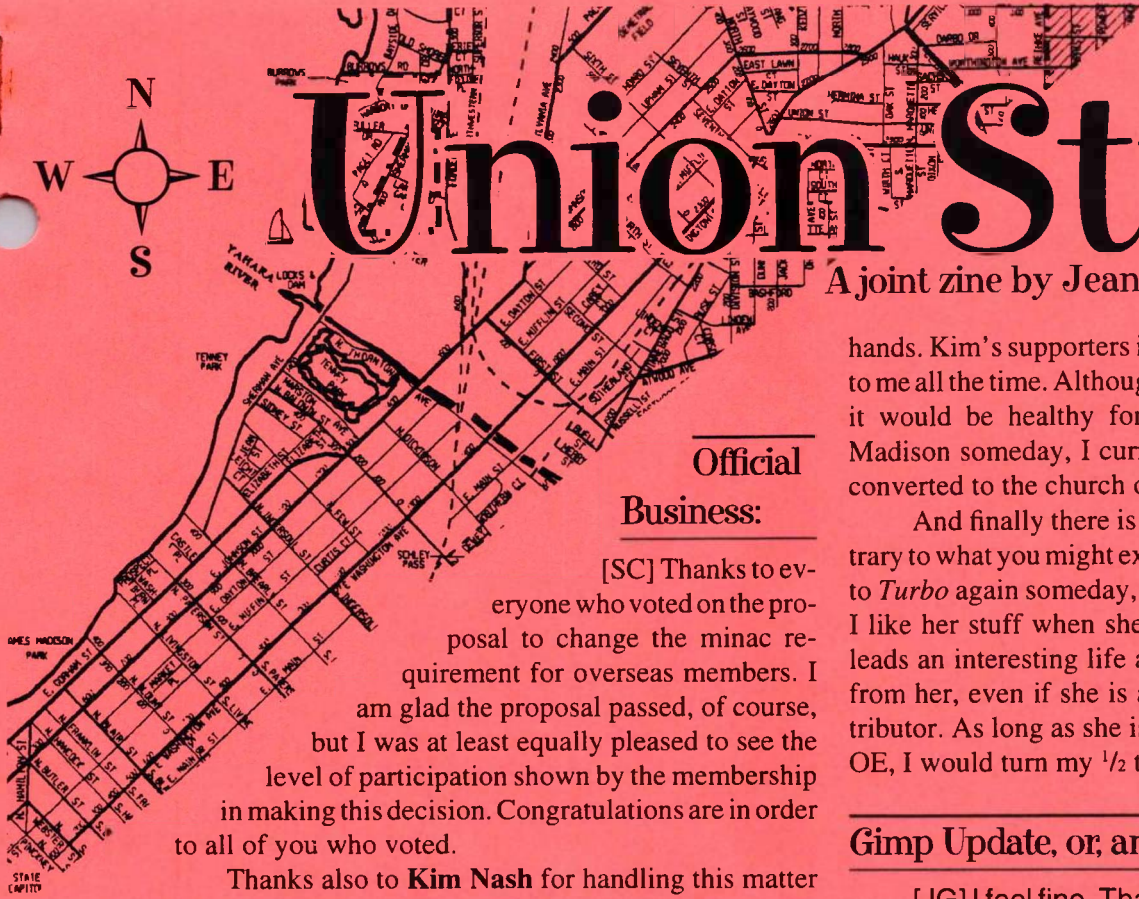


Union Street

A joint zine by Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis



Official Business:

[SC] Thanks to everyone who voted on the proposal to change the minac requirement for overseas members. I am glad the proposal passed, of course, but I was at least equally pleased to see the level of participation shown by the membership in making this decision. Congratulations are in order to all of you who voted.

Thanks also to **Kim Nash** for handling this matter very competently and without complaint. It was a significant added complication for him that I put forward this motion just as I was turning over the apa to him. I probably couldn't have done that to an inexperienced OE. Good job, Kim.

Comings and Goings

[SC] I am proud to have helped bring in some new writers to *Turbo*, over the years, who have turned out to be wonderful and successful additions to the membership. I regret that I am not always so successful. I championed bringing Spike back into *Turbo* and I was looking forward to her discovering a new and improved apa. I was as surprised as anyone that she dropped out so soon, especially after I extended to her a rare Grace.

I am also disconcerted that Steve Swartz dropped out almost immediately after moving to Seattle. This would have been a far less jarring development had I not been vocally supporting him for OE right before his move. I do not know what would have happened to *Turbo* had he won the election, but I gather that the realities of his new job would have forced the management of *Turbo* almost immediately back into my

hands. Kim's supporters in the election are looking wiser to me all the time. Although I will not forsake the idea that it would be healthy for the OEship to move out of Madison someday, I currently count myself among the converted to the church of Nash. All hail the OE.

And finally there is Nevenah being Nevenah. Contrary to what you might expect, I would support her return to *Turbo* again someday, though I will not nominate her. I like her stuff when she bothers to submit a zine. She leads an interesting life and I always find it fun to hear from her, even if she is a maddeningly haphazard contributor. As long as she isn't financially in the red to the OE, I would turn my 1/2 thumb up for her return.

Gimp Update, or, an HMO Fable

[JG] I feel fine. Thanks for the email messages, cards, and various expressions of concern. The heavy doses of antibiotics eliminated most of the red tide and nearly all the pain from my ankle and leg, and after a couple weeks, I was able to get around on crutches, then a cane, and finally with nothing but a limp. Now the limp has disappeared.

However, I'm still getting treated for what may or may not be athlete's foot. After about a month, and after having diligently taken the antibiotics for the suspected staff infection and having applied the

prescribed lotion and swallowed the prescribed pills for the fungal infection, I returned to the HMO clinic with a foot and an ankle even *more* swollen than they had been at the beginning of this process. Socks barely covered my foot. The diameter of my right ankle was half again as large as my left ankle. (Some of you may have noticed this at our New Year's party.) Also there was *another* sort of weird rash, not at all like athlete's foot fungus, starting on my lower leg. I could walk just fine, but something was obviously not right. My regular GHC doctors allowed as how I should seek help with a specialist....

So I went to see Dr. Diane Taylor, who I already knew well

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Peerless Press (SC) #84

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from my diagnosis, years ago, of alopecia. Diane heard my tale, laughed, and called my doctors a bunch of bozos. She said I had clearly become allergic to all the lotions that had been prescribed for me over the years for treatment of athlete's foot and told me sternly to stop using the stuff. OK, I said. Then, she did a biopsy to see if the suspected staph infection was actually *gone*. I was amazed to realize that nobody at the clinic had considered checking to see if they'd actually gotten rid of the infection. As a matter of fact, it turned out that I was *not* cured of the infection. To top it off, I was stunned to learn that I had a different sort of infection than the clinic doctors had been assuming all along, but never bothered to confirm. Diane gave me a prescription for the proper antibiotic and gave me a shot of cortisone. The next day I woke up to find that my ankle had already lost half of its swelling. The next day, the swelling had reduced even more. The redness is almost entirely disappeared, and these last two weeks I've walked home from work six times (a four-mile distance). I feel fine.

