

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]

March 2020 for *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #405.

What's New

[JG] Scott has called in absent for this issue. So it's just me, Jeanne.

We're getting ready to drive down to College Station, Texas to attend Corflu. By the time you read this, we will either have returned from that trip or cancelled our plans.

Of course there's uncertainty everywhere and will be for a long time, lasting until the science of the virus is understood. But there is virtually NO testing being done in the US (North America?) at all. Just as a hot spot was revealed in Seattle in early March, it's probable that there are more hotspots in other parts of the country/continent. People may be catching the virus all around us here in Madison, but we won't know until pneumonia cases spike in area hospitals. I am just getting over a bad cold, but if I wanted to be tested, I don't think I could get one. In the meantime, medical care workers are no doubt being exposed in various places around the country and precisely when and where they will be most needed, it will turn out that many of them will have gotten sick. Through active, stupid neglect by federal health authorities, we are in danger of creating another Wuhan situation in this country.

So...on March 11, Scott and I are planning to drive down to Texas in order to attend Corflu and show off copies of TAFForensic Report. We already cancelled a 3-day detour to New Orleans on our way to College Station, Texas, on the theory that visiting a town in which thousands of folks from all over the world had just gotten together to do a week-long party (Mardi Gras), might not be the smartest idea. We're

driving, not flying, but most of the folks attending will likely be planning to take planes. It's possible that many people are reconsidering and it's also possible the whole conference could be cancelled. We will see.



As it turned out, we carried through on our plans and did drive down to College Station, Texas. The drive south involved two very long days in the car and another two very long days back home. But Scott and I enjoy traveling together, we were eager to do a roadtrip with our new car, and the idea of getting to Corflu via car was certainly more attractive than flying.

Only 33 people attended Corflu 37 and together with another handful of people booked into the hotel to attend a firefighter's training course, we rattled around in the very big Hilton College Station and Conference Center like a New Year's Eve noisemaker that's lost most of its pellets. The Hilton boasts 27,000 square feet of meeting space—exactly the same amount as Madison's Concourse Hotel. The Hilton has 330 sleeping rooms compared to the Concourse's 373 sleeping rooms. The Hilton offers "cabana rooms" overlooking the pool, which are employed very much like the Concourse's 6th floor parlors; that's where Corflu's hospitality room was located. The wide first floor hallways always seemed empty, the elevators arrived instantaneously, and the whole place echoed. It was a little eerie. The hotel restaurant's buffet breakfasts were cancelled for obvious reasons and hotel staff could be seen constantly wiping surfaces with disinfectant; bottles of Purell were everywhere. Things were beginning to shut down in the world around us, and we



Corflu attendees bumped elbows, kept our distance from one another (mostly) and contemplated this Very Last Convention for the Forseeable, and speculated on how much things were about to change, both in the short-run and long-run. The conversations about the apocalypse gaining steam around us were stfnal, fascinating, and pretty near constant. I have wished frequently these last couple years that fewer conversations would devolve into anti-Trump grievance sessions. Well I got my wish. Coronavirus conversations obsessed all of us. Nevertheless it was good to get together for this last celebration in who-knows-how long. I was happy to sell quite a few copies of *TAFForensic Report* for TAFF, seeing some of my contributions to the auction do well, and enjoyed performing a (very small) part in **Andy Hooper's** play, *The Fan Who Shot Liberty Campbell*. I had some great conversations with friends I see too seldom.

