



Madison foursquare

87

This issue of *Madison Foursquare* is brought to you by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, who live at 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704.

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Covers

[SC] Great covers this month, **Kim and Kathi**. Are these covers and photos from books you own?

[JG] I LOVE this! My favorite is the Alfred Bester cover.

Marilyn Holt & Cliff Wind

[SC] Thanks for the update on how you guys are doing and the lovely photos. Life sounds calm but the animals must provide a nice distraction. Jeanne and I are good about masking up whenever we are in buildings with the general public, except for restaurants where we go only about once a week. There is less masking going on in Madison now, but Covid is still around and, as predicted, has worsened in the winter months. One side benefit of continuing to mask up is neither of us has had a cold or flu so far this winter.

[JG] It is a bit sad when all the brightly colored leaves and grasses drop or turn gray. But I also like the stark black-and-white vistas of winter, the intricate lacing of branches revealed when trees drop their leafy gowns, the intense contrast of white snow and black trees. At least I like it now. It gets a bit tiresome later in February.

Greg Rihn

[SC] I think your comments on the Israel-Hamas war were spot on. The situation continues to develop. As I write this it looks like the Netanyahu regime is tempted to widen the war into Lebanon against Hezbollah, and there are persistent rumors that Israel ultimately wants to force Palestinians out of Gaza completely (presumably into Egypt) and seize the territory.

[JG] As I read and agreed with your assessment of the Israel-Hamas war, I was getting ready to draw a comparison of Israeli politics to the deadlocked Republicans in Congress, but then you went there too. So just consider me nodding in agreement.

Re my phone fraud case, no one from AT&T's fraud department ever got in touch with me, so I haven't needed to file a police report or prove that I lived where I live. AT&T removed the charge on my account, but it looks to me like whoever is responsible for using my name used nothing but my name. No charge card, no bank account. My Experian records show nothing suspicious. So strange.

HEADS UP!

Georgie Schnobrich

[SC] I'm glad you and **Greg** had a good time at Teslacon again this year. I'd like to have seen both presentations, they sound fascinating. I'm so sorry that your recovery from foot surgery is so awkward and complicated. I look forward to news of swift progress. Your timing seems to be good. You're not having to miss any gorgeous weather.

[JG] Reading about your Teslacon program about stories set in Cairo made me wish I'd been there to hear both yours and **Greg's** presentations, so thank you for giving us the text! I read P. Djeli Clark's *The Haunting of Tramcar 015*, and enjoyed it. Maybe I should check out *A Master of Djinn*; sounds interesting. Have you read *The Hidden Palace*, by Helene Wecker, sequel to *The Golem and the Jinni*? Characters in both books move back and forth between early 20th century New York and Syria. I loved both books for their exploration and braiding of Jewish and Syrian cultures and mythologies. Amelia Peabody sounds like she would have enjoyed meeting Sophia Winston (a young American woman in the *Hidden Palace*, traveling in Syria). If you haven't read them, I highly recommend them.

I share your skepticism that work preserved in the oral tradition is as unreliable as a game of telephone. I think you are right that people tend to become skillful around things valued in the culture or essential to survival. In modern history, we've gone from many people needing to remember many phone numbers to current days, when no one has any reason to try to remember any. We remember what is most important.

Condolences about the long foot surgery recovery. I remember scootching up the stairway on my butt, but only had to do it for a brief periods of time. Damn, you must be building up good arm muscles!

Andy Hooper

[SC] Marty Sullivan was a refreshing change for a Horror Host. I was particularly amused at the idea that he played Superhost for laughs while also being the station's evening news anchor for so many years. In my experience most news anchors take themselves too seriously to cut it up as a kids show host, too. Great story.

Regarding your comment to **Carrie** about *Murderbot* on Apple TV, we will get to see it but I have to admit that the current state of affairs with streaming TV leaves a great deal to be desired. We have to use Sling to get MSNBC as our preferred TV news

source, but Sling is very far from perfect. We keep a few other streaming services but sign up for others on a trial basis to binge a handful of shows and then drop it. It's a big game we have to play. On the upside, some of the best TV I have ever seen has been in the last few years.

Four Star Video is still in business in Madison. The last time I was there I asked about new movie and TV show releases on DVD. They said it all depended on the studio. Some release their stuff right away, some take forever, if ever, to release anything. I signed up for a weekly email alert on what new titles they received. In a recent email they listed six movies/shows I never heard of and *The Holdovers*, which we saw at the Marcus Palace theater just the week before.

[JG] No, no – my theory was that the printer was using obsolete software, not you. I wish I'd gotten hold of the pdf of your zine; various theories are still occasionally running through my mind.

Duh! Of course. I'd forgotten about King's anthology, *Night Shift*. A great collection.

On the subject of "sad departures," I suppose that you've heard by now that Darrah Chavey died on January 6 of complications following heart surgery. That one hit me hard. I've known Darrah for more than 40 years and introduced him to WisCon and the Tiptree/Otherwise Award. He became a major supporter of both and invited me to talk with his class a couple times about Tiptree and feminist SF. I think he bought quite a few items from your eBay auctions. About a month ago he posted on Facebook that he needed to find a new home for his vast collection of materials related SF written by women, which sounded fairly ominous to me. He was hugely popular among his students at Beloit College and I expect that his celebration of life, (which will apparently happen later in the year), will be attended by many hundreds of people. We will be there.



Peggy Weisensel Chavey & Darrah Chavey

From *File 770*: “Wisconsin fan Darrah Chavey died January 6, 2024 from complications of heart surgery. He was a mathematics professor at Beloit College in Wisconsin, teaching Computer Science, Ethnomathematics, and Ballroom Dancing. He was a member of the Beloit Science Fiction and Fantasy Association. He was an active volunteer in putting on WisCon for a number of years, including running the “Internet Lounge.” As a contributor to the Internet Science Fiction Database, one of his specialties was SF by women authors, especially works before the mid-80’s. Some of his research was captured on the SF Gender page. He is survived by his wife Peggy Weisensel Chavey and other family members.”

Carrie Root

[SC] Regarding your comment to us, thanks for the compliment on our new (cheap) chairs. Buying them was not as easy as it sounded. We answered an ad from a woman who lives just south of Madison. We drove down there in the late afternoon to look at the chairs and met her husband who was working on their house. It turns out they were fixing it up to sell. They were planning to sell their house (and most of their stuff) and buy a van or trailer to travel around the country. The woman was not home from work yet, but the husband happily showed us the chairs in the almost empty house. While we were talking, we heard two or three dogs barking loudly from another room, apparently locked up. We bought the chairs but I could not fit more than four of the six chairs into our little Kia Niro. I told the husband I could come right back the next morning, as early as 8AM, to pick up the other two chairs. He said that was fine, in fact, he had to be somewhere by 8:30, so I assured him I’d be there on time. He told me not to worry as he would leave the front door unlocked and I could just take them when I stopped by.



