer suitable, so I started looking into it.

The first thing was to determine whether I was even a candidate for this procedure. I went to an ophthalmologist who performed the procedure for an evaluation. While I've had keratoconus for twenty years, my cone has stayed stable and I've had no thinning or scarring of the cornea, which made me an excellent candidate for the procedure. Additionally my expectations for results were reasonable—I knew I wasn't going to be able to throw away the glasses and the contacts—what I was looking for was better corrected vision in glasses and an easier fit with standard contact lenses.

Once this hurdle is passed, then you get to fight with the insurance company. Actually you get to fight

with them the entire time. First you have to convince them that this is not refractive surgery like Lasik; then if you have insurance that requires precertification or preauthorization that you obtain this. When I was with BCBS, they denied the request because they thought it was refractive surgery. I had to get my doctor to contact them to explain the procedure before they reversed the denial. Then I got a letter from them telling me we had physicians in the plan that performed this procedure. Since we're looking at 7K per eye, it's a consideration when insurance will cover more for a provider who is in the plan than one that is not. The next fight will be when the provider submits a claim for payment. Intacs is considered a humanitarian device, not experimental, so it does have a CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) code.

CPT codes are published by the American Medical Association. A CPT code is a five digit numeric code that is used to describe medical, surgical, radiology, laboratory, anaesthesiology, and evaluation/management services of physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers. CPT codes are used for billing. A new CPT code, 0099T, to describe Intacs for keratoconus was released by the AMA on Jan 1, 2005. What gives Claims people fits is this is a Category III code and doesn't follow the 5-digit format, which means their System Administrator will have to input it into the computer so it doesn't reject.

Then I changed jobs and had to start the process again. I again was told that I was a good candidate for this procedure and would see measurable results. Then my optometrist gets involved—he didn't know much about the procedure, so he recommended I see a corneal specialist. This guy tells me I won't see any improvement, so now I'm really confused—I've got two docs saying yes and one saying no, and it's crunch time—it's open enrolment and I need to determine how much is going into flex spending for the year. I called the surgical consultant and told them my problem, and they said they'd have their corneal specialist review my exam results. They call and tell me that their corneal specialist has reviewed my exam and feels it would be beneficial, so now I have duelling corneal specialists. I decided to go with it anyway; after all, what's the worst thing that can happen? No results.

I allotted the max for flex spending since most of the doctors require payment up front—they are after all a business, and insurance keeps jerking them around to avoid paying them, and I finally scheduled the date for June 8th. The contacts have to be out a week before the procedure, so I took them out when we were in Vermont.

The day of the procedure, my friend Ross drove me to the office. The beginning is the same as for Lasik—they use numbing drops, wash the surrounding eye area with Betadine, mark the site, put on the hair and shoe covers, and I went into the room. I was on a reclining chair and was given two rubber balls to squeeze for tension. My eye was immobilized so the laser could create the channel, and then the Intacs segments were inserted. There's no pain, but I did feel a tugging on the eye while the segments were being put in and adjusted. The procedure took about 45 minutes and Ross got to watch while it was filmed. One of the staff was explaining the steps to him—she had seen Lasik performed but not the Intacs. After the procedure I was given my kit, which contained prednisone and antibiotic drops, artificial tears, sunglasses, and an eye shield to protect the eye at night so I wouldn't rub it. They suggest a nap when you get home, but there's no way I can sleep during the day; so I just rested for a couple hours with my eyes closed. Ross stayed with me during my "quiet time", put my drops in, and took me to dinner.

For anyone who has worn contacts, the feeling after the procedure was like when I scratched my corneas when I was wearing hard lenses, so they recommend using lots of artificial tears. The cornea heals in 24-48 hours.

I went back for my follow-up the next morning and the doctor seemed pleased with the results—she said I was seeing at 20/200, when I had been seeing at 20/400 prior to the procedure. I couldn't tell since things were still pretty blurry. On my way home after work, I stopped by my optometrist's office to get my glasses (all three pairs) adjusted and, since I'm his first patient to have the procedure, to show him what the Intacs looked like.