Mailing comments

[JG] I have made the discovery that my usual way of marking comment hooks in the margins of apazines to remind myself of things to which I'd like to reply, does not survive two months, a holiday season, and an ankle infection. As I reviewed *Turbo 125*, I kept finding checks in the margins next to paragraphs that, when I reread them, mystified me as to what I thought I had to say about them. Some were clear. But lots were total mysteries. Ah well, my catchup comments will be slightly spotty....

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Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I wish I could have dropped by Lee Schneider's house on Halloween and seen your holiday production. What fun! I'm really impressed. What role did you play, Georgie?

You're absolutely right that fans could outdo Martha Stewart. And not only with home-centered crafts. You know, I think I've heard the same sort of reaction that Martha elicits, often with an eerily similar tone of voice, from some folks when confronted with the kind of extensive book collections owned by many fans. ("Have you really read all these books?! I don't have the *time* to read *fiction* anymore.")

The *Babylon 5* lurker's page contains synopses and commentary on each episode, as well as cumulative synopses and background. Click on the "Episodes" button. The information I found there has helped Scott and I catch up a bit.

[SC] Another stunningly beautiful cover. For years the members of this apa have put a lot of effort and creativity into our cover art. You are setting an even higher standard for us. Thanks again.

Congratulations on the new computer. Don't forget to send us your email address when you get one.

Pretty wild description of the Halloween goings-on at Lee Schneider's house. Very impressive. This production must be legendary with the neighborhood kids.

I thought the article you printed by Michael Bowen demonstrated profound ignorance on his part. He underestimates "the Rich" and confuses Liberals with Leftists. He is not much less condescending to "the Workers" than the intellectual/liberal straw man he constructed (and what about the Poor?). It's just more recycled conservative boilerplate accusing the left of failing to understand the common man. What nonsense.

Michael Shannon

[SC] Nice piece on your flying lessons and experiences. I enjoyed it and hope you keep writing about it. I hadn't thought of co-owning a plane as an option, but it is really a good idea. Like anything else, you would have to feel pretty good about your partners to get into such a deal, but you're certainly right that the expenses of sole ownership of a small plane would be significant. Good luck with this venture.

Sandy Taylor

[SC] YCT us re: overhearing "the militant campers" at Rock Island park. The nuts who invaded the beach and performed military exercises in the middle of the night that summer were not campers, but came from somewhere else via boat. Jeanne and I had been camping up there that year, but we were not out there the night they showed up. We read about it later in the newspaper. As near as I can tell, they never repeated the performance.

Kim Winz

[JG] I hope that Nick and his brother or sister develop a close relationship, but from my experience, it won't necessarily have anything to do with proximity in age. My brother Rick and I were very good friends, which fits the proximity theory, since

he and I were only two years apart. Steve and I are four years apart, but only became friends after we became adults. When we were kids, we hated each other. On the other hand, my sister Julie and I are amazingly close friends and she's 11 years younger than me. Danny's 18 years younger and we like each other, but I hope we eventually get to know one another better. Since we only lived together in the same place for about a year when he was an infant, it's hard to build those usual family connections... The determining factor, in my experience, is not proximity of age, but of interests and personality. [Completely reversing my experience of sibling friendships deepening with time, however, is my mom's relationship with her siblings. As the baby of the family, she remembers being very close to her three sisters and one brother (all aged within 10 years of each other), but grew estranged from them all when they moved away from home. Mom began repairing some of those relationships during the year their father died, but still expresses lots of anger toward them.]

Jae Adams

[JG] "...a computer game for an incredibly boring person." I like to think of not-obviously-fun-but-engrossing-computer-housekeeping-chores, as exercise, or maybe some sort of agnostic prayer, in the sense that *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* author, Robert Pirsig talks about the virtues inherent in taking care of ones equipment.... I've never gotten into playing computer games for their own sake; I like to be making something, moving toward a tangible goal of personal value to myself. I think I play with graphics programs (and recently, have begun designing some databases) with some of the same energy that some people play computer games.

Microsoft's CD disk, *Cinemanía 94*, doesn't have nearly as many pirate films listed as your Hallwell, but then, one can't do subject searches with *Cinemanía*. All I could find were titles which had the word "pirate" in them: *The Pirate* (1948), *Pirate and the Slave Girl* (1961), *The Pirate Movie* (1982), *Pirates* (1986), *Pirates of Blood River* (1962), *The Pirates of Capri* (1949), *Pirates of Monterey* (1947), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1983), *Pirates of Tortuga* (1961), *Pirates of Tripoli* (1955).

**People disappear all the time.
Especially in Iowa. We might
have saved him from an alien
abduction.**

After reading your description of it, I tried to find Fay Weldon's *Notes to Alice on First Reading Jane Austen* at Borders, but it wasn't there. Is it an older book? It must be out of print, so I'll look for it at the library....

You wrote that you liked the film version of *Persuasion* better than the latest *Sense and Sensibility*. Me too. In fact, the costuming and sets of both *Persuasion* and the BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice* both looked more real and less romanticized than S&S. For instance, I was fascinated by the overdresses (or dress-like coats or whatever they were called). (Why do I think that **Georgie** will

know right away?) that the female characters wore in *P&P* when they went out for walks. But the thing I liked most about *Persuasion* was its elegant plot. I did wonder, however, why the movie left out almost all the revelations of Mr. Eliot's crimes. The movie made him out to be, at worst, rather vain and greedy.

Congratulations on your letter being published by *NYRSF*! We don't subscribe to it, but I would like to know what you commented upon in your letter.

What a great (!) description of the bad old days, Dippity-Do and bonnet hair dryers and sleeping on spikey rollers.... Ugh. I used to envy a girl in my 7th grade class who had mastered her hair. She wore her medium-length hair in an absolutely perfect flip, much like the "do" pictured in your zine. Only her hair was blond and somewhat longer. I struggled, but I could never get all of my hair to turn up at the ends. Some of it would defy my brush and turn under; some would turn up tightly; some would turn up only slightly. I felt like screaming in frustration, especially for all the trouble I was taking, washing and wrapping my hair around large brush rollers every night before going to bed. The brushes inside the rollers dug into my scalp like spikes; it's hard to remember how I even managed to sleep wearing those torture devices.

When blow dryers finally were introduced, I finally began liking my hair. Its thick, somewhat wavy texture held styles easily, and I enjoyed the feeling of it when I brushed my fingers through it, and especially loved how easy it had become to take care of it. *sigh* Now I'm all nostalgic for hair. Wigs are even easier to take care of than blow-dried hair, but I think I would even be willing to go back to rollers again if it meant I could grow my hair out again.

If you haven't seen the books that **Vijay** recommended to you (*Griffin and Sabine*), and you'd like to, ask me sometime and I'll show them to you. They're really lovely works of craft and you should know about them if you don't already.

