

You're Still on My Mind #2

from Rich Lynch * rw_lynch (at) yahoo (dot) com * April 2023

Hello again to all my friends!

This is the second of my letterzines for holding belated conversations of sorts with people who wrote me letters of comment about *My Back Pages*. The first one covered the first five issues of *MBP*, so let's see what loccers told me about the next several issues...

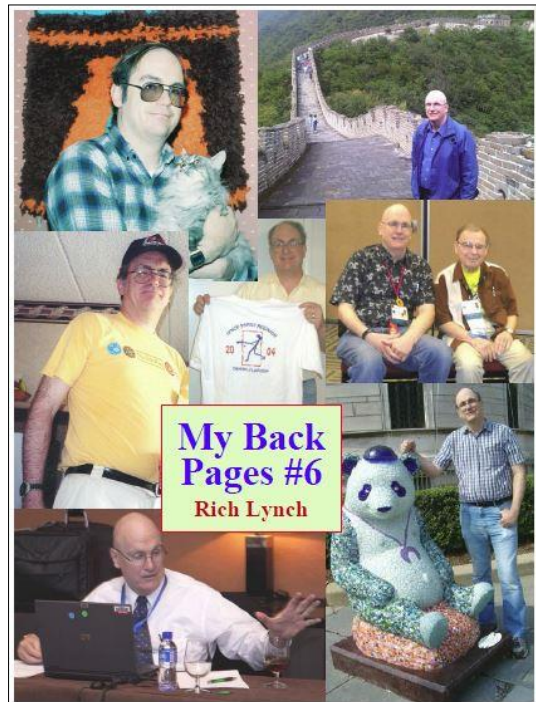
There were only two letter that I can find in response to *MBP* 6 (published in December 2011). One of them was from [Kip Williams](#), a fan with considerable musical talent. He commented on my essay about the great composer Ludwig von Beethoven and my observation that lack of birth records prevents us from knowing for sure that Beethoven was born on December 16th:

By a coincidence, I was born the day before Beethoven's birthday. Maybe. Or maybe not. Or maybe so.

Mom was in labor for many hours before the 11:59 pm time on my birth certificate. I was born a minute before Beethoven's birthday. Except – (I only found this out a year or two ago, from Dad, as Mom had passed on) – except that I was actually born at the stroke of midnight, and the doctor or doctors offered Mom the choice of dates when I was born, and she chose the 15th, so the time was backed up to one minute before midnight. So I wasn't born on Beethoven's birthday after all, but share the date with Dave Clark (of the Five) and Nero (the non-fiddler). Unless Beethoven was really born on the 15th.

Tch. We'll never know.

The other letter was from my friend [Lloyd Penney](#). And, as usual for him, it was a lengthy one. The leadoff essay in the issue was a description of my first visit



to the Middle East, where I spent a week in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on a business trip. This inspired Lloyd to tell me:

Saudi Arabia is a place I'd never thought to go to, and I know I never will, but it must be very hot and dry, much like the desert outside of Las Vegas. That's the last time I was in a place so hot and dry, and it's the only analog I can think of. One might think that everyone is rich in that part of the world; I've seen programmes on television that prove, at least to me, this isn't true at all. Like in most places, the poor become quite invisible.

He's right about it being hot and dry, though the city where I was staying was very close to the Persian Gulf which I guess kept it from being even hotter and drier than it was. I don't remember seeing anybody who looked impoverished, but given the nature of the trip (a big international meeting about carbon capture and storage technologies) there wasn't really any chance that I would.

There were two essays in the issues about members of fabled First Fandom: Bob Madle (who was in his early nineties when *MBP 6* was published) and Harry Warner, Jr. (who had died several years earlier). My essay about Bob was an appreciation that had been originally published in a Boskone program book, while the piece about Harry was a remembrance of him. They were both good friends. Lloyd, in his letter, added a few of his own memories of them:

I've had a little contact with Bob Madle, and gotten some catalogues from him...I wish I'd actually been able to buy things from him, but either I didn't have the money to buy what I wanted, or there were problems with getting books across the border. I had more communication with Harry Warner, Jr., and he liked the fact that I was loccing everything I could get my hands on, a policy I keep today. I did get some of his zines, and as our ability to travel is reduced, I can see his own move towards writing as the best way to communicate with fandom as a whole.

