

Madison Foursquare



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]

October 2019 for *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #400!

[SC] Congratulations to one and all for keeping this enterprise going for $\frac{1}{3}$ of a century. Special kudos to **Andy Hooper** for starting us all down this path back in 1986. Woo Hoo!

[JG] Hazzah!

Greg Rihn

[SC] We also enjoyed the *Downton Abbey* movie as longtime fans of the series. I was talking to my sister on the phone the other day and she said she'd already seen the movie twice and was willing to see it a third time even though she'd never seen the TV series. She said her daughter was helping her get access to the TV series. I think she plans to savor them over the winter months. That answered the question I had about whether the movie would actually appeal to anyone who had not seen the series. Apparently the answer is yes. Thinking about the lavish production values of the movie, the clothes, the cars, the food, the lush sets and scenery, I tend to think of it as a sort of period porn. Pretty easy to get caught up in it, I guess.

One of the reasons I like trip reports is I often learn a few things through other peoples' travel experiences. We are also fans of Premium Economy on long flights. I liked your idea of shipping your bags to your hotel instead of checking them on the flight. Having lost checked bags twice on non-direct flights, I'm open to new ideas. I think I would be tempted to only ship the bags going out as I don't care as much if my bags are delayed on the trip home. I also hate the mad crush for overhead bin space on planes so I'm unlikely to try to squeeze all my stuff into a carryon bag.

Your Berlin itinerary was all very interesting and your willingness to use public transit when possible was something we also prefer. I'm looking forward to your comments on Prague. Jeanne and I have never travelled in Europe beyond Britain and Normandy.

Thank you for the offer to show us around to some small museums for a day trip. We will take you up on that when we are more physically up to it, perhaps next spring.

[JG] It was so nice to peek into the on-going life at Downton. As you wrote, Greg, there was much more of a sense with the movie, as opposed to the TV show, that life continued in an interesting manner. In fact, I find myself thinking about

how some of the characters will deal with not-so-distant events. I wonder if there will be another *Downton Abbey* produced after another ten years.

Your report about a rearranged Viking tour is the fourth such that I've heard in just a few years. A former co-worker of mine had her boat tour changed to a mostly bus tour because of *high* water levels. I am starting to wonder what percentage of European boat tours end up having to be re-scheduled because river levels are either too low or too high.

What a great trip report (part 1)! Thank you so much.

I am very sad about the change of Tiptree to Otherwise Award. I support the motherboard's decision, and believe that the award would have been fatally harmed if the motherboard had to deal with never-ending online attacks. But I won't be talking about either my own or other motherboard members' opinions. I've had my say within the motherboard's deliberations. Nevertheless, the joy is gone from working on the award for me.

I actually wore nothing but a very uncomfortable pair of heels beneath my graduation gown. Yup. I kept plucking at the front of my gown, to make sure that it wasn't clinging to me in too revealing a manner.

Steven Vincent Johnson

[JG] I totally agree with you about how a retiree does not necessarily find more spare time available than they had available before retiring. However I think it is true that retirement does mean that one has more control over how one's time is spent. My choices of projects seem to have replaced my pre-retirement full-time work, hour-for-hour. In fact, those self-chosen projects may actually gobble up *more* time than work-for-pay used to consume. I think I'm actually spending less time reading for pleasure than I did before I retired. But the critical thing is that I get to choose the projects and I get to decide when and how to work. It was not a good strategy (at least from my point of view) by the previous OEs to suggest that as retirees we "should..." I am allergic to "should" work these days.

Love the story of the UHA!

Jim Hudson and Diane Martin

[SC] Best wishes as always to Diane in her struggle with mysterious (and no doubt enormously frustrating) medical challenges. Thanks for the update.

I enjoyed your trip report. Reminded me a bit of our driving trip last year east to Vermont via Niagara-On-the-Lake and back home via Toronto and the north shoreline of Lake Huron. I know we saw *Man and Superman* once (without *Don Juan in Hell*) and liked it. I don't remember where we saw it, not at APT maybe it was our first trip to the Shaw Festival. Thanks for the tip on *Henry VIII*, I will resist the urge to see it if it ever comes around. When we are on a long drive we will usually rotate through either listening to an Audible book, or Jeanne reading a book aloud and listening to news and podcasts. If it gets late or we are getting tired I will put on some driving music. What do you guys do on long drives?

