

OPUNTIA

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Apres Le Deluge 2013

OPUNTIA is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada as the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount. US\$ banknotes are acceptable in Canada at par value; what we gain on the exchange rate we lose on the higher postage rate to USA. Do not send mint USA stamps as they are not valid for postage outside USA and I don't collect them. A cumulative subject index for all issues is available on request.

AFTER THE FLOOD

by Dale Speirs

The Story So Far.

2013-06-29

June 20 and 21, 2013, the city of Calgary (pop. 1.1 million) had 190 mm of rain, and another 250 mm fell in the adjacent foothills and mountains. All the rivers and streams in southwestern Alberta flow out of the mountains. The worst flood in Alberta since records were first kept cost 100,000 Calgarians their homes, with as many again being evacuated from towns and villages all the way south to Crowsnest Pass. The downtown core of Calgary was flooded for the first time since 1932 and all the skyscrapers were evacuated for a week as the electricity, sewage, and waterworks shut down. The Stampede rodeo grounds were flooded just a couple of weeks before the world's largest rodeo was to begin (1.4 million paid visitors).

A week after the flood subsided, so did a railway bridge over the Bow River when a freight train pulling a line of tanker cars filled with dilutant (a petroleum solvent used to make heavy oil or bitumen flow in pipelines) caused a pier to give way. The base of the pier had been scoured away by the flood, and the fast-flowing opaque waters made it impossible to see the damage. Six tankers hung over the river for a day, their wheels just touching the water, before thick cables and multiple locomotives could pull them out.

Calgary is staggering back onto its feet. The City placed roll-off dumpster bins throughout the flood-damaged areas as homeowners began gutting their basements. All blue bin (recyclables) pickups throughout the city have been suspended indefinitely so that Solid Waste Dept. crews can haul landfill garbage. Thousands of volunteers are helping neighbours and family whose houses were soaked, and whose basements must now be stripped and disinfected. Landfill sites have suspended their dumping fees, and long lines of trucks wait to unload.

Sinkholes are appearing everywhere, not just the flood zone, as the groundwater shrinks back to its normal level and no longer supports the asphalt or turf that was floating on water-filled washouts. The Stampede grounds have dozens of dump trucks rebuilding the race track and rodeo infield and an army of tradesmen inside the buildings. The rodeo will go on, but all events in the Saddledome arena have been cancelled because damage was so great. The penning competition (horse riders separating three cattle from a herd) moved to Okotoks, a half-hour drive south of Calgary. The tractor pull is cancelled, and the heavy horse show will be in a tent elsewhere on the grounds.

In Calgary, the biggest Canada Day celebration is traditionally held on Prince's Island in the Bow River downtown. The island

was scoured by the flood, so instead the party -2- was stretched out along 8th Avenue South, from Millennium Park at the west end of the core, along the 8th Avenue pedestrian mall to Olympic Plaza at the east end in front of City Hall.

The Calgary Zoo, on St. George's Island in the Bow River, will be closed for the rest of the year. The animals are in temporary accommodations because the buildings are a mess. 300 staff were laid off and only the animal keepers and tradesmen were kept on. The island is several metres above normal water level and has never been flooded since the zoo was founded in 1929.

Both the old and new City Halls were flooded at ground floor level, as well as the Central Library across the street. There are branch libraries across the city so staff will be dispersed across them without layoffs. The Central Library is where I do a lot of historical research. Fortunately the Local History Room is on the fourth floor and the documents collection is on the third floor, but the library will be closed for weeks as they pump out the basement and renovate the ground floor.

