

Madison FOURSQUARE

25

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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Scott Custis [SC] and Jeanne Gomoll [JG]

September 2018 for *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #387.

Cover

[SC] Great covers this month, Patrick! I did not have much luck at the game because I have only seen one of the movies. The one I saw I really liked, *An American Werewolf in London*.

Greg Rihn

[JG] You asked about the woman who sang “Molasses to Rum” in the Four Seasons Theatre staging of *1776*. Her rendition was very powerful, very dark, but somewhat distracting because she had to shift keys several times.

Excellent thought experiments for what nuanced paths the “Killable Bodies” discussion might have taken. If only...

Also to **Andy**: Re the discussion about *Walking Dead*, I am very intrigued by the alternate sensibility being developed in its sister show, *Fear of the Walking Dead*. The original show explored and still explores the inherent inhumanity that is a part of all its characters. The newer show, i.e., the new writers this season, seem to be exploring the potential of humanity inherent in its characters, who are consciously choosing to help others. I wasn’t a big fan of the first couple seasons of *Fear*, but this year it has definitely caught my attention. Something different is happening with this show.

[SC] Maple Wood Lodge sounds very relaxing. How did you originally discover it? We have also enjoyed strolling around Mineral Point, which is well worth a visit. We both liked our visit to the Brewery Creek brewpub, but I don’t think we had sandwiches. We sometimes find ourselves in Spring Green before or after American Players Theater shows. I was impressed with Arcadia Books and Freddie Valentine’s restaurant (in an old bank, I think we managed to get seated in the old bank vault once.)

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I agree with you about the value of effort. I think the varying valuations that people put on doing work has something to do with the situation I found myself when working in Wisconsin’s Department of Natural Resources. I had several opportunities to advance, to climb the agency’s ladder, but all those opportunities would have resulted

in my no longer doing the work for which those offers of advancement were supposedly rewarding me. There was no possibility of recognition of my expanded skill set, no advancement to a higher level of artist. “Wanting to do the work” was viewed as an almost incomprehensible reason that I would turn down a higher paycheck, more power, and less hands-on work.

Andy Hooper

[JG] I really enjoyed your fine history of Mort Weisinger. Intermittantly through the essay, I recognized bits and pieces that I had heard before, but never realized were stories about the same person or how they all connected. What a guy. That he (and other comic book editors of his time) asked for stories based on cover work already purchased sort of reminds me of what seems to be the current equivalent: movie-makers who ask for screenplays based on special effects on hand.

“Truly, there were giant idiots in those days.” -- Andy Hooper. Deserves to be an interlineo. Or a museum diorama.

[SC] What an illuminating piece on a subject who made real accomplishments while being a titanic jerk, Mort Weisinger. I was a pretty big comic fan when I was a kid, which would have been during Weisinger’s time at DC comics and there is no doubt in my mind that Mort’s influence on Superman and other titles helped drive me to discover Marvel and instantly switch allegiance. Superman especially seemed so lame and the introduction of Super Boy and Krypto the Super Dog did not help. I used to watch reruns of the old *Adventures of Superman* series, but when the *Batman* TV show aired in the ‘60’s I was appalled. That was the last straw. I stopped buying DC comics and did not look back until the 1978 *Superman* movie came out.

Patrick Ijima-Washburn

[SC] Welcome back! I do not really share your fascination with manga and anime but I have enjoyed reading about it in your zines. Your piece on Leiji Matsumoto and your own history with the genre was very nicely done. I liked the image particularly of the old style passenger train travelling across the Universe in Galaxy Express 999. Cool artwork, too.

Kim & Kathi Nash

[JG] I hope both your health issues, diabetes and aneurisms, are controllable and/or transient!

There's nothing like acting as executor for someone's estate to make one conscious of the amount of stuff we ourselves own. I am gradually ramping up my downsizing activities.

Walter Freitag

[JG] Things recovered from a washing machine's innards: love it! We all know about how things go missing in sofas, but I would never have thought about washing machines. Now I am looking at ours with suspicious eyes.