Congratulations on the anniversary and the celebrations. Though I know better than to see it a second time, I remember way back in 1979 being excited for, and reasonably satisfied with, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. Back then I guess I was inclined to like it from the start and I mostly did. I remember those long exterior Enterprise shots. I suppose back in the day, I considered them "stately."

Although we were very sad to miss *She Stoops to Conquer*, it has been a very good season at APT once again. Thanks as always for making it all work so well for the rest of us, Jim.

[JG] I'm so sorry that you are having to deal with all these mysterious but too real health issues, Diane.

Sounds like you found a good place to stay in Niagra-on-the-Lake! One of these years I'd like to go back again.

I wouldn't call our process of doing our apazines (comments first) to be the result of "organization," so much as conversational style. For me, doing comments first matches the way I prefer to converse with friends, one-on-one or in groups—going back and forth between listening and talking, with one comment sparking a response. Sometimes in the process of that back and forth, I may end up talking about what I have been up to. But other times the back-and-forth turns into a discussion of philosophy or ideas, or recollections. I figure I'll get to the what's-going-on part eventually. But the important thing in apas and perzines, for me, is the engagement with others. Not surprisingly, I value mailing comments. I guess updating folks on what I am doing tends to be secondary.

Andy Hooper

[SC] Thanks for the terrific comment, and new information for me, on my Dad and his P-38. To the best of my knowledge, he only ever flew missions alone as you surmised, though I think he went on a few training flights with new pilots but I don't know how that worked. I also

have no idea how my old man was able to scrunch himself into those cockpits which were not really designed for guys his height. He was skinny and wiry in those days. I should run a photo of him standing with his flight group. He towers over them. I should have quizzed him more about that along with a few million other things I wish now that I'd talked with him about.

I enjoyed your tour through historical societies around the country, a world I never knew existed but makes perfect sense once some thoughtful person points it out. I was also amused playing the game of looking through the available topics in the list of articles from the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* you included, and guessing which one I'd choose first vs. the one you actually chose. You surprised me a couple times by describing an article I was not initially interested in, but then convincing me otherwise.

But my favorite part of your zine was your childhood memories starting out in a Detroit suburb, moving to Morgantown, WV, on to Madison and then segueing into your interest in local history and discovery of the Museum of History. Very nicely done.

A year ago, in *Turbo* #388, I ran a list of *Turbo* apas I was ready to give to any current member who wanted them. If your missing issues are in these groups, I'd be happy to send them to you at my expense. The issues I have are:

- #139 to #219, January 1998 to September 2004
 - #72 to #98, June 1992 to August 1994
- EXCEPT for issues 75, 78 and 89.

[JG] Interesting: you and your family arrived in Madison less than a year before I started my junior year at UW-Madison. I visited the State Historical Society Museum more than a few times after moving here and have loved the place. Nevertheless I've learned more about the Society from reading your account here in *Turbo* than I ever picked up during my visits to the campus and Capitol Square buildings. Thank you Andy.

I visited the State Historical Society Museum most often to make use of their photographic and film archives.

I took a couple film classes in college, one on Federico Fellini, because he was my father's favorite director and I was curious. The Fellini class was most interesting for the way it followed an artist's evolution over time. The class didn't inspire me to share Dad's love for Fellini though. I now think that Dad's feelings stemmed from a particularly romantic chapter in his life when he first saw a Fellini film. The class did, however, inspire in me a life-long love for the music of Ennio Morricone. But the *other* film course I took in college focused totally on Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane*. It was a small class and each of us wrote a paper on one aspect of the film that we had to support and document through a frame-by-frame examination of the film, using a special desk projector that can be advanced one frame at a time. I chose to examine it as a piece of literature. It was a really interesting experience. And I did my frame-by-frame work at

the museum. So now, whenever I see scenes from *Citizen Kane* or think about it, the image is accompanied by the particularly musty odor of a certain room in the museum.

But I visited the place most frequently in order to browse through the museum's Madison photo archives, and sometimes purchased prints from the museum that I used for jobs, for gifts, or just to frame and hang on my walls. What an amazing resource.

I've also designed a book for the Wisconsin Historical Society Press—*Every Root an Anchor: Wisconsin's Famous and Historical Trees*, by R. Bruce Allison.

