



Union Street

A joint zine by Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis

Official Business

[SC] Jeanne and I would like to nominate Steve Swartz for a return to Turbo APA. We saw Steve recently and he expressed interest in returning to the apa and asked us to nominate him. It is our pleasure to do so. Most of you know Steve and I'm sure there will be plenty of support for his return.

[JG] I don't think it's a very good idea to stop enforcing minac just because we no longer have any names on the wait list. If something has to be done, I'd rather decrease the number of members, say to 25.

© Cover

[SC] Another beautiful and oh-so-appropriate cover Georgie, thanks.

© Vijay Bowen

[SC] Regarding your comment to us on fashion, your "precarious fence-straddling position" makes about as much sense as anything, but what I always come back to on this subject is the issue of children. Adults can make their own choices about fashion, but children are most vulnerable to the mass culture's relentless pressures. Just as I was sitting down to write this, the new issue of *Rolling Stone* came in the mail. Paging through the ads is always impressive for the flurry of twisted messages they send. At my age, these ads bounce off me like paper clips, but they're not aimed at me. They are aimed at much younger, more impressionable people. I wonder how kids are

supposed to decide what is right for them when advertisers and the media are shouting at them all the time about what is and isn't cool and beautiful. How are kids, particularly young girls, supposed to maintain a healthy self-esteem making fashion choices while conforming to the pressures of their peers and the media to wear platform shoes, smoke cigarettes, and stay as deathly thin as possible? How many years does it take the average person to get over the obsessions they had as kids about their appearance, those adults who ever do get over it? While adult women embrace their freedom to choose, who is standing up for the kids?

[JG] My mild allergy to latex was discovered when I went through a series of allergy tests last year, following the episode of my leg infection. Actually, it turns out I've got far fewer allergies than most people have, according to my doctor, who expected to find dozens of allergy "blooms" on my back after she'd applied the test patches. Besides being allergic to various anti-fungal topical medications, I've just got this one, to latex. No dust, pollen or animal allergies at all. I suppose this particular allergy to latex, varies in significance depending on one's job, fashion preferences, and/or lifestyle. As it happens, I don't work in a hospital, which is a good thing, since a local doctor apparently had to give up his career recently, because of this particular allergy; he couldn't even stroll through an operating room without breaking into hives. Also, as it happens, I don't buy condoms or rubber fetish suits, and am willing to surrender the keen pleasure of wearing rubber gloves for cleaning ovens to Scott. (Wadda guy!) The most inconvenient thing I've had to deal with so far is the fact that so many bras contain latex, and I end up having to buy the seriously ugly, cotton varieties. Also, because there is a latex ingredient in most glues used in shoes, I can't wear them without socks. The problem may get more significant to me if I am not careful, or so I've been admonished by a nurse, who warns me that if I expose myself too often, that my sensitivity could increase in severity to

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the point that I too would have to avoid rooms in which latex exists. We'll see.

© Georgie Schnobrich

[SC] I found your flights of fancy pretty entertaining this month. You can put me down for a copy of *Red Hot Chili Soup for the Soul*, whenever it comes out.

I have only seen pictures of the new VW Beetle, but not yet one "in the flesh." It looked to me like they were trying to streamline the original, which had to be the most unstreamlined car ever designed. I think the new design Bug will fail. Trying to make the old Beetle look snazzier simply misses the point.

My attitude toward the old Beetles is not very typical. I had a cousin who burned to death in one when I was a kid and I have always viewed them since then as rather scary. The idea of the gas tank in the front always bothered me (this was before the Ford Pinto and Chevy pickups made gas tanks seem hazardous wherever they were put.) I also thought Beetles were ugly (not so ugly they were cute, just plain ugly), under-powered and uncomfortable to ride in. The one redeeming feature they had was that they were easy to work on. Though small, they were simple enough that almost any idiot with a set of metric wrenches could dismantle one.

I like your idea of the Valkyrie, the sports car for women. Your criticisms of most existing sports cars were completely on target from my experience, although I admit to having a typical drooling guy reaction to most of them. Have you ever seen or ridden in a Mazda Miata? It's a snazzy little two seater that would be my candidate for the sports car for women and anyone else who wants pizzazz to be combined with sensibility and reliability.