Next morning, I arrived at 8AM sharp. There was no pick-up truck parked outside and all seemed quiet. The husband did not appear to be around. I opened the front door and the chairs were right inside. I reached for one of them. Instantly there was an explosion of barking, only this time they were not locked up. Three large, excited dogs (including one German Shepard) piled out of a back room. They barked at me furiously. I froze as I tried to figure

out if they were going to attack. They seemed more scared of me than aggressive, so I slowly continued to move the chair out the door. The husband then stumbled out of the back room in underwear and a robe, hair askew. I must have woken him up. It had not occurred to me that he might be sleeping in the house. I reminded him that I said I’d be back at 8. He only said “Oh, yeah.” I carried the chairs out to the car, threw them in and went home. They only cost \$10 each, but the experience, as they say, was priceless.

[JG] The reading-along-while-listening-to-the-audiobook strategy worked really well for both *Hild* and *Menewood*. I will gladly do it again. And yes, I’d love to set up a special zoom discussion of the two books. I will try to remember to propose it at our next SFw/oBorders discussion.

Catie Pfeifer

[SC] Excellent comment zine, thanks. I hope you had a lovely holiday season, too.

Regarding your comment to **Luke** on *Hild* and *Menewood*, we just finished both books over the holidays, reading along on eBooks while listening to the audio versions together. It was a good way to keep up with all the characters and places, but now I fear I have left myself in the same place you are in. Clearly there will be at least one more book, but who knows how long it will take Nicola to write it. When the next book eventually comes out, will I have to re-read the first two again? This is why I prefer to wait until all the volumes of a series are out, or nearly out, before beginning the first one. But waiting could take decades and I’m really enjoying it. How do I get myself into these situations?

[JG] Hail Update. Apparently, our roof did not take enough damage from the hail storm to convince our insurance company to replace it. We were really hoping that would happen because our roof is rather old and actually needs to be replaced anyway. That will have to wait a while till we finish paying off the garage renovation.

Steven Vincent Johnson

[SC] I think you have a tough decision to make regarding Charm’s treatment.

Regarding *Turbo* apa contributions, I hope people are submitting at a comfortable level of activity, large or small. I hope no one feels pressured to do more than they want to do or have time to do. It’s unlikely

anyone gets the feedback from comments they really deserve, but maybe they get enough feedback to be assured their work is being read and appreciated. That's what I aim for in writing comments. I write comments because I'm no poet or fiction writer. My essay writing feels (and ends up sounding like) a school assignment. I can write passable letters and emails, so I write comments because I draw from what people contribute and I try to respond conversationally, like I would in a letter. It may not be good fanzine writing, but it's what I've got.

Steve Swartz

[SC] I need to make a big correction to your comments on *Little, Big*. The schedule I printed in our zine was not MY schedule. It was YOUR proposed schedule. Since I have never read the book, it would be weird for me to suggest how much we should tackle each month. I thought your plan sounded reasonable and I offered to print it in our zine as insurance should something prevent the December issue of *Okay*.

I liked your piece on the Nugget Buddies, but I'm glad I don't share your collecting bug. I had heard about the controversy surrounding John Jay Audubon, but I did not know that extended to changing bird names. All our love and best wishes to Allison, of course. What a rough time she's having.

Regarding your very amusing comments to me, meals out do not always devolve into violence. At fish fries I automatically hand Jeanne my lemons and she hands me her tarter sauce. We have ordered meals where one will order a vegetable side and the other will order a potato side and we will split them. We've done that with desserts, too. I thought your story about being rejected for a credit card was simply outrageous. Almost as outrageous as your accusation that I "like pretty much all" disco music. Slander most foul.

[JG] I found your zine very "chewy" this month, Steve. Lots of comment hooks.

Birds aren't the only things that are being stripped of names inspired by real people. Awards too, obviously, and I expect more things over the years. Maybe, eventually, we will see fewer public buildings named after corporations since corporations are people and all. There are lots of opportunities for regret around the reputations of corporations whose name is plastered

on the side of a city's convention center. That process has already affected the naming of baseball teams.

Home renovations so often turn into grueling experiences for the homeowners even though, mostly, the results are eventually judged worth the birthing pains. We are certainly happy with all our major renovations, while the memory of the contractor contractions has gradually been forgotten. At least we have not been bothered by one of the main annoyances that small-town folks have to deal with: the scarcity of builders, especially those with certain specialty skills.

I'm sorry to hear that Allison is having painful and mysterious health problems.

I'd like to see your recipe for "5-minute artisan" bread and would happily exchange a few recipes with you here. I've already looked up the *NYTimes* recipe for Mexican Hot Chocolate cookies and will make them eventually; I love Mexican hot chocolate. Thanks for that. Here's the recipe for one of our favorite sandwiches, my invention – half a toasted onion bagel, topped with a slice of ham, red bell pepper strips, and pepper jack cheese, sprinkled with Italian herbs; broiled in the oven till the cheese melts. Yum. That was dinner last night, so it was on my mind.

Well, it turns out I DID think about using a photo of Scott on a cover, or at least the cover on our most recent apazine (showing Scott on a ladder, hanging a wreath onto our garage).

I think the largest Bill Hoffman feast that we hosted at our house was the multi-coursed Chinese meal, and it was the second one that took place at our house. (Subsequent feasts were hosted at other Madison fans' homes.) Sadly, I no longer remember the first of Dr. Bill's feasts. I don't think I wrote about it, which seems to be the only really effective way for me to retain detailed memories. My brain must have cleared the memory to make room for something else. But I know that many more than 13 people attended that second feast. So you are right, 13 was not the largest group that Scott and I ever hosted for a meal. The big differences are (1) I cooked only one dish for the Chinese feast, while I made most of the food for my family's meal, and (2) the guests at the Chinese feast did not all sit around one table as did my family during our 2023 Thanksgiving celebration. For Dr. Bill's Chinese feast, Scott and I pushed furniture aside in the living and dining rooms; we even removed some large pieces onto the porch. Then we arranged rented tables and chairs in rows, so that the space resembled a small, crowded cafeteria. I included a story about it in my

book, *Becoming* (“China Mountain Chow”), and have attached it near the end of this zine. Your role was one of the highlights. Do you remember?

Thanks for your comments/reply about reading expectations.

I totally agree with your concluding comment about the future of AI (to **Lisa**): “You can slow down the development of AI by legislating against its use in public, but you can’t stop it. If AI is outlawed, as the saying goes, only outlaws (and government) will have AI. ... Our means exceed our wisdom.” And so, when you wrote this to **Walter** re old-school media producers: “It’s still true that if you hire the best and give them money, they can create the best content,” I sighed, and wondered, but for how long?

Re your comment to **Andy**, I loved the tiny story you told about the books you gave away before moving to Paris – most books went to the SF-reading geeks you knew at Microsoft, while the novels with lesbian protagonists and relationships went to a “home for women battered by their Microsoft husbands.” What better illustration to the idea that people generally seek out entertainment that support their own worldviews?

