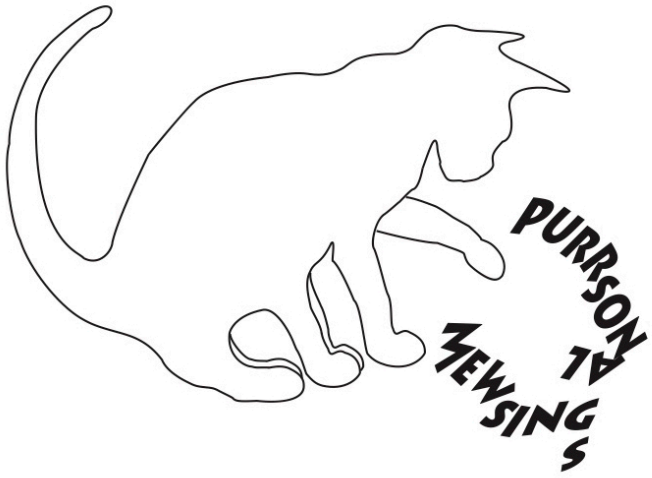
Purrsonal Mewsings #95

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

It is distributed to friends and family. It is available for the usual (a response of any kind, including letters, e-mail, and phone calls of comment; trade; contributions of illos, fiction, or articles; or even money: $5.00 per issue). The zine will be placed on the web shortly after paper publication; please let me know if you prefer just to read the web version. I can also e-mail this in Word or rtf format. Kattesminte Press #545.



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

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

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

* Editorial / Introduction

I learned recently that the metric system is the official measurement system of the US. Why isn't it in common use? The legislation has no teeth. It's all voluntary for the most part. However, I will hereafter use it.

Just as I was putting the previous issue to bed, a fire started about three miles away from our house. Not too long after, we were put on "set" status. This means we would be ready to evacuate on short notice. To prepare, I put cat food and dishes, a small litter box, and litter in a bag. I packed a carryon suitcase with clothing and toiletries and anything else I thought was of importance. We put my external drives in a backpack. Mike gathered important papers. We would just grab those items and leave, probably taking no more than five to ten minutes. This happened just before bedtime, so it was difficult to sleep. This continued for three days, at which point, we were finally back to "ready" status and could relax again. The fire was mostly stopped after it grew to about 1223 acres (about 495 hectares). Our post office was for a while in an area that was evacuated. We found out too late that we could pick up mail two towns north of us. By the time we were able to get to the PO, things were more or less back to normal. It was determined that the fire was human caused. Fortunately there haven't been many fires since then, and the few that happened were small.

As of early June, we'd already had fourteen named fires in Arizona. Of those eight were confirmed to be human-caused, and four others were likely human-caused. You'd think people living in a place like this would be more responsible. Prosecution is being pursued in four cases. Two of the fires were caused by lightning.

In a followup to things previously mentioned, although I finished my physical therapy sessions, I'm still not quite back to normal. Part of the problem is my impatience; I do things I'm not quite ready for, and that sets me back. Grrrr.

My annual eye checkup in February revealed that the inside of my left eye looked like a dust storm. My eye doctor could do nothing to improve my vision. He referred me to a cataract specialist, and I eventually got new lenses put in both eyes. I've reached the point where I was able to get new prescription glasses. I have corneal astigmatism in both eyes, and cataract surgery cannot correct that. My eyesight without glasses is legally okay for driving, but I prefer to have the best vision I can get. I also need reading glasses. My new glasses have been somewhat problematical. Apparently my eyes took longer to settle down than expected. I wore them without problems for a couple of months. Then I found I could see better without them and used regular reading glasses for close work. After about a month of that, my eyes seemed to settle down again. The glasses are okay again for most purposes. The Transitions treatment is not working so well for me; so I've been using regular sunglasses when I need them, mostly for driving. When I get new glasses next year, I won't get Transitions. I guess it worked well for me before because of my cataracts. Also Transitions now come tinted, and that's really bugging me.

Summer started to wane toward the end of September, and we've had cooler and dryer weather since mid-September or so. I'm still finding it too warm to walk Cato again, but that'll probably happen soon.

In order to get this issue out in a more timely manner, I've decided to run my report for last year's Tuscon this time. It'll take me a while to get my Seattle trip, including the Worldcon, written up. This was also my visit with my sister. We did a little sightseeing

in town, and we also went up to Victoria in British Columbia to visit Butchart Gardens.

* * *

* Kritter Korner

Here are a few recent photos from our yard.