[JG] Yes, I too noticed that the trees are fighting back. The same morning that a tree killed Sonny Bono, I had this weird dream that reminded me of a *Pink Panther* movie, in which the similar crime scenes of both deaths (Kennedy's and Bono's) convinced the detective (me) that there was a crazed killer tree at large . . . and it was going to kill AGAIN! But I only told Scott, as it seemed—that day—to be in bad taste to giggle about the death of two real men. Obviously I've gotten over that. We've all gotten over that.

I'll add your name to the potential panel on class at WisCon 22.

© Jim Brooks

[SC] Much good stuff as usual, I particularly liked your piece on Coyote.

[JG] Thanks for the address update, Jim, and also for the stream-of-conscious, bit-phrased description of your life lately. Sounds like it would make a good movie. I am curious about the deflating mattress, though, especially since you warned us not to ask.

I really like the idea that Coyote is a composite of all your driving buddies, much like the characters in *Dilbert* are, for some people, the composite of all their co-workers in the white collar workplace.

Well, maybe Amazon.com wouldn't be able to give you relevant recommendations of books to read based on that very eclectic list of recent books read, but what if it *could!*? The intriguing possibility

of a large enough data base to actually match one's tastes with that of others with similarly eclectic reading preferences, make the possibility of a match as intriguing as one of those fantasy shops which appear only for the protagonist and disappear

then next time she/he looks for it. It is, I suppose, why I put so much time into the reading project of Alexandria.com. It didn't work out, but I'm still hopeful that if I go back in a year or two, enough people will have typed in their preferences that I will be given several to-die-for recommendations.

Your mention of the scavenger hunt and the discussion at Potlatch of the Corflu scavenger hunt that didn't happen has made me wonder if we couldn't pull off something like it for WisCon 22. The Corflu folks considered it last year when it looked as if the con hotel was going to be on Fisherman's Warf in San Francisco. The concom figured that, well, they weren't going to be able to prevent most people from spending most of their time outside of the hotel, so they may as well set up some part of programming to benefit from excursions. It seems to me that we've got a similar situation in Madison: a lot to see and do outside the convention. It would be fun to make up a list of scavenger items and give a prize, at the end of the convention, to those folks who had actually been able to bring them in. Anyone want to volunteer to run it?

Quote of the Month

The three kinds of cheesecake are 1) good, 2) very good, and 3) what is sex again?

You call your trucks "Alice." I named our server computer at work Alice. I don't think there's much connection however. I was thinking of the waitress in the movie.

I'm still waiting to hear an explanation for this turtle business.

© Julie Zachman

[SC] Welcome back and I hope you are able to hang with us here in *Turbo* for a long while this time.

I have no objection to your sending Tess copies of the apa. Maybe she'll get hooked and want to join. If she continues to be interested, maybe you'll tell us a little more about her. And she can tell us a little bit more about you (I was thinking of the sort of details you'd tend to leave out about yourself.) Yeah, Julie, go ahead.

[JG] Welcome back! I think it's a very cool thing that you are leaning to play the blues on piano. I'd love to hear you play someday.

And judging by how hard I laughed at your brother's response to your reading of the necrophiliac erotica, I've got the feeling that I'd really like to meet him. Whew, when I read that title, "Quote of the Month," I thought the quote in question was the indented text! The real quote of the month took me completely by surprise. Well done.

Holocaust novels: Vonda N. McIntyre's *Sand and Grass*, Joanna Russ' *We Who Are About To*. Old books for which I no longer remember the authors: *Alas, Babylon!* and *Level 7*. Nevil Shute's *On the Beach*. And then there's Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, Suzy McKee Charnas' *Holdfast* series: *Walk to the End of the World*, *Motherlines*, and *The Furies*.

What a good idea to do *Cyrano de Bergerac* with a female protagonist! You know, I think that would work really well, and in fact might be more realistic than with a male lead. Well, maybe we'd have to change the sword fight scenes to something else (or maybe not, what fun!), but the basic motivation of the character would play very well.

The game, "Keep Away," is a common one. I've heard it used in my family and among friends for years.

© Mike Peterson

[SC] I believe you are the only member of the apa I haven't met yet. Are you coming to WisCon? There'll be a *Turbo* party at some point over WisCon weekend, probably Friday night. I've always felt that *Turbo* is a way for folks to connect with the social group. As Julie

Zachman pointed out in her zine, it is often helpful for new members to be able to attach faces to names in the membership. Zines can suddenly make a lot more sense.