Re your comment to **Elizabeth** about the experience of being an artist—whether they focus more on their own internal experience or on the expected consumer’s experience – Garrison Kiellor talked about this idea in a very interesting way, in his *Prairie Home Companion 50th Anniversary Livestream* (which Scott and I watched Thursday night, 1/12/24). Rather than tell one of his beloved, “News from Lake Wobegon” stories, Garrison reminded us that he’s been living in New York City for many years now and has lost touch with his invented Minnesota town, where the women are strong, the men are good looking, and all the children are above average. So, instead, he recalled past performances, and how audience reactions sometimes caused him to alter a story on-stage, in the middle of his monologue, from its originally planned trajectory. Like when he noticed a San Francisco audience getting fidgety as he began to tell the story of a guy in a deer blind about to shoot a deer. He changed the story so, at the end, the hunter fell into a reverie and recalled a poem. Then, he went back to his car without killing an animal. Garrison imagined his Midwestern radio listeners saying, “What the fuck?” His introspection and re-examination of past performances and his created world reminded me of how Ursula Le Guin returned to the world of Earthsea and re-examined it from women’s perspectives—thus enlarging the world of Earthsea. I

imagine that storytellers, improv actors, and stand-up comedians often respond this way to audience feedback, each time creating a new piece with the audience.

Jeanne Bowman

[SC] After reading your interesting piece “Don’t Sit Next to Dad: My American Exceptionalism” I was startled to realize that I had absolutely no idea if anyone in my family, including my brother’s and sister’s kids and grandkids and their partners, was left-handed. I’m drawing a blank. I know my parents and siblings are right-handed, but I don’t know beyond that. I also realized that I was unlikely to notice these days because it’s becoming rare to see people hand writing anything. Everyone is typing or thumb-typing. To find out I’d probably have to come right out and ask.

I remember the Bacigalupi novels as more unrelentingly grim than Nicola’s, but she had her moments to be sure. Hey, it was no picnic back in the 7th century. I like “Thud and Blunder with rainbow sprinkles” (would you believe I have never seen the expression “Thud and Blunder” until this issue of the apa, when you and **Greg** used it independently?) I agree with what you concluded about *Menewood*, it was not “overlong and slow-paced.”

[JG] Overlong? Nah, I would have been happy if *Menewood* had gone on for another few hundred pages. I think what I will remember most from it was not so much the violence and tragedy (though there was certainly plenty of both), but the amount of long-range, detailed planning that Hild did in preparation for war. Just the task of gathering and preparing supplies took months. Stealing horses. Writing letters to potential allies whose reply took months (which first required her to skin a sheep and make parchment, ink, and wax to seal the letter). Figuring out a brilliant strategy. Examining her long-term goals (No, she did not want to be King.). Camouflaging her home base, *Menewood*, to protect her loved ones. Taking her gesiths hunting so she could teach them guerrilla tactics. Advising her friends to take actions while she was fighting, precisely when she needed those actions to take place. It was a huge, human-scale chess game without spreadsheets. I was enthralled and not just because I have Virgo tendencies.

“*Menewood* is hope, emplaced, threaded through with birdsong.” Lovely and yes.

Lisa Freitag

[SC] Having just finished *Babel* for our book discussion group, I'm also surprised it did not win more awards.

Regarding your comment to me for #449, I think you are far from alone regarding your emphasis on character in your reading. I prefer characters to be interesting and well developed, but for me characters are still just elements in the service of ideas, themes and story. Characters are no more important to me than the style, setting, genre, action or other elements. As well developed as the characters were in *Babel*, and as compelling as the plot was, I was more interested in other elements of the story like the struggle to fit into foreign (often racist and hostile) environments, the complexities of linguistics and whether violence is the best way to challenge entrenched power.

I laughed at your comment to **Andy**, "All I can think of is the Spirit Airlines version of budget cryogenic travel." Oh. My. God.

[JG] That's quite a list of difficult things to avoid thinking about. I'm sorry you're feeling so down and powerless. I suspect you may not actually be looking for advice, and are just using the list to illustrate your state of mind. Got it and respect it. But if you do want a bit of advice, I would suggest choosing just one of those difficult things (not Republicans, for sure, rather something that was in your power to change) and make a list of small actions (step 1, step 2, etc.) that might improve that one thing.

I was intrigued by Kuang's argument in her novel, *Babel*, for the necessity of violence and I greatly admired the unflinching ending to the story. My main discomfort was the overly long and repeated lectures about the evils of empire and colonialism. The argument was much stronger when Kuang showed us (through characters' experience) how the world works, rather than telling us. I'm looking forward to this month's SF Without Borders book club meeting to discuss *Babel*'s characters' evolving notions of the efficacy of violence and the perspective of women and non-white workers being co-opted into the oppression of their homelands.

We will be reading *Nettle and Bone* sometime this year for the book club and I am looking forward to it.

Luke McGuff

[SC] Thanks for the lavish comments. I have just a couple responses to comments to me. Regarding the stained-glass window, fifteen years after my dad's passing — my brother Jon is finally starting to talk about tearing down the old farm house. I recently learned that Jon remembered that Jeanne once expressed interest in that window and he has long planned to give it to us. I'm not sure we should end up with it after all because we have no place to put it. I still think it should stay in the family, so I may have to poll the grandkids to see if any of them desperately want it.

I think it's too soon to make judgments of the city's BRT system. It could completely transform mass transit in Madison, but it's been a difficult process so far.

Jeanne and I liked *Get Out*, *Us*, and *Nope*. Ordinarily we rarely go to horror movies.

Of the human pyramids I have been involved with, they were always instigated by Spike and I always ended up on the bottom with my comrade **Andy**.

Nice watch! It looks like a Swiss Army or a Tissot? Jeanne bought me a Tissot at Dykman's Time Shop and I wore it for years and years. It finally died, but I was able to save the watch band, which I wear now with my new watch.

[JG] I am swimming currently at the Sun Prairie YMCA, which is a newer facility than my usual place at the East-side YMCA on Cottage Grove Road. Sun Prairie's YMCA locker room is really luxurious in comparison, and I am seriously thinking about switching to it, even though it's a longer drive than the one to the Cottage Grove Road facility. I'll check out the improvements at the East Side Y before making a final decision, but that won't happen till the end of January or early February, since renovations are taking longer than expected. I suppose the weather may have something to do with the delay.