We left Wisconsin early Tuesday March 10, and arrived back in Madison before sunset on Tuesday March 17. As it turned out, that was actually one more day than we'd originally planned to be gone. Somehow, in the course of cancelling the New Orleans leg of our trip and getting packed, and worrying about whether we should or shouldn't do the trip, we got our days mixed up. The car was packed up the night before, dawn had cracked seconds earlier, and we were accelerating onto Highway 30 on our way to the Interstate, when I looked through my folder of Important Papers. "Hey," I said, "We don't have a hotel reservation for tonight. It's for TOMORROW night." We suddenly realized that we were leaving town a day EARLY. I asked Scott if he wanted to go back home; I was already visualizing our comfy, still-warm bed. But Scott replied with several expletives and absolutely refused to turn around. Well that decision turned out all right. It was easy to change our reservations using my smart phone, and we both appreciated arriving the night before most people showed up at Corflu. We got a good night's sleep and relaxed on the patio by the pool for most of Thursday as people filtered into the hotel. Many of them joined us with beers under the umbrellas and the convention began in a very relaxing manner.

We did some grocery shopping the day after we got home again and will keep to ourselves for a couple weeks in hopes that we didn't bring any virus germs along with us from our trip. I hear that a couple days after we left Texas, restaurants and bars closed. Most likely the convention would have been cancelled if it had been scheduled any later than it was.

If anyone wants to check out my *TAFForensic Report*, you can get it here. \$15 for the paper copy (with b&w photos); \$8.99 for the pdf (with color photos). All proceeds will be donated to the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF).

<https://tinyurl.com/JGTAFF>



My knee is much stronger and hardly hurts at all these days, though my other knee has reminded me that it will not wait too long to be replaced. Right now, elective surgeries are out of the question of course, so it will have to wait.



Lisa Freitag

[JG] I'm horrified (again) at the WisCon concom's treatment of you. I wonder how long the list is ... the list of people they've banned from WisCon? I've got the feeling it's not short. It certainly seems like they've got only one punishment in their toolkit for any and all offences: banning. It reminds me of the list of rules ship captains used to read to their crew in the 1800s: with all offences punishable by flogging. Considering the flashing danger signs reflected in the current dumpster fire that is the US Justice Department, it now seems especially ironic that the WisCon concom seems able to comfortably assure themselves that their self-investigation has cleared themselves of complaints about their own behavior. Scott read your paragraph about the situation to me, and my first thought was that I'd had enough. And having resigned from the Tiptree/Otherwise Award, it turns out that it has become much easier for me, now, to go one step further. So a minute later I told Scott that I didn't want to attend WisCon this year. With the exception of the 1999 WisCon when I was recovering from hip surgery, this will be the first WisCon I've missed. I'm so sorry you're having to deal with this, Lisa.

I believe I have a videocassette of the Pongo movie... somewhere. But I do not have a videocassette player.

Greg Rihn

[JG] As demonstrated in the Turbo cover art for the January issue, I totally agree with you about the events of this past month. All I could do was attempt to capture the nightmares I've been having.

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] "All the steps that had to be faced and mastered before women could even begin [to achieve suffrage]—like speaking aloud in public places!" That sounds a lot like the rationale for

rooms of one's own, both of Virginia Woolf's space and more contemporary rooms used by women and people of color to build skills and network with one another. I hope you will continue to share your panel research as lectures or essays here in the apa. I like the way you think.

Jim Hudson

[JG] I've noticed that someone or several someones like to contribute technical reports to the little library on our street. I think they must think it's more virtuous to offer them to others than to simply toss them into a recycling bin. Or maybe they think their contributions make for good reading.

I hope that all your travel plans work out. I am thinking that, with the coronavirus situation, all of us may find it necessary or prudent to curtail unnecessary travel for part of the year. [Several weeks later: It's amazing how fast things have changed. I would not have written that we "may find it necessary" if I was writing these comments now.]

Scott and I had the same question about the audience member in *Every Brilliant Thing* who gave a supposedly extemporaneous speech during the play. I'd like to find someone who attended the show on a different night and ask them what they saw.

Speaking of uncanny (pet) valleys...I can't wait to hear how real dogs react to the movie *Call of the Wild*. I suspect to see a spate of cute-doggo-gifs on Facebook—of dogs watching the movie on home screens. In fact, I think it's likely that dogs may actually understand big chunks of the plot. But the dogs in the movie are all CGI, so I'll also be curious to know if that bothers the real dogs.