[JG] Wow, another apa member who doesn't like using abbreviations! Me too, although you're made of sterner stuff than me when it comes to "SASE." That abbreviation seems to have become a word in itself and I've succumbed to it. But I don't like using "RAEBNC" or "re yct" any more than I like using smiley face icons as verbal shortcuts.

Yes, everyone seems to like Xena. I certainly like the idea of her. But in practice, I haven't been able to actually stand watching more than 10 minutes of her show. It affects me, just as anything over 5 minutes of a Leslie Nielson films (the *Airplane* or *Police farces*).

Great illos! You should do some for the WisCon program book next year.

© Pat Hario

[SC] In regards to your comment to Lisa on tourists renting cars in Britain and driving around, Jeanne and I rented a car when we were in Britain in 1987. We needed to get from the ferry dock at Stranraer (after returning to our short trip to Northern Ireland) to Carlisle so we could pick up our train and proceed South to the Lake District. It's really not hard for an American with a valid drivers license to drive over there. I was most concerned about driving on the left side of the road, but that turned out to be a problem only at conventional intersections when it could get a little confusing where to turn. Other than that it often didn't matter which side of the road you were driving on because many of the roads were only a little wider than one car width anyway. The real scare were the "roundabouts," those circular intersections where you drove on from one side and drove around in a circle until you found the road you wanted to exit on. It's like being on a merry-go-round in your car. On our drive, the roundabouts were pretty tame, but in London they were multi-lane affairs with many streets radiating off them and a lot of maneuvering traffic. I wouldn't try driving in London, but I wouldn't have a problem renting a car to go most anywhere else.

Pat the Last Bison Mistress? Oh that is cool. I like that a lot more than being a turtle.

[JG] The conversation here and in the electronic FEM-SF list about feminist fashion has been fascinating. As a member of a generation that rebelled against then-current fashions, and who chose to wear comfortable, utilitarian clothing, I've had to remind myself that there no longer exists an estab-

lishment that demands the kinds of dress codes against which I rebelled. I have felt, in fact, a little uncomfortable by the fact that its pretty clear that I am one of those now viewed by some young women as a part of an establishment they perceive as pressuring them *not* to wear high heels and various fashions that go along with heels. I feel uncomfortable about this role switch partially because I, of course, am convinced that my rebellion was part of a larger, more significant rebellion against larger, more unfair gender assumptions. That's mostly rationalization, however. I probably would have rebelled at least partially against whatever had been the fashion standards of my youth, in the same way that I rebelled against expectations that I learn how to sew and cook because I didn't want to be like my Mom. Still, I am convinced that I would have eventually come back to a preference for comfortable, non-dangerous clothing no matter what kind of fashion I'd chosen in my youth, and I hope that most young women who choose that kind of clothing out of rebellion now, will eventually come back to what feels good, just as I finally admitted to myself that I liked cooking and realized that it didn't automatically turn me into my mother.

I certainly have considered the fact that I have enough time to go to Australia. What holds me back from planning that trip, however, is that Scott will not have that amount of time to go to Australia, and more importantly, that neither of us is likely to be able to afford the trip unless we start saving money now. And right now, there are other priorities that are taking our spare cash. So I think it's unlikely that we're going to go to the worldcon downunder unless one of us is invited to attend as a GoH. If we eventually make such a trip, I think I'm less interested in joining a tour group than in doing the trip on my own. I've got a lot of contacts in various fangroups around the world, and I'd hate not to be able to visit overnight with friends along the way. Also, I really hate the idea of somebody else organizing my itinerary. I even dislike the idea of working on an itinerary with a *group* of people. Doing it with just one other person involves considerable compromise, as it is. My ideal of travel to Australia would be to purchase some plane tickets between two or three cities, but to completely play it by ear in between flights, with no itinerary set at the beginning. I'd do plenty of research so I had a lot of ideas of things that we might do, but I'd want to be free to change plans when we met people I wanted to hang out with or if we had a good time at a particular place and wanted to extend our visit there.

I hope you're able to spend more money on your trip next time. Unfortunately, that isn't something I usually have to work at when I go traveling!

© Michael Rawdon

[SC] I concur with Pat's advice on scaling back your commitment to the apa for awhile if it will help. We don't want to lose you. And judging from last month, your idea of "minac" is still substantial.