[SC] I very much liked your informative piece on dealing with hair over the years, but I have to admit that I most enjoyed your review of pirate movies. I have not seen all the movies you mentioned, but I remember as a kid seeing *The Crimson Pirate* and *The Black Swan*. I remember enjoying them a great deal, but I suppose having someone yell "Sexist dog!" every few minutes would have been helpful later in life. And yes, the 1973 *The Three Musketeers* (and the sequel *The Four Musketeers*) are delightful movies. Good luck finding them.

A very belated congratulations on getting your letter pubbed in NYRSF. I would have congratulated you sooner had we known.

Tracy Benton

[JG] Congratulations on the new car, Tracy. It sure looks pretty.

You should send your question about iridescent bubbles to *The Straight Dope*. I believe that column is represented on the web, too.

[SC] In case I haven't said this already, congratulations on the new car. I am very envious, as always when my friends get new cars. I have never purchased a brand new car myself, but I swear that I will someday. It seems to me the process of buying a new car could be nothing but fun. Once you have done the hard part of figuring out what you can afford and narrowing down the choices to a few models, deciding between them has got to be so much fun. I have always had to buy cars based on figuring out whether they will turn into bright and shiny lemons, since all the cars I've ever bought were used. That is not nearly as much fun as weighing options, colors and equipment in cars that are fresh from the factory. I read about how difficult this all was for you, but believe me I would have enjoyed it.

One other thing on the subject of new car buying. Steve Swartz was impressed with how shit-headed the local dealer was about working with him toward buying his new Subaru Outback. He wound up going on the Internet and finding a friendlier dealer in the Milwaukee area. In the future, you might not need to settle for working only with the local Honda dealer on Honda prices (however, I think you made an excellent choice with the Saturn.)

Vijay Bowen

[JG] I'm very sorry to hear about your dad's death, Vijay. It's been nearly 7 years since my brother died and I'm still experiencing that momentary feeling of discontinuity fairly frequently, when I think of something to tell Rick, and then suddenly realize I can't talk to him anymore. More and more recently I've just gone ahead and told him anyway, sort of imagined the conversation I might have had with him. (What an embarrassing revelation this would be if I were the wife of a President....)

[SC] Very sad news about your father. We are both very sorry for your loss.

YCT re: pierced Turbo Chargers, I just don't think we want to go down this road, Vijay (thank God Nevenah is not here to bite on this hook). However, in the spirit of cooperation I will report that I have the only piercing in the *Union Street* household, a single one in my left earlobe. And I assure you, no others are planned.

Heather-Aynne Brooks

[JG] The beach and the public pool *would* be degrading to women if all women were required to wear bikinis to visit these places. That we have a choice of what to wear and how to interact with others in these places makes all the difference — in comparison with a job, for example, where one's employer sells women's bodies or views of women's bodies along with hamburgers and beer. A beach can be degrading for a woman if she meets someone who assumes that her skimpy clothing means that she is available to all men on the beach. So can a bar. And if the employer subtly (or boldly) suggests that the employees have been hired because of their big breasts or shapely build, it's not surprising that a lot of customers make assumptions that makes those jobs degrading. Take for instance, the case of the stewardess, a few years back, who was fired from her job because she failed to smile enough at the passengers, or the hundreds of stewardesses who were formerly fired every year because they gained too many pounds or weren't young anymore.... There are (still) far too many jobs in our society which employ women not for their skills or their strength or their intelligence, but simply for their ability to be attractive to men. Given that, it's not surprising that some male customers feel that these women have been provided *for them* and in fact, learn to extend these assumptions to other women in their lives.

I don't often use the word "degrading," to describe Hooters-like situations. I more often just feel angry that there are so many jobs in which women's bodies are treated like a commodity and which foster sexist attitudes in society. Neither am I suggesting that those jobs ought to be made illegal or that we should censor pornography. But I am glad that the women's organization (against spousal abuse, I think?) was able to refuse a donation from Hooters. I don't like the way companies like Hooters, tobacco companies, polluting industries, and the like attempt to clean up their image by associating themselves with admirable organizations. A heavily-polluting company contributes money to environmental organization to improve their public image, but the company is still a polluter. The same goes with a sexist industry that contributes money to a feminist group; their actions speak louder than their words.

I'm glad you enjoy working at Hooters, that you are not uncomfortable there. But, as you quite rightly suggest, everything's relative. And for a lot of us, Hooters is just one more place where women's bodies are treated like a commodity with huge value to entrepreneurs, to everyone in fact, except women, who are called whores if they choose to sell their own bodies.

I actually thought it was rather objectionable that Hooters rules say that you are not *allowed* to hug your dad (or anyone else you choose to show affection) at Hooters. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources would have a lawsuit on its hands if it attempted to tell me that I couldn't show Scott any affection when he picked me up at my office. I don't grant the DNR the right to tell me who I kiss or *who I can't kiss* by the terms of my employment. Does Hooters worry that its customers would assume that if a waitress hugs one customer, that she should be available to all other customers for the same service? And where would a Hooters customer get *that* idea?

I hope you keep fighting to get the treatment you need for your knee injury. If I've learned anything through my own health crisis this past month, it's that you have to demand what you need. HMO's (and, I assume, Workers Comp. officials) will do anything to avoid referrals to specialists. In fact, I hear that there's a growing branch of law — workers comp law — catalyzed by the huge number of people who actually need legal advice in order to get the benefits they've earned....

[SC] Welcome back. I find your stuff fun and refreshing. I hope you can stick with us for a good long time.

Your job at the Radisson sounds cool, but it is not clear to me what you do there exactly. Are you working in Reservations?

Jim Brooks

[JG] You mentioned that the Martian rocks are going for high prices, \$800,000 to 2.5 million. Well I sure hope no science fiction fan puts money down for such bad investments. I would think these rocks will only go down in value in the future, at least I hope so, as Martian rocks become easier to get.

How do you know all this stuff about the speedway!??

I agree with you that the web stories about TWA flight 800 were probably just speculation and gossip, but if the explosion on flight 800 had actually been a result of some military misfire, and if it had been covered up by the government, I can think of no other place more likely than the Internet from which the truth might leak. Look at how the Internet provided the ideal forum for several major, historical leaks of secret tobacco company research, proving that tobacco company executives have known for years and years about the addictive qualities of nicotine, and possibly providing enough legal evidence to successfully sue that industry.

[SC] Fabulous zine Jim. I enjoyed it all very much. However, I am endeavoring to catch up this month, so I only have space and time to respond to your comments to me.

Re: "wordplay" in my comment to Vicki, hey, it really WAS accidental! I shouldn't be taken to task for that. It's not like intentional punning, which oughta be a Federal offense.

I appreciate your thoughtful feedback on my gratuitous name-calling. You were probably right to call me on that. Jeanne and I watched a story on 60 Minutes a while ago on the troubled middle eastern city of Hebron. They interviewed Arabs and Israelis who lived there who were both adamantly set against any hope of compromise or resolution with each other. The only way they could imagine a solution being reached was war. Jeanne and I both found it hard to understand that degree of hate and distrust and narrow-mindedness.