Carrie Root

[JG] Congratulations on your retirement and good luck on all the gardening/yard projects. Outdoor plant-related projects have never found their way onto any of my to-do lists, but I am grateful that so many friends of mine love gardening and invite us over so we can enjoy the visual fruits of their labor.

Marilyn Holt

[JG] Congratulations on the short story sale! Good for you!

I imagine that one way that a woman could create an egalitarian society in the hinterlands would be if, by some accident, white men were out of the picture for a time, and there were only women, people of color, and native Americans involved in the initial building stages of the society. I would imagine that non-whites and women would

be eager to set things up in such a way to alleviate the kinds of prejudice and injustice they were familiar with. Not to say that this group of people wouldn't build their own prejudices and injustices into the new society, but they might be less likely to automatically re-create a society they were familiar with and benefited from. Just a thought.

Since you are getting CBS AllAccess, I recommend checking out *The Good Fight*: political and feminist and funny.

Andy Hooper

[JG] Have I told you lately about how much I appreciate your mailing comments? I really do.

TAFForensic Report is done and I will hand a copy of it to you at Corflu unless coronavirus precautions end up preventing you from showing up. I suspect that it's a possibility that some people may be re-thinking travel plans, especially when they involve airplane travel. Scott and I are driving, not flying, but we are keeping an eye on the pandemic news. If I don't see you there, I will mail a copy to you. I just received an incredibly complimentary email from Geri Sullivan which relieved me no end, because my normal tendency to doubt the quality of work once I've submitted or published it. I had begun thinking this whole idea of writing a TAFF report 33 years after the fact would interest few people and be boring or at least verbose, and oh shit, maybe this was a mistake.... But Geri rescued me from my typical after-it's-too-late-worries, and I am eager to distribute copies.

I loved reading your sweet compliments and appreciation to **Carrie**. You two have built a wonderful partnership! And I know what you mean about how retirement, living at home full-time with Carrie (for you) and Scott (for me) changes everything and nothing in such a weird way. But like you, I'm feeling very happy about how we've eased into this new life together.

Re Terry Garey's health news: **Diane, Jim** and I have all been reading Denny Lien's daily updates on Terry's *Caringbridge* site, and I highly recommend them—not only if you'd like to keep up on Terry's condition, but also to read Denny's sweet mini-stories. Denny is inventing a new genre of fannish writing with his compassionate, humorous, loving, sense-of-wonder-provoking chronicles of his and Terry's current life. <<https://www.caringbridge.org/visit/terrygarey>>

I liked your postcard investigation—both of your ancestor and postcard culture.

I don't understand the Lettercol Quatrains. I recognize many of the addresses, including a very old one of my own, but I'm missing the thing that links the addresses within each quatrain.

I loved Allyn Cadogan's piece. You're right, it felt related to the Pongo story!

Kim & Kathi Nash

[JG] I hope you're wrong about Trump finding a way to invalidate the election, but I worry about that too. Recently, I've been imagining that he might eventually use coronavirus to declare martial law.

Steve Johnson

[JG] I'm glad to hear that you've found a support group, Steve. Sounds very useful. It got me thinking about all the different kinds of support groups that have helped me in my life. For instance, professional graphic artists at a training seminar which helped me work through professional and technical issues about which I had no one else to discuss. Feminist discussion groups which helped validate ideas and experiences about which most everyone else in my life was clueless. Fandom in general which encouraged me to do creative things for the love of it, when the rest of society mostly frowned on the idea of "wasting time" on non-remunerative activities. And most recently, my own post-surgical support group—the Total Knee Replacement class. I'm sure I can think of more, but it's good to know you have found a group of people who have shared some of your experiences and with whom you can work through common problems and perceptions. It's a Good Thing.

