

Madison FOURSQUARE

23

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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Nomination for Turbo membership

[SC] Jeanne and I would like to nominate poet, writer and local fan Jeannie Bergmann to join Turbo APA. I think she would fit in well with our current group of writers.

Covers

[SC] Awesome covers this month, Steve and Darlene. What a beautiful silk design, Darlene.

Greg Rihn

[JG] Enjoyed your reviews, as always. Scott and I have decided to wait to see *Avengers: Infinity War* until just before part 2 comes out. Won't have to worry about the cliff-hanger that way. I am expecting to join Georgie with a case of "combat fatigue" myself; most superhero films affect me that way. I hate hate hate the waste of time and plot on fights that by definition can resolve nothing. In fact I've begun skipping superhero movies that fail to get rave reviews for that reason. But we've invested enough time in the Avenger franchise, though we haven't seen them all, that I want to see the story that weaves their stories together. But I can wait.

[SC] Sorry about the misspelling of your name. I know that can be annoying. This is a good example of proofreading text while forgetting to look at the headlines. Since we are on the subject of halting spreading contagion, I'd like to point out to one and all that Jeanne and I are both writing in our zine. I am using the serif typeface, Jeanne the sans serif and we put our initials at the beginning of our respective comments [SC], [JG]. Thanks.

Your thorough comments on *Avengers: Infinity War* helped to solidify my preference for waiting to see it, at least until the second movie is released. For one thing, it's far too long at 2.5 hours to expect to remember what happened. We'd have to see it again before starting the second movie. Most importantly is the vast amount of time devoted to watching superheros bash each other. If Georgie was burned out by it, Jeanne certainly would be and my own threshold for endless fight scenes has been dwindling for years. So, best to just push the whole thing off and get around to it only if the

second movie has good reviews. Otherwise we can find lots of better options.

Very recently we saw *Invincibles 2*, which was great fun. One of the things that I was most impressed by for a superhero movie was how they handled the fight scenes. Instead of long sequences of opponents just bashing each other rather pointlessly, *Invincibles* had fight scenes where the characters seemed to only briefly exchange punches, then quickly switched to inventive uses of their powers to carry on the fight. Fights always seemed to be fast and frenetic, but not so boring, and usually focused on overcoming some bigger challenge that focused on their powers rather than just characters hammering each other back and forth. Maybe live action movies could learn from this approach.

Joe Leslie Adams

[SC] I thought of you Sunday (June 3) when Jeanne and I hung out for a couple hours at the first Central (now McPike) Park Session of the summer, the Pursuit of Happiness Festival. The Session series are benefit concerts for local non-profits. We saw a few bands. One called Feeding Leroy, a folk band from the Superior area, was very good. You should check them out if they're playing the Duluth area when you are visiting, if folk music is something you like.

Ruth Nichols

[JG] I'm a slacker of a gardener compared to almost everyone here in *Turbo*, but for the last few years I have been planting herbs and a few flowering plants in the thin strip of soil between the house and driveway, as well as filling giant blue ceramic pots on the front porch with colorful plants. (The cover image is an overhead view of one of those pots, with a bit of Photoshop finagling.) I don't weed enough, but my habit is to water everything when I come home in late afternoon from swimming laps at the YMCA. I've been just a little surprised that these plantings have mostly survived and look sort of nice.

Re your coronation as condo board president.... I have discovered that I have recovered somewhat from my most-of-a-lifetime tendency to volunteer for such things. I've been doing a little volunteering with our CHEW (Culinary History Enthusiasts of Wisconsin) group -- helping to organize appropriate snacks for each monthly meeting. But when asked to join the CHEW board, I said No without hesitation, and was sort of surprised by my immediately negative feeling about the opportunity. I guess experiences with WisCon have had farther-reaching effects than I expected. But that reminds me, YOU might like to attend a CHEW meeting sometime. We meet at the Goodman Center on the first Wednesday of the month. There's a members-only party in July and we skip August, but if you want, I could remind you about the September meeting, for which a topic hasn't been announced yet. But you can get more info about the group here: <http://www.chewwisconsin.com>



Thanks for the sourdough raisin bread recipe! I haven't baked bread in a couple months, but since I continue to feed my starter, I think it's time to make a couple loafs.

We liked the movie *Tully*, too. I was delighted to see the actress Mackenzie Davis again. I loved her character in *Halt and Catch Fire*.

[SC] Ruth, I always enjoy your *Fluff* pieces and poems. Re: weather, Jeanne and I were sitting outside at the aforementioned Pursuit of Happiness Fest in long pants, fleeces and hats. It was a little breezy but we were comfortable and I remember sipping my locally brewed craft beer and thinking back just one week to the Sunday of WisCon when temperatures soared into the mid-90s every day, and thought it was going to be the start of an absolutely beastly hot summer. As you put it, "God knows what will happen next."