Yet, when it comes to abortion opponents, I feel somewhat the same way. I don't hate them or wish they could be exterminated, of course, but I don't see any possibility of compromise with them. When you point out that name-calling hurts the chances of working out a

resolution, I have to say that a compromise resolution is not possible. It is a winner-take-all fight. They are fighting to stop “murder;” you can’t compromise on murder. We are trying to retain basic human rights, you mustn’t bargain away your fundamental rights. (The law can certainly chip away at them as we have seen often enough.) So it is easy to resort to writing them off as hopeless and treating them thoughtlessly.

I am glad you weren’t around to suggest your “improvement” for orange bowling.

Clay Colwell

[JG] I was really impressed by your painfully honest account of your week’s visit with your grandmother. I’ve certainly been there, that awkward conversational desert with a relative with whom one has little in common. I was surprised that you would commit yourself to such a long visit. Maybe if you have another opportunity to talk to your grandmother, you might try to get her talking about her memories. You might hear some really interesting stories, and maybe find a way to come out to her by clues about how she’s dealt with nonconforming old friends and family members.

Bill Dyer

[JG] Bill, I’m so sorry about the deaths of your sisters-in-law and your brothers’ injuries. I can’t imagine how your family is dealing with such a tragedy. Scott and I are both thinking of you and hoping that you, your family, and friends are taking care of one another through this very hard time.

The photo of your tattoo scanned pretty well. You are such a wonderful photographer... I certainly wouldn’t mind scanning more photos for your zine. It would give us all a chance to see more of your work.

[SC] I was shocked and saddened by the tragic news about your brothers’ accident.

YCT us on your Union troubles: I have not always been terribly sympathetic with your problems, but I want to pat you on the back for volunteering to work on the contract negotiating committee. Co-worker apathy and complaints have to be very frustrating when you are putting in so much work. What you are doing is terribly important and, despite past problems, your co-workers ought to appreciate that.

Jim Frenkel

[JG] Congratulations on the new house! The short-range plan for a removed office space and the long range plan for moving sounds eminently practical.

Interesting technique to get folks to closely read your mailing comments — don’t say to whom they’re addressed. People have to read them very carefully, then, in case they’re aimed at them.

Hope Kiefer & Karl Hailman

[JG] What a great letterhead opportunity for Karl’s mom and dad if they wanted to stress the Jupiter and Venus post offices.

I don’t know why Michael Moore is banned from NPR. He didn’t really explain. He mentioned it partially, I think, to shock all us lefty Madisonians who assume that *our* liberal media isn’t the enemy. As a matter of fact, he said, that he thinks local public radio stations are great, that he gets lots of air time from stations like WHA, but apparently he was a little too controversial for the national shows. I suppose, though I don’t know, it has something to do with the fact that NPR is increasingly funded by big corporations seeking to clean up their public images through association with intellectual, liberal organizations, and Michael Moore doesn’t have much respect for these big corporations.

Andy Hooper

[JG] Once again, you chose a topic that — initially — I didn’t think would hold my interest for as many pages as stretched ahead of me, and once again, your story caught me at the beginning and held me all the way through. I admire the clarity of your organization, how you are able to collate the huge number of details in the history of the search for Nessie and make it feel like a *story*. I also liked the way you bring in relevant and illuminating personal connections. (That little anecdote about the weird fish-sighting from your youth made the perfect allegory for the rest of the story.) Thanks Andy. Yes, I think this would make a wonderful book. It should include lots of photos, especially of the Nessie-hunters (maybe blurry photos, barely discernible as human beings....)

[SC] Your zine was simply great. I enjoyed it all from start to finish. I was immediately excited that you were tackling the subject of monsters and Loch Ness. I have never read anything that covered this topic so fairly

yet managed to leave me feeling nearly certain that something out-of-the-ordinary is living in Loch Ness (and probably other large lakes.) Wonderful stuff Andy, certainly worthy of a book treatment. If you come across some more current information since 1990, I would love to see an update to this piece.

And of course, I think visiting the Loch would be great fun, too. Another stop to add to our eventual return trip to Great Britain.

Bill Humphries

[JG] Michael Moore made the same point you did — about using one big company against another to make a movie critical of the other. Moore said that capitalism's biggest hole — one you can drive a truck through, I think were his exact words — is that there is no message too objectionable to the stockholders of any corporation that the corporation will not publish or film if it makes a big enough profit.

Michael Rawdon

[JG] Good comments on how and why you enjoy some books and not others. It's becoming fairly clear that you and I have rather different maps for the word, "enjoyment." On the other hand, we agree entirely, it seems, on the film *12 Monkeys*. Amazing! We both like it.

[SC] I also loved *12 Monkeys*, but I consider *Brazil* (at least the original director's cut) to be Terry Gilliam's masterpiece.

Thanks for the review of Willis' *Bellwether*, I will put it on my list as a must-read per your advice.

Jeanne and I are both eagerly looking forward to the return of *Babylon 5* along with most of the rest of Madison fandom, I expect.

I am also a fan of Alison Bechdel's quirky *Dykes To Watch Out For*. I only see about one of them a month, so they are always welcome. What an enormous cast of characters she has. Her relationship with her friends must be really interesting.

YCT me: without rereading *Trouble*, I can't respond in more detail than I have about why I felt it was making some topical commentary on the gay/lesbian scene, but I recall that I felt that strongly at the time I finished it. I may revisit the subject if I put some of Melissa's books on the top of my priority list before WisCon.

I don't think I consistently place entertainment value as my single highest priority in a novel. I do turn to novels I expect will purely entertain me from time to time,

but I am willing to work through a novel that is not entertaining if I think it is valuable and interesting in other ways.

Vicki Rosenzweig

[JG] What a relief it is that we *Turbans* turn out not to be the noxious sorts of people that **Bill Dyer** and **Barb Jenson** meet sometimes who assume that their professions enable them to read minds. There are other professions, too, to which people confer superhuman (or at least a little strange) abilities. Kids often think moms can smell guilt. Lots of folks think that priests, ministers and nuns can perceive the state of their souls — whether they are "good" or not. Watching some folks around priests reminds me of little kids around Santa. The kid suddenly pretends to be a little angel, and changes their whole demeanor and sometimes even their vocabulary to pretend they're something they're not. Same with some folks around priests. Suddenly no expletives. Suddenly the word "god" is sprinkled liberally through their conversation. Anyway. Doctors must get this all the time, too, only about physical ailments. Probably carpenters hear about everyone's house ailments....

[SC] YCT **Jae**, ct me, on pre-written membership saving zines. I actually made this very same suggestion to the membership of *Turbo* when I took over as OE. I don't think anyone took me up on it, but it was a good plan for dealing with unexpected minac worries. It is still a good idea.

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Jae Adams

[JG] "... selling mops & brooms made by the blind over the phone." I've heard that other skills improve after one has lost the use of a sense, but... wow! (Insert smiley face here.)