Walter Freitag

[JG] I'm totally with you on enjoying melodious music of films (I'm not familiar with game music) and completely uncomprehending of the pleasures of so much modern music. Nevertheless, I think this is unlikely to be a golden stick deal (even though I love the metaphor and can easily see myself applying it in many other situations) because I also know several people who honestly seem to enjoy music without melody, rhythm or harmony. They seem to be among the same group of people who look at a mathematical proof and smile at the "joke." I'm there for music with melody, but that's not to say that there aren't people who find pleasure in other sound experiments.

Cathy Gilligan

[JG] You asked what was amusing about my grandfather's beekeeping book. Here are a few amusing quotes from *ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture*, edited by A. I. Root (The A. I. Root Bee Library, 1929) in a section on "Beekeeping for Women," which A. I. Root outsourced to entomologist, Mrs. Anna B. Comstock:

"Taking the 'Why shouldn't' question first, we are bound to confess that nowadays there is no effective reason why woman should not do almost any thing that she takes into her enterprising little head to do... There is no use trying to gloss over the fact that there is a great deal of hard work and heavy lifting in the care of a profitably

apiary. The hard work is really no objection, as most women of whatever class are doing it anyway. But lifting heavy hives is certainly not particularly good exercise for any woman, although I must confess that I have never lifted half so strenuously when caring for the bees as I used to on the farm when we moved the cook-stove into the summer kitchen,

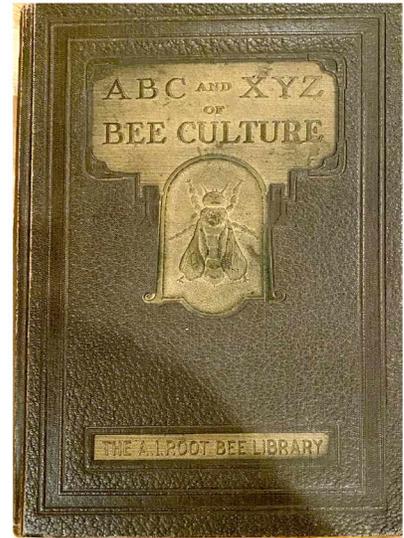
accomplishing this feat by our feminine selves, rather than to bring to the surface any of the latent profanity which seems to be engendered in the masculine bosom when taking part in this seasonal pastime."

Mrs. Comstock goes on to recommend that women rely on help from other women, brothers, fathers or husbands. *"I am sure my husband would say that I am quite enthusiastically in favor of the man solution of this problem; but his opinion does not count for much, because he loves the bees so enthusiastically, I have to beg for a chance to work with them at all, although he virtuously points out the hives to people as 'Mrs. Comstock's bees.'"*

An additional problem for women is the likelihood of bee stings. *"This year when I was struggling to hive a swarm from a most difficult position, an interested man stood off at a safe distance in a most pained state of mind. He was a courteous gentleman, and he felt that it was outrageous for me to have to do the work alone, but he did not dare to come to my aid, and I think he considered my temerity in dealing with the swarm as almost scandalous."*

Mrs. Comstock goes on to list several reasons in favor of women beekeepers—as *"an interesting study in natural history,"* as a way to cultivate calmness, self-control, and patience, and *"to supply the home table with a real luxury,"* to add to a woman's available spending money, and to distract women from the "eternal drudgery" of doing housework.

"Beekeeping is one of the best of...life-saving, nerve-healing avocations; it takes the mind from household cares as completely as would a trip to Europe. for one can not work with bees and think of anything else."



Joe Leslie Adams

[JG] We should have trading cards with pictures of the House Managers on them. I was also very impressed. But it's still sad that we sigh with pleasure at the thought of a public official who is able to speak in complete sentences.

Sister Mary Pelosi. Oh, yeah, I can see her rapping the orange kid on the knuckles for bullying and sleeping through class.