When and how did you become president of the condo board, and what were you thinking?

I liked "Our Side" which alternated sublime images of stillness and beauty along the river with the ugly realities of life (the groping incident.)

Jim Nichols

[JG] Sorry to hear that you've been sick, but glad that you are planning to retire early! If the work isn't what you want to do anymore, and you can retire, then it's definitely time to do so.

[SC] Jim, I hope this is the end of your severe medical issues for long while. The rationale behind your decision to check out your retirement options sounds familiar to me and I hope a speedy departure can be arranged. It helps having fun things to look forward to in retirement.

Kim Nash

[JG] We have also been thinking of de-cluttering of late. Well since dealing with my mother's and sister's estates. Same as you: the experience of dealing with other people's stuff causes one to look at our own belongings and see it all as it will, eventually, be seen by those who take care of our estates.

Turns out that we will be with family on July 4th. My brother Steve and wife Linda will be back from Hong Kong and have invited the family to join them at their lake house.

[SC] It was great fun meeting up with you at the Malt Haus recently for the usual too many good beers. Sadly, we will not be able to make it to the July 4 party this year.

Steve Johnson

[JG] I love Darlene's starry horses artwork! Thanks for including it in your zine and on the cover. Gorgeous!

Julie Zachman

[JG] We are fans of all three TV shows you listed, *Walking Dead*, *The Expanse*, and *Killing Eve*. Happily, *The Expanse* was picked up by Amazon almost immediately after the SyFi channel cancelled it; I hear that it is one of Jeff Bezos' favorite shows. Yay! Too bad *Sense8* wasn't another of his faves. I loved *Killing Eve* right away: I love the writing and Sandra Oh (wow!). Another show that tickles the same taste buds for me is the brand new show, *Dietland*. As you say about *Killing Eve*: Just watch it. Apparently they started work on this series well before the #MeToo movement; it's coming at exactly the perfect time.

I've also done the "double dip." Make sure they give you adequate anesthesia; I woke up before they were actually done and it was not pleasant.

[SC] We appear to have closely overlapping tastes in television. Jeanne and I are also big fans of the three shows you listed. You have no doubt heard by now that *The Expanse* has been picked up by Amazon, and *Killing Eve* has been renewed. Break out the champagne!



We enjoyed our houseguest dog over the WisCon weekend. Nick, a rescue greyhound, came with our friend Elizabeth Matson. Nick could not manage stairs, so we arranged for Elizabeth to sleep downstairs in Jeanne's office on an inflatable mattress (which are pretty nice these days, the inexpensive one we got was really quite plush and came with its own electric pump). Nick was pretty excited by the change of venue and was quite affectionate with both of us but we all learned to play a good game of distraction with a peanut butter loaded toy so we could get out of the house when leaving Nick alone. He's used to being on his own back home when Elizabeth is at work, and Elizabeth came back to the house to visit with him once or twice during the day. The only other thing was if we got home later after Elizabeth went to bed, Nick would usually greet us right away and, if he did not get sufficient attention from us before we headed upstairs (and out-of-reach) for the night, he would stand at the bottom of the stairs and whine. Jeanne learned that all he needed was a bit more love.

Andy Hooper

[JG] Utterly fascinating bios of the Futurians. You brought them to life. Thank you. Yes, Kornbluth is one of those authors (like Jane Austen) whose work I'd like to see from an alternate universe in which they did not die at such a young age. And I keep thinking of how familiar John Michael's character is among many fans I've known. I love the idea that the exclusion of the Futurists at Nycon began the tradition that "the coolest people are always going to be found in the bar."

Thanks for reprinting that LoC from D. West. I wonder what the editor felt about it.

[SC] Re: your question to Jeanne about the Balestrieri crime family in Milwaukee, yes they ran Mafia operations in Milwaukee for many years, but the Chicago Outfit has largely taken over there ever since the death (by natural

causes) of the notorious boss Frank "Mr. Big" Balestrieri in 1993. Interestingly Frank's son, John, is currently serving the remaining gang as consigliere even though he has been disbarred since around 1984. More than you wanted to know, but still...

You succeeded in coming up with another absorbing installment of your NyCon series with the fans who were barred from attending. I look forward to any other related information you plan to share with us. They were certainly an interesting gang of rejected fans who ultimately ran the gamut from the great successes of Fred Pohl and Don Wolheim to the sad end for John Michel. I enjoyed all of it.