Congratulations on turning 29, this means you still have a whole year to plan a big blowout bash for the big 3-0. Right?

[JG] I hope your computer is feeling better these days.

© Jim Nichols

[JG] I notice that aliens are flying into your zine. I borrowed your technique of introducing little scenes into Scott's and my *Union Street* graphics, but no one seems to have noticed either the sea monster in Lake Mendota or the ice skater's predicament.

© Ruth Merrill

[JG] I really like the cool Picasso graphic of the woman in the "Fluff Cubed" box (did you draw it?), although it was difficult reading the text around it. (Layout hint: If you want to put a graphic in the middle of your page, make sure it is in the middle of two columns of text and that the reader's eyes are not required to jump from one side of the graphic to the other in order to read the text.)

I also really liked the concept of *Marla Sewart's Cube Living*. What a great idea!

I was confused, however. I thought, at first, that you were doing a pastiche on the SF³ newszine, *Cube*, but of course you may never have seen a copy of our group's newszine, it's been so long since it was published. Scott and I are hoping to put an issue out soon and to publish bi-monthly after that.

© carl juarez

[JG] "I appreciate [Steel Beach's] ambition and nerve, which was a great relief after the Sheffield novels last time. Do you find the Heinlein overlay troublesome? Or is there some nasty pointlessness in the subtext?" Sorry, carl, I will need to put this off to a future issue of *Union Street*. I never got around to looking over the novel again, to try to remember my objections. I do recall, however, that I strenu-

ously disliked the idea of a guy becoming a woman and suddenly feeling the urge to wear make-up and uncomfortable clothing. That particular transformation seemed to contradict a lot of what Varley was saying in earlier books.

© Barbara Jenson

[JG] Please, don't go!

I really want to see *Midwest Side Story*! It sounds like you're going to do a great version and I want to see it. Thanks for the preview!

© Hope Keifer and Karl Hailman

[SC] Karl, thanks for the comment on your own travels out West. When we were visiting Rocky Mountain National Park, I was tempted to try the Long's Peak climb, but we just didn't have the time. Jeanne was not handling the altitude well for hiking, so I would have had to go on my own. Maybe some other time when I am in better physical shape and we are visiting with a lot more time.

[JG] Yes, Scott and I have seen *Gattica* and thought it was an absolutely stunning movie. Really great. Like *Contact*, it was one of the few SF films that grapples with ideas more than special effects and connects with the stuff that made me love SF. It shouldn't be too bad on videotape since it was a relatively low-budget film, and most of the sets were restricted to small spaces. See it when you can!

Karl, I'd love to see some of your parodies of the ecological nature trail signs. Do you still have any?

© Jim Frenkel

[SC] I laughed at your "Things we'll never see in annual family form letters," maybe because we did one ourselves this year. We usually just do the card thing, but this year even doing that on time was beyond us, so we opted for a post-Christmas year-end wrap up letter.

On Princess Di and Jackie Kennedy, I have more respect for Jackie because I believe that once she left politics, she never really sought out publicity. She seemed

to be a consistently private person who just wanted to be left alone. Princess Di, on the other hand, always sought out attention. She had a very stately and caring public image, but she needed and used the paparazzi as much as they used her. Her death was more ironic than tragic.

On Geraldine Ferraro, I always liked her, but your blunt assessment of her is probably correct. I guess I always assumed she dumped her husband after the last big scandal he dragged her into. Too bad. As you noted, you really have to be clean and sharp to stand a chance against that bastard Al D'Amato.

[JG] I liked your characterization of the downside of the lives of (most) rich and famous people: that they don't have to do a lot, so in most cases they don't. I agree. But of course, I'm convinced, that given the chance, I'd be able to figure out a way to live an interesting life even if I was encumbered with incredible wealth. (And of course, there are a few really admirable wealthy people who work hard at giving back to the world.)

