

*This is a truly last moment edition of Obsessions, once again an issue intended to save my membership in AWA. Not only is it a post-mailing, but it is an eleventh-hour postmailing. In lieu of mailing comments, I cannot even say that I have read and enjoyed all of your zines, because I am behind even on that portion of my membership duties and am not up to date with even the reading of AWA! So, with that apologia, welcome to number 26 of Obsessions and number 67 of the Obsessive Press opus. All material copyrighted © 1982 by Jeanne Gomoll, 2018 Jenifer St., Madison, WI 53704.*

#### INKING IN THE PARKS

Last time I wrote, it was Spring and I was eagerly anticipating some field trips up into the state parks in connection with my job with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Bureau. Well there weren't as many field trips as I had hoped, mainly because of the budget cuts made this year in the State Civil Service. Travel allowances were cut sharply and only the most necessary trips were allowed. That meant that only the higher echelons got to go on milk runs.

Still, it's been an enjoyable summer at the office. I got to go on a few field trips and the work—inking in maps of the parks, brochures, and exhibits—is still very enjoyable for me. This year I designed and produced the Parks exhibit at the Wisconsin State Fair, redesigned the Parks annual catalog, and am in the process of redesigning and retypesetting all the Park Newspapers. It's likely however, that my term as Graphic Artist with the Department will be most remembered for the cartoons that I'm being asked to do with greater and greater frequency. Last week, for the Parks Conference, I was asked to do some certificates of appreciation to various important speakers who participated in the event. By the time I was through with them, they included large, relevant cartoons. They got big laughs and prompted several work assignments from members of the aforementioned higher echelons.

I could tell right away that the Parks Conference in Eau Claire wasn't any SF con. The elevator doors opened almost the instant after I pushed the call button. Of course other things tended to tip me off as well. The fact programming attendance was mandatory. The fact that the whole convention ate meals in the same hall together. The fact that I wore a skirt throughout most of the con, not to mention the fact that I got a lot of sleep.

This Park's Conference is the second one I've attended since beginning work with the Department, but the ratio of men to women hasn't improved since the last one two years ago. There were about 150 men and six women, two of whom are Bureau secretaries. The three days thus had a feeling of an "old boys" gathering, although I must say the advantage we few women had with regard to toilet availability was comically satisfying. The speaker at Wednesday night's so-called Banquet played to his audience though, and his talk (mostly concerning maintaining the "right attitude", i.e., a pep talk) was peppered with dumb women jokes. More than half of all his jokes concerned the dumbness of his wife or his mother or of women in general, and the

joke staled fast for me. There were too many men crowded around the speaker for me to say anything to him afterward, but, by chance, Dave Weizenicker (Director of the Bureau of P&R) approached me and asked me what I thought of the speaker. I told him that, frankly, I'd been put off and bored by the speaker's constant use of dumb-women jokes, and after Dave had wiped the look of shock off of his face (expecting, as he had been, the innocuous good review), he agreed with me, saying that he'd been offended by that too. Now, Dave was not offended: I saw him laughing his head off every time the speaker tossed off one of his funnies. But Dave is very, very concerned about the possibility of being called for sexism. Directing a Bureau with a professional gender ratio of 150 male professionals to 4 female professionals, gives him ample cause for such worries. And so any comment that I or any of the other women in the Department makes is at least listened to with token seriousness. Dave continued, saying that perhaps next year we could obtain a woman speaker from the Speaker's Bureau. Great, I said. I'll help, I added. Dave looked slightly worried. I smiled.

#### WAKE ME UP IF I LOOK LIKE I'M ABOUT TO VOLUNTEER

Enough of mundane life. My job with the DNR certainly can't be blamed for my tardiness with this zine. I don't know if anything can, actually, and I won't attempt to definitely fix blame, but everything's connected...

