

Sporadic 48



March 2018
SFPA Mailing #322

SPORADIC 48

“You better learn to make a living with your head, Boy, because you’ll never do it with your hands.” – Charlie Plott to teenage son c. 1962

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No proofreading held from Nancy Wilstach this time. All of the typos are on me.

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A new round of computer woes

And yet another round of computers woes.

Nancy complained vociferously that she could not access our wireless network on her Mac. Rebooting and all of the usual protocols changed nothing. It was a bad situation because she had a deadline for a news story and her column with no way to send them. I wasted an hour in an online chat with “Roy” who was not able to resolve the issue. Finally, he suggested I reboot the modem. I guess it didn’t occur to either of us that rebooting the modem would break the connection for our ongoing conversation.

By now it was late afternoon so I said to Nancy, “Write them, put them on a flash drive and send them from my computer. I’ll get on the horn with AT&T again tomorrow.” That worked. She filed the story, said she do the column the next day, and then checked her email and such on my desktop computer.

The following morning I sat down to read my email. The computer would not let me change the AOL sign-in from Nancy to me. When I typed in my password, it kicked the sign-in page back to her user name. Connecting my phone to a set of headphones I called AOL. For about two hours Maria says off and on, “Well, that’s odd” when she is unable to solve the problem. Without wearing you out with detail, I’ll say that around 11:30 a.m., I was able to sign on and read email again.

That still left the hanging problem with AT&T – no way to for the Mac to access the internet. I said it would have to wait until after lunch because I was exhausted from the AOL business. I had a sandwich, then finished correcting end note issues with Chapter 21 of my Birmingham Black Barons book.

Pouring a fresh cup of coffee, I was ready to confront AT&T. This took another hour out of the day before “John” finally changed the name of the wireless account and provided a new password, one of those complex AT&T configurations that AT&T so loves.

On the eve of my departure for Bowling Green, everything seems to be working fine. AOL and AT&T had better hope it remains so. They really don’t want to deal with Ms. Wilstach without me there as a buffer.

But there are lingering problems,
. The little Epson 830 that I use primarily for scanning is out of commission. It will not recognize a replacement cyan cartridge, thus rendering the machine useless. Even though no ink is involved, it will not allow me to scan anything. After a lengthy conversation with one of their tech people, I was asked to send the cyan cartridge to California and they’d send a replacement. It’s been two weeks, and I am still waiting. Meanwhile, I went to Staples and bought a new cartridge, hoping it would solve the problem. No such luck. Printer doesn’t recognize it either.

So, the bottom line is there will be very little in the way of illos this issue. Fortunately, I had already saved a few cartoons and book covers.

I am on the verge of removing Epson from my life and possibly turning to Brother.

Cruisin' down the ocean

Reflecting on our ages and general health, which is decent *right now*, it occurred to us that we may be getting short of time when we take Atticus on meaningful vacations. We discussed several options for the upcoming spring break in Montevallo. finally settling on a cruise.

We will take the lad to The Bahamas the week of March 25-29. Actually, he will be taking us, so to speak. This is his third cruise and our first. He has promised to show us around. Not only is it his third cruise, but also his third cruise and third foreign country in the span of nine months. Can any of you non-military brats lay claim to such a cosmopolitan life?

A full report will follow in the next issue, but our boat is supposed to stop in Freeport and Nassau, not one of those manufactured cruise line islands. A nature excursion is tentatively planned in the former and casual historical wandering in the latter.

We hope a bonus will be lunch with the Lillian contingent before we start back to Alabama.

Pounding the old horsehide

It's spring and baseball is back. Atticus will once again be playing in a coach-pitch league. I am interesting in seeing if his skills mature this year. Like I was, he flinches at a ball coming toward him. He still has not mastered the art of turning the glove over rather than palm up when trying to catch a thrown or batted ball. If he doesn't learn that, he will not likely find kid-pitch ball much fun next year. But that's okay, because he loves soccer and we have both fall and spring soccer programs. It will be his call when it comes.

And pounding the old ivories

We have wanted to get Atticus into music, and Nancy wisely determined that he should start with piano. He is now taking lessons with Lauren Middaugh, a senior faculty member at the University of Montevallo. Lauren and her husband, Bennie, an outstanding singer in his own right, have been friends for years.

We normally sit on a pew near the piano/organ player at church. After his first lesson, Atticus took more notice of what the young man was doing at the keyboard. The Sunday after the second lesson, he walked up after church and said, "I can play the piano, too." Lauren totally cracked up when she heard the story, but added that confidence is important to learning.