I've never been very much of a letter writer but I do appreciate it as an art form – a well-written letter of comment is a joy to read. And letters of comment are as much a currency for fanzine publishers as money. Maybe even more so. Many years ago a friend in the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA) once offered to pay for an issue of *Mimosa* that Nicki and I had sent her on spec, but I told her that I'd much rather that she write a letter of comment instead – it was way more valuable to us.

And speaking of WSFA, another essay in the issue was a reprint of an article about D.C. fandom that had been published in the program book of one of the club's Capclave conventions. A paragraph had described the 1974 Worldcon and

its Guest of Honor, Roger Zelazny, and this had induced Lloyd to remember his lone encounter with the author:

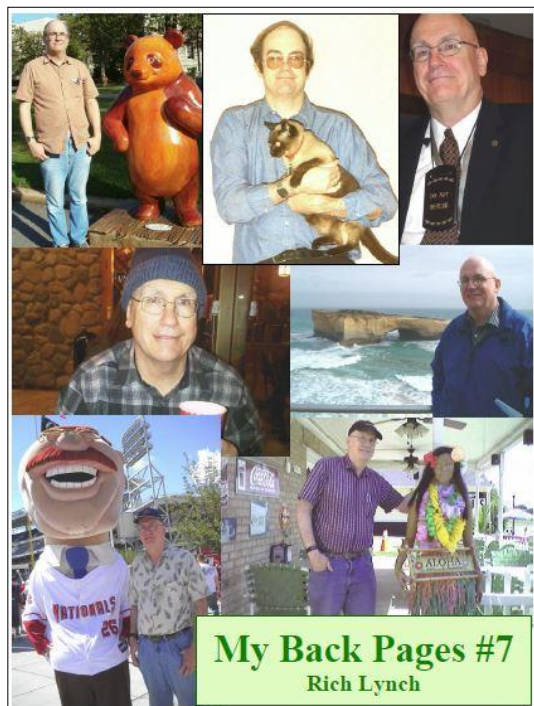
I found Roger Zelazny friendly but shy the time he was in Toronto for a convention. He was getting ready for a return trip to Toronto when he passed away. We were told later that his bags were packed, and he was to leave for Toronto in the morning, but he died in his sleep. Later, I found someone in Toronto through a writers' group with the last name of Zelazny, and I set him upon his search to find out if this other writer named Zelazny was a relative. I never did hear about his findings.

I was also fortunate enough to have met Roger Zelazny but as it was for Lloyd, it was a pretty brief encounter. He had been the Guest of Honor at one of Louisville's Rivercon conventions in the 1980s, and I remember him as being affable and outgoing. I hope an audio recording of his GoH speech exists somewhere – he was as good a speaker as he was a writer.

True to his stated intention, Lloyd also wrote me a letter of comment for the next issue. *MBP 7* was published in April 2012 and the front cover, as usual, featured a montage of photos of me. One of them was taken during a trip Nicki and I took down to D.C. to see a baseball game at Nationals Park, and the entity who appeared with me in that photo caused Lloyd to ponder a bit:

It's a little difficult to comment on so many photographs, but when you've got the mascot of the Washington Nationals (is that a big costume of Teddy Roosevelt?) on the front cover...well, there are things to say.

Teddy is not quite a mascot, but he's certainly popular. He's one of the so-called 'Racing Presidents' who make an on-field appearance after the 4th inning of Nats home games. Nicki took that photo of me with Teddy when we saw him in the plaza outside the ballpark entrance. As for the contents of the issue, I'd structured it thematically as a personal journey with essays that chronologically spanned more than a half century of my life. The first of them described perhaps my most unusual journey ever, a virtual Walk Across America (an actual walk but taken entirely within the walls of the building where I



worked, with progress plotted on a map). And yeah, over the six years it took to complete the walk there were a lot aches and pains to deal with. Lloyd, in his letter, zeroed in on one of the most usual:

I do as much walking as I can, but time rarely allows for it. There will be more incentive to walk more when the weather gets warmer. I just have to make sure my knees agree with this increased activity.