Julie Zachman

[JG] Scott has been stopping at regular intervals to view the very slow destruction of the old DOT building. I had been hoping for more of an explosive, instantaneous implosion.

[SC] I really like your layout. I'm glad you ran the photos of the destruction of the old Hill Farms State Office building, my worksite for my last 21 years of state service. I did not move around much in the building. The entire time I spent on the 3rd floor, west end of the building in the corner facing Sheboygan Ave. I moved around within that corner of the building several times but somehow never managed to get near a window.

We recently finished watching the Australian TV series *Mystery Road*. It's a contemporary Western with Judy Davis as police officer Emma James so I was excited about it. It was not ground-breaking TV, but we enjoyed it. We have also been binge watching *Endeavour* on Masterpiece Theater. Now that we have seen all the *Lewis* and all the *Endeavours*, I suppose we should finally consider seeing the original *Inspector Morse* series, which we have never seen.

What's New

Craigslist story: scam averted

[JG] It all began when we decided to buy new dinnerware for our Christmas present to one another last December. We only just found the dishes we wanted, finally, which meant that it was time to sell the set of Fiestaware dishes to make room for the new stuff. Our old, 16-place settings of Fiestaware dishes showed some normal signs of wear: we'd used them for 20 years or so, after all. They were scratched but in decent shape. So I put them on Craigslist for \$250. Within minutes, we received an offer. Susan asked us to send an email to her mom about the dishes, so I did. Her mom, Jacqueline, replied right away saying she was definitely interested, but her hours as a nurse prevented her from coming over to look at the dishes. But she really wanted them and so, if we would remove the ad from Craigslist, she'd overnight a cashier's check to us for \$300, \$50 over the asking amount for our trouble. Before you say anything, we know NOW that we should have cut off contact right there, but we were

Jeanne and I both loved *New York 2149*, which we read for our book discussion group earlier this summer. It's one of my favorites by Stan Robinson. I did not tire of all the characters because they all brought so many interesting perspectives to the world he was describing.

Clifford Wind

[JG] Agreed. *Coco* is a lovely film.

And thanks for the description of the process of preparing chicken for sale. I look at a convention and can see how the various parts are planned and produced, but have never looked at a chicken breast on my plate and thought about how it got there. I like knowing the stories behind the things around me. Like how that hill was once a pile of dirt and rock pushed around by a glacier. So thank you for this story!

[SC] For not being a farmer, you sure do a lot of farmer-related things. Interesting description of the chicken processing operation which had its weird elements (thinking here about the plucking machine). A lot of hard, messy work. What did you mean by, "all for a food long ago fallen out of favor"? Chicken is out of favor? Also, interesting pictures.

Marilyn Holt

[JG] So sorry for you loss of such beautiful, loving dogs. And congratulations on the arrival of your new guardians!

I love "Fowl's Lamination"! Thank you.

[SC] Sorry to read about the passing of Rosie and Sawyer, both beautiful animals. It was also sad how the ducks responded to the loss prompting your lovely poem "Fowl's Lamination." I hope the new dogs work out.

Congratulations on the published story and also on the progress on your novels. Please let us know further developments.



unfamiliar with this particular scam, and it took us a little longer to catch on. Instead, we said wow, and OK; we offered to deliver the dishes to her ourselves. That's when things turned weird and we realized that we were being scammed. Jacqueline sent us instructions for SHIPPING the dishes to her via a SHIPPING AGENT. What??! Jacqueline said she was sending us a check for \$1600 (!) which we should cash, and then call her shipping agent to whom we would give \$1300. Aargh. Do people really fall for this? I guess they do. The check actually did arrive via FedEx, looking very shady, from Santa Clara, CA, though the check itself was a "New York Premier Wines, Inc." check with a totally silly note attached with fake legal jargon attesting to its authenticity. Wow. Neither Jacqueline or Susan made any attempt to reclaim the check when we told them not to contact us again.