What is cool is that he does not find practice onerous so far. Sometimes he will just sit down and start without being told.

The next book

This will be an abbreviated issue. I have spent long hours, most of my free time, the past few weeks finishing my book on the Birmingham Black Barons. The narrative is done, but there is still the appendix and photo gathering. I have a couple of interesting photo hunt stories to tell next time.

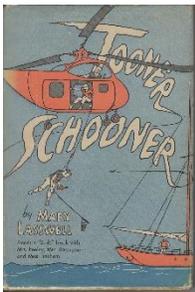


**“I’ve never yet come out of a bookshop without purchasing something...
Sometimes I half-heartedly determine not to buy any more books until I have
read the ones I already have, but such madness soon passes.” – Al Andrews**

Reviews

Tooner Schooner by Mary Lasswell (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1953, hc)

When we last checked in on Mrs. Rasmussen, Mrs. Feeley, and Miss Tinkham, they had just returned home after a cross-country adventure involving drugs, undercover agents and a phony, half-crooked psychic. The return to San Diego was not the joyous event they anticipated. They arrived to find that Noah’s Ark, the junkyard and home they shared had burned to the ground in their absence.



The three beer-swilling ladies are living in a cramped trailer on the property. still uncertain about what to do next. In comes a trio of old friends – Oscar, Jasper and Red – to tell them that bigger quarters are coming. The guys acquired seven busses that were about to be hauled off to the scrap yard. “They was gonna haul ‘em to the dump. Make you a motel out of ‘em. We’ll do the work. You got three of ‘em rented already: jasper ‘an’ Red an’ me. You ladies need one. Old-Timer (their handyman) could hold kind Liberty Hall in another of ‘em.” Soon the dismal Noah’s Ark property is turned into a unique motel with brightly colored busses converted into rooms.

Meanwhile the hopheads befriend Captain Elisha Dowdy, who owns a charter boat called the South Wind. With the skillful Mrs. Rasmussen running the galley and Mrs. Feeley and Miss Tinkham quickly learning to hoist sails and handle other shipboard chores, they sign on as his crew. “You got all the crew you need right here. I’ll be your swabbie and Mrs. Rasmussen’ll cook. Miss Tinkham can add class an’ elegance.” Business picks up and things are looking good. Then, the legal woes hit. The boat is actually owned by the captain’s estranged wife who

currently lives in Arizona.

Once again the ladies are off on adventure that involves a lot of cleverness and certain amount of subterfuge to return the *South Wind* to Dowdy. This is the fifth title in Lasswell's Suds in Your Eye series. They are dated but not so much that they can't be enjoyed. The characters are funny, the story lines are engaging. A fun read between more serious books from the nightstand.

Quotables:

--"Don't form any hasty conclusions, Captain," Miss Tinkham said. We can wear a red sock on one foot and a green sock on the other and then we call tell port from starboard."

--"What is your name, sir? There is a deadly anonymous quality in not knowing people's names."

--"She would give a good account of herself in Buckingham Palace or in a barroom brawl."

--"Keep your behind close to the ground an' you'll never git no highfaulutin notions."

--"Drink you beer before it's a hot toddy."

--"They both get boat-sick if they pass a travel ad in a window."

--"We ain't et since five," Mrs. Rasmussen said. "My stomach sounds like a haunted house."

Captain Underpants and the Invasion of the Incredibly Naughty Cafeteria Ladies From Outer Space (and the Subsequent Assault of the Equally Evil Lunchroom Zombie Nerds) by Dav Pilkey (Scholastic, 1999, trade pb)

Once again exhorted by my 7-year-old grandson, Atticus, I have jumped into the world of Jerome Horwitz Elementary School, ruled by the irascible Principal Krupp. And, of course, the ever-prankful George Beard and Harold Hutchins, creators of the story with a story. They produce a comic book called Captain Underpants. In the first book they accidentally hypnotize Krump and realize they can turn him on and off with a snap of the fingers or a splash of water to the head. The most fun always comes when they turn him into their comic book creation.

This "The Third Epic Novel" in the series, opens with three space aliens landing on top of the school with a plan to take over the world. They see an opportunity when the three lunchroom ladies quit and the aliens are able to don dresses and go to work. Toward their nefarious end, they cook up food that turns all who eat it into zombie nerds. As usual, one of George and Harold's Captain Underpants comics is woven into the overriding story line.