We are very much addicted to MSNBC news. When we travel we download Rachel Maddow's and Chris Hayes' podcasts.

Karl Hailman & Hope Kiefer

[JG] Thanks for hosting the Super Tuesday party! Much fun despite person-eating sofa.

From the Vault

Nancy Drew Finds Out About Sex

The Big Changes in my life have always stemmed from finding out new things about the world. Finding out about how the glaciers scoured the part of the Midwest where I grew up, and finding out that the ridge visible through our living room window marked the place where a mile-high glacier had paused for a Pleistocenian coffee break helped to inspire me to major in geography in college. Working off my science requirement in the least painful manner had been the original, cowardly motivation for enrolling in Geography 101, but amazingly, I actually majored in it more or less because of the heady, sense-of-wonder sensation that goes with *finding out*.

I suspect that you're not really interested in reading about glaciers and their relation to my career. It was exciting at the time, but it may be one of those things that you have to experience directly to appreciate.

There have been lots of other "finding out" episodes in my life, though.... Finding out that daddy didn't make up the comic strip stories as he went along, but that I could read those squiggles. Finding out about Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, and my Guardian Angel. Finding out about dinosaurs, other planets, and fandom. Finding out that everyone doesn't believe in God. Finding out that I didn't believe in God. Finding out about sex....

The archetypal experience of "finding out" is of course the time we find out about sex. For me it was an exercise in research methodology.



Up to a certain point, mom had given me the necessary information. I was two years old when my brother Rick was born and four when Steve arrived. There was no silly business about cabbage leaves or storks, and the evidence of mom's coincidentally expanding waistline provided pretty convincing collaborating evidence for her explanation. Still, it was all pretty abstract to me. Mom would grow big, go away for a week or so, and return home with another brother. We visited some friends of

my parents who lived on a farm once in a while, but the experience didn't provide any mammalian performances, just chickens and corn. Those visual aids might have sufficed had I been wondering about genetic mysteries, but that sort of question hadn't occurred to me yet.

Anyway, by the time I was 11 or 12, the "where" question had been answered in sufficient, though hazy detail, and the question of "how" babies were made was bothering me. The first few times I asked, mom didn't seem to have enough time to answer, but it soon grew plain that she was avoiding my inquiries. Finally, I cornered her. We were alone in the car, on our way to the grocery store, and I asked her as we turned out of the driveway.

"How does it *happen*, mom?"

Mom got all red in the face and hugged the steering wheel with a death grip that inspired me to survey the road ahead with a worried glance. But it was OK; the road was empty. Still she hadn't answered and I asked her again. "Mom...?"

She leaned into the steering wheel, glaring straight ahead of her and tightened her grip as if the car were struggling through thick fog. Then she partly gasped, partly yelled through tense, strained lips, "*It just HAPPENS!*"

Well. Just like when Nancy Drew gets kidnapped for asking the Wrong Question, I knew that I was on to something. Something important. Imitating the girl sleuth, I did the usual kid kind of investigation:

I tracked circular, frustrating, self-referential circles through the dictionary, and eavesdropped on adult gossip sessions. I poured obsessively through titillating stories in mom's magazines like *Good Housekeeping* that had titles like "My Most Horrifying Experience: How I Coped When My Daughter Was Molested." But the kernel, crucial, descriptive parts of the information were always deleted. These were the old days when *Life Magazine* ran the photo of the topless swimming suit in which a woman wearing it could *almost* be seen through the rippling water of a chlorinated pool. I'm sure that photo was just as frustrating to some boys my age as those *Good Housekeeping* articles were to me, in which the crucial paragraphs were written all rippled

and vague, so that you only knew what they were talking about if you already knew what they were talking about. It drove me crazy. Nancy Drew never had such a hard time.

My best friend, then, was Leslie Baseheart and she and I decided to cooperate on the great research project: to find out how IT happened.