Most of my knee issues were from going up and down stairs (each mile I walked included more than 100 vertical feet of stair climbing/descending). I do enjoy walking, though, and there was usually a lot of it whenever I was on a business trip. One of the essays in the issue described one of my most memorable ones, to London in 2009 for another big carbon sequestration meeting. This must have resonated with Lloyd, as he'd been contemplating a visit of his own there:

Yvonne and I are now saving to go the London Worldcon in 2014. We had at first thought to run for TAFF, but thought that this will be the final big trip of our lives, so we want to make sure we've got the time and the money to do everything we want, and not necessarily all the things a TAFF delegate might have to do. And, saving enough cash is not guaranteed. That's why we are skipping the Chicago and San Antonio Worldcons in favour of going to London.

The Fancyclopedia article about the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund indicates that Lloyd and Yvonne were not candidates for 2014, and that's too bad – they would have been superb TAFF delegates.

I can find only two other substantive letters that commented on *MBP 7*. One of them was from [Jerry Kaufman](#) who had some things of his own to say about London, especially my descriptions navigating the city via its subway system and my circuit aboard the London Eye:

When we get back to London, I may sit at the base of the Eye while Suzle rises above me. (I'm leery of heights.) But thanks for all the details about it. And the Underground is a little dreary but has some quite good buskers and interesting poster ads.

I remember that the poster ads were in a lot of places, but the ones I mostly noticed were promoting various West End plays and musicals. One of my very few regrets about that trip is that I didn't take in a show while I was in London. On the other hand, Nicki and I have never been to New York City without going to at least two Broadway theatres. Another essay in *MBP 7* described in detail one of those trips, which included being let down by a famous show that I'd expected to be excellent. Jerry had a comment about that:

Despite living in New York for about six years in the 1970s, I never made it to the Chrysler Building, but I did get to see *The Fantasticks*. I think the set has always been minimal.

Apart from the song “Try to Remember”, I’d pretty much disliked the show from start to finish. But it was more because of underwhelming performances by two of the leads than the minimalist set.

It was [Eric Mayer](#) who wrote me the longest letter about *MBP 7*. He commented on many of the articles in the issue including the New York essay (which had described my admiration of Andrew Wyeth’s painting *Christina’s World* in MOMA). This had caused Eric to remember back to when he had lived in the city:

Since I was going to law school and working at the same time I didn’t get to see much of the city. I suppose it was also thanks to the stupidity of youth that I didn’t make it to the museums more often. I did see Monet’s incredible, enormous water lilies. Now I have a rotating gallery of artwork on my monitor and could kick myself that I didn’t see more paintings in person.

Just recently I’ve come to appreciate Andrew Wyeth more than I had. My dad was a watercolorist and a good one but early in his career when he painted brown fields, or grey weathered barns, people compared him to Wyeth which irritated him. It was ridiculous because they were both painting Pennsylvania country landscapes so of course the colors they used were similar. But my dad kind of didn’t like to hear about Wyeth. Lately I have been noticing how brilliant his stuff is. Not simply its subject matter but the amazing compositions, textures, light and dark. Extremely realistic yet with so many of the qualities of abstract or figurative art.

Two other short essays in the issue described the time I had almost gotten beaten up in a redneck bar and the time when the scream of a pegged-out radiation counter had reminded me of a famous song by The Who. Eric had some thoughts on those as well:

Don’t know which was scarier, your close call with rednecks or with radiation. Very clever juxtaposing those two essays though. I must say, I was a bit disturbed by your mentioning “Won't Get Fooled Again” however. Yes, a great song, but I was living in a Brooklyn apartment when it first came out and every time I hear the song or hear of it I can’t help but recall the neighbor who played that at thunderous volume over and over and over for what seemed like weeks. Presumably he at least never got fooled again.

The final essay in the issue was titled “My Plans for Screenwriting Stardom” and had described my experience in getting a root canal as a possible idea for a future Quentin Tarantino movie. And this had prompted Eric to describe one of his own dental procedures in maybe just a *little* too much detail:

I’ve never gone through the horror of a root canal and I hope I never will. I have a phobia about dental procedures – all the horrible grinding and cracking. The few times teeth have gone bad I’ve had them removed. I figure it is easier, cheaper and I can manage without a few back teeth. Front teeth would be different. One time the tooth broke and had to be sawed into sections and extracted piece by piece, so maybe that was almost as bad as a root canal.