Pilkey's ability to mix and mingle had this funny moment. In the opening to Chapter 15 we are warned, "The following chapter contains terribly inappropriate scenes that certainly do not belong in a children's book. If you are offended by such senselessness, please put this book down immediately, raise your arms over your head, and run screaming to your nearest show store. When you get there, ask them to make you a cheeseburger. (Noted: This probably won't help you a bit, but we think it will be funny.).

A chapter late, when the boys are battling the space aliens lunchroom ladies, Captain Underpants arrives with his trademark cry of "Tra-La-Laaaaa!" He shouts, "I am here to fight for Truth, Justice, and all that is Pre-Shrunk and Cottony!"

"Where were you back in chapter 15 when we needed you?" asked George.

"I was at the shoe store ordering a cheeseburger," said Captain Underpants. Yes, it is all incredibly silly, but it is also funny.

And, as an afterthought, I will say that the Captain Underpants movie -- which Atticus noticed quickly blends parts of books 1, 2, and 4 – is quite a hoot. We really don't object when he wants to call it up yet again on Netflix.

Red Pizzas for a Blue Count by Geronimo Stilton (Scholastic, 2000, pb)

This re view begins with George Wells. Remember him? Stone age SFPAn. At the High Point DSC he and Rich Dengrove took an interest in my grandson, Atticus, trying to chat with him about the books he was reading, etc. That brought forth a story from George about meeting another small child and having a similar conversation. That kid told George that he was a big fan of the Geronimo Stilton stories. George said Atticus might like them, also

Geronimo Stilton is a businessmouse who owns a newspaper. Covering stories sends him off on a myriad of adventures. This story, the first in the season, has him off to Transratania where his cousin Trap appears to be in trouble. Of course, the whole things has a vampire theme of sorts.

Included is a colorful map of New Mouse City, a map of Mouse Island and a two-page spread of *The Rodent Gazette* newsroom with more than 30 reporters and other characters. It's quite a busy little universe.

Although the series credits Geronimo as the author, it was created by Ilisabetta Dami, a rather remarkable Italian writer and adventurer, born in 1958. I don't know if she has a James Patterson-type stable of helpers or not, but she is quite prolific. There are more than 40 of the 120-page Geronimo Stilton adventures. But wait. There is another series focused on Thea Stilton, Geronimo's sister. And there are at least two spinoff series about Spacemice and Cavemice.

My take? It was an okay story, nearly as interesting to me as Captain Underpants and the Wimpy Kid series. More importantly, though, George, Atticus enjoys them. Thanks a lot for the recommendation.

By the way, there is a television series based on the characters. In the series, it has been updated to make Geronimo's business enterprise a television station rather than a newspaper.

Quotable:

--"Well, it has always been obvious that you and I are very different....I am strong, and you are weak. I am carefree, and you are a worrywart. I am an accomplished chef, and you have trouble balancing your cheese on its cracker."

Dragonbreath by Ursula Vernon. (Dial Books for Young Readers, a Penguin Random House imprint, 2009, hc)

This book, also, is a take-away from DSC55 in High Point. Nancy and I got into a conversation with a vendor in the huckster room. We asked about a good series for Atticus, and she recommended the adventures of Danny Dragonbreath, a young dragon still trying to master the skill of breathing fire. It is a shortcoming a bit disconcerting to his father, who urges him to think hot and keep practicing.