I'd like to see Stomp perform sometime. Thanks for the description. I was wondering if Matthew imitated the dancers after he saw the show. Might have been a noisy week for you and Jon, although stomping may have been easier on your nerves than the usual simulated explosions.

Good essay on the proper use of signs in the urban environment. I've always thought there were basically two kinds of signs: the useful kind and the kind that gets put up to avoid a lawsuit or lock up after the horses have already escaped, so to speak. The sign at Devil's Lake, "Do Not Put Picnic Benches Into The Lake," falls into the latter category. Also the

signs on ladders advising one not to climb past a certain step. It's sometimes fun to think about the story that might have led to the posting of weird signs. I imagined a group of picnicking snorklers at Devil's Lake.

I haven't gotten around to Wharton yet, but will eventually, and maybe I'll tempt my appetite by renting *The Buccaneers* or *The Age of Innocence*. Right now I seem to be immersed in a catch-up reading binge of recent books by SF authors, though a couple of them aren't really SF.

This past couple weeks I read 5 books and am part way through a sixth. Marge Piercy's excellent *City of Darkness, City of Light*, is about the French Revolution from a very feminist viewpoint. (Piercy believes that the French Revolution marks the beginning of the modern feminist movement.) I liked it a lot, although I would never have recognized her style from her previous work. It's really quite different from anything else she's ever written, even her other historical novel, *Gone to Soldiers*. *City's* characters are all real, historical people, and there's an almost documentary feel to it; there was also a lot more telling than showing than I'm used to in Piercy's work, and I'm still not sure about what I think about that.

I also read Pat Murphy's *Nadya*, an wonderfully entertaining adventure story about a young female werewolf/pioneer in the late 1800s who journeys across the west to California and eventually to Oregon. It's also a story of outcasts and says a lot about being gay, female, foreign, or nonwhite in this country. If Pat weren't a Tiptree administrator, it would be a likely Tiptree winner for 1996.

Amnesia Moon, by Jonathan Letham was less interesting, but I'm still glad I read it, since the discussion we had about it at Borders was fascinating. It was a short book luckily, because if it had been longer I might not have been able to deal with the central dilemma. (*Something* apparently happened five to 20 years before the time set in the novel, and that *something* apparently fragmented reality. There is no United States, in fact there are no states or regions that mean anything to anyone any more. The largest collectives are small towns and neighborhoods of big cities. Day-to-day life in these places is dominated by one or a few "dreamers," whose imaginations actually create reality for everyone else.) The dilemma — for me, anyway — is that nobody seems to know how or why any of this

happened, nor seems to feel it is particularly important to understand it. The various realities are wildly funny at times, and nightmarish at others. One town's air is filled with green fog; everyone is effectively blind and entirely dependent on the head dreamer. Residents of another place believe they live in a post-nuclear holocaust world. In yet another town, everyone is required to move every Wednesday and Saturday. The denizens of this place are measured on a bureaucratized scale of "luck," and beauty, the results of which determine their social class. In one very tiny community, the "McDonaldites" live according to the McDonalds code of food preparation. And so on. The group at Borders decided that *Amnesia Moon* is an extended allegory of modern life.

But I think I enjoyed Karen Joy Fowler's recent novel, *The Sweetheart Season* the most of all the books I've inhaled recently. It's not SF at all, not even fantasy unless you want to count the several

**Some of the world's great
journalists got to the root of this
sod thing that is suddenly the
biggest story in these parts since
they painted the Hardee's.**

possible ghost sightings and a fictional Betty-Crockerish icon who may or may not have come alive long enough to write some revolutionary letters to the editor. It's hilarious, the sort of book I kept wanting to

read aloud, and did fairly frequently, to Scott's surprise. *The Sweetheart Season* is about a young woman named Irini who grows up after World War II in Magit, a very small town in Minnesota. Most everyone is employed by Margaret Mills, and most of the women work in the "kitchen," where they devise modern recipes ("just add water") and test cleaning tips involving common household items. The owner of the Mill, is a nice but patriarchal old coot who decides that something must be done about the fact that none of the soldiers came back to live in town after the war and none of his "girls" seem to have much chance of getting married. So he finances a women's baseball team and sends them around to other towns to play exhibition games (and find husbands). The thing that gives a sharp edge to this story, however, is that it is told not by Irini, but by Irini's daughter, whose future perspective lends a dollop of loving sarcasm to the proceedings. (I was further intrigued by the fact that Irini would have been the same age as my mother after the war, and the anonymous biographer must be about my age.) I highly recommend this book.

I don't recommend Lisa Mason's *Golden Nineties*, a sequel to her time travel novel, *The Summer*

of *Love*. The historical details of San Francisco in the late 1800s were rather fun, though I was skeptical of some of it since there had been so many errors in her historical interpretation of San Francisco in the late 1960s (in *The Summer of Love*). *Golden Nineties* will be the last Lisa Mason book I read — not, however, because of her shaky research. In the earlier book, she twisted the plot so the hero, an adult man was required (because of a time travel paradox) to impregnate a young 14 year old girl, which it turned out, was just what she needed. In this new book, our heroine falls in love with her rapist. I got angry about how Mason's time travel paradoxes "required" each of these disturbing turns of events....

I've just started Melissa Scott's *Night Sky Mine*, and I'm enjoying that a whole lot more.

[SC] Interesting piece on your experience at Blind Made Products. What an odd idea for a for-profit business. You would think that Mr. A would have a dozen better ideas than a boiler room operation for brooms. It only makes sense if, in fact, he ran it for reasons that had nothing to do with selling brooms.

Also, excellent comment to **Lisa** on policing warfare play. I thought you drew very sensible limits on what would be tolerated. I think warfare play has always been around as long as war is glorified in any media. The question I have is how much more aggressive and chaotic it has gotten as media outlets have shown us more graphic (and less moral) depictions of violence. I wonder if the media images that powered my war-play (mostly from TV, comics and some movies) thirty years ago had a more dramatic effect on me than the media images (radio, tamer movies and comics) of the generation before mine. And I wonder at the power of such imagery today compared with what I was exposed to as a kid.

Bill Bodden

[SC] YCT "Fishy Business" when I saw your comments I emailed **Kim Nash** and told him that I would respond to your question regarding **Lilian Edwards**. Kim received the Waitlist from me and was merely honoring it as I had given it to him.

Lilian does not require seconds. Back in the August, 1995 issue of *Turbo*, Lilian made it to the membership. She had been on the Waitlist with three seconds since the previous November. She received her two "free" issues but never contributed. Just before her final deadline in October, I finally got in touch with her to find out that she had suffered an accident that left her unable to sit at a computer. She couldn't work and certainly couldn't contribute. She still wanted to be in *Turbo* however, so

instead of dropping her and making her go through the seconding process again I elected to simply put her at the bottom of the Waitlist and hoped she would be fully recovered when her name came back up. Actually I was doing something similar with **Lynne Ann Morse** at the time. The Waitlist was pretty short just then, but several people were in the process of being seconded so I waited until all the "new" nominees were approved before adding Lilian and Lynne Ann to the bottom of the revised list in December, '95. Lynne Ann didn't require seconds either, but a couple people threw her their support anyway.