So...if Scott and I wanted to share our *Turbozines* as you do your *Captain Flashbacks*, on efanzines.com, how would we go about it?

By the way, I DID show up at my high school reunion, and it was OK. Best part is that I connected with someone I don't even recall knowing in high school, and we may end up visiting in the future. But for the most part, organizing the profiles before the reunion may have been the highlight.

Our book discussion group, "Science Fiction Without Borders," met at Frugal Muse's new digs and the place is just lovely. It is far more welcoming and actually seems larger than the store on Mineral Point Road. Yay!

I think your chronological list of OEs still has errors. You missed the short reign of Jerome Van Epps in your listing. And in reading our past *Turbo* zines, I noticed that **Kim Nash** was OE when Scott and I first became members. (And I think he came back for a second term, just before **Hope** and **Karl** took over). There was quite a bit of controversy during his first term around the issue of how new members were added and whether joint memberships should be allowed. Dick Russell weighed in with enormous and complex amendments (including that the rules page be re-named the constitution) which were batted away by most of us. It seems as though Kim may have thrown the reigns away in disgust before Tracy took over. On other matters—deadlines and covers—I responded to OE, **Kim Nash** like this:

The new deadline rule is fine with me. We all profit by an honest forecast of the probable collation date, rather than the same date every month that may or may not be a convenient time to do the bindery work. On the other matter—the \$10 annual fee assessment [to cover AFA covers]—I am not in agreement, and I hereby cast my one-half vote against the proposal. I think that some people already feel too much of an economic pinch in publishing their zine and in some cases, paying for postage. Covers should be paid for by the people producing the covers, which can be as elaborate as the creator wants.

Union Street #14, for Turbo-Charged Party Animal apa #54, December 2000

Which is ironic in the extreme, because the reference to the deadline date change echos my proposal of just a few months ago.

Thanks much for printing Jerry Kaufman's "Necessary to Invent."

Marilyn Holt

[SC] You, **Greg** and **Jim Hudson** all commented on the Tiptree Award name-change decision in this issue of *Turbo*. I have been refraining from writing about it publicly because I am too close to internal motherboard workings to be able to be completely candid. But I get the anger and frustration you and **Greg** expressed. Although I also disagreed with the name-change decision, I know the process of arriving at that decision was complicated. My feeling now is mostly just sadness and disappointment.

[JG] FYI, Jeff Smith who serves on the Motherboard with me and who was close to Ali and became executor of her professional papers after her death, says that Ting did not suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's. I do not mean to argue with your feelings about the award's name change or the dishonor done to Sheldon/Tiptree. I just want to correct the record. Jeff is particularly upset for the memory of his dear friend, that this false idea has once again become widespread.

Jae Leslie Adams

[SC] **Andy**'s official list of past *Turbo* OE's seems to still need a couple names added, Jerome Van Epps and **Kim Nash**. I don't currently recall Jerome's tenure, but I took over from Tracy and **Kim** directly followed me. And according to your research, **Hope** and **Karl** have been *Turbo* wranglers for more than 15 years. Longer than I'd even guessed.

It was too bad we did not get to talk after APT's *The Book of Will*, which Jeanne and I both enjoyed. After the show ended we elected to take an easier route out of the theater to the shuttle bus by mostly avoiding the stairs. I caught up with **Jim** and **Diane** and Barb on my walk down the hill, but missed you and Jon. I'm curious what you thought of the show.

[JG] I loved the idea of commenting on a long-past zine. I am feeling the urge now and then to do the same as I gather my past writing, including stuff from apazines.

Jeannie Bergmann

[SC] "Long Time No See" was creepy and perfect, thanks for sharing it.

[JG] After reading your poem I suspect that you and I have similarly conflicted feelings about our mothers.

Ruth and Jim Nichols

[SC] Thank you for the complement on our comments. I always start out doing the apa by reading it and making comments, it's what gets me motivated. Anything else I write for the apa comes after that part is done.

Regarding the barber shop photo, I like it too. I think the guy in the chair was starting to get a shave when the photo was taken. My guess is that's shaving cream on his face, not a towel. The barber next to him has a tool in his right hand, but it doesn't look like a razor. Maybe he folded it before the picture was shot so it wouldn't look so creepy (like he was about to do a Sweeney Todd on the customer in the chair.) I'm going to take this picture to our next cousins' lunch in Iowa and see if any of my older cousins can tell me more about it.