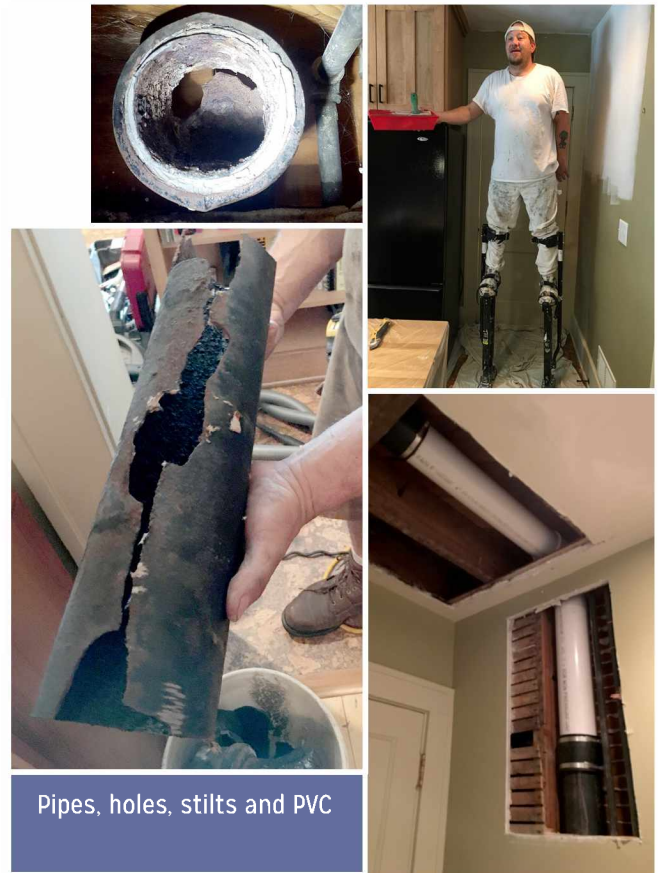
Home repair

[JG] This seems trivial compared to the uninsured flood damage that Jim and Diane and other Madison folks are dealing with, but it was moderately traumatic for us. On the morning of July 4 I was taking a shower. Scott and I planned to leave soon to celebrate the day with my brothers and their families at Steve's lake house in Oconomowoc. Scott was reading in the dining room when he heard water in the kitchen: there was a sort of waterfall steaming from one of the overhead lights. He ran upstairs expecting to find water overflowing from the shower onto the bathroom floor, but there was none. So...fast-forward through a bit of panic, turning off the water, and having to wait for emergency service till the next day ... Our contractor and plumber diagnosed that there was a crack, possibly a hair-thin crack, in the pipes *somewhere* below the bathroom, such that when the pipe got plugged up by *something*, the water backed up through the crack into the space above the kitchen, instead of the bathtub or toilet as would have been normal. Fast forward a month later: the very old, guilty pipes turned out to have developed enormous, gaping holes over the years. But they have now been removed and replaced with new PVC pipe. The holes in our kitchen ceiling and wall have been repaired and painted. Everything looks as good, or better, than ever. Sigh. I feel so grateful that we have such a good contractor to call on in emergencies like this and that we discovered the problem immediately. It could have been much worse. The next step is to submit the bill to our insurance company.

And now we have a new project: to replace some windows. Work on that will start next week. We had been hearing reports of neighborhood break-ins through basement windows and decided we could no longer put off replacing our decrepit windows. I am hoping this will be too boring a home-repair story to tell in this zine.

FB scam theory

[JG] We've encountered so many faked Facebook identities lately! I've never seen so many. I can think of 6 friends in



Pipes, holes, stilts and PVC

just the last couple weeks who've been hacked. I've notified Facebook about most of them. It seems like something is happening and I wonder if a truly massive number of pages are being hacked in an attempt to flush out a small percentage of them that won't be detected or reported. You know, folks who created a Facebook page, but then lost interest and never really kept it up. Folks who died and whose pages were never memorialized. I bet there are lots of pages that can be hijacked without anyone noticing or complaining. Anyway, here's my theory: that these hijacked pages are being bundled and sold to Russians and other hackers who want to use Facebook to promote fake news during the upcoming election, since their former pages have been closed by Facebook administrators.