I hope that answers your question. All this can be tracked through the apa business pages from about May '95 (Lynne Ann) through December '95. I am sorry about the confusion. I could have simply continued pubbing Lilian's name on the Waitlist with her original seconds, but I guess I didn't think it would take a whole year for her to get back through the list. Sorry about the confusion.

I completely agree with your piece on Weird Pets. As attention getting devices, exotic pets are an unfortunate fad. You are right on the money. I thought your list of one-liners was not only funny, but completely appropriate. You should have gone ahead and zapped the hapless scorpion owner with some wit. He almost certainly wouldn't have felt it.

Vijay Bowen

[JG] "There's an odd sort of liberation that comes from being able to say, 'If I do this assignment, these things will not be done this week. You have to decide the priorities, and tell me what you want done in the 35 hours I'm here.'" I know what you mean. Since being transferred to another bureau, we artists were taken off the "honor system" whereby we worked as long as it took to get the job done, and if we worked more than 40 hours one week, well we took off a few hours the next week when things were slower. Can't do that anymore, so more often than not work doesn't get done. Management assumed that if we were allowed flexible hours that we would work *less*. They now know that, in fact, they were getting a deal, as deadlines get missed more often than used to be the case.

Clay Colwell

[JG] You may never get offered \$100 for switching back to AT&T, or maybe we all will. I heard on NPR a few weeks ago that AT&T is "testing" various financial incentives in different areas of the country and various buying markets, to find out the optimum

incentive that nets the most returnees for the buck. Results are not in yet.

[SC] "*I can stomach bloody slashes and dismemberment, but not the live-action equivalent of cartoon violence.*" So I take it you were not a fan of the Three Stooges as a kid? I have to confess that I was a devoted Three Stooges fan and watched every one of their shorts dozens of times. I wrote an outraged letter to the local TV station when they stopped showing them (one of the few times I have been motivated to do that.) I was a big fan of cartoons too and always considered the violence of the Stooges to be similarly over-the-top. I still like physical comedy.

Lisa Freitag

[JG] In terms of "getting" works of classic literature, it's impressive how seeing that work performed by good actors can improve one's chances of "getting" it the next time one tries to read it. I credit the recent spate of excellent filmed versions of Jane Austin's novels for my reading enjoyment. And I think I have a lot to thank our local acting troupe, American Players Theater, for my increased appreciation of Shakespeare's plays. Sometimes it seems that what is missing is a sort of key to the reading, an understanding of the rhythm of speech, or the particular focus of the historical period. Once the key is discovered, the work suddenly unfolds.

I don't mean to drag on a discussion of raising kids, because obviously I don't have much experience to offer (only, as I said last time, my own experience as a kid), but I find I still don't agree with **Michael's** and your assumption that kids would be badly affected by other people's behavior toward them if those people were not told the kid's gender.... At least no more badly than they are already affected by the continuous bombardment of gender-based assumptions. The colored clothing provides the label, and people go on and on applying their assumptions. It's got to have some effect, and I suspect the effect is monumental.

Oh, and about those national parks.... I didn't mean to say that most people don't value them, because certainly they do. I work at the Wisconsin DNR, and am constantly aware of how proprietarily so many Wisconsin residents feel toward their state parks. I'm sure there's a similar support network for the national parks as well. But there's also a movement within state and national governments to *make the parks more profitable*. Private industry is very interested in this too, because what's being pro-

posed is that a lot of the functions of state and national parks be privatized so that the costs can be removed from the state and federal budgets. Thus, reservations could be made through Ticketmaster, and we all know how good Ticketmaster is at turning a profit. Concessions would be turned over to companies like McDonalds and Dairy Queen. The price of taking care of these services will be that private industry will want to run parks like businesses, and will demand that park facilities be run in such a way as to maximize the number of customers. The emphasis will be on customers not resources, if the parks are privatized. It goes without saying that private industry will look much more kindly on mining and drilling interests and demand that that hikers and campers should find a way to coexist with other (paying) park users. This is already happening in small ways. As budgets are cut, Wisconsin state parks are being forced to accept the help of private concessions to publish maps or build trails. In return, the concessions are demanding, for instance, the right to advertise in the parks or build more snowmobile trails. Parks are being required to write cost/benefit analyses along with their environmental impact statements.

What a cute kid William is!

[SC] I have no idea whether the information you seek on air bag safety is on the net. Our account on AOL gives us very little access to the net (we are *supposed* to have accessibility to the net, AOL is just too damn busy all the time for us to be able to get on.) But from what I understand, your concerns about air bags are reasonable. Air bags are dangerous to children sitting in the front seat. If you have a passenger side air bag, kids should sit in the back. Small children in safety seats should be in the back anyway. Small adults may also be at some risk from air bags, but I think it is far less clear to what extent it might be life-threatening. My feeling is that, for adults, air bags are worth the risk unless you are unusually small or short. Sit in the seat, if the you can visualize the exploding air bag striking you directly head first, then you are at risk.

YCT **Tom** on nose hair, "*Nose hair must be happening to yuppies now.*" It is really true that baby boom yuppies control our culture. I never heard people talk about nose and ear hair until recently when the boomers "discovered" it. Cecil Adams devoted his whole *Straight Dope* column to the subject this week. I certainly had no idea cool gadgets existed for such things. I can remember seeing my mom occasionally having to painstakingly trim my dad's ear hair with a barber's scissors. I shouldn't have bothered wondering how I would deal with such an annoyance. By the time I have to deal with it (no, I'm not

there quite yet), I can buy a Sharper Image gadget that is ergonomic, water proof and, by then, will probably come in a variety of hip colors too. Jeez.

Pat Hario

[JG] I totally agree with you on the comparison between the overgrown, tacky Wisconsin Dells area and the less tacky, but still beautiful Door County. However, I suspect that Door County may be quite a bit more healthy financially than the Wisconsin Dells, partially because Wisconsin Dells hit its peak tourism rush some years ago, and has been deteriorating progressively ever since. But also because the emphasis on quality development in Door County has attracted a large, well-off population who not only likes to vacation up there, but wants to live there, at least part of the year, and is driving real estate prices through the roof. I don't know if this is a particularly good thing (except in comparison to what it could be, see Wisconsin Dells), but I suspect that big sections of Door County will eventually resemble a very wealthy suburb, minus the franchise shopping strips. These people are going to be extremely protective of the environment in which they have invested.

[SC] YCT **Georgie** on the Internet server commercial trashing libraries, remember a few years back when FedEx ran a commercial that depicted postal workers as lazy and rude? There was an outcry and FedEx had to pull the ad. Librarians should make use of this fine tradition, get pissed and yell at these guys. I mean the ad isn't even funny (I kind of liked the FedEx ad.)

I wish I had seen your Halloween costume. I was very curious after you hinted that you would be "using" a tiara.

I am really enjoying all the responses **Jae** got on her piece about hair. Speaking for myself, I have always taken women's hair for granted. I had no idea how much work and discomfort it involved.