It sounds like you and Jim had way too much medical excitement last month. I hope you have a wonderful time at the lodge overlooking the Mississippi.

[JG] Hawks View Cottages sounds lovely. I am looking forward to photos.

What's New?

[JG] New iPhone! It is Way Cool.

We had to skip our annual summer trip up to Door County because of my stupid knee injury. Nevertheless, my brother Dan and his wife Kelly went and sadistically sent us a photo showing us what we were missing. (Photo, below)

I have mostly recovered from my September fall and the resulting avulsion fracture of my right knee. I've graduated from crutches to cane, to nothing at all, at least around the house. I'm back to swimming my mile of laps three times a week at the YMCA. "Then why do you still need surgery?" asks my brother Steve who may not have been paying close attention. "Because," I answer, "I've lost all the cartilage in

both knees. It's basically bone grinding on bone. So I will have to get both knees replaced." Steve replied with a sad face. Well, it was on Facebook. Surgery is scheduled on one knee, my choice (depending on which is in worse shape), for the day before Thanksgiving next month. Second knee surgery TBD. There are things I need to take care of before then, but I find my mind gliding around those things as it attempts not to think about it much. I'm going to need to focus pretty soon.

The Tiptree-renaming stuff has been very upsetting. Add to that, friends' Jane Hawkins and Terry Garey's serious health issues, well, it's been a bad couple of months. But I am doing what I frequently do during times of loss and stress, I do something creative that takes my mind off the bad thing and engages it in an interesting, all-consuming project. So this time I seem to have done a really deep dive into my archives.

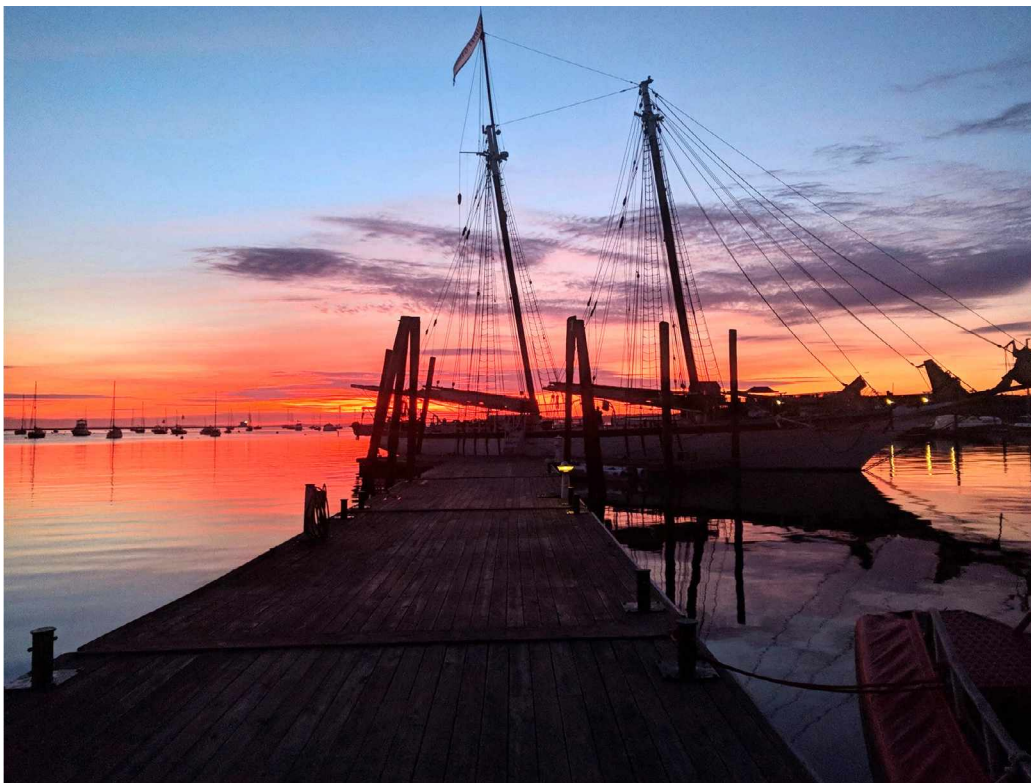
I've transcribed 4 of 6 dvd audio tapes (converted from mini-cassettes, taped in England during my TAFF trip.) So there's that. I think there will be a very belated TAFF report.