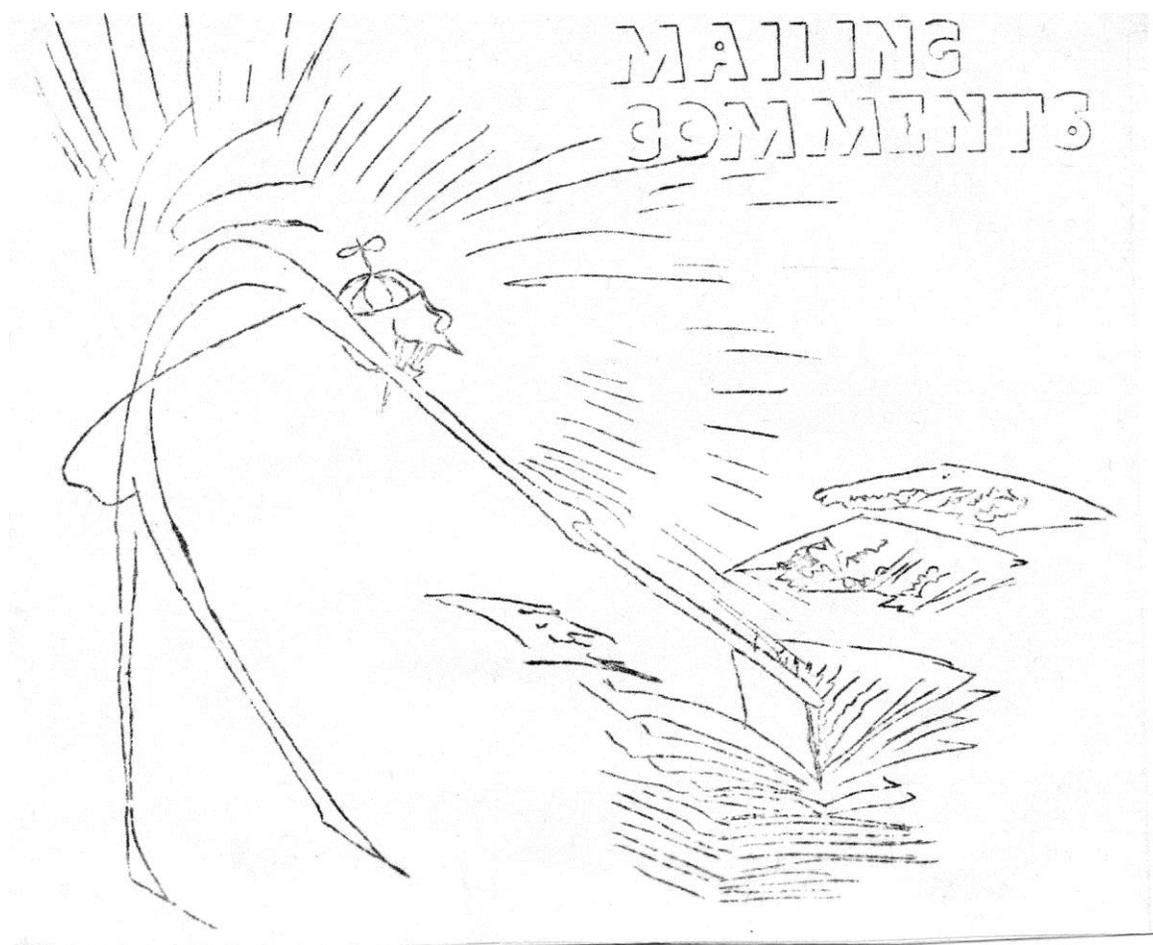
All of the characters are critters. Danny's best buddy is Wendell, a green iguana. There is a school bully who is a Komodo dragon. Wendell is the type that tends to do his homework on time while Danny is easily distracted by more interesting things. Faced with a deadline on an essay about the sea, Danny takes his mother's advice to contact his cousin Edward, who just happens to be a sea serpent. Danny and Wendell take the city bus, which makes stops at the mall, East Street, the Library, 3rd Street, the Community College and the Sargasso Sea.

The Sargasso Sea stops puts them near Edward, who takes them on an undersea adventure. It's a cleverly done tale with creative characters.

I added it to my stack of To-Be-Read books because I want to have reference points for the series that Atticus likes. I probably won't seek out future titles of this series or of Geronimo Stilton, but I'm glad I read them both. Both employ that wonderful mix of illustrations and prose that is popular today with young readers. There are extremely clever graphic structures with type fonts and drawings. Kids love pictures but in these books they are also honing their reading skills with large swaths of text.

One complaint on this title, though. The front cover has one of those little gold stickers that proclaims the book to be "autographed by the author." The autograph, inside the front cover, is an indecipherable squiggle. Now, perhaps that is how Ms. Vernon signs her name, but it looks to me like something done in a hurry to get through a stack of books. I would hope she would be a little more considerate of her audience. I don't know that Atticus will ever recognize that as an autograph rather than a squiggle.





The Southerner #321/Joe Not a pad page count considering the holidays.

The Noctuary #20/Joe Did those youthful images foretell a life of books, fanzines, movies, and Asian food? Perhaps, but appear to be quite a somber lad in some of those years.

Along the Watchtower #144/Larry I'll skip any football comments since you wrote your natter before the National Championship game, and we know how that came out. Roll Tide and take a back seat, Bear.

The Traveling Wilburys Vol. 1 is one of the all-time great albums. "Tweeter and the Monkey Man" is an amusing ballad, but it is far from the best stuff on the album. That would be "Heading for the Light" and "End of the Line, especially the latter. Did you happen to catch the video – back when MTV played music – of "End of the Line"? It was obviously recorded after Roy Orbison died. The other four are performing in a rail car. Part of the décor is a rocking chair with a guitar. The album itself is just extraordinarily listenable from track 1 to track 10.