Leslie was a skinny, unusually tall, gawky grade schooler who traded Nancy Drew books with me. Her family home was built on the top of the glacial moraine ridge in my neighborhood and she and I blked up and down that hill to one another's house on an almost daily basis. We were determined to unravel this ultimate adult secret.

First of all, we decided to pool all our "clues." We knew that married people had babies, and if this were our only information, we might have been willing to accept my mother's statement at face value. It might have seemed perfectly reasonable that people as powerful as our parents could have children merely because they decided to have them. "Because I said so," encapsulated the explanation for so much in our lives already; one more thing wouldn't have bothered us. But we had another clue that contradicted that theory. Leslie's older brother, David, had gossiped to her about *high school girls* who got pregnant and were thrown out of school for the offense. Furthermore, he told her that they got pregnant in the back seats of *cars*. Older brother David wouldn't divulge anything more than that though, and we were on our own.

It was an important clue. We deduced from it that girls could get pregnant before they got married and without meaning to do so. But that was a terribly frightening idea. Who knew what the trick was? What if it was something simple, a thing someone might just accidentally do in a clumsy moment without understanding its dire consequences. Could a mistake in square dancing class make us unwed mothers? We'd heard all sorts of speculation in the girls' restroom. You could get pregnant from just kissing a boy, something called "french kissing." (And that precipitated a wild digression in Leslie's and my research project that uncovered the correct but almost unbelievable description of *that* procedure. "Yuck!" was our first reaction to the idea.) A sixth

grader had overheard a seventh grader say that it had something to do with *rubbing* and *touching* and for a while we fearfully avoided any contact with boys, keeping a safe margin between ourselves and boys when we stood in line or sang with them in the choir loft.

But after a short time, Leslie and I decided that nobody in our grade knew the truth, or if they did, they weren't going to share it with us. And so we taught ourselves how to use the card catalog and poured through the encyclopedia during library hour. That search was doomed from the start, however.

The library at St. Luke's Catholic School held only a couple hundred books at the time and all of them had been carefully screened for any so-called "objectionable" material. I gleaned more from *Good Housekeeping* than I could discover in St. Luke's library.

Then, finally, we thought we'd achieved a breakthrough. For the next five Saturday mornings, mom had signed me up for "charm school" class in downtown Milwaukee. A series of classes for pre-adolescent girls in the arts of deportment, make-up, and wardrobe was being offered by the Boston Store. The first week the instructor presented us with a big box of make-up samples and taught us how to sit properly (by backing up to a chair and waiting to feel the edge of it against our legs before sitting down). I thought I'd never heard such a bunch of boring, silly stuff in all my life, which was probably one of the reasons that mom had signed me up for the class in the first place. And so, after that first session, I decided to skip the next three. The fifth session was unavoidable because we were scheduled then to display our newly-acquired charm to the assembly instructors and parents in a formal reception.

The "breakthrough" didn't concern make-up or deportment. The fact that I had an hour and a half to do whatever I wanted to do in downtown Milwaukee between getting off the bus at the depot and returning home, while I skipped out of charm school—that was the breakthrough. An hour and a half in downtown Milwaukee meant an hour and a half free to spend in the Main Public Library with its millions of books and its roomful of card catalogs. I

was a little worried about the reception in which I would have to carry off the charm without benefit of the instruction, but I couldn't face the classes, and the probability that Leslie and I would have *found out* about sex by then seemed to make the risk worthwhile.

Unfortunately, there was just too much in that library. There was a whole drawer full of cards in the subject catalog just on sex alone! Cross references would have filled a dozen notebooks. And besides that there were so many other books! Whole shelves of science fiction. I was in heaven. And so although I did find lots of books with sex in their titles and tables of contents, and I did take notes, those books tended to be written in obtuse medicalese, and with all the science fiction so close at hand, I easily gave into the frequent temptations to "take a break" from the research project and read SF. By the end of the third week, researching had more confused than enlightened me on the subject of sex. And mostly I was upset that I wouldn't be able to finish one of the SF books I'd been reading. (Of course I couldn't take the book home with me and tip my parents off about what had *really* occupied my time in Milwaukee.)