I used to swim at the YWCA on the Capitol Square. I'd stroll three blocks to the YWCA during my lunch hour, swim madly, dry off, and return to work. But that convenient option disappeared when the YWCA finally closed down its decrepit penthouse-level pool. The decision wasn't surprising, but I was very sad. Then I started swimming at the downtown YMCA, a 5-minute bike-ride west of the square, and it was very nice, better and larger than the small YWCA pool in fact, but

after I'd been swimming there for less than a year, the board decided that they wanted to tear it down and build a better, grander YMCA. After the demolishing was done and nothing but an enormous hole in the ground remained, the board suddenly realized that they didn't actually have enough money to build the new, grander YMCA, and so they sold the property. *sigh* At the time, I was working downtown in GEF-2, just off the square, and wanted to continue swimming during my lunch hour, so I decided to try swimming in the Olympic-size pool in UW-Madison's SERF (Southeast Recreational Facility) on Dayton Street. It took me about eight minutes to bike there from my office. This was many years before the SERF was demolished (in 2018) and replaced by the Nicholas Recreation Center. The SERF was an incredibly wonderful place to swim. I *loved* swimming the long lengths of the Olympic-sized pool; it was a dream come true. However, in order to swim there (or to use any UW-Campus facility), the rule at the time was that I needed to be an employee or student at the UW. So, for a couple years I audited a series of one-credit courses, one per semester. My problem was that I felt obliged to take each class seriously. I didn't skip them. I took notes, and eventually that got to be too much. For a few months I tried swimming at the east-side YMCA very early in the morning before work, but I hated getting up so early and gave up when taking the bus during winter months added a half hour to my commute. I didn't get back to daily swimming again until I'd retired and began driving to the east-side YMCA.

After writing about my lifetime search for the next swimming pool, I remembered John Cheever's novel, *The Swimmer*. I think they made a movie from it starring Burt Lancaster. The main character runs from one backyard swimming pool to the next, swimming the length of each pool, and each time he emerges from a pool, he's aged another few years. By the end, he is an old man (still wearing a Speedo).

I see that UW's rules have changed: if I want to swim at the Soderholm Center (which is part of the Nicholas Rec Center, right?), I would no longer be required to take a class, but could purchase a membership as a UW-Alumni. The \$45/month fee is actually cheaper than what I am paying at the YMCA, but daily parking would make it considerably less convenient and more expensive. Nevertheless, I may have to check it out! It would be lovely to swim in a giant, Olympic-size pool again. Thanks for the suggestion.

I think you're on to something with the idea of edges (in your comment to [SteveVJ](#)). Not just shoreline edges,

but forest/meadow edges, and more – all shedding metaphorical light on societal edges where creativity blossoms. Cutting edge technology. Edgy personalities. An edge to her voice. Cliff's edge. Including multiple meanings of borders and margins. You should continue ruminating!

Jim Hudson & Diane Martin

[SC] As I write this, we know that Diane's surgery was successful. Onward to recovery and eventually maybe cartwheels and kick-boxing.

I'm sorry we did not stop in to cookie-baking, we woulda if we coulda. We were in Iowa. Congrats to all the bakers for the stupendous haul.

I do not envy your December travel schedule. I'm glad it all went like clockwork. It had to if you were going to get it all done.

Wonderful pictures once again. That one of Oz and Akiko is perfect.

[JG] We watched some stuff (But this zine is too long for pics and paragraph reviews.)

All Creatures Great and Small (PBS) Lovely

Bull Durham (Max) Still a great movie

Chicken Run: Dawn of the Nugget (Netflix) Wildly funny, but I couldn't help but wonder what the chicken island must *smell* like

The Family Plan (Apple) The previews are funny. Seeing the whole movie doesn't add much.

Ferrari (Theater) Adam Driver is *fantastico!*

For All Mankind (Apple) Scott and I had completely different reactions to this season. I loved it; Scott was very unhappy. We will write more about this later.

Lawmen: Bass Reeves (Amazon Prime) Excellent series based on a real, black lawman soon after the Civil War. It was impossible not to watch it without feeling impending dread.

Leave the World Behind (Netflix) Neither Scott or I liked this much. Far too many inconsistencies.

Maestro (Netflix, though we would rather have seen it in a theater) We loved this. I want to see it again.

Mistress America (Max) Pleasant, entertaining. It was lovely to see an early, less-famous Greta Gerwig.

The Northman (Starz) Sort of what you'd expect if Ingmar Bergan made a movie about depressed, suicidal Vikings.

Poor Things (Theater) Wonderful! We were glad it won the Golden Globe.

TURBOCON



State Street, Madison in October

[JG] This month, Scott and I scraped up comments and suggestions about *TurboCon* from last year's *Turbos*. And then I wrote up a report on the responses we received from the *TurboCon* questionnaire. You will find all this at the end of our zine.

I think all of us have slightly different expectations in our heads about the shape a *TurboCon* might likely take. Part of those expectations stem from the **word** we are using for the event: *TurboCon*, emphasis on “con.” As active SF fans, we are all familiar with the model of a con. If we had called our event a *TurboFair*, *TurboParty*, or *TurboRetreat* I expect that our conversation would have gone in very different directions.

This is how Scott and I hope *TurboCon* will work: We don't see there being anything resembling a ceremony (opening, award, or closing), much less a master of ceremonies. We don't expect to rent hotel function space. We don't think our small group can afford a traditional all-hours consuite in a hotel room, financially or time.

Nevertheless, a couple people have championed the idea of a conventional con in their apazines. On the other hand, **SteveVJ** has declined to be involved specifically because he is not interested in doing a conventional con. Scott and I would back slowly away from this conversation if it leads in that direction.

My expectation is that *TurboCon* will be a time for friends to get together for walks, meals, conversations, show-and-tell sessions; I expect that we will share

hobbies with one another—writing, artwork, cooking, gardening, etc. I will use the term “programming,” in the most ironic manner. Of course it will be necessary to set up a schedule showing who is hosting what meal or activity, but I expect that the “programs” will most likely be listed as a general something happening Saturday morning, and another taking place in the afternoon and a third in the evening. Like that.

We're not going to push for any one thing to happen. If someone(s) wants to host something, I, for one, will consider it a gift to us all – a group of

friends who have decided that it would be fun to get together and socialize in person.



Not at all like this

[JG] I am so sorry if you missed this second-in-a-series of post-WisCon feasts served in Scott's and my house, and orchestrated by Dr. Bill (Hoffman). The menu was titled "China Mountain Chow" and riffed on the title of the winner of the second Tiptree Award, *China Mountain Zhang*, by Maureen F. McHugh. The meal took all evening to consume, each course being prepared (and cleaned up) by a different crew, always directed by Dr. Bill. Every half hour or so, delightful odors would drift out of the kitchen into the living room and dining room among the thirty or so dinner guests who relaxed around the four tables (three rented for the day).

Then, the cooks of the course would emerge bearing beautifully appointed platters of steaming delicacies. Then the eating (and moaning and sighing) would commence. The highlight of the evening was without a doubt, "Smoked Tea Duck," which Dr. Bill had begun cooking two evenings earlier....

Monday night, March 8, 1993, Bill marinated three ducks in peppercorns, orange & tangerine peel, and fresh ginger. I got back from work on Tuesday night and watched Dr. Bill as he placed the marinated ducks onto platforms constructed of chopsticks inside two woks lined with aluminum foil, and strewn with jasmine tea leaves, brown sugar, orange & tangerine peel, cinnamon sticks, and Chinese cassia bark.

That's when Rose, Bill's friend, asked a series of questions that alerted me to the fact that this "smoking business" might be an exciting event.

"Have you ever done this before, Bill?"

"Do you think the woks will work as smokers? Or do you think we'll burn the house down?"