And speaking of music, your little easy on how to behave with women reminds me of the Confederate Railroad song, "Don't hand me no lines and keep your hands to yourself."

Hear, Kinder/Guy Your annual summary of things in Lillianville was much more enjoyable reading this year. Nothing like a fun job and better health to improve one's outlook on life. I'm glad you are where you are.

Sporadic 47/me I have accepted the advice of several and photocopied my comics, but I still seem to get crappy reproduction. I'm at a loss for why.

Trivial Pursuits #195/Janice I see the uncertainty continues in the work place. Good luck with that. It's tough dealing with a person who is obviously in the wrong job and maintaining an even keel and proper performance. Bug we've seen to weather employment storms before and come out ahead. I'm confident that will be the case here, too.

Regarding the article on net neutrality, Nancy is convinced that it is affecting her ability to get online with her Mac. Could be. My computer is slow at times, too, but that may also be because it is several years old, and I, perhaps foolishly, rejecting some updates along the way. In those moments, my thinking was, "You already make me mad. Why should I give you more opportunities to do that?" I'm more circumspect about those updates now.

Ct. Rich Lynch and Chris Thile. This topic comes up in a couple of other places in the mailing. I noticed a couple of weeks ago that the name of the show has been changed from *A Prairie Home Companion* to *Live From Here*. I guess that completes public radio's total separation from Garrison Keillor after the sex abuse charges. I can listen to Thile's show and get enjoyment from it, but it is not a go-to as Keillor's show was.

I agree with you and Guy that the combination of natter/ mailing comments is the strength of the apa. Together they are kind of like a conversation with friends over lunch, chit-chatting about the news of the day or what's going on in our lives. That kind of camaraderie is what keeps me going to DeepSouthCons. My primary interest is in hanging out with folks from this group and making some new friends. Speaking of such, I hope to finally meet you this upcoming weekend.

Ct. Gary Brown and baseball, I did not refer to the red Sox as the Antichrist. Indeed, that appellation belongs only to the Yankees. It is almost necessary to drive a wooden stake through their evil hearts to keep them out of the World Series.

The Typo King #47/Robert Thanks again for the heads up on the Radio Spirits package of *The Shadow*. I listened to several of them on the Bowling Green trip. Most were very good stories. As you and I have discussed before, my love of the character is through radio. However, I recently read another of the pulps and thought the story was pretty good. I may not get it reviewed until next mailing because I'm feeling a time crunch right now.

Regarding *The Brotherhood of the Seven Kings*, if all of the writing was as ponderous as the passage you share dup front, I don't know how you got through the book. Still, your detailed background information was quite interesting. And I must say, I have on a few occasions made myself finish something that I really disliked because I felt the need for the reference point. In fact, I try to finish any book I start.

Ct. Gary Robe and Christmas decorations. You said, "*I also see that many of these inflatables can't seem to hold air for long...*" What you may not realize is that a lot of them are

attached to timers, which deflate them during the day and kick them back up at night. Until I learned that, I thought maybe teenagers with BNB guns were taking target practice!

Atticus' ardor for creating his comic strip has waned considerably. He still has the earlier work in his desk and may return to it someday. I hope he does because his enthusiasm was quite contagious.

I'm surprised that radio stations in your area play "Alice's Restaurant" around Thanksgiving. I'm pretty sure I have never heard it on a station down here. That reminds me of a big change in radio programming. In the '70s it was quite common for radio stations to interrupt their playlists for songs by artists who died that day. That doesn't happen anymore. All of the programming is locked into place by suits with reams of demographics. I did not realize that artists get no royalties for airplay. I always assumed both writers and artists got paychecks for airplay.

I am the opposite on Agatha Christie, I always enjoyed her stories. I thought they were very clever. As for her regulars, I enjoyed Hercule Poirot, but Miss Marple was my favorite, especially in the films made from Christie's work. I particularly remember some wonderful films with Dame Margaret Rutherford as Miss Marple. At the same time, they were producing a series of Poirot films with Tony Randall in the lead. I don't seem to recall him being as good as some more recent actors.

Peter, Pan & Merry #137/David Interesting cover and a neat T-shirt. Alas, none of my vintage shirts would fit any more and most have been long since thrift stored. Today, I'll bet we all have closets or drawers with shirts that never make the rotation, largely because we have so many. I can't recall ever having a message shirt as a kid.

Regarding the charge for the writing workshop in North Carolina last summer, you have added yourself to the majority. Nobody seems to have heard of that practice at a con.