And...

I stopped writing a formal journal after graduating from college and have no doubt mentioned off and on that I abandoned journal-writing after that. But in fact, I *have* kept a journal of sorts through nearly my whole life—in the form of perzines, apazines, essays for fanzines, etc. For many years, I wrote one or two essays every month for apazines. Stitched together, essays from those publications reveal a picaresque memoir. I have found essays and stories and articles in *Janus*, *Aurora*, *Whimsey*, fanzines published by other faneds, a few other odd places, and of course, the apazines—*Obsessions*, *Allargando*, *Grayscale*, *Union Street*,

Jornada Post, and *Madison Foresquare*. I am finding an enormous amount of stuff, written and drawn. Quite a journey. It's going to take a long time to go through it all and decide what I want to keep/preserve. More than a year, I expect. Debbie Notkin wants to help me edit it.

Here's a sample of one of my long-out-of-print essays from and about the Madison and Minneapolis SF Groups' Olden Days.





The Madison Science Fiction Group (Madstf) circa 1979.
Art by Jeanne Gomoll

“I Was a Sercon Spy for Madstf”

by Jeanne Gomoll, originally published in *Rune* #57, 1979 (uncertain. Andy, can you help identify the issue?)

It was a foggy, cold 3:00AM in Madison, Wisconsin. I peered tiredly through the cab window with little interest at the deserted streets I so seldom saw at that hour of the morning. The cab swam through the swirls of mist and pulled up into a yellow glow that marked the entrance to the Greyhound station. A half hour later I was sitting in a northbound bus watching the ominous shapes of dark Dells bluffs chase past the windows, and I considered my mission.

It was a dirty business, but somebody had to do it.

Somebody had to infiltrate into the society of the Minnstfers, had to find out all we could about their absurd (or fiendish?) plans for a convention in '73, had to crack the Bozo Bus enclave...had to do all this before the silly Minnstfers took over the entire Midwest and made Wisconsin unsafe (or too funny) for serconicity!

“Be careful, Jeanne,” I had been warned. “Remember the Martian jokes? the lapses of giggling? the borderline ‘jokes’ you slip into *Janus*? We are worried that you might be susceptible to the contagious Minnstf silliness ...that you might succumb and lose faith with serconicity.” Indeed, it was difficult to convince the stern masters of Madcity fandom to let me make the necessary trip to Minneapolis. But in the end, the urgency of the mission...and an *I Ching* reading which foretold my nomination as best *serious artist* in the FAAns prevailed upon my comrades to approve my mission.

Would I succeed in my mission to unveil the workings of the Minnstf conspiracy? I nervously licked my dry lips. Or would I indeed succumb and (like John Bartelt) forget my beloved sercon homeland? Only time would tell. The rising sun was relieving the foreboding aspects from the wintery landscape outside, and I calmed myself by performing a warm-up sercon yoga exercise. I contemplated the significant Grail imagery in the film *Close Encounters of a Third Kind*, and as I felt the tide of sercon righteousness rising within me, began to make notes comparing Ian Watson’s and Arthur C. Clarke’s conceptions of quantum leaps in human intelligence. As the bus pulled into the Minneapolis station, I was confident and eager to begin my infiltration.

Carol Kennedy, Lee Pelton and John Bartelt met me at the station and drove me to a nearby pancake restaurant where we ate breakfast and exchanged silliness. My disguise held remarkably well. They never suspected me, for I made not one reference to Russ or Delany, and chuckled and laughed appropriately through the whole conversation. Carol and Lee took turns describing the humorous antics of the MiniCon planners, and John delighted in tempting me to join an anti-cat program to be held at the up-coming con.

I listened carefully to all three of them because the subject of MiniCon was of crucial concern to all of us back in Madcity, and I personally had developed a theory concerning the corrupting role of cats in the Minnstf phenomenon. All the while grinning, I listened carefully for any hints that John’s disgust for cats was less persistent than it had been when he lived in Madcity. John was a particularly tragic example of the contagious effects of Minnstf silliness, and since moving north he had lost much of his sercon heritage; indeed, were it not for his continued scholarly attention to the works of John Varley, we would fear him lost to us for good. I suspected that cats—perhaps alien parasites disguised as cats—were to blame for this dreadful conversion of my friend, but John betrayed no change in his old contempt for cats, suggesting at one point that if cat-lovers loved kittens so much, they would be advised to preserve them in Lucite. He smirked as he told me of a photograph he’d arranged for, showing a police detective checking out the chalk outline of a cat on a city sidewalk.