"Do you have a fire extinguisher, Jeanne and Scott? Just curious."

"Maybe you'd better disconnect the smoke alarms now. Don't you think?"

"Is there enough good smoke coming out of there, Bill?"

"Will we have any warnings if it's about to blow? Maybe Cassie [Rose's daughter] and I will wait in the other room."

The smoke filled the house, until it was so thick that Cassie and Rose escaped outside to very cold weather

just to give their eyes a break. With bare feet, and wearing nothing but a brightly colored kimono, Bill carried the smoking wok out onto the snow-covered driveway and took off the lid, waiting to disperse the smoke before returning into the house. "Damn, that snow is cold!" commented Bill.

We all decided that going out to dinner would be an excellent idea that night. Scott and I opened windows and the attic door, set up fans, and hoped that we would find the air more breathable upon our return. The woks went back onto the stove over a low flame, this time to steam the ducks for a couple hours. We returned home from dinner a while later (relieved to see no fire engines out front), to a very cold, but smoke-free house.

Despite all the foreshadowing, that in any short story or movie would have been followed by at least a small fire, Bill did no harm to our house. The dinner was served, on schedule, Wednesday night. The only disaster, and it was a pretty small one, happened when **Steve Swartz**, as a member of one of the clean-up crews, slipped and spilled a wok-full of oil onto the kitchen's linoleum floor. I was sitting with my back to the kitchen when it happened. I had just popped a morsel of deliciousness into my mouth when I heard a clunk, a gasp, and several expletives yelled from inside the kitchen.

"Should I turn around?" I asked Dr. Bill.

"I wouldn't if I were you," said Dr. Bill. And so I stayed where I was, and pinched a scallion and ginger explosion shrimp between my chop sticks and ate it. "So good!" I sighed, and resolutely ignored the muttering emanating from the kitchen.

Bill's eight-course meal was extraordinary. I don't think I ever tasted anything so delicious as the deep-fried duck in my life. People laughed about the "abuse" our house took as a result of the massive amount of cooking, the huge crowd of dinner guests, not to mention the smoky Tuesday night, and jokingly asked me when I would "allow" Bill to cook at my house again. I took another bite of that extraordinary duck, and said, "how about next week?"

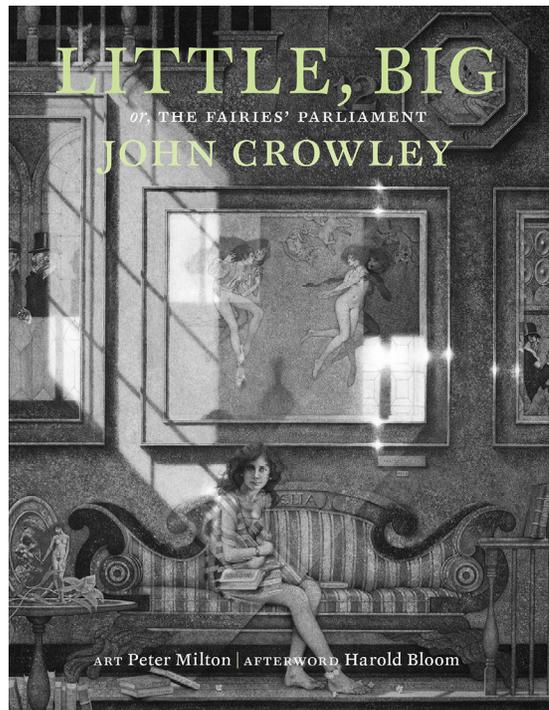
[SC] Well, that was interesting. Fewer than 100 pages in, and I don't think I have read anything quite like it.

As an occasional reader of fantasy fiction, I'm left with some first impressions, but not much in the way of analysis. This book feels like it's full of symbolism and metaphors, which is not a bad thing. The book will likely hold up to multiple readings because new things can be discovered in it with each reading. Unfortunately, I haven't taken a lit. class since I was in high school and I've read very little literary criticism, so I don't

feel I'm in a good place to try to deconstruct the story, but I had a few reactions and questions.

Crowley's writing style here feels old fashioned, as if he is trying to mimic the feel of a 19th century novel. I don't mean this as a criticism but this is my first Crowley, so I don't know if he always writes like this. I wondered about the odd labeled subdivisions of the chapters. Isn't that something you'd see in an old novel? Any idea if there is a point to it beyond making it easier for the reader to navigate the text? Or is the author trying to focus our attention toward what is most important in a given passage?

I like how the fantasy elements of the story are subtle, or seem to exist at the edges of the story. The characters are interesting but most do not feel



realistic to me so much as allegorical (Barnabas was anonymous to the point of invisibility, for instance). Again, not a criticism. The story did not go where I expected in the beginning. I thought Smokey Barnabas' journey to Edgewood would take much longer and involve more adventures, but he had little difficulty finding his way there and a lot more time was spent introducing him (and us) to the fantastic house and the Drinkwater family. Then we moved to the past for the story of John and Violet Drinkwater.

Crowley introduces a lot of ideas. A house of many fronts. The real world and the fantastic worlds are enclosed together and are shaped like concentric rings, infundibular. They exist side by side but the fantastic creatures are too small for someone from the real world to see. However, some of us can enter the fantastic world via doorways. Violet seems to actually be a fairy or an elf, but others of the Drinkwater household appear to have limited power and access to the parallel fantasy world. And there is also the idea of The Tale.

I'm enjoying this so far, but I'll be glad for some insights from you. One last thing, this story is complicated. Reading a few chapters and then setting it aside for a month may become a challenge because I'm afraid I'm going to lose the thread of the story and have to do a lot of re-reading each month. We'll see.

Please join the conversation! But when you do, please do not respond ONLY in your zines. **We can't plan TurboCon via conversations in mailing comments.** So please write an email (REPLY TO ALL), or at least copy your apa comments into an email, and send them (REPLY TO ALL!), with the subject line, "TurboCon."

This report contains information gathered from responses to the emailed questionnaire, as well as suggestions made over the last year in TurboApa. [See the next article, "A History of the TurboCon Conversation."]

1. We asked you all if you want to attend a Turbo gathering in October 2024? Here are the responses as of January 15. 19 said yes; 3 said no; 6 haven't responded yet.

Yes:	Greg Rihn	No:
Jeanne Gomoll	Jim Hudson	Marilyn Holt
Scott Custis	Diane Martin	Steve V. Johnson
Jeanne Bowman	Elizabeth Matson	Darlene Coltrain?
F.J. Bergmann	Hope Kiefer	Unknown:
Steve Swartz	Karl Hailman	Catie Pfeifer
Luke McGuff	Carrie Root	Jae Adams
Julie McGuff	Andy Hooper	Kim & Kathi Nash
Pat Hario	Lisa Freitag	Walter Freitag
Georgie	Andrea Connell	Jim Nichols
Schnobrich		Ruth Nichols

2. We asked you which October 2024 weekends would NOT work for you. Two October weekends are possible for those who replied:

No objections to:
October 4-6 (Pro: it might be a little warmer.)
October 11 -13 (Pro: Fall color may be a little more advanced.)
(Farmers Market will be open both weekends.)