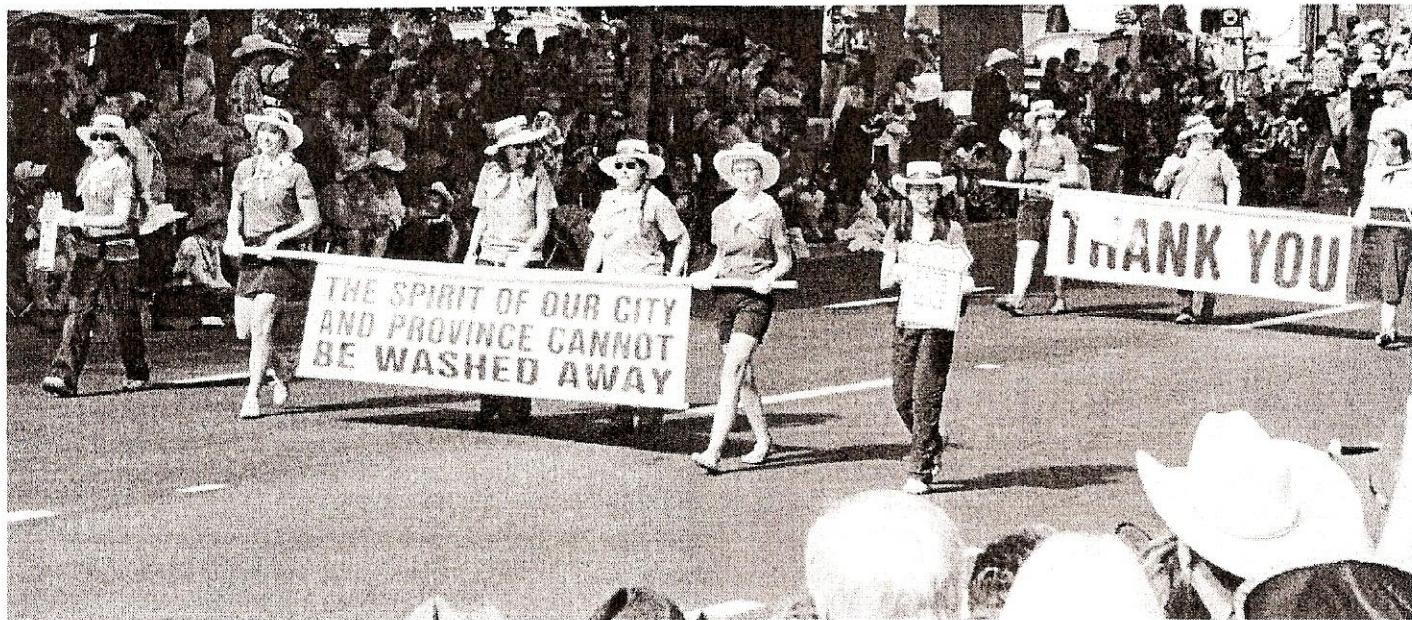
The downtown core re-opened after a week, good news for the 350,000 people who work there. The levees are dry again, although there are several breaches still being repaired. The streets have been scraped clean and gone over with street sweepers, so the Stampede parade will follow its normal route.

After The Aftermath.

2013-07-05

The South Leg of the LRT opened in time for the Stampede after the tracks were washed away. Contractors worked around the clock for a week rebuilding the tracks and got the job done yesterday.

Today is the Stampede parade, the opening event of the rodeo. I went down to watch it, as did 200,000 or so people. There were the usual floats, marching bands, colour guards, lots of horses, and aboriginals. The parade also included a march-past of first-responders taking a short break from flood clean-up. They got standing ovations from the crowd.



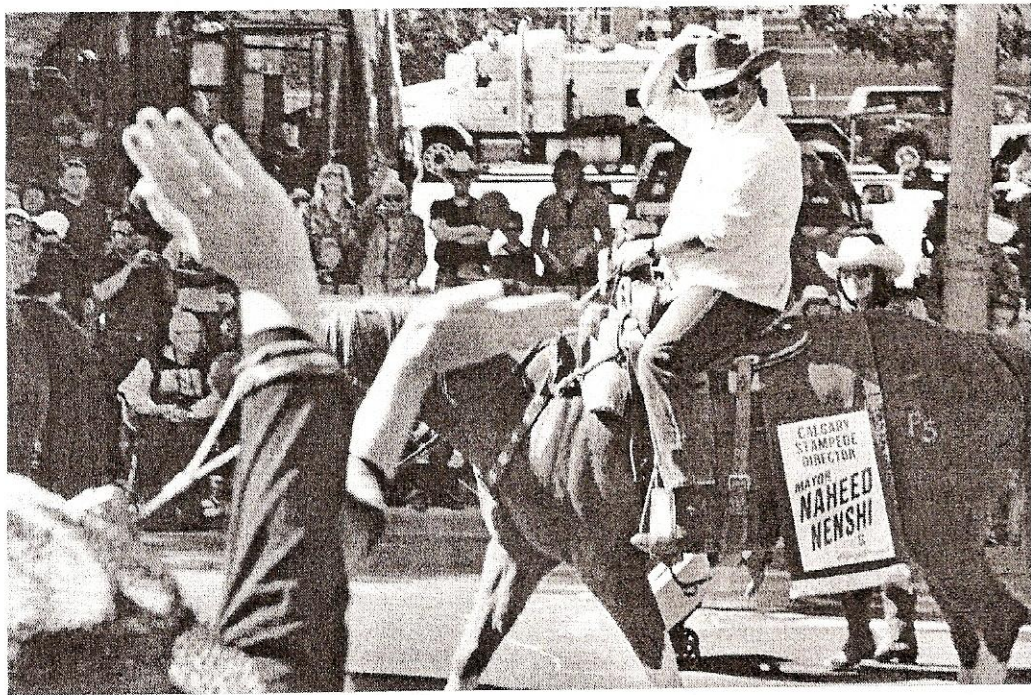
The man of the hour was Mayor Naheed Nenshi, who worked long days during the flood at the Calgary Emergency Management Agency, fortunately located up on the plateau 100 metres above the flood zone. He got a big cheer from the crowd as he rode along in the parade, as seen below.