Ct. Tom McGovern and pro football. Interesting comment on the Tebow and Kaepernick situations. I think Tebow's little prayer is no different than other guys thrusting their pelvises or jumping into the stands. There's no reason for Tebow blowback. As for Kaepernick still being unemployed, I don't think it is collusion among the owners. I think it is simply that none of them want to deal with the baggage he will bring to the team, especially when there are plenty of decent quarterbacks available.

Variations on a Theme 121/Rich L Yeah, it is scary to look back and think that we didn't think we could do any worse in the White House than the W. Trump is mentally unbalanced. I'm just thankful that there is a complex process and not just one guy pressing a button for a nuclear launch.

Ct. Jennings and print fanzines. I print about a dozen extra copies of my zines. They go to mostly relatives and a few friends. I'm dismayed when I realize that postage and envelopes usually run about two bucks for each zine, plus the already upfront cost of paper and ink.

Ct. guy and con reports. I have always done con reports. I can't imagine not doing one. It's almost the first thing that comes to mind when I get home. But then, I do not attend many cons, usually one, sometimes two a year. If I were going to three or four, I might not be inclined to do a report every time.

Ct. Jeff. I, too, have a floppy disk drive that connects through a USB port. It's been a while since I used it, but it has come in handy a few times when I wanted access to old files that have not been updated onto a flash drive or computer file.

Jewels and Binoculars#41/TomM

Nice cover. I'm a Godfather fan, also. It's one of those things that is almost impossible not to stop and watch if it comes on television. Not that I really have to wait for it as Joe Moudry gave me the whole saga when he upgraded to Blu Ray awhile back. I introduced middle daughter Maggie to it years ago, and she loved it. I told her watch the second one because it was extraordinarily good for a sequel. When I asked her how she liked part 2, she bristled with anger. "You didn't think it was a good movie?" I asked. Her response was, "Daddy, Michael is not a good godfather!" She was so into it that she took Michael's behavior quite personal!

I'm glad there seems to be some positive action on your health front. I'm hoping that will still be the case when this mailing rolls out.

Ct. Rich Lynch and his Illuminati invitation. I had intended to address that last issue, but it slipped my mind. I'm disappointed that Rich didn't take advantage of the opportunity so he could share the secrets with his fellow SFPAns. (Assuming he wouldn't have to kill us, of course.) My grandson Atticus has taken an interest in the Illuminati recently. I think it showed up in couple of TV cartoons.

If, as a Red Sox fan, you can't take a more disdainful view of the ~~Antichrist~~ Yankees, they may not let you into Fenway.

On the Tijuana Bibles, no, I guess I wasn't clear. No, I don't think they are still being produced. Given what's on television and the internet, it would seem rather pointless. When I looked at the book, though, I was astonished at how many of them have been found and the wide range of celebrities lampooned in them.

ROM/TomF

Why do you guys have a house? I don't see how you could possibly have a use for one because you are never there. You attend more classes, concerts, plays, etc. every month than I do in a year! Actually, I am jealous of the many things you get to. Obviously you have a lot of fun. How many people are in the Packers club? Are they all from Wisconsin? That's been my team because of all of the Alabama connections such as Don Hutson and Bart Starr. If you get into microfilm from the 1940s you will be amazed by Hutson. He was a franchise player long before anybody ever thought of the term. He would lead the league in scoring because he was their kicker as well as top receiver.

Ct. Jennings and Motel 6. I notice from their signs that rooms are now about 40 bucks. The last time I stayed in one was in the late 1980s in Tuscaloosa. I don't recall if there was a pay television or not. I did not recall them using that system until you mentioned it.

Enjoyed hanging out with y'all in Bowling Green.

Spiritus Mundi 283/Guy

Let's get the disagreement out of the way first. I was not offended by the cover. I just thought it was tacky (more on that in a minute). Indeed, if anyone was offended, it appears that it was you over the blowback from me and a few other SFPAns. Power Girl's name on every page of 283? Come on. I get the message. You think it's cool; I don't. I had never heard of the character until this little brouhaha

came along. I did some research. I didn't know superman had any cousins. Well, the artwork reminds me of something out of a 1970s men's magazine, or maybe a moderately talented middle school boy using the bathroom wall for a canvas, so I remain with my assessment.

You may go ahead and categorize me at whatever level of prudery you wish, but I find those comics that Mike Weber likes equally lame.

Now to more amenable topics.

Congrats on the laser surgery. Everyone I know who has had that (my wifemate included) has said nothing but good things about it. I may face it eventually but at present my eye doc says it isn't necessary.