Somehow, the charm school reception turned out all right. I remember following the other girls down the aisle, walking as they did, keeping my chin up as they did, and praying that I wouldn't trip over the steps going up the stage. We all sat ladylike and polite at little round tables, sipping punch from tiny, delicate, crystal teacups, and listened to the instructors make unabashed sales pitches to our parents, and then it was all over, and very little was ever said about charm again. For whatever reason, I was grateful. But soon I became anxious about Leslie's and my research project and wished that I could think of another excuse for going downtown again.

One day Leslie called me up and told me that Cathy, an older neighborhood girl, had told her that she'd actually seen her parents Doing IT. I rushed over to Leslie's and we hid upstairs in her bedroom closet and she told me what Cathy had told her. Apparently Cathy had surprised her parents in a spontaneous moment: they were standing up, making love in their bedroom, in the *daytime*. Cathy's description was (in

retrospect) reasonably accurate, and Leslie reported it to me as completely as she could. We sat huddled there in the dark closet amid fallen clothing and shoes and games and considered this bombshell of information. It was difficult to believe. In fact, we didn't really *want* to believe it.

"It can't be," I said finally.

"Why not?" Leslie asked hopefully.

"We *know* this can't be how girls get pregnant..." I said, convinced now, and pausing dramatically to tease Leslie.

"Why? What d'you mean?"

"Because! It can't happen that way because they can't do *that* in the back seat of a car!!" I said triumphantly.

Leslie agreed in a second. I suppose she stopped speaking to Cathy, who we both decided had been despicably cruel for trying to make us believe and pass on such a blatantly, ridiculous lie and making laughing stocks of us at school.

And so we continued on with our research.

It's amazing how obtuse any kind of material becomes if you can't believe or don't want to believe it means what it says. That was probably the biggest part of our problem when we tried to understand my notes from the library medical texts. It wasn't till months later when I came across a novel that presented the matter with less objectivity and more sensationalism, that we were finally convinced of Cathy's accuracy.

St. Luke's library had received several crates of used books from a parishoner who had cleaned out their attic. Some of the books must have been shelved without a thorough screening...

The title of the fateful book was *Westward Vikings*, and its cover portrayed a marble stature of a Viking, heroically pointing and gazing westward (I assume), against a blue sky and fluffy clouds. It was a big, thick novel and I began reading it with no premonitions that the story was anything more than a quasi-historical adventure tale.

"My name is Lief Erickson and this is the story of my education," it began. And indeed it was about a Norseman's education ... *all* levels of his education.

A major part of the novel involved Lief's promise to his father to convey a beautiful woman, his father's fiancé, from her home to Lief's dad. Lief promised dad that he would make no advances on the virgin during the sea voyage. So, of course, when the young woman falls in love with Lief, she has to do all the "advancing." I blushed more or less continuously for the two days it took me to tear through the novel and the several days afterward that I kept *Westward Vikings* to re-read the good parts.

Then I passed the book on to Leslie and Leslie passed the word on to other kids in our grade and I guess at some point the librarian grew curious about the massive popularity of the book and read it herself. *Westward Vikings* disappeared from the shelves of St. Luke's Library immediately afterward, but left its mark on several classes of grade schoolers who would forever associate ice and glacial landscapes with passionate embraces, heavy breathing and sexual mysteries. Some of us carried our fascination with icy landscapes into our adult lives.

...Some people assume that I majored in art in college. I don't usually go into all my reasons for choosing Geography as an undergraduate major. But sometimes I mention how *exciting* I found the study of glaciers in those days.



Jeanne Gomoll
March 2020



You know how there's a dramatic increase in births after big disasters?
I'm hoping for a big spike in fanzine publishing this time.