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Premier Alison Redford was riding alongside him but only got polite applause. Although she represents a Calgary riding, she didn't spend much time here during the emergency. As Premier, she had to cover the whole province, especially the flooded areas south of Calgary, including the city

of High River (pop. 12,000). It was completely evacuated, and only now are some of the residents being allowed back. The flood waters are still there because much of High River is below the level of the Highwood River, somewhat like New Orleans being below sea level. Whereas Calgary quickly drained naturally, High River has to be pumped dry.

High River and Highwood River are both translations of the Siksika name "Spitzee", meaning "high trees", the tall cottonwoods that grow along the banks in an otherwise treeless floodplain. Like New Orleans, High River residents have always lived in denial of what the word "floodplain" means, and their city gets flushed away about once every fifty years, not counting minor floods every five years. The gods themselves contend in vain, etcetera.



Even as the flood waters were still receding, the Stampede board announced its revised slogan for the 2013 event was "Come Hell Or High Water". The t-shirt manufacturers have gone into overtime to meet the demand for shirts with the slogan.

Today is a bright warm Sunday and I went down to the rodeo grounds for the Stampede. Very crowded. If you were an outlander who hadn't heard the news, you would not know the park had been underwater. The Saddledome arena was closed and silent, and the Big Four building lower level was shut down, but other than that the rodeo grounds have been restored almost to normal. Looking closely, I could see faint water stains on the walls of many buildings, but one had to specifically look for them.

I had a good time. Wandered through the exhibits, watched the acts, all the usual. Ate too much over-priced food, but like going to an SF convention, you knew you were going to. There is a fad this year for deep-fried everything. Deep-fried avocado on a stick. Deep-fried Mars bars on a stick. Deep-fried cheese on a stick. Deep-fried pickle on a stick. Deep-fried jelly doughnut on a stick. Everything your doctor warns you against. Being on Lipitor, I avoided things dipped in batter and deep-fried, but did have steak burgers, charbroiled sausages, grilled chicken, and other things my doctor warned me against.

I circulate OPUNTIA through a science fiction apa called Fantasy Amateur Press Association (FAPA). For those of you receiving this issue who do not know what an apa is, please read on.

Modern zine publishing as we know it today began in the middle 1800s as cheap, home-use printing presses became available to the general public. Zinesters developed a distro method called the amateur press association (apa) where members sent x number of copies of their zine to a central mailer (also known as the official editor). The zines are collated into bundles, and each member gets back one bundle of everyone's zines. There is an annual fee to cover postage, but this works out cheaper than mailing individual copies. Apas have a minimum level of activity required, such as publishing 8 pages a year. It must be emphasized that apas are not for passive subscribers; you must commit to the minimum activity level or you will be booted out.

The oldest apa is the National A.P.A., founded 1876. FAPA was founded in 1937. Details from Robert Lichtman, 11037 Broadway Terrace, Oakland, California 994611-1948. In addition to articles, there will be mailing comments on other apazines in the last FAPA bundle. I quote the remark I am commenting on or otherwise make the context clear, so hopefully an outsider can still read the comments with interest.

COMMENTS ON FAPA #303

FAPA bundle #303 received in Calgary on 2013-06-05. The Clearcut Award for the most zine pages went to Dale Speirs for 32 pages (OPUNTIA as 64 half-pages).

Swordperson #1 I enjoyed your reprint of the 1908-04-19 NEW YORK TIMES article about pulp writers who churned out 60,000 words per week for dime novels. It is easy to see why most such writers seldom lasted five years at that rate.

Re: the SF author who was offended because you advised that her feeding her dog with cheeseburgers was unhealthy for it. My observation is that people who tweet or blog expect to receive only praise from their own circle, and cannot handle any kind of constructive criticism. This is why I don't take seriously the Internet commentators who talk about how it builds online communities. It builds group thinkers. A true community, such as the physical ones we all live in, has every kind of person and belief, not just fellow travelers.