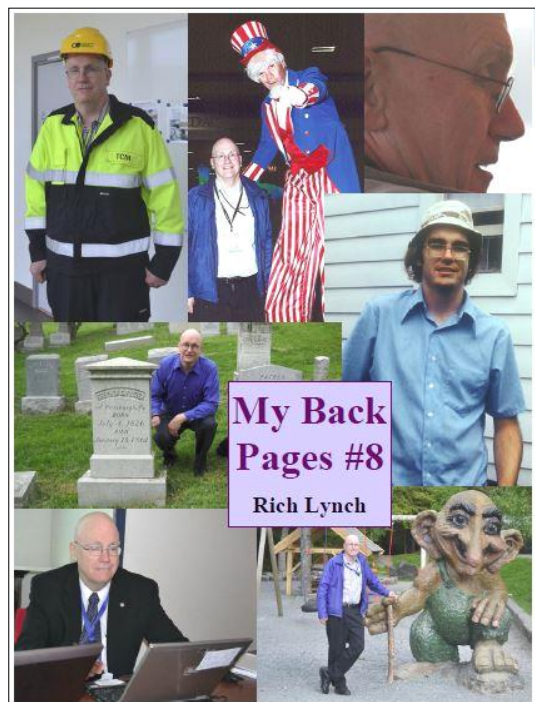
Besides these, there were a few much shorter-in-length emails I received about the issue. One of them was from [Mike Meara](#), who had been publishing a fanzine in some ways similar to *MBP*:

Many thanks for sending *MBP 7*. Hope you picked up *A Meara for Observers #11* from my emailshot. Others have commented on the similarity of our two zines, and I can see why. But #7 is all reprints: will #8 have new material?

Mike probably had missed seeing the first issue where I’d described why I was publishing *MBP*. (Short explanation: it’s actually a time capsule that’s disguised as a fanzine.) Up to then, every issue of *MBP* had consisted of reprints and that would continue for another 4½ years – it wouldn’t be until issue #17 when I’d include an essay that hadn’t been previously published. But I’ll get more into that when the time comes to reprint letters about the issue.

MBP 8 was published in August 2012 and was the last issue in what had been a three-times-a-year schedule. I’d come to realize that publishing that frequently just wasn’t sustainable in terms of having a sufficient amount of material to reprint. It turned out that changing over to twice-a-year *was* sustainable...at least until the pandemic happened. And I’ll have more to say about that in a future issue.

MBP 8 was published just prior to the 2012 Worldcon, so as a prelude to that event I reprinted my trip report for the 2011 Worldcon as the first essay of the issue. The



My Back Pages #8
Rich Lynch

beginning of that report talked about me finding in the dealers room a copy of Allen Steele's (then) new novel *Hex*, where a snippet of my review of a previous novel by him (which accurately described him as "the closest thing the SF world now has to Robert A. Heinlein") had been used as a blurb on the book's cover. So it wasn't wholly unexpected that the first letter of comment I received on *MBP* 8 was from...[Allen Steele](#):

Thanks for the compliments (in particular, the remark about "hard SF the way it's meant to be written". Yeah, I like to think so, too). While I've always been a bit leery of comparisons between my work and Heinlein's – his shadow is too big for anyone to comfortably stand within – that particular review quote is one I don't mind and I'm glad that Ace uses it.

The 2011 Worldcon had been held in a place I'd never been before: Reno, Nevada, which is not even close to being the most beautiful city in the world. (But to be fair, the countryside and scenery surrounding Reno *are* pretty spectacular and I wish Nicki and I had had more time to see some of it.) In my essay I'd described Reno in a somewhat uncomplimentary way, and this had prompted Allen to share his own opinion of the city:

You're right about Reno being a phenomenally ugly town. Sort of like Vegas, only without the class. I'm just happy that Linda and I got out of town for a bit; Saturday afternoon, we left the convention and drove up into the mountains for a little hiking, then took a quick spin over to Lake Tahoe and walked around the state park shoreline. If it hadn't been for the fact that the Hugos were that evening, we would have stayed longer, but we had to hurry back to eat, get dressed, go to the reception, etc. That part of the worldcon location was pretty neat but in my experience, the only city that's played host to a worldcon which was harder on the eyes was Brighton UK.

