

# Madison Foursquare

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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 2019 for *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #399.

## She's down for the count.

[JG] It was Thursday, September 12. Scott and I had just picked up our new prescription glasses that morning before he dropped me off at the YMCA. He would run a few more errands and then return to get me after my swim. I grabbed my duffle bag full of swimming stuff from the trunk, holding both duffle and half-filled can of diet coke with my left hand. Then I slung my purse over my shoulder, and dug into its pocket with my right hand to get my YMCA tag, in order to have it ready to be scanned at the front desk. What I did NOT do was pay any attention to the wide, yellow, warning stripe painted onto the step in front of the YMCA. So, when my toe struck the edge of the step, the rest of my body continued to move forward and, eventually, down. I didn't even scrape my hands because both of them were otherwise engaged. I went down, mostly, onto my right knee. Happily my new glasses did not fly off.

As some of you may recall, I've been having trouble with my left knee, and expect to have it replaced sometime later this year. Well, that bum left knee is now what I call, "my good knee."

Boy-o-boy, did it hurt. I turned over, sat on the concrete, and cried some, all the while holding my knee. Scott saw me suddenly disappear in his rear view mirror and ran out to see what had happened, and a YMCA staff person came out to help. I asked them to just let me sit there for a few moments as the initial pain ebbed, and then I began to bend my knees up. That's when the filet knife stabbed through my knee and I realized that I would need to be actually lifted up, that I wouldn't be able to put any weight at all onto my right leg. With an arm over Scott's and the YMCA guy's shoulders, I rose to standing on my left leg, sort of like a flamingo but way less graceful. Scott grabbed my cane from the trunk, and I was able to get to the car and collapse into the front seat.

We went home; I was convinced that I would get better quickly. But that didn't happen, so we drove to GHC Urgent Care where they x-rayed my leg and assured me that I had not broken anything. But because of the severe swelling, they couldn't tell yet, what I'd actually done. Ace bandages were wound around my knee. Pain meds were discussed.



That day and the next were sort of nightmarish. Climbing and descending steps was torture, but there is no avoiding steps in our house and no comfortable place to sleep other than our bedroom upstairs. I was very glad to still have the crutches from my previous hip replacements. So that was me, slide-hop-ouching around the house on crutches, never wanting to lift either foot off the floor. I learned how to climb steps with crutches, while never bending my right leg at all.

The pain ebbed more each day. The PT exercises helped. But I'm very conscious of how much slower I seem to be recovering than I would have when I was younger. And Scott is wonderful. He's even cooking with instructions pronounced from the next room. We had to skip the APT play last weekend, but I'm really hopeful that I will be

much more mobile next week. We're planning on attending the first collation party at Jim and Diane's house in a few days.

A couple days later: MRI results say that I have "an avulsion fracture with PCL origins." From what I can google, it looks like the solution will be surgical. Which explains why they want me to make an appointment with an Ortho doctor. It may be that we will discuss addressing all my knee problems at once, since I expected to need at least my left knee replaced this year. We will see. I had hoped to put off surgery till later in the fall, but those plans may not work out.

## Lisa Freitag

[SC] I was intrigued by how you were initially drawn to the anime music and then got so into it that you wanted to play it. Very cool!

## Jim Hudson & Diane Martin

[JG] Thanks for volunteering to be OE of *Turbo*!

All the dates you propose for your month of magic anniversary parties are open for us. Looking forward to the festivities!

Interesting insights into yourself about how you use gaming to feel "busy" and also to provide some limited presentation-as-woman time. I've recently taken note of a pattern in my

life around big, difficult events—deaths, job crises, WisCon and Tiptree upheavals—that have each time inspired me to launch myself into complicated, time-consuming projects. I think it's a healing and survival impulse. Oddly, romantic break-ups don't seem to inspire any creativity for me.

- Graduating from college (yes, it was traumatic. I really liked school and had no idea what I was going to do afterward)—I joined Madstf, began co-editing *Janus*, and soon thereafter signed on with WisCon and everything that followed.
- My Grandfather's death—I wrote a long story, observing my mom and her siblings during the months of Grandpa's decline, "I'm Over Here Gerhardt!"
- My brother Rick's death—I made a piece of art commemorating his memory, his love of Tolkien and a poem written by one of his close friends.
- Getting laid off from DNR—I started a new business, Union Street Design
- My parents deaths, and Scott's dad too—I created pieces of art commemorating their memories
- Resigning from WisCon and SF<sup>3</sup>—I wrote and designed *The Tiptree Quilt Story* book
- My sister Julie's death—I scanned and cleaned up some of Julie's very elaborate and striking doodles from the margins and covers of her journals and made small art pieces to give to attendees of her celebration of life. And then I dove into drawings for *The Space Babe Coloring Book*
- Vonda N. McIntyre's death—I dropped everything else and solicited memories and tributes, and designed the *Remembering Vonda* book
- The recent Tiptree situation—I am gathering writing and artwork for a publishing project of my own past work. In progress

Weirdly, I just recently noticed, for the first time, the connection between difficult events and making art.

[SC] Jim, thanks for the comments to me on the bike trails. You have been out that way more often than I have, but I'm looking forward to getting out there again before the end of the season. I will keep your suggestions in mind. I have taken only one brief bike ride around Lake Monona since my accident. When Jeanne fell on her knee I decided I did not want to leave her alone long enough for a big ride and I also decided I did not want to ride just yet without Jeanne being able to act as backup for me if I got in trouble out in the boondocks again (even a flat tire might be a problem if I'm too far out.) So, I will see what I can get in once Jeanne can drive again and before the cold blows in.