Antelope Squirrel

Cooper's Hawk-camera trap

Desert Cottontail (taken by Mike Weasner)

* * *

* Astronomy

Mike's continuing problems with his left hip and lots of clouds kept him out of his observatory for most of the summer. Recently, however, the skies have been clearer; and he's been able to get out more. Here are a couple of photos he took.

Recent launch of SpaceX Falcon 9

Mercury with Crescent Moon in June

* * *

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

***Tartuffe*,** play by Moliére, translated by Richard Wilbur.

This was the Rogue Theatre's first play for the 2025-6 season. I studied Moliére in French class in high school but don't remember whether we studied this particular play. I note that I have a copy in my library, so I guess we must have read it, but I really had no recollection of it. The play was written 362 years ago, but it's still relevant. Tartuffe is an imposter. He pretends to be pious and poor. The head of a wealthy household is totally taken in by him despite the efforts of his family to disabuse him of his erroneous opinion. It's a comedy, but it seems to be relevant whenever it's shown. The translation was done in the 1950s in rhyming couplet. It was relevant then, and it's relevant today. Many people are very susceptible to being duped.

It was excellently done as usual.

#

***Oracle Piano Society*,** Roman Fediurko, piano.

The Oracle Piano Society has been giving concerts for the past ten years. This is the first year that I've subscribed. There are nine concerts in the series. This first one featured a young Ukrainian pianist who just won a competition in Phoenix, which the Oracle Piano Society helps to sponsor. For the past four years, he has been studying in Austria.

The programme started with a Mozart sonata. It was played well. The second piece was a piano version of "Isolde's Love Death" from the opera *Tristan und Isolde*. I had never heard it on piano before, and it was very moving. Then came a Rachmaninoff sonata, and it blew the audience away. Rachmaninoff is never easy to play, and he did a great job. After the intermission he played selected preludes by Ukrainian composer Levko Revutsjkyj; this was completely new to me and probably most of the audience. He ended his programme with a sonata by Chopin.

Judging by the audience reaction, everyone enjoyed the concert a lot.

#

***Komarr*,** by Lois McMaster Bujold.

For whatever reason I hadn't read this book, which is in her Vorkosigan series that I love. It takes place on an outlying planet, and Miles is there to investigate a recent death by misadventure. What had initially appeared to be an accident turns out to be something much more complicated. In the process, he meets a woman who interests him. This part of the story has a followup in *A Civil Campaign*, which I have read and am rereading. Reading it after *Komarr* gives it the context I lacked the first time I read it.

#

***Ancillary Justice*,** by Ann Leckie.

This was a reread for me, though I remembered very little of it. I remembered the general gist. On this second reading, I found it much more interesting; and I've put the sequels on my to-be-read-list. Ancillaries are basically reanimated and cloned corpses and considered expendable. The story takes place after the height of their use. The main character is one of these ancillaries. He finds himself alone after his cohorts were all killed. Many years later, he finds a human he had worked with and rescues him. The empire they live in apparently suffers from division at the top, and the two end up being recruited to try to fix it. It's a fairly complex plot.

#

***Farewell to Manzanar*,** by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and James D. Houston.

This is a biographical work for the female half of the author. She was a young girl during World War II when Japanese Americans, whether or not they were citizens, were incarcerated in camps away from the Pacific Coast. Manzanar is near Death Valley. The housing provided for them was fairly primitive, but the inmates did the best they could with the resources they had. It took Jeanne many years before she could talk about this. This is part of American history, and we should all be familiar with it.

#

***Coyote*,** by Allen Steele.

This novel takes place in a future when the United States has been split up, and the protagonist lives in the part taken over by right wing fundamentalists. The protagonist manages to organize a rebellion and takes over an interstellar colony ship just before launch. There are a few loyalists on board, and they foment the kind of trouble the reader may expect. They are in suspended animation until they reach the planet called Coyote, which is actually the moon of a much larger planet. The main characters after landing are the adolescent children of the protagonist and others. They must hurriedly build a small town to house everyone before the oncoming winter and also grow enough food to sustain them until the next growing season. Toward the end, another colony ship arrives that was sent by the government that took over after the previous one. They are not necessarily compatible with the first group. At the end of the book, the original colonists pull up stakes and take all the food and other supplies with them to another site. This book has sequels, and I've put them on my to be read list.

* * *

* Tuscon 2024

After lunch on Friday, 8 November 2024, I left for Tuscon. It took a little over an hour to get to the Doubletree hotel by the airport. I had the same problem here as I did at the previous year's Tuscon. The room was freezing; it turned out that the furnace hadn't yet been turned on; but the weather had turned unusually cold. Otherwise the room was about as expected. At least they offered space heaters. I think I wasn't the only one requesting one.