Problems with:
October 18-20 (Lisa Freitag, Jeanne Bowman)
October 25-27 (Jeanne Bowman, Georgie & Greg)

3. Hotel question:

These people may want hotel rooms: Jeanne Bowman, Steve Swartz, Luke & Julie, Georgie & Greg, Hope & Karl, Carrie & Andy, Lisa Freitag

No one expressed specific preferences for hotel choices. **Greg** wrote: "I expect that we will need to budget carefully. I don't know what my employment situation might be by then. That said, we might consider people chipping together to rent hotel rooms with a parlor suite, which could be the main venue?"

Scott and I suggest that the folks who want to stay at a hotel form up a subcommittee and see if they can agree on a hotel. If an in-town person is needed for negotiation, let us know and we will help.

4. Money

Most people said they would be willing to pay a modest fee to cover expenses.

To our suggestion that it might be useful to rent a van in order to transport Turbites to various venues around town, **SteveSw** wrote: "I would be happy to work with the people from out of town to coordinate travel and rent a van together."

Hope wrote that she and **Karl** would be willing to pay a modest fee but reminded us that "our modest and your modest are probably not the same. Also, re: van rental, we have a van that can transport 8 people, including the driver (8 or 7 comfortably)."

Several people mentioned hotel "function space," or "consuite." Renting a room at a hotel would of course be a major expense in terms of both money and labor, and unless someone wants to work on this, I expect (and hope) that none of our events will require renting several nights-worth of space in a hotel.

The fee for renting a park shelter for a day would be more affordable. But weather might be the most important factor in deciding whether or not to do stuff outdoors. The Warner Park Recreation Center would be an option if we needed an indoor venue one day.

JeanneB wrote, "Also yes to a pot to ensure lack of funds does not mean lack of attendance for any who need (say, equal to fee or the like, maybe on the corflu 50 model where a few chip in a fixed amount, etc.) whatever works, not too much trouble and so forth. Okay, maybe this a five. I can do that. It might look like an envelope of cash or a jar full of self-service bills, but, sure."

Carrie wrote "Modest fee, ok, but we might wait till we know what we're doing to commit on that..." Agreed.

5 People sent in interesting suggestions for programming.

These folks offered to volunteered to help run someone else's event.: Steve Swartz, Luke McGuff (would like to help with a tour or a live fanzine production), Pat Hario

[**JeannB, SteveSw**] Making stuff with interesting stuff, maybe legos (JB) or maybe Popsicle sticks to make a truly noteworthy cover (SS).

[**JeanneB**] Tours of famous *Turbo* faannish sites nearby? Jeanne and Scotts kitchen, Jae's basement, any recently remodeled space as appropriate. Who has the best library in Madison and can we browse?

[**JeanneB**] JeanneB's "Birding and Bugging Practicum: An Informal and informational daily gathering. Participants contribute observations: dramatic reenactments and group discussions ensue. Twenty minutes to twilight, for twenty minutes where ever we are, congruent with other programing. No specialized equipment necessary, but show-and-tell about your favorite accouterments encouraged. Expected topics may include: who is roosting where, what the heck is that sound, where fledglings follow, when do the owls start up?"

[**Pat**] Park Shelter reservations are available on-line. Pat writes, "The summer months tend to go quickly. October? Not so much. And there is always the Warner Park Recreation Center. <https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/reserve/shelters/shelterPrices.cfm>

[**Jim & Diane**] Garden Tour and/or Parade of Cats

[**Many Turbites** talked about this in the apa] **A Live Apazine**—readings, artwork, and performances, including story-telling. Everyone who wants to do so could take a turn live reading or otherwise performing an item that could or would be a *Turbo* submission. Presentations could combine performances in other media or forms of art in addition to things published or publishable in the apa. After each "submission," the audience would comment live. It would be difficult to contain everyone's participation within one event. We suggest that this event be divided into four parts, held through the weekend.

[**JeannieB**] SF/F Poetry reading. Note that unless the crowd is VERY large, I'd be willing to host some indoor events (NE side of Madison).

[**JeanneG**] I always hated it when WisCon attendees made suggestions that began with the phrase, "You should—." Nevertheless, here I go: **Luke, Julie, and Jim**, you should lead an early morning hike (or maybe two!) on your favorite trails.

[**JeanneG & Scott**] Pot luck and Pie-Palooza at our house.

[**JeanneG**] If there is interest, I could ask Kafryn Lieder to help me set up a tour to see the amazing campus, buildings, and artwork at Epic Systems in Verona.

[**SteveSw** from comments in his apazine] Dessert Banquet. (Steve hopes he can borrow the use of a kitchen in Madison to make something)

[**SteveSw** from comments in his apazine] a cross-country croquet game. "There should be water features, roads to cross, and so on. We can start groups of players with a time lag, but if someone catches up with the previous group, sending the laggards should be fair game."

[**Andy** from comments in his apazine] Presentation of the Freitag Award, which consists of a \$19.73 honorarium & summary expulsion from the con.

[**Andy** from comments in his apazine] Things we did at summer camp – games, scavenger hunts, sing-a-longs, archery. Campfire skits! Ghost Stories!

[**Pat** from comments in her apazine, with further suggestions by **Andy**] Dessert banquet with a GoH speech (Andy suggested that the randomly-chosen GoH could choose someone else to deliver a speech (homage or roast) in their place.

[**Andy** from comments in his apazine] Pulling slips of paper from a bin or hat, everyone receives their designation (some sort of office) – the Welcome Committee chair, Admiral of the Fleet, Mistress of Venomous Spiders. etc.



Hypothetical, Not-Set-In-Stone, Preliminary, Aspirational *TurboCon* SCHEDULE

Even if no other events are submitted, these suggestions, dredged from 2023 apazines and the *TurboCon* questionnaire, could fill up the weekend nicely. Here's what a hypothetical schedule might look like: (This is not a real schedule! There is room for more or different things. What are your suggestions?)

Friday evening: Dinner at East-side Businessman's Club, where everyone picks slips of paper from a bin or hat and receives their designation/office; GoH chosen randomly. Afterward we adjourn to someone's house for the Live Apa, part 1.

Early Saturday morning: An early morning hike led by Luke, Julie, and/or Jim – featuring bird watching, fall color admiring, and a stop for coffee and pastries. In one of his zines, Luke once volunteered to “wax rhapsodic about restoration and prairies.” This might be a good place for this to happen.

Saturday morning: An expedition around Dane County Farmers Market, Capitol Square.

Late Saturday morning: lunch/tea, and part 2 of A Live Apazine: Poetry readings at Jeannie Bergmann's house with art presented by Jae in a slide show.

Saturday afternoon: Garden tours, cat parades at Jim & Diane's house (and others?). This tour might include renovation tours of Pat Hario's bathroom, and Jim & Diane's basement, risen from the flood.