Alphabet Soup #78 Re: the U.S. Postal Service proposing to do away with Saturday deliveries. Canada Post stopped them in 1969 and no one up here seems to have missed it.

Entropy Blues #5 Re: SF fandom not being what some fans

thought it would be. I have been reading SF since I was a young lad and it were all fields around here, but didn't become active in fandom until my early 30s. Prior to that I also became involved and still heavily am in organized philately, which predates SF fandom by decades. A comparison between the two quickly convinced me to stay away from fannish clubs and convention running. I attend SF conventions only as a passive member. In philately, the participants are far more mature and wise on average. I enjoy the sense of wonder of SF but never wanted to become embroiled in the senseless actions of many SF fans whose enthusiasm far exceeded their competence.

SF fans call their international convention a Worldcon, despite it only being about 5,000 paid attendees depending on location. An American international stamp show (dealer bourse, competitive exhibiting, seminars by top names) gets about 50,000. In China and southeast Asia, stamp shows get 200,000 paying their way in. The Internet generation ran Calgary's gencon Con-Version into the ground because they thought that blogging and tweeting snappy remarks were a substitute for proper organization. Fortunately Calgary Comic Con has solved that problem by using professional management to take 60,000 media fans off the street. They relieve them of several hundred dollars in admission fees for the privilege of being herded like cattle into a ballroom to hear actors from cancelled shows pontificate about life as the third Klingon from the left.

This is why I enjoy so much Calgary's new literary convention When Words Collide. (Please note the correct spelling: Words, not Worlds.) You fretted that "*it has taken away our local VCON's reputation for being a literary con*".

I'm not certain what you mean by this. The two conventions, nor any other readercon, are not in competition with each other. The success of WWC would not diminish the Vancouver convention. Since the two cities are a day's hard driving apart from each other, the cons are held at different times of the year, and draw on different populations, there is no competition. The success of one convention cannot weaken another, and may even strengthen it because it gets more people excited about literary SF.

I don't see many teenagers at WWC but I have noticed a reversal of the aging trend somewhat. The Old Guard are now in their 50s and 60s, but WWC is drawing a large number of members in their 30s and 40s, indicating a generational changeover of some sort. The younger folk talk about ebooks and flash fiction, while us older Boomers clutch our small-press and print-on-demand books, but we all still read.

You were wondering if Calgary still had its "frontier museum" with its collection of old buildings and a steam train. In a word, yes. It is called Heritage Park and is continually growing and improving. It now takes up the entire peninsula on the east side

of Glenmore Reservoir. They have their own sternwheeler as well. I live at the north end of the reservoir and in summer can hear the tooting of its whistle as it takes tourists once around the waters. They recently finished building a large two-level auto museum. The village reminds me of my birthplace in Eckville (rural west-central Alberta) with its wooden buildings, vacant grass-covered lots in the downtown, and people ambling down the middle of the street because there is so little vehicle traffic.

Voice Of The Habu V15#2 Re: Big Brother at the shopping mall sending coupons for baby things to a teenage girl and thereby exposing her pregnancy to her parents. I usually pay cash for store purchases and don't use their loyalty cards, so I haven't been plagued by this sort of thing.

But nevermind that; consider the shopping mall car parks. In Calgary, many of them have green/red light indicators over each parking stall so that you can look down a long row and see if a space is available without having to cruise up and down the rows. The lights are controlled by what I always assumed were either motion sensors or electromagnetic sensors. One day after parking my car, I was walking to the mall entrance when I passed a technician up on a stepladder fiddling with the devices. Out of curiosity, I stopped and asked him what kind of device it was. He showed me the miniature camera and said that recognition software looked for the licence plate,

recorded the number, and that was how it knew to change the stall light from green and red. My blood ran cold, and I asked him what the mall management did with the plate numbers. He said they used them to track their customers.

Fortunately my car is registered to my post office box number downtown, not my house. It does explain some of the weird junk mail I occasionally receive from mall stores in far distant suburbs that I have only visited once or twice.

Implausible Futures #1 *"FAPA isn't the bright center of the fannish universe anymore."* True, although I doubt it ever was even back when. However, no Website is a bright center, and 99% of them come and go so fast that they are hardly more than a faint flicker.