Jeanne: What's New

[JG] Scott and I went to see the Four Seasons Theater production of *1776* about the Continental Congress's debates in June-July 1776 on the Declaration of Independence. We've been fans of Four Seasons for many years, ever since we saw their very first production, *Ragtime: the Musical* in 2005. I'd seen that play once before in a traveling Broadway show at the Overture, but Four Seasons' singers were as good, if not better, than the Broadway cast. I've seen several different versions of *Ragtime* since then, all wonderful, but still remember how that I loved it for its gorgeous voices and beautiful stage, but also because it fell perfectly into my favorite kind of play: Great music + political elements: *Les Misérables*, *Hamilton*, *The Cradle Will Rock*, *Assassins*, *Sweeney Todd*, *West Side Story*, *South Pacific*, *Cabaret*, *Miss Saigon*, *Show Boat*, *Man of La Mancha*...you know, like that. So, of course we bought tickets to this Four Seasons production of *1776*, and were glad we had. The Four Seasons team discovers, nurtures, and trains local singers and actors through a remarkable system of tryouts, cabarets, workshops, and internships. A man sitting in front of us in the theater was applauding his granddaughter, the young actress, Maddie Uphoff, who played the role of the soldier/courier and sang one of the most achingly beautiful songs of the play, "Momma Look Sharp." Wow! I look forward to hearing her voice again when she stars in some future Four



Seasons production. We congratulated the man and his family during the intermission; he was certainly very proud of his musical family. In fact, he mentioned that his niece is Karen Olivo, who played Angelica in the Chicago production of *Hamilton*. (We are looking forward to seeing Olivo star in Forward Theater's musical production of *Fun Home*.) One of the interesting things about Four Seasons version of *1776* is that the major roles were all assigned to women: John Adams (while Adams' wife Abigail was played by a man), Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Hewes (the North Carolina representative who sings the chilling song about the South and North's complicity in slavery, "Molasses to Rum."), and of course the soldier/courier. At one point, the actress Clare Arena Haden, who played John Adams wearing a white pantsuit, removed her jacket to reveal a t-shirt emblazoned with the words "Nevertheless, She Persisted." There was a lot in the play that felt very current. Take these lyrics from "Cool Cool, Considerate Men," sung by John Dickinson, from Pennsylvania. I imagined Republicans singing in chorus from the contemporary congress.

*Come ye cool, cool conservative men
Our like may never ever been seen again
We have land, cash in hand
Self-command, future planned
Fortune thrives, society survives
In neatly ordered lives
With well-endowed wives*

*...
Come ye cool, cool considerate set
We'll dance together to the same minuet
To the right, ever to the right
Never to the left, forever to the right*

*Let our creed
Be never to exceed
Regulated speed
No matter what the need*

[JG] Other things...

(1) My cumulative lap swimming distance this week reached 309 miles, 2 miles more than the length of Lake Michigan. My next goal is Lake Superior's length, 350 miles. I should make it around the end of September.

(2) The Tiptree Award Space Babe Coloring Book sold well at WisCon, and I've even gotten a few requests from bookstores that want to carry it, and promises from a few reviewers to boost it. Cool. And I sold quite a few of the Space Babe color pieces, printed on glass, in the art show. Actually, I still have some pieces left. If anyone is interested, just let me know.

(3) I managed an on-line auction to benefit the Tiptree Award (May 15-June 16) ([https://](https://www.32auctions.com/TiptreeAward)



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www.32auctions.com/TiptreeAward). There were just 10 Tiptree-related items offered, and all but one received multiple bids. It was success; I was especially pleased that some of the folks who used to attend WisCon Tiptree auctions showed up for this one. I used an on-line auction tool, 32auctions, that is actually free for small numbers (less than 20) of items. The only outreach I did for it was through the Tiptree Facebook page, but that turned out to work really well. This may end up being a significant fund-raising tool for the Tiptree Award. If anyone is thinking of doing an on-line auction, I'd be glad to tell you more.

(4) Big news for Scott and me: I finally pulled the plug on my retirement. After discussing the process with an attorney, I decided to tell my clients first, rather than trying to sell the business before I contacted my clients. I told them my plan was to interview several Madison-area graphic designers and small design agencies with the purpose of finding a designer to buy my business. My main goal is to ensure that they will not be inconvenienced by my retirement. I told them I would be looking for a designer with skills that match or exceed my own, and one that has the flexibility to respond

to their future needs. I told them I'd be charging the new designer for my time to locate and extract the files and save them onto a hard drive. There are other options,

depending on whether they want to take possession of the files themselves or give them to a designer of their choice. But so far, everyone who has responded seems very happy about my proposal. Next step: to talk with some local designers and design agencies. My goal is to be mostly out of business by November. I'm going to keep doing work for Kafryn Lieder because her work comes at predictable times and is quite lucrative, and the income will pay for monthly subscription fees to the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Acrobat, etc) and computer upgrades. But this should be the end of late-night calls from clients who need something "yesterday!"

Jeane and Scott
June 18, 2018