You seem to be really enjoying your new career as teacher. I found it very rewarding when I was doing the same. It can also be frustrating. When I was adjunct faculty at historically black Alabama State University, I had a lot of kids who came out of those poor Black Belt counties. Their preparation for college was woefully lacking in many cases. It brought home very much just how unequal education was in those days.

Ct Gary Robe. I had forgotten all about The Fog with the delectable Adrienne Barbeau. Do you remember her from television? She played the daughter on *Maude*.

Funny story about Jerry Proctor and his neighbor. I regret very much that I did not know about the fannish connection of the Proctor family. It would have made the year that Jerry and I worked together much more bearable. It was the worst year of my life professionally. I was introduced to his wife at George Inzer's funeral.

Regarding the Early Bird competition, I doubt I will have another first. My con report last summer just lent itself to that opportunity. I'm satisfied with my place in the standings.

I hope you will go back to the two-column format for SM. It sure makes it a lot easier to read.

The Neighbor's Polar Cat #6/Joe Is that cover photo for real or some kind of Photo Shop magic? It's hard to see two cats standing still for the costuming and the picture. Nice pictures of the girl child and the grands. I've met Leigh and the little ones, of course, but I'm not sure that I've ever seen a picture of Kaylin. A lovely lass, also. I may have told this story elsewhere in this mailing, but I only recently learned what an Instant Pot is. I had a vague notion that it had something to do with a certain crop in Colorado. The device got a good review in *Consumer Reports*.

Spartacus No. 24/ Guy Sadly, I agree with your friend's speculations on whether our country can pull out of the Trump bog. Even if there is a Democratic uprising that sets the house in order again, there is an undercurrent of incivility out there that may never go away. My truck, which has Democratic stickers of one kind or another, has been moderately keyed in one place. "The driver of this truck is a dumbass" was written on one of the Demo stickers. That's Trump's base.

Twygdrasil and Treehouse Gazette #168/RichD I love the faux book covers. Some really clever people came up with those ideas and the spot-on blurbs and art. The *Bibliobimbo* is so like the covers of some of the novels my dad used to read. Thanks for the update on our niece. I'm glad things are looking so much better for her now.

I could not get interested in Lucretius, and I did limit your colonoscopy to quick glance. I think and hope I m still a few years away from my next one. I will say, though, that the prep is immeasurably easier now than it was when I had my first experience 20 or more years ago.

Ct. Larry and mass murder odds. It is true that the odds are infinitely less than a plane crash, a car wreck or just a heart attack. Still, I wonder if the possibility lingers in the backs of other people's minds. I must confess that there are times at the Y or in church when I scan exits and think of what could happen.

Quote alert, Mr. Jennings: "Your ex-wife believed horror movies create demons that run amuck? Why not? I remember a camp counselor telling me that science fiction could cause you to go mad....He was wrong – we science fiction fans are crazy to begin with."

Ct. Tom Feller and restrictions on DeepSouthCon sites. I think the bylaws are less of a problem than finding a bigger con that will allow us to piggyback. We may be forced to hold one among the Northern Tribes someday.

I did not know that Disney sued a Tijuana bible company over copyright infringement or that Mickey had been up to such hijinks. It's a little remarkable that Disney found the company to sue. My impression was that the producers were fairly clandestine and many of the artists are still unknown today.

Ct. Joe and Nancy comics. I read them, too, and as you say they were note big haw-haw laughs. But then, I read *all* of the comics in our newspaper, even the ones I don't particularly care for such as *Garfield* and *Marmaduke*. What I have noticed here is the practically total disappearance of adventure strips. *The Phantom* is the only one still carried. I would love to get *Dick Tracy* to follow Joe Staton's work. Interestingly, the current producers, Tom DePaul and Paul Ryan, are doing separate story lines for daily and Sunday strips.

Good to see you in Bowling Green.

Box Scores #127/GaryB Finally got my page count average back to where I wanted, but it was not from *Sporadic*, per se, but because of the extras like con reports and the Bob Cox one-shot.

Oblio No. 233/GaryB A Man of Leisure, indeed. Just wait until you've been at it a few weeks. You'll start to wonder how you ever could have worked the *Palm Beach Post* into your schedule. Seriously, I think you are really going to enjoy building you own schedule each day. I hope the severance, pensions, etc., are adequate to allow the home improvements you mention. A large flat screen TV can radically change movie and ball game viewing.