Another comment I received about my 2011 Worldcon report was from [Jerry Kaufman](#). I'd mentioned that seeing my quote on the cover of Steele's book was no doubt a part of my overall 15 minutes of fame, so Jerry described a small part of his own 15 minutes:

Your piece [which described] your 15 minutes of quasi-fame reminded me of my own 15 minutes of pseudo-fame.

It wasn't carried in all the media, only in ads for the Locus Awards weekend – ads run in *Locus* itself, and in *Locus On-Line*. There I am, standing next to Bill Gibson during the finals of the Hawaiian Shirt Contest, answering Connie Willis's shirt related trivia questions. Behind me is the rest of the line-up.

The reason this is pseudo-fame is that the picture is always captioned “William Gibson and other contestants.”

The ever-dependable [Lloyd Penney](#) wrote a substantial letter of comment about *MBP 8* which began with a few of his own memories about the 2011 Worldcon:

Reno was fun...so many old friends, interesting things to do, lots of parties, going to some very well-run panels. The Hugo Awards were great fun to see. Still, we had roommates that took up a lot of our time, and we spent far too much time walking from hotel to convention centre and back.

Another essay in *MBP 8* was a description of some of the many think tank luncheons that I attended in the early 2000s. One of them, inevitably, was about global warming, and that had inspired Lloyd to climb up on his own soapbox to provide some thoughts on the topic:

There’s lots of evidence for global warming, whether humanity causes it or not. Even if you don’t believe we contribute to it, if we were to cut back on our own emissions, warming would be lessened. And, even if you’re right, and we don’t contribute to global warming, we would still have a more regular and cleaner atmosphere, so we’d win anyway. (I do believe we’ve warmed our planet with our activities, and I suspect that we might be past the point of no return, no matter what we do. A true dystopian, SFnal situation is staring right at us, and we have to see if we’re willing to save our planet. Unfortunately, we’re greedy enough to let money concerns stop us from doing so.

I should mention that I am firmly of the opinion that human-caused climate change is occurring, and *has been* occurring for many years. And that mitigation activities need to be happening, much more so than they are. Concerning that essay, I also received a much shorter letter from [Greg Benford](#), who provided a reality check on the existence of think tanks in general:

Yep, your Q&A in DC is why I opted out of a full time job there. Too much Alice in Dunderland.

And speaking of human-caused climate change, the final essay in the issue was a description of one of my business trips: all the way to Beijing for a multinational conference about carbon capture and storage technologies. (I was a member of the Secretariat of the sponsoring organization.) But from his comment, Greg seemed a bit skeptical:

At the China meeting on carbon sequestration, did anything get done? I think since the APS study we all know industrial capture is dumb unless to supply

CO₂ that goes right back into the air... but are proposals using natural mechanisms getting any attention at all?

C'mon, Greg! We all know that multinational organizations usually do things at glacial speed! That said, the organization actually did make some progress during the Beijing meeting. Really!

Lloyd Penney came to my rescue by preventing *MBP* 9 (published in December 2012) from being commentless – his is the only letter of comment I can find for that issue. And, as usual, he had a lot to talk about, starting with the front cover:

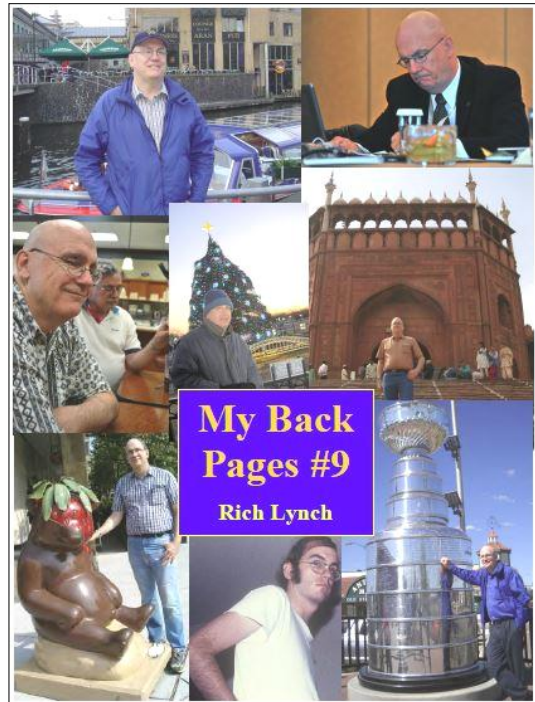
I have to ask, where did you find that enormous Stanley Cup in the lower right corner? Was that in Montréal in 2009? I don't think that's here [in Toronto] at the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Neither of those two cities. It's a piece of street art that I came across back in 2011 when I was in the Strathcona section of Edmonton. As for the actual Stanley Cup, I did get to see it when I was in Toronto for the 2003 Worldcon, as I described in my "Torcon Odyssey" essay. And while I was in the city I also got to see a regular season game in another sport, which had caused Lloyd to comment:

I have seen a couple of Jays' games in the SkyDome, but they are horrifically expensive, so good for you on seeing a game from the Renaissance [Hotel, which has rooms that look out into the stadium]. And, the Hockey Hall of Fame is a great place to be, especially when you see the room of inductees, and the original Stanley Cup in the centre.

The first essay in the issue described another Canadian Worldcon, the 2009 one in Montréal. One of fans I crossed paths with was an old friend that I hadn't seen since the 2003 Toronto Worldcon. And the same was apparently true for Lloyd:

It was great to see Benoît Girard again...so many wondered where he'd gotten to, but I'd found his e-mail address and asked him if he was coming. He might have come to the Montréal Worldcon to reminisce, but I wonder if we'll ever see him again. We haven't seen him since.



Nicki and I had originally become acquainted with Benoît via his entertaining “semi personal fanzine” *The Frozen Frog*, which he had published during the 1990s. But by the turn of the Millennium he had mostly dropped from sight. So it had been a pleasure, though perhaps not an entirely unexpected one, to see him again at Anticipation in Montréal.

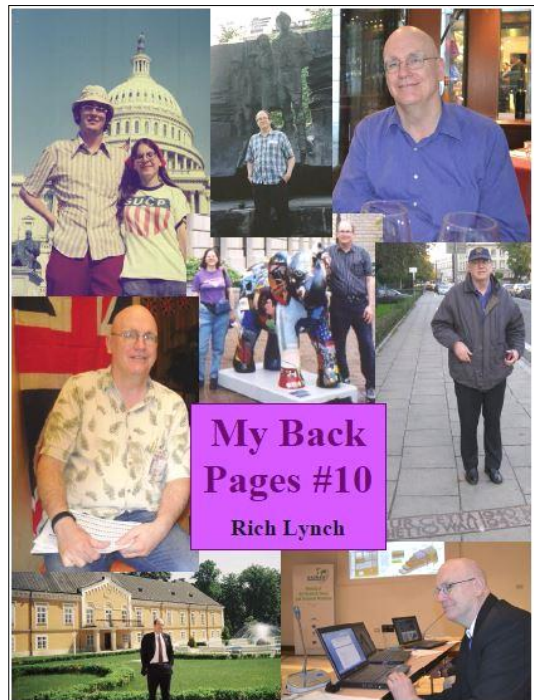
Before ending his letter, Lloyd also commented on two other essays. One of them was about a great fanzine and the other about a great friend. He had this to say about them:

Stefantasy was a great fanzine, especially seeing it was manually typeset. Bill Danner’s work is, unfortunately, unknown by the majority of fandom, but at least those who care the most remember. Same goes for Roger Weddall. Roger would send me zines, and we met only once, at that same 1992 Worldcon in Orlando you write about. Roger made the trip to Worldcon because he knew he was dying, and he was gone not long afterwards.

As I’d expected he would, Lloyd also wrote me a lengthy letter about *MBP 10* (published in June 2013). The issue began with an essay about a business trip I’d taken to the Pyrenees region of France, and Lloyd had a comment about that:

You’ve been quite lucky to see some of that pretty big world. I haven’t been able to travel the way I’d like, but I am pleased with where I’ve been able to get to. Britain, Holland, Mexico, and a good portion of Canada, and I hope to return to Britain next year for Worldcon.

I do consider myself lucky about the way my professional career turned out. My first positions out of college were in private industry (I was a process engineer for a year and a half and then a research chemist for five years), and while I did okay I didn’t exactly thrive. I did much better when I became a project engineer for the Tennessee Valley Authority but I found my calling when I moved to Maryland in 1988 for a job with the U.S. Department of Energy. I became involved in some of the Agency’s international activities, where my technical background and ability to write were valuable assets. This took me to many interesting places in the world.



