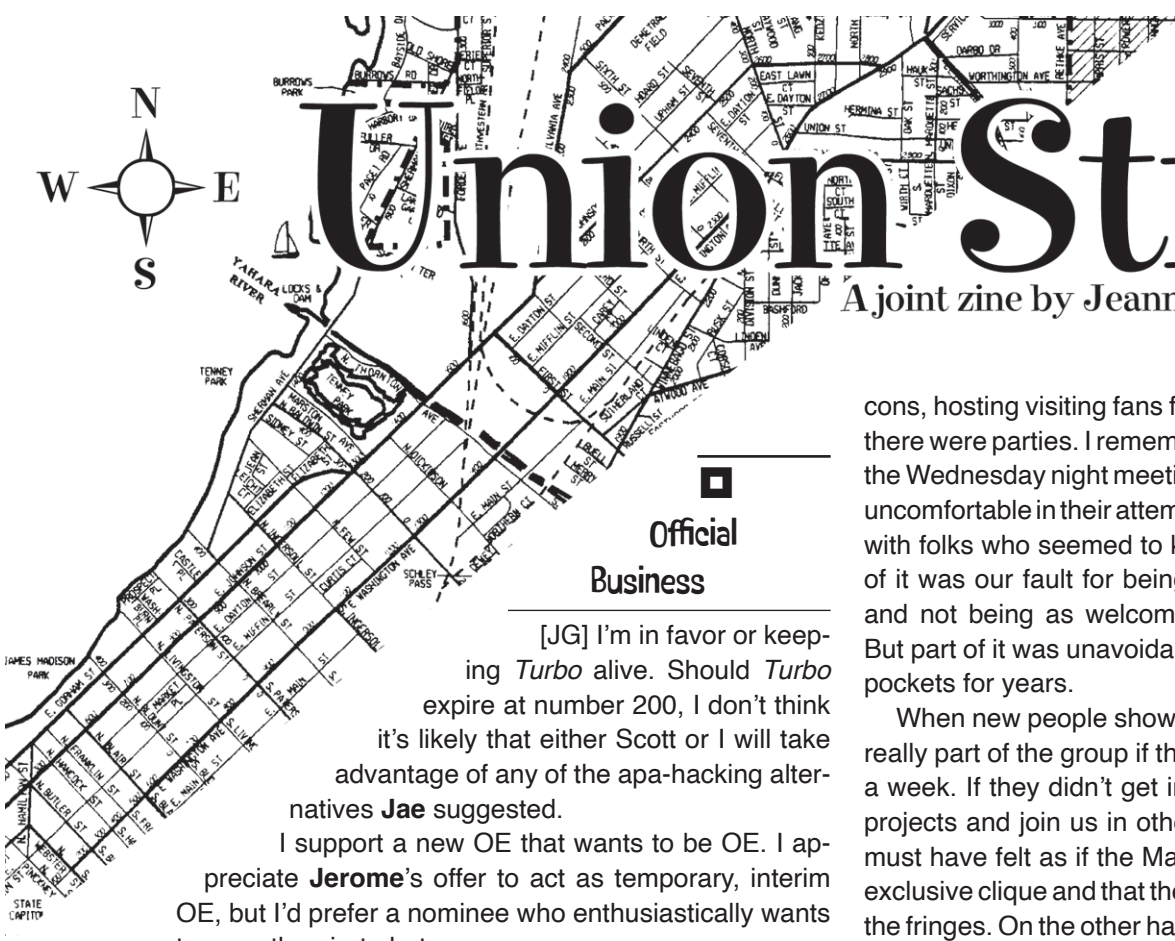




# Union Street

A joint zine by Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis



## Official Business

[JG] I'm in favor of keeping *Turbo* alive. Should *Turbo* expire at number 200, I don't think it's likely that either Scott or I will take advantage of any of the apa-hacking alternatives **Jaе** suggested.

I support a new OE that wants to be OE. I appreciate **Jerome's** offer to act as temporary, interim OE, but I'd prefer a nominee who enthusiastically wants to wear the pirate hat.

## Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I keep thinking there is more to talk about in connection to **Maureen's** experience with the Aldington quilters. You described it as a "social group with an unofficial sub-membership that others somehow can never quite join." Having been both outside and inside such groups, I have mixed feelings about whether this kind of social behavior is fair or kind to outsiders. Much of my high school and early college experiences could be summarized as various forms of the outsider role and I frequently felt rotten about it. But I got to experience the other side in the early days of the Madison SF3 group—at a time when most of our members were students and few of us had fulfilling jobs. We met formally once a week at the WSA Book Co-op, and later at Nick's Restaurant/Bar on State Street. But we also tended to go to movies together *en masse*. We worked on projects together and socialized together so much, that it was quite usual that the group got together three or four times a week. There was a lot to do: there were the fanzines, WisCon, the monthly presentations, the weekly radio and TV show, the book review organization, the book discussions, trips to other

cons, hosting visiting fans from other cities and of course there were parties. I remember new people showing up at the Wednesday night meeting at Nick's who obviously felt uncomfortable in their attempts to join in the conversations with folks who seemed to know each other so well. Part of it was our fault for being poorly socialized ourselves and not being as welcoming as we could have been. But part of it was unavoidable; we lived in one another's pockets for years.

When new people showed up at Nick's they never felt really part of the group if they joined us just that one day a week. If they didn't get involved in one of the group's projects and join us in other social activities, I'm sure it must have felt as if the Madison SF group was one big, exclusive clique and that they'd always wander around on the fringes. On the other hand, the group was a wonderful thing to those of us who had few friends outside the group, did not have very fulfilling jobs, and were devoting a huge amount of energy to the group's activities. It was a kind of family/apprenticeship program/team.

Today, I can easily experience the outsider feeling for myself just by dropping in on a Progressive Dane meeting. Ironically this local political group meet on Wednesday nights too, and just like the Madison SF group that I recall from the late 70s and early 80s, there's a (much larger) core of very active members who devote most of their free time to the group's activities, and who probably derive a great deal of self-esteem from their work in the group. They frequently socialize together too, that's pretty obvious. Progressive Dane matches my politics well; I like many of the people quite a lot, and in fact have formed a couple friendships, but in order to really feel like I belonged, I would have to totally rearrange my priorities. Not only would I have to regularly attend the weekly meeting, but I'd have to get involved in one or two of the other regular activities, and around elections, I would have to ignore everything else in my life and devote myself entirely to the committees and the work, much like I do now, in fact, in the couple months before WisCon. Oh, and I'd probably have to back away from WisCon too.

This issue of *Union Street* is brought to you by Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, who live at 2825 Union Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53704. 608-246-8857. Jeanne's email is ArtBrau@gdinet.com; Scott's email is sec@gdinet.com. This is *Union Street* #139, Obsessive Press #268, Peerless Press #139. *Union Street* was created using a Power Macintosh G3, InDesign 2, Illustrator 9, Photoshop 6, and a Laserwriter Select 360. Display font is Elroy. All contents copyright © 2002 by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, November 2002 for the *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #197.

Having experienced groups from both the outsider and insider viewpoints, I feel a lot more tolerant of groups that seem cliquish; I'm less likely to feel that there is anything personal about my being excluded. I feel that it's simply a matter of priorities. There's just so much time.... And that's not a bad thing.

And by the way, I do think that men's groups are just as capable of this sort of exclusivity as women's groups are.

You wrote (also to **Maureen**) that "Regular Americans just don't sing in large groups—except to 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game' at actual games." I can think of another small exception. Garrison Keillor seems to be able to get his *Prairie Home Companion* audiences to sing aloud together enthusiastically. I've gone to a few shows over the years and each time there have been several sing-along songs and everyone (including me) has a lot of fun joining in on the songs. One of the perennial PHC songs is "Oklahoma!"

I thought it was ironic that you wrote about the "semi-riot of strangeness"—Madison's annual State Street Halloween celebrations. This year's Halloween (or actually, the Saturday night after Halloween), turning into a not-so-semi-riot. More irony: it seems that the situation may have escalated into violence for the same reason that the anti-war demonstrations of the 70s escalated into violence: because police dealt with the situations as confrontations, us-against-them, and brought out the tear gas when they felt they had lost control.