(This was the trip that showed me how much closer the Tucson airport was than I had previously thought—just a bit over an hour. I will be using this airport to fly out in future.)

Another problem was that I managed to wrench my back lifting my carryon to the luggage rack. I don't know what I did wrong.

I attended one programme item ("Generative AI and Intellectual Property Chaos" with Cory Doctorow, J. L. Doty, Thomas M. Sipos, Bob Nelson, and Brian McAuley), where I hooked up with the Dotys. We went together to one other programme item ("Bad Science in Fantasy" with Gloria McMillian, Tim White, Bruce Davis, and Brent Miller) and then the Meet the Guests event.

Then we went to dinner. The hotel restaurant was decent, though the service was slow and the coffee lukewarm. I think a shot of vodka eased some pain from my back.

I returned to my room about 22:00, and my room was freezing. That's when I called for a space heater. I also took a hot shower. I got to bed about 23:30.

Even with the space heater running all night, the room just barely made it to 70°F near where it was placed. My back was feeling better after a night's sleep.

I got down to breakfast about 07:45 and was joined by author/publisher Ross Lampert.

I attended a talk by Bruce Davis (see left) about emergency wound care. He is a trauma surgeon in Mesa and also writes both fiction and non-fiction. Afterward, I found the dealers room and made a circuit.

Instead of lunch I had a snack bar in the lobby.

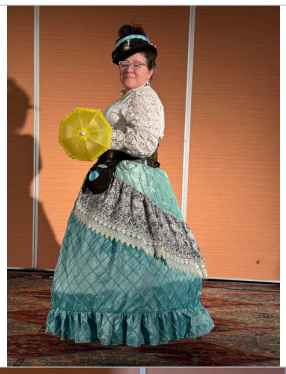
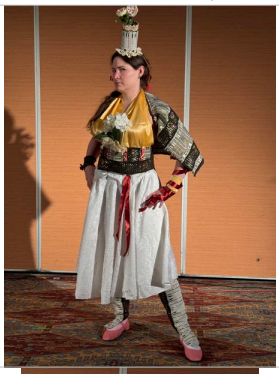
Starting at noon I went to three panels. "The Fireside Chat with Cory Doctorow and Patrick Nielsen Hayden" was the first one; Cory told us about his Eastern European ancestry, his early work experience, and his current focus. Then I attended "Hour with Artist GoH Sarah Clemens"; there were no visuals due to technical incompatibility. She told us about her early life, her professional role as a technical artist, and her erotic art. She also does fantasy art, many of them featuring a cat and dragon.

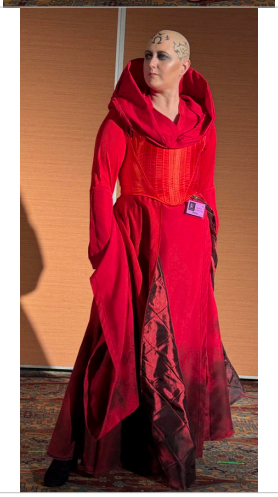
At 14:00 I went to Cory Doctorow's presentation, "Enshittification Isn't Inevitable, It's a Choice We Make"; he had previously presented a version of this talk at a technical conference; it was fairly upbeat and gave me hope for the future.

I had dinner about 15:00 in the company of two women, whose names escape me. I had the restaurant's version of a cosmo; it was very tasty.

A bit later I attended "Was Star Trek the Original Solar Punk?" with David Lee Summers, J. L. Doty, and Chaz Kemp; the title refers to the positivity and rosy outlook of the show.

After that I attended the Fashion Show, which was pretty good.


At night I kept company with Karen and Jim Doty while they had their dinner, and I had another cosmo. Afterward I had another look through the art show, which happened to be near my room. Then I went back to my room to retire about 22:45.

Sunday morning I got up shortly before my alarm went off at 06:30. This morning seemed warmer. The soreness in my back had shifted to the right side.

I got down to breakfast about 07:15.

There was really nothing of interest going on this early, so I went back to my room, where I read some e-mail, napped, and packed. Then I took stuff out to my car. After that I checked out from the hotel.

Then I attended the panel "'Pantsers and the Meta Arc: How 'Seat of the Pants' or Intuitive Writers Develop Multi-book Arcs" with Cory Doctorow, J. L. Doty, and Brent Miller".