Another essay in the issue described my ‘ability’ (if that’s the right word) to find luncheon events hosted by some of D.C.’s policy-driven think tanks. But, as Lloyd described, events like that have also happened near where he lives:

Yvonne and I used to go to conferences at the Toronto airport strip, especially for hotels and resorts trying to drum up business. We’d go for free lunches and the opportunity to grab freebies, some of which we were able to use in our usual convention travels.

Lloyd, I think you and I can both agree that Heinlein was wrong – there actually *is* such thing as a free lunch! Now that I’m retired, I’m on the lookout for think tank luncheon events of interest. But the bar is now higher – for the commuting expense to go downtown and the loss of much of the day where I could be doing other things, it would have to be a *really* interesting seminar. And one that had better food than what I could get at a Subway deli.

The final essay in the issue was my lengthy trip report about the 2012 Chicago Worldcon. Lloyd, in his comment, expressed his regret at not attending:

We’d been to several Chicago Worldcons, and I kinda expected to go to Chicon 7, but we couldn’t afford even this short trip. I remember when a Worldcon came out of petty cash; now, we have to save for them, and even with saving, nothing is guaranteed. I expect that London will be our last Worldcon, if we go.

And if we do go, will we see you and Nicki there? Sure hope so.

The best laid plans! Lloyd and Yvonne apparently were not able to attend the 2014 Worldcon and as he describes below, they haven’t been to *any* worldcon since the 2011 one in Reno. Nicki and I didn’t go to London, either, but that was much more about available time (I was still working then) than resources.

This seems a good place to pause, and I’ll do another issue soon that reprints comments received about the next five or so issues of *MBP*. But before I end, here are comments from three letters that I received about the first issue of *You’re Still on My Mind*. which was published back in February. First, here’s Lloyd again:

I must apologize for not responding to *You’re Still on My Mind* from February...my time has simply



not been my own. Editing *Amazing Stories* is now the biggest job I have, and responding to fanzines has been sidelined. Still, as I find the time, I do loc the ishes, and I guess it's your turn now.

I have tried my best to respond, for I figure that if you take the time to create the publication, I should at least take some time to write. My loc from 2010...well, I didn't win the silver rocket, but hey, it IS an honour to be nominated. I still haven't been back to NYC since those Trekcons. At the '83 Worldcon, we ran into Forry and Wendayne Ackerman about half a dozen times. "Stop stalking me! Or...are we stalking you? Hm?"

You're ahead of me for that. I don't think that Forry and I ever conversed prior to the first FanHistoricon in 1994. And you're right that it really is an honor to be nominated. Or more accurately, to become a Hugo finalist. Doesn't have the same ring to it, but we gotta stay current with WSFS Constitution changes.

Taral may have written about sports, but I did work as a sports reporter for a short time for a small weekly paper on Vancouver Island. I was the *Arrowsmith Star's* sports, courts and whatever else reporter, so I got to cover a bowling tournament, a darts tournament, and a rodeo. I liked reporting on the various court cases far more than the sports, but it brought in a pay cheque that helped finance my final year at university.

I'd not known that about you! The best I could do to help me cover some of my college costs was to find minimum wage summer jobs. One of them was for a long-haul trucking company – I had to spray wash the big trailers with a soapy chemical solution, and I found out the hard way that it should not be allowed in contact with skin.

More from me...we did get to the Reno Worldcon in 2011, but that was our last one. I know Yvonne was frustrated that we never had the time to actually see the city we were in (Boston, Philadelphia, more), but we did what we could afford. Worldcon has changed a lot in the meantime...and to be honest, it's appeal has lessened for us. We've gone on to steampunk and other interesting parts of fandom as a whole.

That may also be the case for Nicki and me, though to be fair it probably also has a lot to do with the COVID pandemic. We did go to the 2021 Worldcon in D.C., but we were there for only six hours on the Thursday of the convention. And cardiac issues for Nicki (which are now under control) prevented us from attending the 2022 Worldcon in Chicago (I'd already been leery of going because the bivalent COVID vaccine hadn't yet come available by the date of the convention).