I'll go back after a week, a month, three months, and six months for checkups; so my vision may continue to change during that time. I also need to carry a card in case of an emergency. I should have one anyway since I wear contacts and am allergic to codeine.

My one-week checkup will be this Thursday (6/15). I can already see some difference—images are darker and clearer when I look at them without glasses compared to the right eye. ((Nothing as dramatic – but I'll be starting with Paragon CRT lenses after we return in early August from our trip. They are lenses you wear while you sleep to reshape your corneas. The hope is that they will correct my myopia enough that I won't have to wear glasses except possibly when I read and maybe when I'm working at the computer.))

#

Jason K. Burnett, Minneapolis, MN

13 June 2006

Thank you. I hope to have a LOC done for you soon. In the meantime, if you have a chance, I'd be honoured if you'd go to efanzines.com and check out my new zine, *Hexagon*.

#

Forrest J Ackerman, Horrorwood, Karloffornia

13 June 2006

I never knew b4 till I just READ of your weird disability in new Musings.

So sorry.

All my sympathy.

And Love.

Arms around U.

Always enjoy seeing U.

#

Brad W Foster, Irving, TX

14 June 2006

Thanks for sending the copy of *Feline Mewsings* #24. What a great title! I'd love to see something of mine printed in this zine, if for no other reason than to be able to add such a great title to the bibliography of printed works. Fanzines got the coolest names!

...

Re your comment to Milt Stevens on ground floor apartments: I always avoided the first floor when I lived in apartments, not to avoid the risk of burglary, but because of the noise of people stomping around on my ceiling. I'd rather be the stomper than the stompee.

Re the letter of 1 April from Tim Marion: Talk of "still" using a VCR, I just had to toll in; I recently bought myself a nice new turntable unit so I can listen to the hundreds of lps that are here and waiting to be enjoyed again. (And there is an old hand-cranked Victrola with a bunch of 78s that will work when the power goes out. Old tech forever!)

#

Tim Marion, New York, NY

17 June 2006

Just received *Feline Mewsings* 24 today. Lots of letters in this issue, including a surprising amount of space printing missives from me! Thanks a lot for printing my Cleopatra pun, as I feel that really does deserve wider exposure (sure hope I'm right). If you want, you can reprint my "Panda vs. Kittyhawk" story, if you think it's worth it.

I noticed on the first page you mentioned that you watched *The Dragon King* on the Sci-Fi Channel. It's excellent subject matter and makes a nice costume drama, but none of the performances were very gripping (and that's putting it very politely). I see that on "Movies on Demand" they are also offering *The*

Dragon King, but either the description writer watched only the first few minutes or this is a different "Dragon King" movie, a prequel, regarding the death of Siegfried's father, Sigmund (which, of course, is a Volsung Saga unto itself). I see that it is listed as only 2 hours 12 minutes, making me wonder, if it is indeed the same movie, how the Sci Fi Channel could have expanded it to four hours, even with commercials. ((I checked online, and I believe *The Dragon King* on your Movies on Demand is the same as the one on the Sci Fi channel. Besides adding commercials, the first several minutes of the second part was a rehash of the first part.))

I also caught *Duma* on Movies on Demand, which is about a boy escorting his pet cheetah across barren areas of South Africa to a "safe" wooded area away from the city. This movie about returning a wild cat to the wild is based on a true story of a domesticated cheetah that actually stayed on the farm its entire life. As it turns out, as I've discovered from my research, the cheetah is actually a "forgotten" domesticated animal, with a history of domestication that stretches back almost as far as the common cat. The ancient Sumerians, then the Egyptians, then the Mongolians, and even up until the Renaissance with the Italians and French, kept cheetahs (and the smaller, lynx-like caracals) as "hunting cats." Through successive generations, these cats became very familiar with and friendly toward their human hosts/masters.

Really, *Duma* is a pretty good movie with beautiful scenery and photography and some interesting, inventive story telling. The only real problem was that the cheetah was a much better actor than the boy.

#

Rita Prince Winston, Venice, CA

24 June 2006

Am now reading *Feline Mewsings* #24. When I reduced the cover photo to 80%, I became pretty sure that it shows oranges rather than peaches. Later I cleverly figured out that it comes from your tour of the Citrus museum. But you didn't tell us where oranges originated (China?) and whether they like living out in a bare desert with no ground cover.