## Greg Rihn

[SC] Two events you wrote about last month made me particularly envious, first was getting to watch the passing

of the Union Pacific Engine 4014. I would have liked to see that. The second one both you and Georgie mentioned was the Moon Balloon event. So very cool.

Jeanne and I went to see *Give Me Liberty*, a movie made in Milwaukee by Kirill Mikhanovsky that we both liked. It's a comedy about a medical transport driver who risks his job to shuttle a group of rowdy seniors, a Russian boxer and some disabled clients around town in a mad dash to get everyone where they need to go on time. It's a movie with a lot of heart, a very different subject matter, an unconventional setting and a very diverse cast of characters mashed up together. Fun, funny, sometimes very frustrating and occasionally sad. Jeanne recognized some of the neighborhoods that flashed by. Not everyone will like it, but it's something completely different.

Re. your comment to me, thank you, but your old accident was worse than mine. You not only broke a bone, you had a concussion. FYI Greg, these days if you go into any medical facility with an injury that you explain was a "bike accident," every medical person you deal with will automatically ask you, "Were you wearing a helmet?" I was tempted once or twice to answer "no" just to see what would happen, but I was afraid I'd end up strapped into a CAT scan machine protesting that I was just kidding.

## Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I also feel like the State Fairs of yesteryear were much more fun than the ones I've gone to in recent years. And like you, I am not sure whether the main factor is the fair's changes or my own.

[SC] We are slipping into Fall now, my favorite season, but you are right that High Summer is a thing all its own with much to like about it. Out on neighborhood walks, I have been noticing occasional dead cicadas on the sidewalk which always give me a little thrill because big flying bugs freak me out more than spiders, snakes or most other crawly things. You are right about how the leaves change and the light seems different to me sometimes. I'm especially glad this year that High Summer did not turn into either a brutal heat wave or a weeks-long downpour and flood.

I would also like to see the answers to all the writing questions you asked Marilyn in your comment to her last month.



## Walter Freitag

[JG] I share some of your feelings about bucket lists. Like you, I've never kept one. My sister-in-law asked me recently what was on my bucket list, assuming that it would be mainly made up of places I wanted to visit, as is her list. I wish I'd had your phrase, "imminent opportunities" when she asked, because that is exactly how I feel about traveling. I stumbled a bit in answering her and said that the only list I could think of for things I hope to do in the future has to do with improvements on our house. That list started in 1989, when we bought our house. Though we've crossed a lot of things off it, we also keep adding things to it. I have come to think of our house as a lifetime art project. I had an epiphany a few months ago, after I sold my business. I've always disliked the idea of planning to do important things after retirement. It has always felt to me that if something is really important, one finds the time throughout ones life to do (at least) bits and pieces of it. That's how it works for me. If I wasn't able to give a project or experience a high enough priority before I retired, I give it really small odds that somehow, I will make time for it after retirement. However...and this is the epiphany...I found out after I retired that things I love doing pre-retirement, don't stop being things I love doing post-retirement. The change is less dramatic than I thought it would be.

[SC] I had never heard the term "bucket list" until someone made a movie about it a decade ago. Nice photos.

## Kim & Kathi Nash

[JG] We hope that Frugal Muse survives! We like meeting there once a month for our SF Without Borders Book Club meetings.

## Cathy Gilligan

[SC] Earlier this summer I took a ride out your way, down most of Troy Drive and around the Mendota Mental Health Institute campus. I had not been out to MMHI since I stopped working there in the summer of 1996. Troy Drive has changed a bit, but MMHI had not changed much at all and I was a little surprised I could still ride all around the campus with no new security restrictions. I rode right up to my old building, Goodland Hall, which used to be half medium security and half maximum security. From the outside, it looks like it might be all max. now. I also rode out to Governor's Island, which I don't think I'd ever been out to before. I rode home through Maple Bluff and finally saw the Wisconsin Governor's mansion for the first time. It was a nice day and a nice ride.

## Marilyn Holt

[SC] The passing of Andi Schechter is very sad news. Lately we have been watching the series *Longmire* on Netflix. It has been working as sort of comfort-TV for us. We both have both been escaping into it away from the world most evenings.

## Andy Hooper

[JG] I enjoyed "Travels with Freida," but was uncommonly absorbed by the story of your obsessive cleaning of the concrete, I think because the behavior is familiar to me. Finishing something, even though it may be only a small part of a larger task...can totally absorb me. Yeah.

Looks like I was one step ahead of you last month when I published one of my 1970s era stories in *Madison Foursquare*. Nevertheless, yes please, if you come across one of my pieces let me know and I will check to see if I have it. I've discovered that I saved hardcopy and computer files for quite a lot of my work, but I'm sure that I've lost some stuff.

Wow, what an amazing story from Bill Rotsler! "...a gay little adventure," not. And yeah, I hate to think how this story might have progressed these days with more powerful weapons available.

[SC] Your discovery of the Sonic Mole and Gopher Repellent System sounds like a good tip. I may look into it. We have only the occasional mole, but we do have rabbits and it would be lovely if it worked on them.

I also enjoyed "Travels with Freida." What good hosts you guys are. The addition of the daily step totals was helpful to me for putting the efforts of your activities into perspective.

## Patrick Ijima-Washburn

[SC] I really enjoyed your zine, however connecting your keyboard to your brain seems to have been a mixed blessing.

Jeanne & Scott  
September 2019



Fundraiser for breast cancer awareness..No comment