I hope you describe your *Lord of the Rings* extravaganza in this issue.

I love the Kali Roger!

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## ▣ Julie Humphries

[JG] Well I'm sorry to hear that you're leaving us, especially considering you contributed such a comment-hook-strewn zine for your last contribution! On the assumption that you'll be able to borrow someone's copy to read your comments, I'll include them anyway.

Your description of sorting your belongings resonated with me. I too have been sorting. I sanded, stained and varnished some new bookshelves a couple weeks ago, and then thinned and reshelfed all our books. Even though we've got two more bookcases, and even though I put a large number of books into "to-sell" boxes, we've still got just barely enough space for our collection. \*sigh\* Scott thinks we ought to order another bookshelf soon. It's a little frustrating, but mainly it feels great to get control of things, get rid of stuff, and feel like everything is in order and clean.... Hope you enjoy that feeling too.

It sounds as if you are applying your job-search skills to socializing. Good for you! I admire your proactive attitude and hope you find some good friends and possibly more....

With regard to your love of the obscure and incomprehensible, have you ever seen the art books/romance—the correspondence between Griffin and Sabine? I bet you'd really like it.

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## ▣ Vicki Rosenzweig

[JG] I've tended to use the phrase "9/11" as shorthand to refer to all the attacks—on the World Trade towers, the Pentagon and the aborted attack that ended in Pennsylvania, because it seems too cumbersome to mention all the events that happened that day. I've tended to use the phrase "post-9/11" to refer to the aftereffects.

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## ▣ Tracy Benton

[JG] Thank you for the Tzatziki recipe. I've been meaning to look for it.

Yes of course I remember the Madison Rax restaurant. I used to live one block away from it when Scott and I had our apartment near Badger Road (on Petra Place). I used to see the sign every day and think to myself every day, "Rax??!!"

I really like the idea of a keynote address on Saturday morning and would like to hear your ideas of who might be asked to deliver it and what it should be about.... I want to talk about your suggestion on the programming list.

Sure, let's talk about coordinating a once-a-month Wednesday night. Sounds fun.

What an interesting question you asked **Lisa**: what author's books would you choose to live in? My first thought was that I'd have to know whether I'd be living in that world as a main character or a spear carrier! But then, I realized that it didn't much matter: most of my favorite authors write about complex worlds that are much like the real world insofar as simply living in that world wouldn't necessarily guarantee a good or bad experience. Not to mention that a lot of them are really dangerous and unstable and I probably wouldn't survive in them for long. I started listing some authors I've read recently ... Kim Robinson, Ursula Le Guin, George R.R. Martin, Gwyneth Jones, Jane Austen, Laurie Marks, Karen Fowler, Marge Piercy, China Mieville, Christopher Moore.... Though there might be a character or two whose life I could wish to experience, I've never desired to live in the worlds these authors create. Maybe Harry Potter's world. Or maybe Ken Grimwood's *Replay*. It's impossible to read that book without imagining how I might have chosen to re-live my life again.

My mind did a couple digressions from your comment to **Carrie**. Maybe we should agree to use Nevenah's name as a unit of measurement. A full Nevenah would be a very difficult move; whereas a .2 Nevenah wouldn't

be bad at all.

So, how did those Halloween costumes turn out? Do you have photos?

I hope your brother is doing better!

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### ▣ Pat Hario

[JG] You're IN! Congratulations! I look forward to seeing the photos.

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### ▣ Maureen Kincaid Speller

[JG] Ironically (considering the frustrating situation with the bank you described), the printing of your zine at Kinkos involved me in a different (but strangely similar) sort of frustrating interaction with bureaucracy. I printed the pdf file you sent and took it to Kinkos for printing. When asked how many pages your zine was, I pointed to the page number of the last page: "8," and instructed the clerk to print it double-sided. But after Scott and I returned from doing a couple errands, they'd only printed pages 1–4. When I pointed out the error, the clerk told me that I'd only given her four pages. I reminded her that I'd actually pointed to the number "8" on the last page of your zine. The clerk told me, and I quote, "that's impossible." Well, luckily we don't live far away from Kinkos, so it wasn't very hard to go home and run off the last four pages again, but I got more and more angry about "that's impossible" statement and made Scott go back to print the missing pages. What happened to "the customer is always right" ... especially when she IS!? Sheesh.