We have turned into local fans, such as fandom is around here these days, and while I am not writing locs or editing stories, I am assisting Yvonne in managing the cavernous Vendors' Hall at Anime North, the big anime convention here, and I would say the last fan-run big convention left here. Once that is done, we will become vendors again, and go to a few places around southern Ontario to sell our goods.

Thank you for this issue, and I look forward to some more!

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Next up is a short note from [Jerry Kaufman](#), who followed up on his previous comment about the EMP Museum in Seattle:

To add to our exchange about the EMP, it's gone through another name change. The new name is the Museum of Popular Culture, or MoPop for short. What with permanent exhibitions on pop music, science fiction, fantasy, horror, and gaming, and temporary shows of costume design, Muppetry, Rube Goldberg, etc, the new name is apt.

Good to know that the Science Fiction Museum and Hall of Fame is still firmly ensconced in the basement of MoPop. The entire museum exceeded my expectations during my visit there in 2015, and I'll certainly want to see it again if I'm ever out that way again.

* * * *

I also received a very nice letter of comment from [Eric Mayer](#), who once again provided me a heap of egoboo. Or maybe I'd provided it to him?

It was a bit of a shock seeing my name in a fanzine. Must be ten years since I wrote a LOC, apart from the "kind of" locs I write to comment on Taral's zines in the course of our ongoing correspondence. As you point out, in the age of the Internet, fanzines have been supplanted by other forms of communication. But social media like blogs, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, etc etc etc are all a bit too frantic and...well...social for this former bookworm. Also the slower pace of fanzines allowed for everyone involved to write with more deliberation. Heck, writing isn't even a big part of most social platforms these days. It's largely media. However, these are the gripes of someone who doesn't even own a cell phone!

Boy, there's a comment hook if I ever saw one! I'd thought I'd been one of the last people in the universe to get a cell phone, and that was at least a decade ago. My outlook has changed so much since then that I kind of feel naked without it. And that goes for my iPad, too. It's a super-useful streaming device. As for fanzines being supplanted by other forms of interaction, it's been kind of inevitable

once blogs became popular. But, as can be seen at efanzines.com, there are still dozens if not hundreds of them being published so I'm not worried that they'll become an endangered species. I had a blog once, over on LiveJournal, but I ended it for the reasons you describe – I'm a slower, more deliberate writer than what works very well for a blog. What I'm doing now feels right.

Ah, the Chelsea Hotel. I spent a couple hours there in the mid-seventies. When I went off to law school in New York, I needed a place to stay while I looked for an apartment. I'd heard of the famous Chelsea Hotel, hangout for creative sorts, so I made a reservation. I was shocked on arrival to see that it looked more like a place where a punk rocker would knife his girlfriend than where Janis would...uh...entertain Leonard Cohen. The door to my room was practically hanging off the hinges and the doorknob was so loose it almost came off in my hand. I immediately called Arnie Katz in Brooklyn. He essentially said: "You're where? Really? GET OUT! NOW!" So he and Joyce put me up for a few days and helped me find an apartment near Brooklyn Heights. Maybe I missed out by not staying in a place with such a fabled history but I suspect I would have had a better chance being murdered there than creating great art. I wish I'd at least seen Patti Smith or someone in the lobby on my way in and out. Alas.

Nicki and I got all the fabled history we needed about the Chelsea Hotel just by seeing all the commemorative plaques on the outside of the building and getting a bit of ambience about the place from its lobby/reception area. It was easy to picture in my mind's eye some of the notables who stayed there sitting around a warming fire on a cold winter night, sharing pleasantries with each other. Whether or not something like that actually happened.

Thanks for remembering me. You're doing better than I am. The last zine I published, maybe nine years ago received quite a few locs, because I didn't put it up on eFanzines and hinted that henceforth my emailing list would consist of people I heard from occasionally. Then I neglected to publish again. Oops.

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And that's it! Thanks to all my correspondents – the egoboo is very much appreciated. Next issue fairly soon, probably in a couple of months. And also a new issue of *My Back Pages* as well! I've been busy with some digital archiving activities for fanac.org, so my plate has been pretty full lately. And with two new issues to assemble by the end of June, looks like it's gonna stay that way for a while longer. Who knew that retirement could be so time consuming?!

Please note that 'Worldcon', 'NASFiC', and 'Hugo Award' are service marks of the World Science Fiction Society.