MORE FLOOD STORIES

2013-07-17

by Dale Speirs

I was at a Calgary Philatelic Society sub-committee meeting tonight and, while waiting for it to begin, chatted with a fellow committee member about the flood. She works for the Calgary Public Library and had been stationed at the Central Library, which was flooded a metre deep to the ground floor. The basement was where the microfilm archives were. I used them

occasionally but generally preferred the University microfilm collections which are open-stack, whereas the CPL microforms are closed-stack and require individual requests. The university campus is up on the plateau so it was not affected by flooding. Microfilm may or may not survive flooding depending on how fast the mould grows, but the CPL newspaper and magazine archives in the basement are a definite write-off. The ground floor had the Current Periodicals, which I often consulted. Much of the non-fiction section is also now pulp. Contractors are working around the clock but the late August re-opening date is very iffy.

Like most businesses, the CPL consigned the IT people and their computers to the basement, so its record-keeping and Website are gone. A temporary back-up Website is running but not at all like the fully functional system. My friend told me that it will cost \$10 million to restore the Central Library because much of it was below code due to the impending construction of a new building a block away. All the wiring and other utilities must be replaced and upgraded because it will take several years before the replacement building is ready. The new building had been announced before the flood but is only at the design stage. Because it will sit overtop the LRT line, the design had already established that there would be no basement and the ground floor would only be an entrance rotunda leading up to the library working floors. So no future flooding there, thankfully.

Now that the waters have receded, I've been visiting some of the parks to see the damage. I went down to Stanley Park on the Elbow River and was shocked at how high the water came up. The river in this section has steep banks two or three metres high. The shrub beds in the park were mud-stained above head height, meaning that the flood had been at least five metres above normal level. As someone who had worked 31 years in Parks Maintenance before retiring, I had often seen floods of a couple of metres, but nothing this height.

Every pedestrian bridge over the Elbow River is hanging in tatters from its suspension cables. Debris and floating trees piled up against them and then tore the decks away. The bridge abutments were scoured out, so they will all have to be replaced completely. Memorial Drive, a riverbank freeway on the Bow River, has reopened. It had been guarded by levees faced on the water side with one-metre diameter limestone boulders. The flood shoved them away like inflatable beach balls and then ate into the roadway.

City Council has resumed its weekly meetings. The old and new City Halls will be out of commission for months, so Council met in an industrial warehouse up in the northeast on the plateau. Preliminary reports indicate at least \$1 billion in damage and cleanup costs to City property and \$2 billion to private property.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[Editor's remarks in square brackets.]

FROM: Ned Brooks
4817 Dean Lane
Lilburn, Georgia 30047

2012-03-27

You mention having published a single issue of THRILLING TYPEWRITER TALES. I collect typewriters and wondered if you had sent it to me. But what I find in the fanzine archive is that I have THRILLING TYPEWRITER STORIES #2. So apparently you did two issues, of which I have only the second. And, alas, I can't find that. Do you remember the date and format?

[My mistake in the title; I was going from memory and should have said TTS, not TTT. There was only the single issue, numbered as #2. This was a parody zine I produced for the apa Point Of Divergence, and included the only two typewriter fiction stories I have found, which I discovered over my years of doing research in the University of Calgary Library stacks while searching for other things. I numbered the issue as #2 so I could include fake letters of comment from typewriter fans gushing about there finally being a zine for them.]

[Ned Brooks, continued]

2013-07-13

Looks like Calgary will be a mess for some time. At least it was fresh water. Much of the problem with the flooding caused by Hurricane Sandy on the east coast was that salt water got into everything.

[I don't think it makes that much difference. Everything in the flood zone was coated with clay mud. Since it was days afterwards before flooded basements and ground floors could be entered, they had thick drapes of mould inside them. In Calgary, the sewage plants were downstream of the flooded downtown and inner city, and it was several hundred kilometres before the contaminated water arrived at the next town. (Calgary taverns like to put up signs in their washrooms: "Please flush the toilet; Medicine Hat needs the water.") In other towns of southwestern Alberta, the local sewage plants were overrun and the raw sewage mixed in with the floodwaters that covered the entire townsite.]

FROM: Stuart Stratu
Box 35

2013-05-09

Marrickville, New South Wales 2204, Australia

Your series on human evolution is fascinating. It seems that the furthest back we think to look these days is confined to the last

century or to the Roman Empire. It's impossible to imagine human life 700,000 years ago; those you called "proto-humans". The first thing that occurs to me is Dr. Who's Tardis, to go back there and observe those communities. What would they make of one of us, from 700,000 years in their future. Thinking on these subjects and distances to me is akin to meditating on the universe and galaxies and stars.

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[What I wonder about is how much of our heritage will be carried forward 700,000 years to our descendants, who certainly will not be recognizable as humans of our kind. 700,000 years of history is a lot of text for even graduate students to do theses about.]