If cats were at the bottom of the Minnstf conspiracy, they were diabolically clever felines, but I began to have my doubts. However, just to make sure, I performed the fool-proof cat wrapping test, developed by Madcity’s **Diane Martin** to demonstrate the innate dumbness of cats. No alien cat, of course, would test positive in this test as all Madcity cats did. And so immediately upon stepping into Carol and Lee’s apartment, where I would be staying that weekend, I grabbed a nearby black cat and wrapped it with my long woolen scarf.

Wrapping a cat simply involves winding a cat’s mid-section securely (though not painfully) with several layers of some

long piece of cloth or scarf. Be careful to leave all the legs free. Experience (14 out of 14 cats so far!) has shown us that upon being set down on the floor in such a condition (or on a shelf if you are feeling sadistic), cats will momentarily appear stunned and disoriented, and then will invariably fall over sideways. Thump. Then, if they can rid themselves of the cat wrappings, they will scurry away unable to disguise their terrible embarrassment. But they will do the same thing every time you wrap them! Beyond the aforesaid low feline intelligence quotient, no scientific explanation has been advanced to adequately explain this phenomenon.

Carol and Lee's cat was no alien at all; it fell right over.

And so I rejected the alien cat hypothesis in connection with the Minnstf Midwest takeover conspiracy. Even though I was soon to learn the incredible truth about the essential "Minnstfania" as I came to call it, I momentarily reconsidered my alien cat theory. For the diabolical cat had taken its repulsive revenge upon the bed in which I was scheduled to sleep that night. "John," I said, "what do you want from me for that anti-cat program?"

Later in the day, Carol, Lee, John and I drove to the regular Saturday Minnstf meeting. Since traveling always induces reveries in me, and are handy devices with which to introduce flashbacks into the narrative, I recalled the reasons for this undercover intelligence mission deep into the heart of Minnstf country.

Madstf, Madcity's fan group, had been in existence for nearly four years. We'd gone from a small group of 10 or so members that used to meet weekly down in the basement of the now defunct Madison Book Co-Op to a modestly sized organization that continued to meet weekly (at a local bar, Nick's on State Street) and also controlled a vast number of complex enterprises. We'd incorporated as the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction (thus SFSFSF...or SF³), published the Hugo-nominated sercon genzine, *Janus* and, sporadically published several other zines as well, and produced WisCon each year (the fourth will be held in March 1980), a convention with a decidedly sercon and feminist reputation. Not only that, but the fan group in Madcity had never disowned its ties to science fiction, and every month group members took turns producing an advertised program which spotlighted some SF author, theme or related topic, and took place in the University Student Union. As if that wasn't enough blatant serconicity, various sub-groups were involved with another monthly reading/discussion group, the Book-of-the-Month-Club, and a weekly radio SF and Fantasy show on WORT-FM. Many group members put more energy into production of several cable-cast media presentations and it seemed every time I finished another book there was another major project being developed.

We had one major problem: there never seemed enough of us. We'd forgotten what "spare time" was; we thought of our mundane jobs as places to relax from the hectic pace set by our fannish activities. And only a pitifully small number of

curious people who walked into a Madstf meeting stayed on as active members to relieve our sleepless schedules.

Minnstf, on the other hand, claimed a membership that we truly envied. How did they do it? Were Madcity fans imminently in danger of encroachment by the Minnstf expansion? Or, could we learn their secret before it was too late?

Various Madstfians hypothesized that the answer lay in secret rites conducted at MiniCon. Others, hysterical about the Minnicon in '73 party held at this year's WisCon, pointed fearfully at the mysterious and classified ingredients of "blog." These members suspected an addictive effect, and warned me against tasting any of the substance should I be offered a drink in Minneapolis. Still other factions critiqued, analyzed and diagramed sentences contained in the Minnstf journal, *Rune*, but no hypnotic propaganda could be discerned, even through a rigorous structural analysis of Pelton and Kennedy's editorials. Ken Fletcher's hand-stenciled illustrations were, however, still under examination.