Saturday evening: Pot Luck Dinner & Pie Palooza and/or Dessert Banquet. Afterwards or during: A Live Apazine, part 3, at Jeanne and Scott's house (also includes renovation tour of kitchen, Xeno's bathroom, and garage).

Early Sunday morning: An early morning hike with Luke, Julie, and/or Jim – featuring bird watching, fall color admiring, and a stop for coffee and pastries, and ending at park shelter (rented for the day).

Later Sunday morning: A cross-country croquet game refereed by Steve Swartz, or other games, taking place or ending at park shelter (rented for the day).

Sunday afternoon: picnic lunch at park shelter, followed by an activity: “Making stuff with interesting stuff,” possibly Legos – led by Jeanne Bowman. The craft project's purpose might be to create a set of personalized apa covers using rubber stamps or other materials, such as Popsicle sticks.

Sunday afternoon: Also at park shelter, Steve Swartz is considering bringing “a whole bunch of things ... inside an over-sized floor-length leather jacket, and offer them for sale ... as an alternative to the dealers room.”

Sunday afternoon: Epic tour?

Sunday evening: Supper: pizza delivered to park shelter followed by dessert: marshmallows roasted for S'mores. Or (if it gets cold) we could move to someone's house and have pizza there. And finally, A Live Apazine, part 4.

Monday morning: breakfast -- at Memorial Union (?) with speech given by randomly-chosen GoH or their designated speaker.

More questions

1. Do you have suggestions for other activities?
2. Who else should we invite? Former Turbo members, Madison fans?
3. Madison fans: would you be able to open your home for an event?
4. Would you find it useful to have a printed schedule with a map and contact info for Madison fans? This would NOT be a program book. Absolutely not a program book, **JeanneG** swears.

A History of the *TurboCon* Conversation

Thanks to Scott for taking a deep dive through a year's-worth of *Turboapas*, and to dozens of sticky labels that sacrificed their lives to the project.

We tried to scrape all the statements and suggestions we could find about *TurboCon*, though we probably missed a few. The shape of *TurboCon* emerges from these conversations, as well as more than a few solid suggestions for what we might do during a weekend together.

Turbo #438, December 2022. The first reference to *TurboCon* that we were able to find in an apa was written by **SteveSw** who we think was responding to something **Andy** said during a zoomed *Turbo* collation party. SteveSw wrote [*Okay* #10]: “Maybe we need a *Turbo-Con* in Madison? I’m willing to volunteer! We could find a venue, invite all current and past members, and then see what happens. Maybe it will be magic! Probably it will be a lot of work.”

Turbo #439, January 2023. In *Asobou* #3, **JeanneB** reported that she had purchased a bag of miscellaneous Legos that contained a brick labeled “*Turbo*,” and so naturally proposed an activity that mixed knolling and Lego-making for a *Turbo* party. “By that I do mean playing with sharp objects, making a three-dimensional articulated sculptural piece, and documenting same. I will procure and sanitize all materials to inhibit cooties and I will provide sufficient bespoke Lego disassembler tools.”

Turbo #440, February 2023. In *Okay* #, **SteveSw** again chimed in, again in a comment to **Andy** with ideas as to how a *Turbo* party in Madison might work over Zoom. He thought we should consider various games. One of his ideas was a French game that combines musical chairs with scavenger hunt.

Turbo #441, March 2023. **Andy** responded to **SteveSw** the next month [*Captain Flashback* #52] and observed that since we’ve gotten older, fewer people might want to play softball or go bowling, though he thought croquet might work. **Andy** championed the idea that *TurboCon* should “take place in the summer, and would have the basic form of a series of potluck suppers. ... It might move from location to location: One night would be held at Ishnala, another at the East Side Businessmen’s Association, and maybe one at the big picnic shelter in Olin Park. ... I think there would be games and puzzles... And we would try to publish our own fanzines, or shared projects like a one-shot.”

Turbo #442, April 2023. **Andy**’s comment inspired more comments in the next issue. **JeanneG** [*Madison Foursquare* #78] said she was attracted to **Andy**’s description of a summer *Turbo* party “as a series of meals and games in various locations, plus a publishing project.” **Jim** [*Things that Begin with A*] wrote that he and **Diane** also liked the idea and suggested that perhaps we could create a set of personalized apa covers using rubber stamps. **JeannieB** [*A Turbulent APA-rition*] suggested that we stage a “Not-At-Wiscon party” in the backyard, weather permitting, scheduled against WisCon. This proposal may have been separate from the *TurboCon* idea, but she went on to tell **Andy** in a comment that she was “totally up for this kind of *TurboCon*.”

Turbo #443, May 2023. In *Madison Foursquare* #79: **JeanneG** seconded **Jim**’s proposal that we set up a Google Doc to schedule *TurboCon*. Well, that didn’t happen. (The problem with trying to do complicated planning with one-month gaps between comments is that we tend to lose the thread.) In *Okay* #13, **SteveSw** championed **Andy**’s suggestion for a croquet game at *TurboCon*. In *Captain Flashback* #54 **Andy** said he favored the late spring and early summer 2024, or early fall, before or after Worldcon. In the same paragraph he began championing a second *TurboCon* for the weekend before the Seattle WorldCom in 2025. Further into his zine, **Andy** jokingly proposed that we present “the Freitag Award, which consists of a \$19.73 honorarium & summary expulsion from the con.”

Turbo #444, June 2023. In *Madison Foursquare* #80, **JeanneG** countered **SteveSw**’s suggestion for a cross-county croquet tournament by factiously suggesting a game of cross-ally bowling ball tag, but winced at **Andy**’s idea of a *TurboCon* 2, since it implied the existence of a *TurboCon* 3, and a continuing, annual event. She really doesn’t want to get involved in planning an annual convention, no matter how unconventional. **Jeanne** endorsed the idea of a Fall 2024 *TurboCon* and asked whether the event would be open to any other local fans or only current and former *Turbo* members. She suggested that some events, “(like a picnic in the park, for instance) that would be open to non-Turbans, while others (in people’s homes) might need to be invitation-only.” **JeanneG** also asked folks whether they might like to tour the amazing buildings and artwork of the Epic Campus. She thought **Kafryn Lieder** might be able to arrange a tour during *TurboCon*.

Turbo #445, July 2023. SteveSw attempted to douse the idea of a conventional convention in *Okay* #15. He wrote: “I like the idea of a *Turbo* relaxicon in Madison in 2024 and then in Seattle in 2025. Maybe we should call it something other than a con. Let’s start not planning! And resisting the idea of it growing larger than a reasonably sized party. In *Captain Flashback* #56, **Andy** wrote in a comment to **JeanneG**: “I don’t know that a *TurboCon* 2 in 2025 necessarily implies a *TurboCon* 3, but the model that seems to be developing is of a traveling con. The first will be in Madison, and you will have to do something to make it happen. But then the scene will shift to the Northwest, and all you have to do is show up. Yes, I think a ceiling of 30 to 45 people is best, and preference should certainly be given to present and previous members of the apa. But friends and well-wishers might be welcome too and provide particular embellishment to the con.” Andy makes additional proposals which became increasingly more fantastical, and seemed inspired by his recent reading of Erin Morganstern’s *Night Circus*. So I will skip over his proposal for multiple tents, labyrinths, and a wishing mimeo, not to mention a display of the wild Pickersgill.