FROM: Boxholder
Box 2

2013-07-17

Plattsburgh, New York 12901-0002

[Ray Palm asks about OPUNTIA:] I've always wondered how you were able to format each issue with a sideways digest format. I thought you printed out all the half-pages in order, then cut and pasted them to make a master paper copy from which you printed the final format. But it seems you're doing it all on computer. What software are you using?

[OPUNTIA is produced on a WordPerfect template. The template

has the zine title, boilerplate text, and page numbers, but is otherwise blank. The page layout is 8.5 x 11 with an upper and a lower half, each with two columns. Pages are laid out in printer's order, that is, the first sheet has page 16 overtop page 1, the second sheet is page 2 in the upper half and page 15 in the lower half of the 8.5 by 11 sheet, and so forth. I print them out as eight full sheets, sort them in order like a flip book, and hand the copy to the printer, who does the rest. Each article is a separate WordPerfect document with two columns the same size and format as the template. I can thus cut and paste an article into the template in a couple of minutes, and see in advance how much room I have for it.]

[It also allows me to leisurely write articles of any length and then easily cut them into pieces for a series, such as the one I am currently publishing on human evolution. The zine listings and letters to editor each have their own document, so I can add to them in increments instead of sitting down and reading two dozen zines at once and then writing all the reviews. The images are inserted as separate jpegs. WordPerfect is superior to MS Word (which I had to use at work, so I am experienced in both) but it doesn't really matter. Any word processing software can be used as long as you're comfortable with it.]

You reviewed a book about Toronto radio station CFRB. I knew about that station through listening to shortwave radio. CFRB

has, or used to have, a repeater shortwave station CFRX. Where I live, in Plattsburgh, New York, there are two broadcasters battling on the same frequency at 1010 AM, a New York City station and CFRB. I've wondered if the shortwave frequency was used to deal with this problem.

[I grew up in the Red Deer area, almost exactly halfway between the big cities of Calgary and Edmonton. As a boy, I used to listen to rock music stations from them. The Red Deer stations were either country, which I hate, or boring middle-of-the-road. I mostly listened to CHED 630 AM in Edmonton to the north. The problem with the Calgary stations to the south was that at night there would be crosstalk interference from American stations further south beyond Calgary. There is nothing north of Edmonton except boreal forest. Most of the Calgary interference was from an evangelical station in Nebraska whose preacher was constantly pumping listeners for money in between preaching hellfire for Godless communists. (This was back during the Cold War 1960s.) That made for some interesting juxtapositions overlapping the Beatles and the Bible thumper. Crosstalk was not a problem during the day but I would have been in school or doing chores. At night the ionosphere not only changes to allow longer transmission of radio signals, but many radio stations in Canada and the USA were allowed to boost their wattage strength.]

FROM: Lloyd Penney
1706 - 24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

2013-06-08

[Re: mad scientists in movies] I always wondered though, if scientists were the studious, nerdy type, how did they find the time to court a girl, get married, and have daughters, just about every last one of them?

I Also Heard From: Anna Banana, Frederick Moe, John Held Jr, Murray Moore, John Hertz, Garry Erwin, Tony Hunnicutt, Sheryl Birkhead, Franz Zrilich, Theo Nelson

ZINE LISTINGS

by Dale Speirs

[The Usual means \$4 cash (\$6 overseas) or trade for your zine. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada or overseas (the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount) or mint USA stamps (which are not valid for postage outside USA). US\$ banknotes are still acceptable around the world.]

[SF means science fiction. An apazine is a zine for an amateur press association distro, a perzine is a personal zine, sercon is serious-constructive, and a genzine is a general zine]

Xerography Debt #33 (US\$4 from Davida -12-
Gypsy Breier, Box 11064, Baltimore, Maryland 21212)
Zine reviews from the alternative culture, plus some essays on zinedom. Several different reviewers are used to provide a variety of viewpoints.

Chunga #21 (The Usual from Randy Byers, 1013 North 36 Street, Seattle, Washington 98103) Genzine with articles about a lesbian wedding, marijuana in SF stories, a couple of moanings about fanzines, a look at old-time movies some of which don't exist, a request for a fannish holiday from someone who evidently never heard of the World Wide Party, and lots of letters of comment.

EOD Letter #26 (The Usual from Ken Faig Jr, 2311 Swainwood Drive, Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741) Apazine devoted to H.P. Lovecraft and his circle, with book reviews and comments. Now that HPL's copyrights have expired, there is a new industry in reprinting his stories, and Ken sorts through all the new anthologies being published.

