

Madison Foursquare

This issue of *Madison Foursquare* is brought to you by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll (layout/design and occasional contributor), who live at 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704. Scott@unionstreetdesign.com
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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Jeanne and I had a quiet holiday season this year. Since we were not doing much travelling to visit family or hosting any large gatherings, we both worked much of the time. I reported to my DOT office every day we were open over the holidays and Jeanne worked on some projects with clients who were moving ahead in spite of the season. The last couple years, we've spent this time going to movies we wanted to be sure not to miss. Likewise this year on Friday, 12/23, we finally saw, *Rogue One*. I can see where traditional Star Wars fans may have some issues with the frank departure from the old-time serial feel of the original films, and the move to much grittier, real-war type of story. My personal opinion is that it is long past time for Star Wars to evolve and I thought this was the best Star Wars film since the original three.

On Christmas night, we saw the wonderful, loopy, bittersweet *La La Land*. We both loved it. On Monday, December 26th we drove out to Milwaukee for dinner and a movie with Jeanne's brother Danny's family (movie fans, all of us). We saw the fabulous Disney animated *Moana*, which we were all bowled over by. It was just excellent.

Jeanne and I spent Christmas Eve driving around Madison doing our weekly shopping as the city began to close down around us. Later, Jeanne made a special Christmas menu (boneless leg-of-lamb roast and bourbon pecan pie) while we watched the special 2-hour Christmas episode of *Sense8*. Also over the holidays we worked our way through the next James S. A. Corey *Expanse* Series novel, *Babylon's Ashes*, by reading it aloud. Our goal was to finish in time for our first book discussion group meeting in January.

Earlier in December, we travelled to Eugene, OR for the second James Tiptree, Jr. Symposium celebrating Ursula K. LeGuin at the University of Oregon. We did not make as long a trip this time as we did last

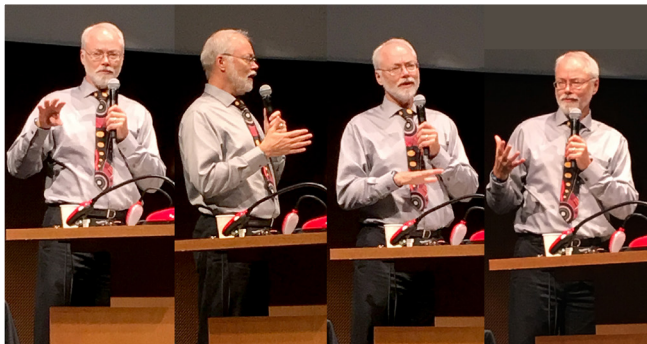
year. We were gone just 5 nights, all of it in Eugene. The weather was much more cooperative this year, cloudy but not much rain. I actually got a chance to do some more extensive walking around the neighborhood and campus. The event itself was excellent and included an all star panel on "Ursula K. LeGuin and the Field of Feminist Science Fiction" with Karen Joy Fowler, Suzy McKee Charnas, Vonda N. McIntyre, Debbie Notkin, Molly Gloss and Julie Philips (moderator).



LeGuin herself managed to make it for one day of the symposium. Also featured was a keynote speech and Q&A by Karen Joy Fowler and an extended trailer for the new documentary film *Worlds of Ursula K. LeGuin*. A reception was held in the Special Collections and University Archives which displayed many pieces of LeGuin memorabilia and photos. The second day of



the event included a presentation by Alexis Lothian, University of Maryland, on “Speculative Gender and *The Left Hand of Darkness*”, followed by a panel discussion “LeGuin’s Fiction as Inspiration for Activism” and another terrific keynote address by Brian Attebery “The James Tiptree Jr. Book Club: A Mitochondrial Theory of Literature.”



There was another party sponsored by the Tiptree Award in our hotel on Friday night, like we did last year. It was well attended and, I think, enjoyed by the academic types who don’t usually think about going to big parties at symposiums. We also enjoyed some very lovely meals out with friends. I may have had a few beers, too, including a delightful trip to Eugene’s very own Ninkasi Brewing Co. on our last full day in town.

It’s notable to mention that we flew out after work on Wednesday night from Madison. It worked out very well. Our flight was Madison to Salt Lake City and then on to Eugene. We had small airplanes with two across seating for us and nice, clean, small airports. The only adventure was weird taxi Karma in Eugene. Last year it was a long wait and an extended struggle to get a cab to pick us up in the pouring rain at the train station. This year, at the Eugene airport, we got to the taxi station to find that two taxis refused to take us because they were waiting for passengers who had reserved them from the plane, one taxi who was not speaking to

anyone, and one taxi driver who had locked herself out of her own cab. Eventually one of the other taxis realized his customers were not going to show up, so he took us. He was from Baltimore, it was his third night on the job, but he had GPS and insisted (unconvincingly) he knew how to get to campus.

Flying back was a bit more of an issue. We flew from Eugene to Seattle to board a much bigger plane for Minneapolis. But it snowed in Seattle and the wait to get our plane de-iced meant a three hour delay. By the time we got to Minneapolis, we missed our flight to Madison, but we could get on another one in 5 hours. Good thing we started traveling that day very early in the morning. We had a nice dinner in the Minneapolis airport, at least.

I am catching up briefly on some comments from October and November this month. Somehow I missed Karl’s email message that the Apa’s were done and I did not end up picking up the December issue until January 13th, so I have not begun to read it yet. My goal is to comment on December and January next month.

Comments on #364 ***Georgie Schnobrich***

Great Pumpkin Witch cover!