© Michael Shannon

[JG] I can understand how you might be hesitant about traveling up to Wisconsin in the middle of winter, but next year don't worry. All of you who failed to come to your New Year's Eve party because of fears of icy Wisconsin weather, listen carefully! (The rest of you, hush up!) **El Niño!!** It's changed everything. Why do you think we had root beer floats at our party this year? Why, because it was so hot! The guys who wore tuxes to the party had to wear shorts instead of trousers. We put little umbrellas in the champagne, pretending they were tropical drinks! It was so warm outside, we left the windows and doors open throughout the party. **El Niño!!** Wisconsin's winter can hardly be called winter; it doesn't include snow anymore! It's tropical. We've given up on decorating fir trees; now we hang ornaments from palm trees! Don't worry. Come to our New Year's Eve party next year! **El Niño!!**

Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis
15 February 1998

WisCon²²n

© True Facts about WisCon 22

1. WisCon 22 dates are May 22-25, 1998, Memorial Day Weekend. It also happens to be the weekend before a seriously big, state-wide celebration of Wisconsin's Sesquicentennial. This means that there will be lots of other events happening in Madison on the same weekend as WisCon, which may or may not be of interest to you. What you *should* pay attention to, however, is the very real possibility that hotel rooms might be in short supply. Make sure to call the Concourse Hotel ASAP and make your reservation. (800-356-8293). Make sure you mention "WisCon 1998" when you call. Rooms cost \$83 per night for up to four people.
1. WisCon 22 Guests-of-Honor are SF author Sheri S. Tepper, fantasy author Delia Sherman, and fantasy author and radio personality Ellen Kushner. Tepper is the author of numerous novels, including *The Family Tree*, *Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, and *The Gate to Women's Country*. Sherman is the author of *The Porcelain Dove*. Kushner is the author of *Swordpoint* and *Thomas the Rhymers*. Kushner and Sherman are also the editors of *The Horns of Elfland*.
2. **Unofficial programming** will begin on Thursday, May 21, 1998 from 6-7:30 P.M. A Room of One's Own, Madison's feminist book store at 307 W. Johnson Street (just 2 blocks from the Concourse Hotel), will host its annual reception for all authors attending WisCon 22. Beverages and treats will be provided. The event will be advertised in the local press and will not require a WisCon membership. All WisCon attendees are welcome to attend. (Authors who would like to attend this reception should contact the program committee ASAP, so that we can make sure that copies of your current book is stocked by A Room of One's Own.)

At the same time (6 P.M., Thursday), program packets will be stuffed in a festive atmosphere we like to call a *work party*. It will be fun, really!

Just about the time that both the ROOO reception and the work party wind down, the two groups will converge upon the Angelic Brew Pub (just across the street from ROOO), to share some excellent beer, good food, and one another's company.
3. **Official programming** will begin at 2:30 P.M. Friday, when WisCon registration opens and a few programs are scheduled. Opening Ceremonies will take place after the dinner break.
4. Each program will run 75 minutes, with a 15-minute break between it and the next program.
5. A lunch and dinner break will be scheduled each day of the con, during which no (official) programs will be scheduled. The lunch break will run from 11:30 A.M.-1 P.M.; the dinner break will run from 5:30 P.M.-7 P.M.
6. Child Care will be available during daytime programming hours at WisCon. Check the appropriate box in the form on page 3 if you would like more information.
6. **Special Events:**
Opening Ceremonies, Friday, 7-9:30 P.M.
The Writers Workshop, Saturday, 10 A.M.-11:30 A.M.
The WisCon 22 Variety Show, Saturday, 7-9:30 P.M.
GoH speeches, Sunday, 7-9:30 P.M.
Brunch, Monday 10-11:30 A.M.
Tiptree Auction, Monday 11:30 A.M.-2 P.M.
7. WisCon 22 will end with one final program—a wrap-up—at which members of the concom will listen to your suggestions and comments.
2:30-4 P.M.
8. **The Dead Dog Party.** We planned a picnic for WisCon 20, got rained out, and ended up sharing pizza in the consuite. It was unseasonably cold at WisCon 21 and our plan to relax outside at the UW Memorial Union made a lot of people shiver so much that we fear we'll never be able to convince out-of-towners to trek down to the terrace again. This year, we're not going to plan too far ahead for the Dead Dog. We'll wait and see what the weather's like. Maybe El Niño will bring warm weather for Memorial Day and we'll be able to throw blankets onto the lush grass of the Capitol Square lawns and enjoy a picnic. Or maybe it will rain again. Let's wait and see. All we can promise you at this point, is that there *will* be a Dead Dog Party late Monday afternoon and into the evening.
9. Check out the WisCon web site at:
www.sf3.org/wiscon