Night Train To Mundo Fine #11 to #12 (The Usual from Frederick Moe, 36 West Main Street, Warner, New Hampshire 03278) #11 looks at the history of the hippie communes in Vermont during the 1960s. #12 is New Hampshire miscellanea and getting away from mass-media noise.

Christian New Age Quarterly V20#4 (US\$5 from Catherine Groves, Box 276, Clifton, New Jersey 07015-0276) A look at the intersection of the New Age movement and ecumenical Christianity.

Fadeaway #34 to #35 (The Usual from Robert Jennings, 29 Whiting Road, Oxford, Massachusetts 01540-2035) Sercon zine, with articles on Rod Serling, 1930s movie mysteries, a radio promotion gone wrong, convention reports, and lots of letters of comments.

Cherry Monocle (Spring 2013) (The Usual from Phlox Icona, 36 Huntington Place Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30350) Brief collage zine.

Alexiad V12#2 to #3 (The Usual from Lisa and Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040) Lots of book reviews, convention reports, horse news, and letters of comment. Always a good solid read.

Ray X X-Rayer #95 to #97 (The Usual from Boxholder, Box 2, Plattsburgh, New York 12901-0002) #95 looks at one UFO couple who search for evidence of aliens but by their own account as soon as they found some they destroyed it. The couple report that aliens were knocking on doors and then running away, which, as Ray X points out, would imply that the aliens must be star-

faring brats playing tricks. Also, some sort of feuding about a Website called Skepchick and inappropriate ads fed by third-party companies to a Web page. #97 has the ultimate in conspiracy theory as some UFOers accuse others of being under mind control of aliens known as Dow Greys. And for something completely different, a note about how radios used to be plugged into light sockets before two-prong plugs were invented.

Probe #155 (The Usual from Science Fiction and Fantasy South Africa, Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa) SF clubzine with lots of short story fiction, some reviews, and letters of comment.

Retro Tech Reproduction (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720) A one-shot single-sheet zine done on a mimeograph, which is how zines were commonly printed before the photocopier came into use.

OSFS Statement #408 to #410 (The Usual from Ottawa SF Society, 18 Norice Street, Ottawa, Ontario K2G 2X5) SF clubzine with club news, and always lots of astronomy news.

Sugar Needle #37 (The Usual from Phlox Icona, 36 Huntington Place Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30350) Devoted to the subject of unusual candies from around the world, with some taste tests.

Brooklyn! #80 (US\$10 cash for four issues, Fred Argoff, Penthouse L, 1170 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, New York 11230) A look around Brooklyn, with photos of old buildings, how some of the bridges got their names, and how the Dutch founded it as Breukelen and its Flatbush district as 't Vlacke Bos.

The Fossil #356 (US\$15 per year from The Fossils Inc, c/o Tom Parsons, 157 South Logan Street, Denver, Colorado 80209) Published by a group interested in the history of zines since the 1870s. (And no, zines weren't invented by punk rockers in the 1970s.) This issue is mostly taken up with tributes and biographies about Leland Hawes (1929-2013), who published his first zine in 1940 and put in decades of service to the American Amateur Press Association. His day job was a newspaper reporter, and reprinted here are articles he wrote for zines about being run out of a Ku Klux Klan meeting and arriving in Cuba just before Castro entered Havana.

Turntable Operator #5 (The Usual from Frederick Moe, 36 West Main Street, Warner, New Hampshire 03278) The main essay is about people who collect vinyl records of genuine folk music from Africa and Asia. In the 1930s, many ethnologists went out to remote places and recorded local bands who performed the music passed down to them by their parents and grandparents, untainted by broadcast radio or other influences. Those recordings are still preserved by collectors today, a

priceless heritage made by musicians who long ago -14-
sunk into the grave, and in some cases whose culture was obliterated by war or genocide. Also an interesting piece on bone records of the Soviet Union. Because rock music was banned by the Communists, fans had to record music on old X-ray plates cut to circular shape and distributed through the underground network.

BCSFazine #478 to #482 (The Usual from British Columbia SF Association, c/o Felicity Walker, 3851 Francis Road #209, Richmond, British Columbia V7C 1J6) SF clubzine with club news, event listings, letters of comment, and various reviews.

The Ken Chronicles #27 (The Usual from Ken Bausert, 2140 Erma Drive, East Meadow, New York 11554-1120) Perzine, with this issue mostly taken up with an account of a trip to chilly Florida, how to fix a hot tub, and letters of comment.