YCT **Vijay**, "*A tattoo is more appealing to me than another piercing.*" If old Swartz were here, he would probably make use of such a statement by proposing that the apa membership submit suggestions and take a vote on exactly where your first tattoo should go. Fortunately he isn't here anymore and I would never make such a suggestion.

YCT Jeanne re: arguing with Dick Russell. Amen times ten. Wait until you have to argue with him about something that you are trying to get done (like WisCon.) The only redeeming factor is that he never seems to take disagreements personally. He doesn't get pissed off.

YCT **Michael Rawdon** on minac. I agree with you that it is pointless to complain about how people manage their zines when they are performing within the limitations specified in the rules. But I want to make clear that the reason I proposed the minac change for foreign members had nothing to do with how well or poorly they were contributing. I was convinced that there was no need for extra time because they all were submitting zines via email. They don't have any more serious constraints to getting their zine in than our regular contributors on the coasts. I would support extra time for minac for a foreign member who only has the option of mailing zines to us. We should decide that on a case-by-case basis.

YCT me on a reward for solving people's problems. Hey, I'd buy you a beer for each successful case. How's that?

Bill Hoffman

[JG] Welcome back!

You make a (!) click by sucking your tongue up to the roof of your mouth, and slowly drawing your tongue back into your throat until it lets go with a click. (Imagine Bacall teaching Bogart how to do this.) I understand that this is a sound all children can make (and often do for a brief period), but if it is not reinforced by their native language, many people lose the ability to make it. The sound becomes one of those weird tricks some people can do with their bodies.

David Brin, my favorite author, ho ho ho. Actually, I will probably read his new series eventually, because so far I've mostly enjoyed the Uplift stories. It's only when he tries to lecture us about the true nature of gender politics that he riles me. I'll probably wait for the whole series to be published in paperback before I read it though. He's not one of the authors I like to buy in hardcover.

[SC] Welcome back. It's really good to have you back in *Turbo* at least. I miss seeing you. You taught me wisdom I have since decided was *The Meaning of Life* (for the rest of you, it is the number three, as in three shots of the Good Stuff in fairly quick succession.) Will you be at Potlatch?

Sorry to hear you have had some rough times lately.

The Solstice feed sounded delicious and I know well that it probably was at least as good as it sounded. Most cooks I know have long lost interest in struggling with duck. Maybe your new method will inspire someone to give it a try (and invite me over, I love duck.)

Barb Jensen

[JG] I liked your comments to **Georgie** about class and language styles. The current discussion on Ebonics comes to mind.... I am getting a real charge out of all these politicians arguing back and forth about whether lower class blacks speak a different language or a different dialect, and about whether their education should take into consideration that they need to learn a different class's language or dialect before they start learning the other stuff, and all the while not one of them says hey, lets ask a linguist whether or not this is a language. It's a weird thing how language is considered by politicians to be something you can *legislate*. They make laws that say that English (which English?) is our official language and they expect this is going to have some actual effect on how people talk! What arrogance. And now they want to legislate whether black kids are (or should) have trouble communicating with their teachers. *sigh*

Madison has only one "Dale." But we've also got three "townes" and two "gates." Spike used to call West Towne and East Towne — Wastegate and East Wastegate, respectively.

I'd love to see Reinconation move back to a more central location so that we could see more of the city when we visit. Maybe as the area around the Regency Hotel improves, people will become a little more receptive to the idea.

You're probably right about the similarity between the initial grunge and punk movements to the early hippies. Both went through a similar evolution when mass marketing decided their looks were "in." Producing grunge got expensive, but so did the hippie look. Remember how expensive it was to buy all those pre-bleached, pre-ripped jeans?

[SC] Marvelous zine. What a delightful Halloween adventure, beautifully told. Thanks.

YCT me, thanks for the compliment on my con report. I want to congratulate you again on a fine con and you can probably count on us attending Reinconation again next year (and maybe bringing a few more Madison folks.) Meeting friends and forming bonds with some cool new folks in Minneapolis will hopefully spring from bringing y'all into *Turbo*. Reinconation at the Radisson again will be fine, but if you ever see your way to trying the Regency again or some other suitable place downtown, you can count on a vote of support from me. I love downtown.

The mall "...dales" are universal. I think we only have a Hilldale in Madison, but I remember several

"dales" back Cedar Rapids (Westdale, Lindale, etc.) Our State Street has its ugly side, but I prefer dealing with a bit of real life to the artificial, antiseptic, muzac-soaked atmosphere at large malls. As I looked back on my report, I dumped on Mall of America pretty hard and failed to mention that I was kind of awed by the place and that I'm glad we saw it. But I am equally glad that there is so much more to Minneapolis that I can't imagine ever wasting time going back there.

Lynne Ann Morse

[JG] Welcome back! I notice that you chose *Turbo* over *Intercourse*. I take that as quite a compliment to our apa.

I wanted you to know that we had your calligraphy ("Failing that... Invent") framed a few months ago. It looks incredibly beautiful. I chose a more narrow mat than you used, in a very pale green that pulled out some of the green washes in the work. Inside the green mat, is a very thin inner mat, just an eighth inch wide, in deep blue, the same color as the washes at the bottom of the piece. The whole thing is framed in a very simple gold frame and covered with archival glass. I'm really happy with how it looks and am looking forward to showing you how lovely it looks on our wall someday. But before that we should talk. You know what I mean.

[SC] Welcome back. Great news about working on those writing ambitions and the new classes. It all sounds like great fun (it means taking some risks, but it's so nice when they work out.) Jeanne and I have often talked about taking some classes together in literature, history or film someday. We have a lot of interests and tastes in common and it would be fun to work on a class together. The big challenge is getting our schedules synchronized.

Michael Rawdon

[JG] Interesting comment on the *Babylon 5* episode, "Falling toward Apotheosis." The idea of knowing how long you are going to live is intriguing. If *Voyager's* writing ever improves, they have a similar idea in the character, Tess, whose race life expectancy is only 5 years (I think). So far she doesn't seem to live any differently than any of her other longer-lived crew members.

Yes, we've heard of the New Party, and would have liked to vote for one of their candidates in the past election. Not only are they committed to building a new party from the ground up with local

candidates, but it seems that even that ground level has to wait till the basement has been dug. We were a little frustrated by the lack of New Party candidates on the ballot.

[SC] Re: *Star Trek*, I am finishing up my comments on Friday afternoon before deadline and I don't feel I have enough time to respond to this as I would like. Your essay was clear and self-contained and so I think I would like to return to this next month. My feelings on the subject are complicated by the fact that I agree with some of what you wrote, but not all.

I will respond to your critique of *Pulp Fiction*, which I thought was one of the best movies I have ever seen. I can completely understand your not liking it. I loved it at once and laughed loudly all the way through it, but I had serious reservations about recommending it to Jeanne (who didn't go with me to see it.) Eventually Jeanne and Steve Swartz got fed up with everyone talking about a movie they hadn't seen and the three of us finally went together. Jeanne can give you her own reaction, but I would describe Steve's reaction as "shocked." I don't think he enjoyed it either, but he respected it.