I seem to have volunteered for a lot this summer. Cut out the last two words of that sentence and you have the story of my life. I keep telling myself to stop with this volunteering, but like a dream that slips away with consciousness, I forget at all the wrong times. For instance, this summer I found myself volunteering to take on the publicity department for WisCon. Georgie Schnobrich and Lucy Nash are working with me, and they're just as crazy for volunteering as I am, but not crazy enough to let me delegate all the work to them. So, in the last couple months, we've put together the SF<sup>3</sup> general catalog (with Jini Kai, a new woman who's joined the group) which was distributed at WorldCon, is contained in this post-mailing, and will be bulk-mailed in November to our entire mailing list. I designed a routing sheet for the complicated affairs of SF<sup>3</sup> and the WisCon committee in general. I collated all the changes of address in the group and published the new, revised telephone directory for local Madcity fandom (and, of course, three days later, four people moved, making the directory out-of-date in short order). We completed the first WisCon press release and distributed it to local media and fannish newszines, and put together a rate sheet for advertising in WisCon publications. The big thing, however, has been working on the major WisCon brochure which will be going out in November sometime (our mass mailing, including the catalog), and Georgie, Lucy and I are working on that now. We're also planning to finish all of the WisCon program book early except for a center-section supplement, which will include the actual schedule and be printed on different colored paper and at the last moment. My one consolation through all of this work is that the publicity department's work, for the most part, ends sometime before the con and I'll be able to enjoy the con itself while everyone else is being frantic. Of course I always manage that anyway.

But that's not all I volunteered for. Our group is getting large and diverse. It's the natural evolution of all fan groups, I suppose. But in any case, our meetings at Nick's have long since ceased to be ideal sites for productive work meetings (though we still try in sub-groups), and are now even ineffective places to make general announcements. Too often this summer, announcements made at Nick's were not heard by some members, and parties or picnics which turned out to be "secret" parties or picnics led to hurt feelings. Why don't we, someone suggested, publish some kind of short newsletter, so that everyone knows what's going on?! Yes! someone else agreed, a short newsletter. No artwork, no fancy layout, just a two page, typed schedule of Madison events. (Carefully, no one said the word

"fanzine". If anyone had, they would have been jumped upon, pummeled and silenced like that poor man in the movie *The Producers* in the "Springtime for Hitler" audience.) Who will take charge of our newsletter? came the inevitable question, and of course, the dream slipping away as I entered volunteer un-consciousness, my voice turned on and I had taken on the task. Luckily, a part of my natural self-preservation hung onto my inclinations and I amended my volunteering to only one issue, suggesting that the duty be a rotating one. Anyway, a few weeks ago, I designed the logo for *Cube* #1 (a blurred-as-if-in-movement SF-cube and an also moving title, "*Cube*"...well, like this:



The first issue (on blue xerox paper) has now been published, and though it took 4 pages, and not just the originally planned two, it was typed first-draft and took only an evening's work. Much like this zine, in fact. Anyone who is planning a Madison trip or would just like to participate vicariously in Madcity fandom can send me a self-addressed stamped envelope and I'll send you a copy.

I'm not done, however, with my catalog of volunteerism. There was this *Aurora* meeting this summer, you see, and it turned out that Patty Lucas was going to have to step down as this year's publication committee chair. Patty has been getting obsessed lately with boating, kayaking, canoeing, and other wild river activities with the UW Outing Society. With weekends taken up by practice-drowning, she's had to use weekend evenings for studying... Anyway, Diane Martin (the previous chair...she's now a table?) stated that she would like the position back again but that she couldn't possibly handle the job until after WisCon since she is presently the coordinator of that. It didn't take more than a moment. I was right in there volunteering to take over from Patty temporarily, until Diane was free after WisCon. So now, we're in the midst of working on the current issue of *Aurora* and I'm paying more attention to the written part of the magazine than I've been used to doing in recent years.