Union Street Design sale update

[JG] My lawyer has drawn up a contract. The buyer of my company is having her lawyer look over the contract. We are very close to finishing this business. I'm still on track for actual retirement on November 1.

This month's covers

[JG] An impressionistic forest path (front cover) and in the Upsidedown (back cover).

Jeanne & Scott, September 2018

HOPE: *We second Garyn Roberts' nomination to Turbo membership*

KEEP SCOTT PRUITT MOIST

Best read aloud and kept in mind at Hugo-nominating time
By Alexandra Petri, July 5, *The Washington Post*

Scott Pruitt must have his moisturizing lotion.

Why?

Do not ask why.

Scott Pruitt appears to be a man with gray hair. He appears to be a man like other men, though he is charged, unlike other men, with the protection of the environment.

But he is letting the environment change, just slightly. Just enough for another creature to be quite comfortable – one with a hardy exoskeleton that thrives in warmth and darkness.

And Scott Pruitt must have his moisturizing lotion.

NOT THAT ONE! That is an ordinary lotion. The lotion Scott Pruitt requires is quite rare and available only at Ritz-Carlton hotels, and not even all Ritz-Carlton hotels. Hurry, we must drive. We must find the lotion. It must be absorbed into Scott Pruitt's pores. Its scent must travel around him. He must be entirely shrouded in its scent, like the Earth by carbon dioxide.

Is it urgent? What will happen if Scott Pruitt is not given his moisturizing lotion?

Have you seen what happens when you leave an earthworm in the sun on hot asphalt? Have you seen what happens to the things that live in a wetland when that swamp dries up? Have you seen a salamander who has been too long in a hot car? Have you seen a lobster without its shell?

Unrelatedly, we must find Scott Pruitt his lotion.

Scott Pruitt must be seated at the front of the plane, behind the little curtain. Perhaps a private jet would be better, all things considered. It would be safer. None must see what happens when he reaches 30,000 feet.

What will happen?

Nothing, nothing! Naturally.

But it might be good, all the same, if he had a secure door at his office, with a biometric seal. A door that only he may open, that will recognize him, even if –
Do not ask, "If what?" Drive! We must find the lotion. Scott Pruitt must be kept moist.

It is not that Scott Pruitt is beginning to assume a new and monstrous shape. It is of course nothing like that.

Scott Pruitt is trying to keep the Earth warm. As it becomes warmer, he will need more ointment and another mattress. In fact, he needs the mattress now. It is a very particular mattress. It could accommodate an enormous exoskeleton made entirely of cartilage. Scott Pruitt is certainly not terraforming the Earth to be warmer and stormier and filling the air with smog.

On an entirely different topic, Scott Pruitt must have a secure door that responds only to his touch.

The rectangular bottle in which the lotion is kept is dangerously low. And if Scott Pruitt does not have sufficient moisturizer –

And we must find Scott Pruitt a mattress. Not any mattress. One mattress in particular.

What is it that he needs them for? What will happen if he is not kept moist and his back is not properly supported?

Do not ask. Drive, drive!

He must have a soundproof phone booth in his office. No sound must escape this booth, not even the cracking of a hideous and enormous exoskeleton. Not even the sound of moisturizing lotion being frantically slathered on the creature within! Not even its bellowing – a bellowing too loathsome for human ears. We must keep him secure.

Drive, drive! Get the lotion!

And aides must pay for these hotel rooms. That much is clear. The taxpayer must not question. The taxpayer must understand that this is worthwhile. The taxpayer must know that some things are too terrible to behold.

Are you saying that if, for a single night, Scott Pruitt were not kept properly moist, with access to a mattress that meets certain exacting specifications, something terrible would befall us?

Think if they did not meet these specifications. Think what might emerge from that \$43,000 soundproof booth. Think what might escape that \$5,700 biometric lock. No, never mind, do not think of it. You must not think of it. You would go mad.

Drive, drive! Put on the flashing light on the motorcade, if you must! Drive, drive! Scott Pruitt must be kept moist. We must keep him moist at any cost.