Is there any way to save DVR recordings to watch in a year or ten years (like VCR cassettes)? Leaving them on the DVR box results in losing them when the box breaks, as happened to you and presumably also to running out of space to record more stuff. ((There are DVR systems that allow you to copy saved shows to tape or other media, but the Cox system doesn't currently allow this. When I want to save a show, I still use my VCR.))

What is the Neighborhood Place Project? I read somewhere that navel oranges originated as a mutation of a regular orange, apparently causing one orange (the "navel") to grow inside another. So I suppose the navel orange lineage retains the other characteristics of its ancestor, such as the thin and very difficult to remove skin of a juice orange of the thick and easily removed skin of an eating orange. ((The Neighborhood Place Project is a small group, with a few members that seem to keep track of activities, that goes on walks in the LA area. I became acquainted with the group from a listing in the house organ for the California Historical Society.))

About your comment to Dale Speirs about amazon.com reviews, not too long ago, I heard an economist claiming to have proved mathematically that negative reviews on amazon are far more reliable than positive ones because positive ones might have been written by the author or her mother to boost sales.

Lovely linos. I noticed that more than one is attributed to the above Dale Speirs, who must be a very witty person.

About your comment to Robert Michael Sabella, apparently nurses and other health workers have long been taught to tell people to dispose of excess drugs by flushing them down the toilet; that prevents a child from finding the pills and poisoning it and prevents an adult from taking leftover antibiotic or whatever instead of having a new doctor appointment to get a new prescription. They hadn't expected it to pollute the environment.

The LoC from John Purcell questioned the reason why Regency dancing is in sf fandom. Tell him it's the sf fondness of time travel.

The LoC from John Hertz explained the DoD's shortage of trumpeters to play taps at funerals of veterans. I've heard a few news articles on that subject, including one about a veteran who agitated to DoD to recruit volunteer trumpeters not only from among veterans but also from among Boy Scouts. ((I'm sure Mike would be willing to volunteer.))

Tim Marion's Egyptian pun is so awful that it would become very popular if only the public knew what family Cleopatra was from – most of the public now seems to think she was a black African native Egyptian rather than a red-haired Macedonian.

Anyway does anyone know what the name Ptolemeus means in Greek (which would be a clue to what Triptolemeus means)? When I checked the dictionary, it claimed that Ptolemeus was derived from "polemios" (meaning "war-like"), which we have in English as "polemic". I find this theory that an extra letter t just wandered in for no reason to be unconvincing.

#

Lloyd Penney, Etobicoke, ON

28 June 2006

Thank you for yet another paper issue of your zine, *Feline Mewsings* 24. Time to commit notes to electrons.

I guess Yvonne and I are poor consumers, maybe in more ways than one...we have a DVD player now, but we have purchased few DVDs and seen few movies in the theatres. It's become easy to say too expensive and pass them by. Not that we're not into SF any more, but we're not into the more modern stuff. It just doesn't pique our interest. Maybe SF has become our nostalgia. ((You could always use your DVD player to watch rented DVDs or borrow them from your public library.))

I firmly believe a majority of American citizens consider the Bush presidency to have been a living nightmare, so I hope the Democratic Party can get their act together and choose a candidate that all can support and that the world won't fear.

Our car is often mistaken for an SUV. We own a 1998 Suzuki Esteem station wagon, and it can go off-road in emergencies.

I agree with John Hertz about the merit of fanzines. It's easier to find out more about the editors and other participants than the relative anonymity of blogging. Recently at one dead dog, I tried to discuss with a friend the merits over fanzines over lists or LJ, but all she did was shout me down when she disagreed with the least thing. Maybe fanzines also teach patience and manners.

A short loc, but perhaps we'll have the chance to chat at the LA Worldcon. See you there.

* * *

*** Closing Remarks**

We are going on a driving trip up and down the West Coast starting Monday, 17 July, and coming home late Friday, 4 August. Fluffy will again be boarded at the vet's, and Mercury will have the pet sitter coming by once a day. The northernmost point this trip will be the Seattle area. Our trip report will be in the November issue.