Your comments on the traffic jam and the guy who tried to circumvent the rest of the world was amusing. (I hope his injuries were not serious, though.). I was once in one of those Florida interstate parking lots when some hotshot roared by me on the right shoulder. It was enormously satisfying a half an hour or so later when the line moved up and I saw him again. He and several others of similar shoulder-driving ilk were lined up behind a state trooper car parked on the shoulder. The officer was busy scribbling tickets for them all.

Ct. mike and John Fogarty. I was coaching youth baseball or softball when Fogarty's *Centerfield* album was released. Knowing something of the background, I was delighted for Fogarty, and the album was enjoyable. The title song, "Centerfield," became an anthem in ball parks everywhere that year and remains so.

Ct. Guy and SFPA sabbaticals. I think there have been a number of them. Most recently, me, Joe and Liz. Or, perhaps, I'm not understanding your reference to Alan Hutchinson.

Tennessee Trash #140/GaryR

Congratulation son getting that puzzle together. That's a doozy. We enjoy doing one with Atticus now and then. It's an activity that we tend to forget is available to us. And the Robe Christmas doings are always interesting because y'all are such a close knit tribe with cool traditions

Alas, I was not able to equally enjoy the Florida trip. My copy of TT#140 lacked pages 6, 7 and 8. I did get an adventurous 9, though; it was upside down!

Ct. TomM and slavery in The Bible. There was some Bozo running for the legislature in Alabama a few years ago who cited slavery in Biblical times as a justification for the horrible practice.

A quick note on Concave/DSC, fun being with you guys as usual although I'm sorry I didn't get to see more of Isaac. And thanks for sharing the wild pig. Please pass on my compliments to the chef. It was excellent!

Revenant #99/Sheila

Hear@! Hear! I'm glad snow is not part of life normally. I will say that the two snows we got this year were acceptable. The first one left about six inches, plenty for Atticus and his friends to enjoy. It never got so cold that the streets became overly dangerous. Of course, the kids had to go to school on President's Day to make up for one of the weather days they were out. The second snow was just a dusting and likewise caused few problems.

Glad you made it to Bowling Green. I thought it was a really fun gathering. It was great to get to visit with a number of SFPAnS. And there was just the right amount of program for a relaxacon. I was dismayed in one of our chats, though, to find that you still don't have a complete house again after all of this time. On the subject of travel, I'm glad you are going to get o go back to New York, hopefully with a little more sightseeing time.

By the way, I'm sure you realize that the next issue of revenant is No. 100. Will we see something spectacular?

All Along the Watchtower #145/Larry

Ah, we catch up on the late news from #144. Roll Tide, indeed. Saban's call on the quarterback change was gutsy for sure. It will be interesting to see how the two quarterback situation plays out in spring training. Will Alabama have two alternating or will one of them seek a transfer and a guarantee of playing time?

A Man Who Knew the Oxford Girl/mike

I was mentally preparing some empathetic comments on your 2 natter when I hit the update on page 5. I know things are still dire for you guys, but that was delightful news about Kate's disability coming through.

You wrote: "*Roy Moore won, and is now a Senator from Alabama. News from an alternate universe?*" That's how we still feel now that the unexpected euphoria has worn off a bit. But Democrats are encouraged and drumming up what they hope are viable candidates at the local level to capitalize on what is hoped to be a Trump presidency backlash. Interestingly, Doug

Jones got 40% of the vote here in Shelby County, one of the two reddest in the state.
All the best to you guys.

Raincoats to Alaska/George I read *The Hunger Games* and enjoyed it, but like a lot of current series, I had no strong inclination to go further with it. I'm sorry our time at Concave/DSC was so brief. I just seemed to be scurrying each time our paths crossed.

Voice Mail from Boulder/Tyndallite Vol. 5, No. 196/Norman I think we are all of an accord that Joe did the right thing to protect your streak, Norm. As for the other part of the above, I think that's the one that I misplaced from the last mailing and therefore couldn't not comment on.

Of course, you were among those who caught my Forster/Forester screw-up. Thanks for the compliment on the review. Also, thanks for all of the little Philip K. Dick tidbits you shared this time.

Light is the left hand.../? I knoweth not from whence this came. It is not in the contents list. I am not sure how familiar I am with the much lauded Le Guin. I know titles, but I can't recall if I read the books in my previous fannish incarnation. At any rate, a laudable tribute to a Grand Master.

Missing in Action This Mailing

I know they are around here somewhere. Hopefully, MCs next mailing

--Original Ideas/Jeff

--Spartacus no. 25, p. 5-6/Guy