One Minute Zine Reviews #6 (The Usual from Frederick Moe, 36 West Main Street, Warner, New Hampshire 03278) A selection of brief alt zine reviews.

Vanamonde #903 to #917 (The Usual from John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street #409, Los Angeles, California 90057) Weekly single-sheet apazine with comments on numerous subjects.

Banana Wings #52 (The Usual from Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer, 59 Shirley Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 7ES, England) Faanish genzine with essays and convention reports on SF fandom in Britain and the colonies, as well as lots of letters of comment.

The Life Of Rodney Year 64 #3 to #4 (The Usual from Rodney Leighton, 11 Branch Road, R.R. 3, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia B0K 1V0) Perzine with some book and zine reviews.

MetaZine (US\$2 from Davida Gypsy Breier, Box 11064, Baltimore, Maryland 21212) One-shot about zines and how to produce and distribute them. Contains all the basic information to help a neo-zinester get started and is aimed at those who might be usefully converted to The Cause.

National Fantasy Fan #71.4 to #72.4 and **Tightbeam #264 to #265** (US\$18 per year payable to William Center, N3F, Box 1925, Mountain View, California 94042) These are the club publications of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, which was founded in 1941. Club news and contests, reviews, and short fiction.

Who Is The Star-Spangled Torquemada Now? (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720) Single-sheet apazine with comments on a variety of topics.

Treasure #1 (The Usual from Bruce Gillespie, 5 Howard Street, Greensborough, Victoria 3088, Australia) Apazine with essays on growing up a bongo player in a dry-cleaning family, trips reports to Tuva and India, book commentary, and lots of letters of comment.

SEEN IN THE LITERATURE

noticed by Dale Speirs

Hanski, I., et al (2012) **Environmental biodiversity, human microbiota, and allergy are interrelated.** PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES USA 109:8334–8339

"Rapidly declining biodiversity may be a contributing factor to another global megatrend—the rapidly increasing prevalence of allergies and other chronic inflammatory diseases among urban populations worldwide. According to the "biodiversity hypothesis," reduced contact of people with natural environmental features and biodiversity may adversely affect the humancommensal microbiota and its immunomodulatory capacity. Analyzing atopic sensitization (i.e., allergic disposition) in a random sample of adolescents living in a heterogeneous region of 100 × 150 km, we show that environmental biodiversity in the surroundings of

the study subjects' homes influenced the composition of the bacterial classes on their skin. ... By 2050, some predict that two-thirds of the global human population will live in urban areas with little green space and limited contact with nature and biodiversity. At the same time, an increasing fraction of the urban population will suffer from chronic inflammatory disorders, of which allergic and autoimmune diseases are prime examples. Building on the hygiene hypothesis, the notion that growing up in a farming environment protects children from allergic sensitization, and the emerging understanding of the role of microbes in the development and maintenance of epithelial cell integrity and tolerance, the "biodiversity hypothesis" proposes that reduced contact of people with natural environmental features and biodiversity, including environmental microbiota, leads to inadequate stimulation of immunoregulatory circuits. Importantly, interactions with the natural environment may influence the composition of the human commensal microbiota, the members of which are not equal in their ability to stimulate the regulatory circuits via Toll-like and other antigen-recognizing receptors to prevent or terminate inappropriate inflammatory responses."

Speirs: I wonder about this. I grew up on a cattle ranch. I had no problems outdoors with any animals but couldn't go inside the barn for more than fifteen minutes without my lungs wheezing from animal dander or hay dust. I have never had skin rashes

from handling animals; my only allergies were from breathing the air in a confined space. I have never had an asthma attack since leaving the farm.

Rowley, J.J.L., et al (2012) **The strangest tadpole: The oophagous, tree-hole dwelling tadpole of *Rhacophorus vampyrus* (Anura: Rhacophoridae) from Vietnam.** JOURNAL OF NATURAL HISTORY 46:2969-2978

Tadpoles of the vampire flying frog *Rhacophorus vampyrus* of Vietnam develop from non-pigmented eggs suspended in a foam nest in tree holes. The upper jaw of the tadpoles has two fangs and several inward-facing sharp teeth. The lower lip has two forward-facing hooks. The tadpoles are egg-eaters and the mother lays unfertilized eggs in the nest afterwards for them to suck on.

Baricic, T.V., and S. Dodig (2013) **Birch pollen associated peanut allergies in children.** AEROBIOLOGIA 29(1):85-93

This study showed that many children who had peanut allergies were also allergic to birch pollen. It appears that some children considered as having peanut allergy are actually reacting to birch pollen.