On August 5, 2023, JeanneG and **Scott** held an open house in honor of **Andy** and **Carrie**’s visit to Madison. Because they contracted Covid, they were able to attend only briefly, but *TurboCon* was discussed. It was determined that Andy and Carrie’s travel plans for 2024 would make fall the best time for *TurboCon* 1. All in attendance agreed that we should choose an October weekend. Additional suggestions were no doubt made during the party, but unfortunately no one was taking notes, so I can report none of them here.

Turbo #446. August 2023. **Greg** chimed into the discussion in *An Wisconsinzine*. He had enjoyed a party at **JeanneG** and **Scott**’s house and reported that the party had been declared “*TurboCon* Zero.” Later in the apa, **Carrie Root** also referred to the party as “*TurboCon* 1.” On their way home to West Allis, Greg and **Georgie** experienced an epiphany. “I came up with an idea (‘a wonderful, awful idea!’) The proposal is this: each *Turbo* member attending (physically or virtually) should take a turn live reading or otherwise performing an item that could or would be a *Turbo* submission. Then the audience can comment live. (Throwable vegetables not permitted–.)” **JeannieB** bucked the near-consensus in her zine, *A Turbulent APArition*, and tried to convince us to upgrade our plans to a full convention: “I believe a number of former OddConians would be only too pleased to help. I’d really like to see this as an actual

con, at a hotel, Memorial Day weekend 2024. I think we’d have decent attendance. Love the Epic tour idea!”

Turbo #447, September 2023. Several people in the apa joined the conversation about *TurboCon* in this issue, with most of the conversation focusing on producing something like a live apazine. In *Captain Flashback* #58, **Andy** responded to **Greg**’s suggestion of the previous month, questioning the practical logistics of every attending apa member reading at one event, not to mention time for reactions. But Andy was obviously still attracted to the idea and wrote: “Presenting something akin to a ‘live mailing’ is very attractive and could combine performances in other media or forms of art in addition to things published or publishable in the apa.” **Pat Hario** commented (in *No Death. Lots of Poop.*) on **Greg**’s proposal: “I like your idea of a presentation portion of the event. I don’t feel strongly whether they should be old or new. If someone wants to read their favorite thing, I’m good with that. Or, and this is risky, can people read their favorite thing *someone else wrote*?” Pat endorsed **JeannieB**’s proposal that we put on a conventional con. Pat comment to JeannieB, “You gave firm ideas for *TurboCon* – thanks. We need them. If we’re going to do it, I think we should do it right. *Seattle in ’25!*” Pat also extended an invitation to out-of-town Turbiters if someone wants to use her extra room. In *Madison Foursquare* #83, **JeanneG** came down firmly against **JeannieB**’s proposal: “In the words of Petey Otterloop from Richard Thompson’s cartoon strip, *Cul de Sac*, I would rather chew off my arm than work on a convention of the sort that JeannieB suggests in her zine. ... I am also completely opposed to scheduling something in WisCon’s former calendar slot, Memorial Day weekend. I hope that WisCon’s committee will be able to resuscitate itself and resurrect the convention. But if it does not, I do not want any former attendees to assume that this event, *TurboCon*, is meant to take over for WisCon. // I am hopeful that our gatherings will remain loosely organized with only the most necessary and minimal planning done – perhaps making an agreement on a hotel suggestion for out-of-town visitors, and printing up a list of events with phone numbers, addresses and directions. I really want the gathering to remain focused on *Turbo* members and activities. (I do love Greg’s program suggestion, a read-aloud issue of *Turbo*.)” **Luke McGuff** offered his comments in his zine, *Rejuvenation*: “If there are public readings for *TurboCon* I think they should be voluntary. But I would be willing to wax rhapsodic about restoration and prairies.” **SteveSw** also liked Greg’s idea for a live fanzine. “My initial reaction is

enthusiasm and flexibility. The public reading should be optional. People should be able to choose whether they want to use greatest hits or create something new. People should be encouraged to contribute something like what they contribute to the APA, rather than to put together a play (for instance) (though it would be fun as an entirely separate project if a group of us built a round-robin APA contribution). The idea of building up a one-shot *Turbo* 'zine from these parts, and sending it out somewhat broadly, also appeals."

Turbo #448, October 2023. In *No Beta: we die like redshirts*, **Pat** made some suggestions in her comment to **Andy** that indicated that she continued to envision *TurboCon* as a conventional con: "Should we have the (now) traditional dessert banquet? Who would give the GoH speeches? I suggest the previous editors all have a few moments to talk about their regimes." **Jae** commented in *Alphabet-Obsession #207*, that she is "always up for reading aloud ('vantage number two of having grandkids) but I spent formative years in too many instructional 'reading groups' to make anyone do that if they don't want to! I should also point out here that I also have a slide projector (old school) and round cassettes already full of slides that I haven't even identified in years, mostly artwork I think. And there it is, a program item." In *Captain Flashback #59*, **Andy** wrote: "My preference for *TurboCon* I would be to emphasize things we did at summer camp – games, scavenger hunts, sing-a-longs, archery. Some kind of craft project, like a cover made entirely from Popsicle sticks. Campfire skits! Ghost Stories! Actually, in all seriousness, I would love to have a storytelling event like the ones **Elizabeth** attends – which could turn into a one-shot with a little editorial effort. // The more elements of the County Fair we can import for our weekend, the better. If locals were motivated to, say,

make a set of pies for consumption at the convention, I'd be very happy to test them all and award one the Roscoe Ribbon of Excellence. No, don't thank me: I always try to give back to those I left behind."

Turbo #449, November 2023 was almost devoid of *TurboCon* discussion. Only **Andy**, in *Captain Flashback #60* wrote on the topic in response to **Pat**. "Should *TurboCon* have a pre-determined Guest of Honor or should it choose one at random like Corflu? If we did, rather than making the GoH deliver a speech, I think they would have the right to elect any other convention attendee to make a presentation in their honor. It could be an homage or it could be a roast, depending on your choice of surrogate." Then, in a comment to **SteveSw**, **Andy** wrote: "I don't see banning you from *TurboCon* as a viable option, but I am attracted to the notion of fabricating a large conical dunce cap. I think I want to find some way to combine the concept of being banned with the concept of being a Guest of Honor. But these things seem to work best when assigned by random chance as in Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." Or I might take the NFFF approach and assign everyone who attends some sort of office – the Welcome Committee chair, Admiral of the Fleet, Mistress of Venomous Spiders. We could make everyone pick one from a bin.

Turbo #450, December 2023 including only one humorous suggestion by **SteveSw** who proposed an alternative Dealers's Room, with items sold from within an oversized coat.



Blizzard of January 12, 2024