[JG] I loved it.

[SC] I guess it is a film that appeals mostly to lovers of the film noire, hard-boiled gangster genre. Why make the film? I think it is far better to ask why make a live-action remake of *101 Dalmatians*. *Pulp Fiction* is a very creative film that presents completely original characters and dialog in a plot setup that at once satirizes the genre and also has the audience doing some work to keep up. The plot assumes enough intelligence and movie savvy on the part of the audience that events can be shown out of order and we will still be able to follow what is going on. Violent? Well yes, but in *Pulp Fiction* only about six people actually die. That is a far lower death count than even *First Contact* had. But asking yourself why *Pulp Fiction* SEEMS so much more violent is important. Because it presents violence in a realistic manner and doesn't let us off the hook. I respect that. It also shows us how horrific situations (and people) can also be funny, if you have the right sense of humor. No sympathetic characters? What about the killer (Samuel L Jackson) who changes his life to pursue goodness, or the boxer (Bruce Willis) who just wants out? They are not easy heroes, but Captain Sheridans get kinda boring all the time. I would not suggest to you that you are "wrong" about this film. I was surprised at how popular it got and how many people went to see it. It is not a film that is suitable for everyone by any means. But I wanted you to know that I consider myself an enthusiastic member of its intended audience.

YCT me, yes, when you are a Turbo-Charged PARTY Animal, parties are important business.

Vicki Rosenzweig

[JG] Thank you very much for letting me know about the new Holly Near CD containing some of her early work. I will be asking about it at A Room of One's Own the next time I stop by there. I look forward to hearing those songs again. Thanks!

[SC] You also have our condolences on the loss of your grandfather. You wrote about how you were feeling "older" now at only 33. I have felt, at the ripe old age of 40, that I haven't started gradually feeling older, but that the feeling comes in sudden spurts. Most of the time, I feel about like I am about 25 or 30, then something will happen, or I'll find myself hanging around someone, who suddenly makes me feel every day of 40+. Yikes, I hate that.

Good comment to **Georgie** on the article she franked in last month. Also good comment to **Heather** re: Hooters.

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] I know what you mean about feeling nervous about people seeing me work when I'm not sure, yet, where the project is going. Like you, I can ignore witnesses when I am storming ahead, but not when I am fooling around, experimenting. I'm aware that they're looking at the computer screen as something that's nearly finished (even if I tell them that I'm just playing), and I feel embarrassed for the mess, whereas when I'm alone, I look through the clutter and grab the ideas I want. It's a silly thing, but there it is.

So you're still reading *Nexus*, are you? I collected them for many years, starting when they were first published, because the designer, Richard Bruning, was a friend of mine; and because the artist and writer were local. I liked the comics for a while, but as with all comic books, the plots got a little too repetitive for me. But I've still got this giant stack of *Nexus* zines wrapped in plastic which I hope to sell eventually. I'm glad to hear it's still being published; that means they might appreciate in value over time. At least I'm hoping.

[SC] YCT me on Judge Crabb's decision on involuntary medication. First I must confess that I am not mental health professional. I was a mental health "layperson" with a lot of experience with patients on the unit, but not much formal training beyond a college Intro. to

Psych. class. I also don't know the law in great detail. Finally, my experience in the mental health field is pretty narrow and specialized. I worked with a small number of very unusual clients who demonstrated extreme behavior and often suffered severe illness.

That said up front, I think Judge Crabb's decision goes too far. There is certainly reason for concern about forcing people to take drugs willy-nilly. But as you observed, the unintended consequence of her decision is to make it very difficult to medicate severely disturbed people even when they are already institutionalized. As usual, there isn't an easy win/lose choice here. We need to figure out a way to protect people from abuse while also help people who really need medication but whose illness makes it impossible for them to ask for it.

I have known patients who hated being on medication because, as you suspected, they didn't like how they felt on meds. They preferred being crazy because it felt like a very long lasting "high." When they finally were convinced to go on meds, they might make it all the way out the door only to rediscover how difficult life is on the street and then elect to go off their meds and get crazy again. One doctor explained to me that getting people straightened out after these episodes was not an endless cycle. Often, the longer someone stayed crazy, the harder it was to bring them back to Earth. As they got older and repeated this cycle, they wouldn't recover as completely.

Judges have to issue an "order to treat" involuntarily now. The institution has to take the patient and a chart full of documentation of behavior to the judge to get such an order. Judges hate being in this role. They don't like forcing people to take meds, and they are not necessarily well qualified to decide if patients need it. So they require a lot of convincing. Sometimes patients who are really wild in the institution can pull themselves together pretty convincingly before a judge. Sometimes the judge is unwilling to take our word over the appearance of a reasonably together patient. Other times patients come in the door obviously really wild, but we can't do much more than lock them up because we can't force them to take something to calm them down and they are too nuts to understand they need medication.

There are many examples from my experience how this decision makes life tough for patients and staff. I have rarely encountered any examples of patient abuse at our institution, but I have no experience in nursing homes where medication abuse is more common or with the vast majority of mental health patients who are not institutionalized. The view of the situation from my "trench" is that we need to work out a compromise.

Michael Shannon

[JG] Third party candidacies have had important repercussions in national politics. Winning is not the only result that should be considered when studying these campaigns. We wouldn't have laws on the books against child labor; we wouldn't have a legislated 40-hour week as the definition of full-time employment if it weren't for the Wobbly party, whose very successful issues were co-opted by the major parties, who feared the power of the Wobbly candidates to win votes. I think we're in a period right now in which third parties have the potential to express many ideas that are being totally ignored by the Republicrats. I fully expect those ideas to be co-opted by the major parties before any third party actually wins many or any elections, but the effect will be a potentially good one.

[SC] Wow, quite an adventure with your car. I hope you are getting an adequate insurance settlement so the new car is not a huge burden. On the brighter side, I get to read the story of yet another *Turbo* member going car shopping. Are you going for something brand new? I hope so.

I am still enjoying your flying updates. It's great that your plans to buy a plane are firming up, but I was wondering if this means you are not going to pursue buying one with some partners.

YCT us on Ralph Nadar, "...a third party presidential candidate will be nothing more than a distraction." I'll say, Ross Perot distracted enough conservatives, Republicans and other disillusioned souls that normally would have voted for George Bush, that he lost to Bill Clinton in 1992. George Wallace distracted quite a few conservative Democrats back in '68 and Nixon won. Third parties can be plenty influential. Ralph was the first cannon shot from an evolving coalition of disillusioned folks who are disgusted with Clinton's fake liberalism. The hope is to try to get a more progressive message out to the electorate so they can demand a real change to big business sponsored Republicrat government. Progressives can't hope to buy the Democratic party back, but they can scare it into listening to us.

The missing graphic from last month's New Year' party invitation:

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All who came to our New Year's Party

Thanks for joining us! Scott and I hope you had as good a time as we did. Let's do it again next year!