Your coursework does indeed sound hard...but in a good way. You may very well feel incredibly good about the experience afterwards; in fact you seem to already. The challenge will make your achievement all the more worthwhile. You must certainly feel glad that you are not like the majority of fellow students, that you actually value the stuff you are learning and have previously done a considerable amount of work on your own in the area. These factors can only help to enrich the core part of your experience as a student.

And what a great way to end your zine, saying that you are not "sure that life could get much better than this right now!" Lovely.

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### ▣ Jim Nichols

[JG] I wish that you and **Ruth** will consider running for apa OE. I agree with you that the apa is still a worthwhile endeavor in itself. And I'd like to see someone who feels committed to that idea run for OE.

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### ▣ Kim & Kathi Nash

[JG] Thanks for the great "before" pictures. I look forward to seeing the finished house!

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### ▣ Lee Murray

[JG] Love stories written by men do sometimes generate really enthusiastic publicity. I was thinking of *The Bridges of Madison County*, which is of course an Iowa love story. I heard a story about it on NPR before it came out (right around Valentine's day), and I think the reviewer used a phrase something like, "a man's love story," or "a manly love story" or maybe "a manly man's love story." The fact that it was set in Iowa decided me; I purchased it for Scott and gave it to him on February 14. We both read it and found it pretty awful and I never did quite understand what made this particular romance so characteristically masculine. The movie made from the novel actually improved on it quite a bit. I liked the movie.

Using the word "with" to end sentences, as in "the salad comes *with*," has become an American idiom. Maybe it's not even a preposition anymore; it's morphed into a term meaning the opposite of *à la carte*. On the other hand, the more general American penchant for ending sentences with prepositions will probably eventually turn into correct grammatical form, it's so universally practiced. I've noticed more than a few times in movies, that one linguistic signal that identifies the speaker as a member of a higher class is that they avoid those dangling prepositions. "We are so grateful for the inherited wealth in which we roll." I practically didn't pay attention to the plot of the Robert Redford version of *The Great Gatsby*, I was so fascinated by how effortlessly Daisy buried her prepositions within her sentences, while the lower class folks around her left theirs dangling for everyone to see.

And what a wonderful trip report you and **Julie Z.** wrote. Thanks, that was fun! I liked the hand scribed notes and the food reviews too. And the back and forth between you and Julie worked very nicely.

Tastes differ. I actually like it when artists are willing to share some of the technical details of how they created their work. It's one of the things I look forward to when we go to the Art Fair on the Square. Having thrown pots in my youth and experimented with glaze recipes, I would have really liked to find out more about that New Glarus Green. Kilning ceramics at stoneware temperatures (2000°F +) tends to make it difficult to hold really vibrant colors, so fan clubs have developed around artists who have discovered secret color recipes.

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### ▣ Julie Zachman

[JG] I am sorry to see you leave *Turbo*, Julie. But it

sounds like you are replacing it with some wonderfully fulfilling projects. Good for you for volunteering for Big Brothers and Big Sisters! I hope I'll be able to catch up with you every once in a while and find out how your life goes.

By the way, thanks very much for including the description of tracking with Will. How interesting! I really admire how much energy you've put into training your dog.

Re your comment about biking in Michigan, Scott and

I saw a lot of bike paths as we drove north along Lake Michigan. In fact we saw quite a few paths in the process of being built. I'd like to bring my bike along the next time we go there.

Jeanne Gomoll  
20 November 2002




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### New Year's Eve Party

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Please join us on New Year's Eve  
**December 31, 2002**  
8 p.m. til Dawn

Supper served at midnight  
Champagne, wine, beer, soft drinks will be served.  
(But you are welcome to bring your personal favorite beverage)

Formal dress is encouraged.

Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis' home:  
2825 Union Street  
(Please call if you need directions.)



Confetti-Free Zone

Please RSVP!  
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