And so, as Lee, John, Carol and I stumbled and slipped our precarious ways across the ice and snow-cruised walks to the house where that Saturday's Minnstf meeting was to take place, I grew nervous, anticipating the imminent revelation of supernatural rites or even a mass hypnosis session. Indeed, I felt myself losing my self-possession. Frantically I calmed myself by reciting the Sercon Creed ("I believe in one genre, science fiction almighty, creator of fiction and film, and of all change, imaginary and actual..."). And as we proceeded into the living room, I'd begun to regain control of myself, chanting the names of new wave science fiction authors.

Through the early part of the Minnstf meeting, I discovered no clues. There were a lot of weird things going on...but no clues. Or so I thought. Later the whole picture would fall into place.

Denny Lien was handing out mimeographed guidelines for an uncommonly rigorous University program. And while this semblance of sercon activity, plus another positive cat-wrapping test) at first reassured me, I was soon to witness a series of characteristically silly Minnstf activities and characters. Kathy Marshall, looking deceptively normal, displayed two original drawings of the "Knights who say 'Ook! Ook!'" Ken Fletcher's visage, on the other hand, deceived me not at all, and later in the evening he drew an imaginary scene from Madstf history—"Madstfians Discover Mimeography"—showing members of our group crowded, amazed, around a table, and one of us holding a mimeograph machine overhead, having just made a block-print (or machine-print?) impression with it on a piece of paper. (We, of course, are True Believers of Offset Printing.) *Quinapalus* editor, M. K. Digre, walked around with a characteristic editorial gleam in his eyes and somehow by the end of the evening, I'd found that I had succumbed to that gleam and promised to do a cover for the next

Quinapalus. My own powerful characteristic editorial gleam had not been strong enough to counteract Digre's.

This coup might have driven me to distraction with worry, but by the time Digre had assigned me the cover, I had already discovered the Truth about Minnstf. By that time, sitting against the living room wall, drawing with Ken Fletcher (on a piece that would eventually become the cover for John Bartelt's *Digressions*), talking with Ken, John and M.K., and listening to the energetic singing going on in the other part of the room, I was simply enjoying myself. Pardon me, but by that time, I would have said "to hell with serconicity!" if someone had suggested I was perhaps taking the necessity for disguise a bit too far.

* * *

Later, at the de-briefing in Madcity, I recapitulated my deductions for my comrades.

Through the course of my stay with Carol Kennedy and Lee Pelton, editors of *Rune*, I'd found their obsessions for address-, art work-, and article-collecting no different than mine and Jan Bogstad's. I'd watched carefully and noted their familiar addiction to hits of mail. Having missed a day's mail myself, I was a bit edgy, but Lee had kindly handed me a copy of *Fanzine Fanatique* to open and that helped a little.

I found John Bartelt not at all "lost" to serious pursuits. He was, in fact, actively engaged in writing for various popular science publications, as well as for the many Minneapolis fanzines. *Digressions* 4, in progress, was planned to include his Varley interview and research. It seemed that Minnstf silliness had simply animated a tendency in John long dormant, or at least not energetically encouraged in Madcity.

And so, concluding that much of Minnstf activity was just as obsessive as Madstf's, that many of its members were as complex and personable as my fannish friends in Madcity, I was still left with the question concerning the difference in recruiting potential of the two groups. After discarding the alien cat hypothesis, I had wondered if the Minnstf BNF's David Emerson and Jim Young, who were curiously avoiding that particular Minnstf meeting, were behind it all. Or perhaps I simply hadn't met enough of the vast and disparate group that coordinated Minicon. Momentarily I despaired. Would I return to Madcity with no answer?

But then it began.

The meeting was called to order by Nate Bucklin. "Attention!" he yelled. "Attention! This meeting will come to order!" The immediate response of the 35 or so people in the room was: "Run away! Run away!"

Forcibly, Nate pressed the urgent business of nominations for the Minnstf Board of Directors through in a matter of moments. The mob would have stood for no more than that. Their mood was ugly and not to be provoked. Later, John told me that this Minnstf meeting had done a lot more official business than was usual, probably because of the impending MiniCon.

At that point, I flashed back to a recent phone call with Lee Pelton. Asking him how he'd been, he replied that it had been a slow week. There hadn't been parties on a couple of the days.