That's been sort of interesting, though the thing is that I've been feeling less and less in touch with the kind of zine *Aurora* has become. I think I am just getting tired of editing a genzine. I still like working on the production work, soliciting artwork, designing, drawing a bit myself, and doing the layout work, but I can't seem to get up as much enthusiasm for the contents of the magazine as I used to in the early days of *Janus*. We're not so much a feminist-oriented fanzine nowadays as simply a non-sexist and occasionally feminist-nodding fanzine. Where Avedon's *Blatant* is a fannish fanzine published by a feminist, *Aurora* is a genzine published by a group of people that includes some bossy feminists who try to keep the others in line. These days I'm more interested in the kind of writing that's been going on in the small fannish fanzines and I'd like to participate directly in that world. So, at this very moment, I've been writing material and collecting a little bit from outside contributors for my own little fannish fanzine. It's going to be called *Whimsey*, referring either to the zine's probable schedule or its basic definition ("A fanciful or fantastic device, object, or creation, exp. in writing or art"). As I write, it's occurred to me that I am writing this zine as if it were the "0" issue of *Whimsey*.

Along with the decision to join the fannish fanzine publication renaissance, I've also been trying to be a little more consciencious about loccking the fanzines I've been admiring and have been making progress on that resolution.

Sending out copies of *The Cacher of the Rye* is another of my fannish activities, though since selling so well at WorldCon, mail sales have been down drastically. I need to put some more ads in *Locus* and such. Hosting fannish visitors to Madison has taken up more time but has certainly been worth it. Kevin Smith (TAFF delegate), Stu Shiffman, Terry Garey and Ctein visited after worldcon and stayed for several days. We spent most of one day lounging in the park on the shore of Lake Monona, alternately swatting at the swarms of wasps out that day and practicing statue-like immobility when the wasps angrily returned. Well, we played frizbee a lot too, and Stu vengefully trapped wasps in Pepsi bottles. There were ducks to feed too and we had long, pleasant talks.

And of course there was ChiCon. It was fun. We went to lots of parties and then we talked to lots of people and then we went to restaurants and then we went to the Hugo ceremonies and then we sat around the fanzine room and talked and then got hardly any sleep and then we couldn't find a lot of people because there were so many people at the con and then there was an artists' jam and then we ate some more and then we went home. It was great. Seriously, thanks Terry, for putting on a great Women's Apa party. I agree, it was a good idea to have it in the afternoon.

STILL CRAWLING. STILL SWEATING.

Anyone who knows how I love to sleep in mornings knows how much more I must care about swimming and working out to get up as I did at the Parks Conference--at 5:45 am--in order to swim a half mile before breackfast. It's one of the better ways to wake up in my opinion, but it would have been better if the pool had been a tad (even 8 or 9 yards) longer. It was just 30 feet long and it took 90 lengths to swim a half mile. Besides that, the pool was kept bathwater-warm and by the end of my swim, I felt as though I was emerging from a sauna. Still, it would have been much worse to have skipped the swim; I'd have been nervous and crabby all day. Obviously I'm still the obsessed-jock type. My weightlifting seems to have leveled off; at least I haven't been increasing the weights recently. There is a new supervisor working at Bodyworks at the YWCA though, who is an expert in pumping iron and she's been working with me quite a lot. Actually, I've been decreasing some of my weights as she's shown me how to perfect some techniques. I've been bussing more often than usual; as Fall weather creates morning temperatures in the 30's and 40's, the bus looks more and more appealing. Soon my bike will go back up into the attic.