A couple of hours after that I went to David Lee Summers's talk on "To See New Earths (a Presentation about Exoplanets)" (see photo next page). He talked about the

part Kitt Peak plays in this. The room was freezing, and I had left my raincoat in my car.

Finally I went to "No Red Shirts: How to Keep Your Audience Guessing Who Dies First in Your Horror" with Kata Savana, Bruce Davis, Janni Lee Simner, and Frankie Robertson.

After that I drove home. Although I had planned to gas up the car, I didn't feel physically up to it.

A month later I had planned to attend Loscon in LA, but my back problem got worse rather than better and I was forced to cancel my trip.

* * *

* Letters to the Editor

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

David Bratman, dbratman at earthlink dot net **6 June 2025**

Because of Berni's difficulty walking, she used the scooters in grocery stores for a while. But it wasn't satisfactory. It was hard to reach things from them, and the scooters were frequently uncharged when they should not have been. When the pandemic started, our local grocers started offering shopping services: you'd fill out your order from a complete menu of the store's offerings online, choose a date and time, and they'd either deliver it to you (for an extra fee) or you could pick it up at the store: park, phone them, and they'd bring it out to your car trunk. For the first year or so, these services were riddled with problems, and I'd often spend an hour or more at the store trying to pick up my order. But they've settled down, and now we pick up our weekly shopping really easily that way.

((I don't usually have trouble standing up from the scooters to reach things. With my short stature, I often need help getting stuff anyway. Usually Mike is with me. When he isn't I don't usually have any problems finding someone taller than I to help. I've never had problems finding charged scooters.

((Our grocery stores all offer shopping services, but I don't trust them to get the things I want, especially produce.))

I'm glad you got to the eclipse. We missed this one, but we did get to the previous total eclipse in 2017, which we viewed from the backyard of a friend who lived in the path of totality outside St Louis.

Albuquerque: When we went to Albuquerque a few years ago for Mythcon, our flight arrived late and there was nowhere around our hotel still open for dinner at 9 pm or so but Denny's. It was summer so heat was not a problem, but the service was not ideal.

((I have been to many Denny's, and most have some problems. There was one where they kept us waiting almost an hour before taking our order. When travelling it's not easy to be choosy.))

#

Marcia Meldrum, mlynnmel at gmail dot com **7 June 2025**

Thanks for the *PurrMew*, always a welcome read; but sorry to hear you've had so much to deal with, especially dealing with your back injury. I'm glad you're beginning to get back to normal. You should be much happier after your cataract surgery as your eyesight will be much clearer.

((The best part is being able to see real colours.))

Taught two classes this spring, which I love doing, although it always leaves me exhausted. Aida [her cat] has finally settled down and spends much of her time purring in my lap, instead of trying to jump to every high place in the house or to kill the evil squirrels that she sees outside the window.

Hope you continue to improve and stay well.

#

James Benford, jimbenford at gmail dot com **7 June 2025**

Thanks for *PurrMew*94! I like your fanzine, because it gives me an insight into your rather interesting life and adventures. Please keep sending it.

I hope you feel much better in the future, after your recent afflictions.

((I'm happy you're enjoying my zine.))

#

Tom Feller, PO Box 140937, Nashville, TN 37214-0937 7 June 2025

Thank you for sending *Purrsonal Mewsings* #94

My wife, Anita, lost her mother in 2001; and by that time Kroger's was providing scooters. Her mother really enjoyed them.

((One of the supermarkets I shop at here is owned by Kroger. Perhaps it was around the turn of the century when scooters became common. I remember using them at conventions but never needed them for shopping until later.))

#

Cathy Palmer-Lister, cathypl at simpatico dot ca 30 June 2025

I always look forward to your zine, especially for the astrophotos and the critters. So many of the critters in your photo are not in our region. There are no venomous snakes in Canada, and none of the snakes in the Montreal region are as large as a rattlesnake.

We were in the path of totality; some of our members took great photos of the eclipse. I had my smaller telescope out in the driveway to project the view onto cardboard. I'm a bit more than half through finding all the Messier objects, but the Virgo Cluster remains a daunting challenge.

((Mike always seems to have a list of objects to find with his telescope. Unfortunately he's had some health problems keeping him from doing much astronomy lately.))

##

We Also Heard From: Heath Row, Mary Manchester.

* * *

* Closing Remarks

Summer is mostly over, so I've begun looking forward to weather cool enough to work comfortably outside and to walk Cato.

In the interests of getting this done sooner rather than later later, I've decided to leave the Worldcon/Seattle report until the next issue.

See you all next time.

Laurraine