Walter Freitag

I miss signing up for the occasional 5K charity run. It’s been so long since I did much running that I think starting now would be too much stress on my joints, so I have been working on an elliptical machine instead. The lure of a competitive run is still with me. It’s fun to do these runs. Initially I just wanted to know if I could finish one ahead of anyone else, but then it got to be fun to really push and see how well I could do. Good luck.

Lisa Freitag

I enjoyed your writing on your travels and adventures. You made the trip sound a bit grueling at times, but I was a little envious of such a long drive around the country. It’s something Jeanne and I are looking forward to doing more of, when we retire.

Good for you for getting out to the protest. It can be a disorienting thing to be in the middle of a protest demonstration and begin wondering if all the people there along side you are really trying to say the same

thing you're trying to say. I remember a number of times during the big Act 10 demonstrations at the Capital coming across little protest groups who were with us in general, but had a way more crazy/paranoid view of the world than I had.

Our fledgling new theater company in Madison, Forward Theater, did *Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them* as one of their earliest productions. We missed it, sadly, so I enjoyed reading your summation of what we missed. We have become regular season ticket holders for Forward as their productions are reliably well done. I'm confident their version of *Why Torture is Wrong* would have been good, too. This sounds like the sort of play whose success and power depend especially heavily on how good the theater company is.

Andy Hooper

Delightful survey of Madison's boating history. I have never really learned to swim. I'm no longer particularly afraid of the water, just wary. I can dog-paddle and backstroke a bit, but I really have no business in deep water without a life jacket. I also grew bored early with fishing and have rarely gone. I like boats, but I have never had much interest in owning one. Beyond a couple boat rides across Lake Monona on Betty Lou dinner cruises, I have not been much involved in Madison's boating culture. I guess I prefer the lakes as priceless scenic backdrop, but your article reminds me that our lakes have been so much more important than that.

Catie Pfeifer

How are the third shift hours working out? Still doing it? I worked third shift for years and years and I can tell you that there are advantages and significant disadvantages. I personally don't think it's a healthy thing to do over the long term unless a person is willing to make serious changes in their lifestyle.

Kim and Kathi

Sounds like Farrell's was overextended and needed to regroup. That can be painful for the students. I hope they have gotten their house in order and are no longer in trouble. How has the carpooling worked out? Any ideas of what you will do if they end up closing?

Patrick Ijima-Washington

I liked Episode 15, especially the conclusion, as well as your brief tribute to director Robert Clouse. I'd never heard of him before. I also like your lovely sunset picture.

Jim Frenkel

Your moving saga has been a cautionary tale for all of us, I think. A project not to take on lightly. It was no trivial thing when you moved from the East coast to Wisconsin, so you guys have transplanted across the country twice. I'll bet you are hoping this is the last one.

Ruth Nichols

Your boorish condo neighbor story was a little scary. Any issues with this guy since then? Nice photos.

Clay Colwell

Congratulations on the new job. What a relief and the work sounds very interesting. I hope it is all working out well.

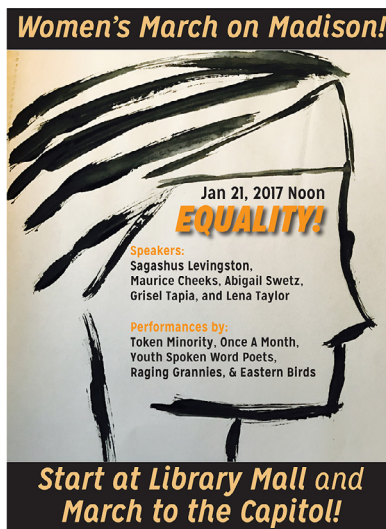
Comments on #365

Jim Hudson and Diane Martin

Very nice cover of the Rapid City, SD statues. I had no idea.

Marilyn Holt

I wanted to respond to your two heartfelt political essays in the October and November issues. Looking back now, on the eve of Trump's inauguration, the confusion and frustration we all felt two months ago seems almost quaint. He has not grown into a more serious person since the end of the campaign, and the lock the Republicans have on the Federal government is forcing us all in a direction we feel almost powerless to resist. I can hear your frustration with Democrats and Progressives, I feel some of that too. But we're going into this future whether we want to or not, so we should spend less time refighting the last war and get on to building a path back to power.



Jason Burnett

Congratulations on being accepted into the MA in Art History program. I agree that all three of those class choices sounded interesting. Which one did you go with?

Your non-fiction reading list was a great mashup of totally different stuff. What a great list.

Georgie Schnobrich

Thank you for the lovely travel report from two cities I have never visited. The one and only time, so far, we were in Ireland (1987) we were in Belfast and surrounding countryside. I'd love to return to Ireland. Also, liked the Lytheria pictures.

Greg Rihn

Awesome trip report. I just drank it up, having never been to Dublin or Paris, it was all great reading.

Steve Johnson

Who would have thought going into Trump's inauguration that we would all be talking about whether or not he is a Russian agent, or at least in their power? Or that he would refuse to truly divest himself of his company connections and continue to openly profit from his business ventures as he serves as President. Or that his cabinet choices would end up being their own Basket of Deplorables. Speculating on whether the Democrats and Trump might combine forces on some initiatives, as you did in November, seems almost funny now that Trump is denouncing both the intelligence community and civil rights hero, John L Lewis.

Andy Hooper

Thanks for your interesting article on more Madison clubs and organizations. Who would have guessed there were so many options of ways to socialize, do something productive and help your community? Tempting to wonder what club might have appealed to me in those days. I doubt I would have been happy as an Odd Fellow, but who could resist calling themselves a Druid, especially the Supreme Druid?

— Scott Custis, 1/16/2017



Ninkasi Brewing Co. art, Eugene OR



Eugene cuisine, food cart serving Ninkasi Brewing Co