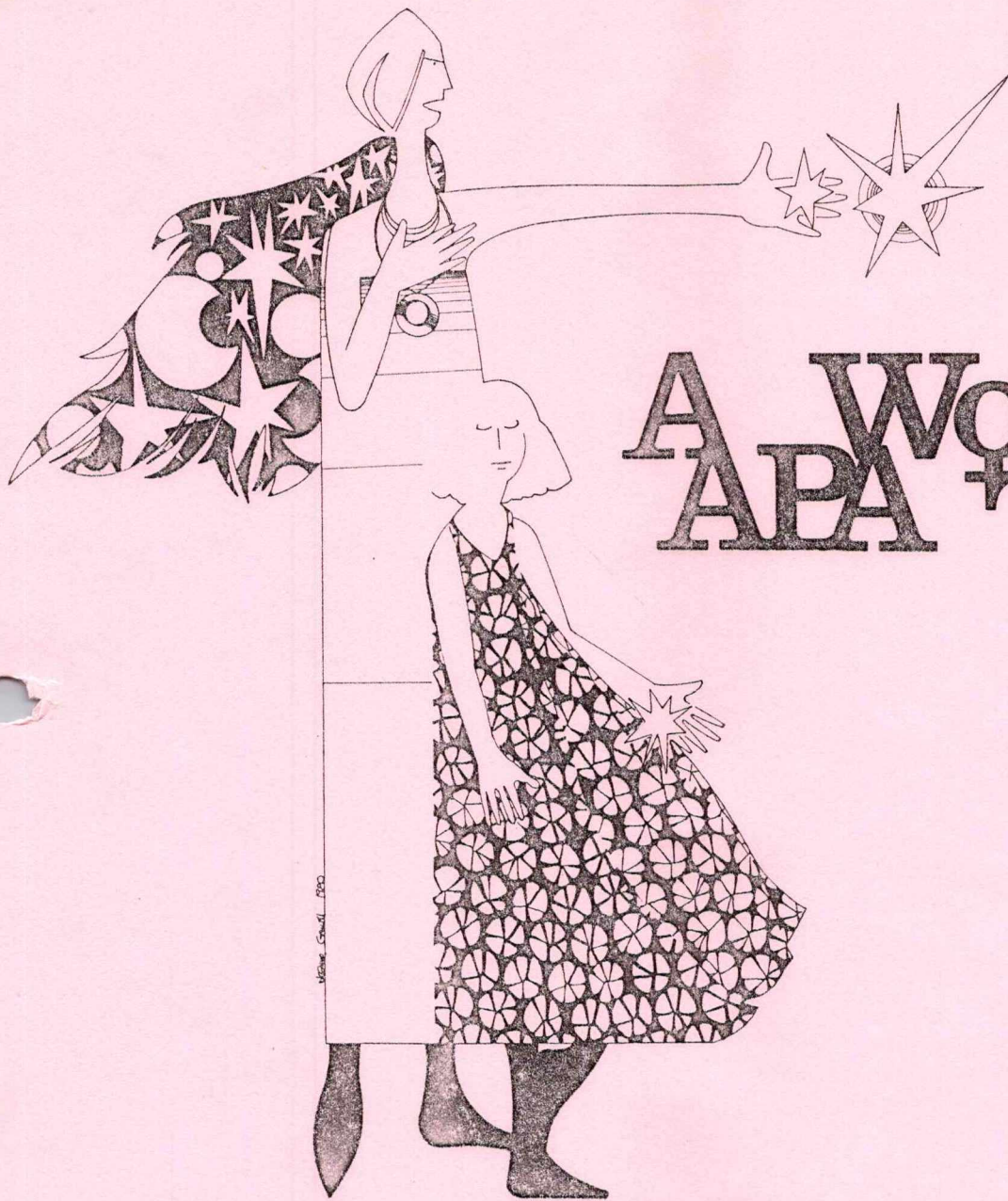
My weight has also seemed to be leveling off and so I've been spending far too much money on clothing for what I hope will be a more or less permanent wardrobe. I'm spending more money than I did when I knew I was merely buying an intermediate wardrobe, though I still try to get stuff mainly at sales. Still I don't want to know the total of all this buying through the past year...

PROMISES, PROMISES, PROMISES

I fully intend to catch up on mailing comments next time, and that will be a fat issue of *Obsessions* indeed. But I've learned my lesson on producing fat post-mailings. It just makes me depressed to get so few reactions to a well-produced zine that I tend to become less enthusiastic for the next issue. So I'll play to my neurosises and not feel guilty about this skimpy one. See you next time.

Love,

Jessie



A Women's  
APA ♀

A Sorcerer's  
Apprentice