It all fell into place. This was a *party!*

Minnstf meetings tend inevitably to deteriorate into parties. (No wonder I'd been getting strange glances at my insistence at calling the gathering a "meeting!") In Madcity, on the other hand, parties tend to deteriorate into meetings! It is a process as invariable as a wrapped cat falling over.

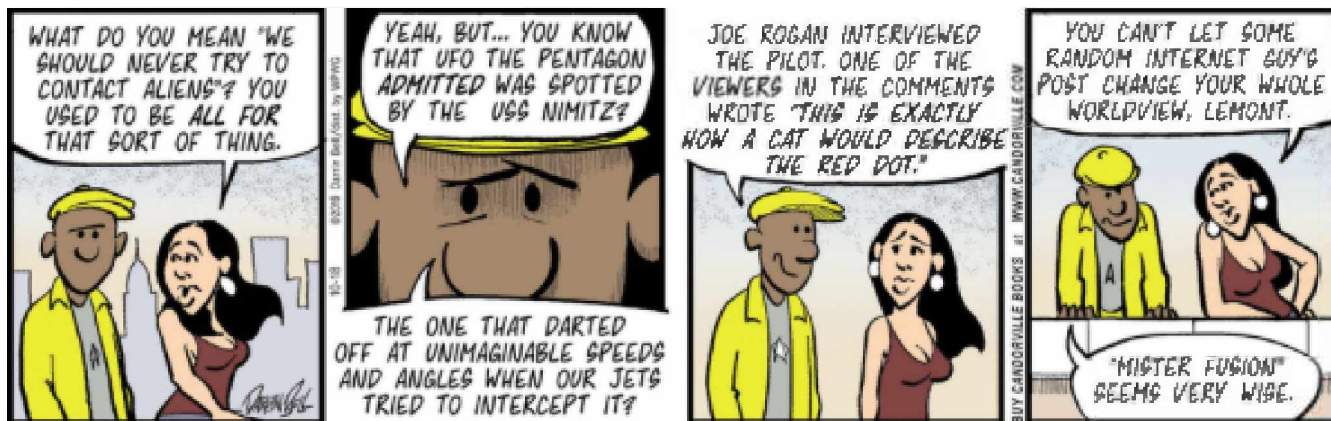
In Minneapolis, work and friendships both are based and reinforced by frequent partying. In Madcity, friendships develop through mutual involvement in projects that we have little compunction against referring to as "work."

That we've re-discovered a positive meaning for that word is perhaps one of the extraordinary achievements of the Madstf group...but is also, perhaps, a scary thing for many newcomers to our group. It's as if we are greeting them saying, "Renounce all your worldly goods, affections and most of all, your spare time, all Ye who would join this group!" Things are sometimes carried to a bit of an extreme when meetings gobble more time than the actual projects, but we seem to be able to recognize those extreme instances and compensate. And so too do Minnstfians individually recognize the extremes of their own party-dominated activities. Support groups within the large group seem to have been formed that aid members to achieve professional goals (such as the groups within Minnstf seriously attempting to work as musicians, artists and writers). Additionally, through a superbly-functioning group delegation-of-work process, committees of interested Minnstfians capably handle the MiniCon and publication of *Rune*, etc.

No, I assured my comrades in Madstf, we are not in danger of encroachment. Our two ideologies are probably quite compatible, though certain personality types will inevitably be more attracted to one than the other of our fannish styles, and make enclaves of partyers or fanatic workers in the encampment of the opposite should they be forced to live among them for one mundane reason or another. And indeed that process is already apparent in the convention programming of both WisCon and MiniCon, with this year's WisCon evidencing signs of boziness ("The Madison Parade of Cats") and this year's MiniCon expanding their program offerings to include more sercon attractions.

Still, there are doubters in Madstf who regard me with suspicion, asking whether I drank any blog after all. Or they ask if my "serious artist" nomination is not due to the actual solemnity of my drawings, but rather to the nominators' assumption that feminists have no sense of humor, thus casting aspersions on my true adherence to serconicity.

I wonder about that myself sometimes.



No rational person would do this. From Facebook.



My favorite side-of-the-house plant this year—some sort of coleus, I think. Continuous color!



That's all, folks. Happy 400th!
Jeanne & Scott, October 2019