

# Goliard

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bet you all thought my calendar didn't have any month in it but February. For that matter, I thought so too. SPILL LOOKS LIKE IT. DETAILS LATER OR --- FOR 150th MLG

## GOLDEN WEATHER

Oro, que me siento oro.  
Oro viento. Oros ramas. . .

Con la luz en ambos manos  
allí sueño en mi baranda,  
oro carne, pelo oro,  
con ojos de feliz verde. . .

Garcia Lorca: "he was a green fool, and all his trees bore green apples." With little or no apology to

It's been golden weather for months. The usual summer overcasts were absent, yet it was seldom uncomfortably hot. We've shown visitors around through August and October, and always had clear sunlight and smiling skies. And when we were traveling, though we had a little rain, the emotional weather was still golden all around us. . .

I failed to take any notes on Discon, not really planning to do a conreport. Only fragments remain: Bonnie Dalzell drawing me a piebald hippogriff, Yang welcoming me into the Dark Horde, Ann Cass cracking all the knots out of my back, Ara Pashinian almost offended that I brought a bottle to his party, Dick Eney feeding me rice crackers and jam for an after-party breakfast (I had a grudge against the coffee shop management, but never mind). Golden weather. . .

After the convention we stayed in Washington to see some of my relatives, look at the new space exhibits in the Smithsonian, and renew (in my case, begin) acquaintance with some of Poul's old friends. I'd never met them before, but took ~~xxx~~ to them at once. Golden weather. . .

From there we went to western Pennsylvania for the Third Annual Pennsic War. If I started to explain that, it would take all night. I'll just say that we were treated with even more courtesy than that due to our rank, and that we made many new friends. -- Oro viento. Oros ramas.

I mentioned visitors -- Before Discon, Poul's mother and her sister Fikke (well, Anne Elizabeth Hertz, but nobody calls her that) were with us for a couple of weeks. We toured San Francisco, Muir Woods, the wine country, Point Lobos. I saw my second sea otter there, right in range of the pay telescope, lying on its back smashing sea urchins. On the way back from Point Lobos we stopped at San Juan Bautista, to show Fikke the mission and the old buildings around the green. We were late, but the guard let us in -- and actually snakkered a few words of Dansk to Fikke! and when we came out, the sun was level and all the grass and trees and walls were golden.

Our other visitors were the Miesels, in October. John was attending a professional convention; while he sat through boring sessions, we showed Sandra around. Well, Poul did most of that, as I had some fiberglassing to do that had to be finished while the dry season lasted. Evenings we partied. Friday and Saturday night of that week they stayed with us, and Saturday night we talked John into wearing medieval clothes to the Orsers' anniversary party. Once he got there, he admitted that a business suit would have been less appropriate than the purple tunic trimmed with gold.

Cutting back to September: I had a birthday in there, and we celebrated it by visiting the Brundage collection of oriental art at the De Young Museum, buying a reproduction of a tenth-century Mongol buckle at the museum store, shopping in Chinatown, and having dinner at the Empress of China. On the way home we picked up a couple of bottles, and finished the evening drinking King's Peg -- brandy and champagne. Could any drink be more golden?

For a while after that I was busy with the purchases of that day plus some other things. When I joined the Dark Horde, I swore fealty to Yang only insofar as such fealty would not conflict with oath to the Crown and Kingdom of the West, an oath I renew as an officer of state at every coronation. To emphasize the difference between Kartina, Vesper Principal Herald, and the rider of the Horde, I took a new name and persona. My new costume made that explicit. I had -- still have -- a stubborn case of laryngitis, so I'd told my chief deputy he would handle all the work at the Crown Tourney. He did so; and when court was almost over I strode up to the King --

Here's what I was wearing. A blue Chinese coat brocaded with gold dragons, trimmed with wide bands of fake snow-leopard fur at wrist and hem. A blue felt cap, high in the crown, with a band of the same fur, at each side of the crown a pendant of Peking glass and kingfisher feather inlay, at the front of the fur band the Mongol tiger buckle. Baggy brown trousers, tucked

into short silver naugahyde boots. A belt of golden links, and suspended from it a small deerskin pouch, a larger reindeer hide pouch with the hair on it, a flask of brew, and a short curving knife in a white leather sheath. As I strode up to the King, I unslung a cow's horn from my shoulder and gave a mighty toot. (To tell the truth, it was a bit cracked; I'm still working on my embouchure.) "Lord King! I am Altyntai, a Rider of the Dark Horde. In the recent Pennsic War, the Horde was hired to fight for the Middle Kingdom against the East. The East was defeated. Soon the combined forces of East and Middle will attack the West. The Kha Khan bids me tell you that if ~~you~~ you fail to hire the Horde against that day, God alone knows what will happen." -- That last line, by the way, is a quotation from Genghis Khan. Oh, my new name -- Altyntai? It means "Golden."

It was just as well that I hadn't waited for Court to be over when I did this, though I didn't know it. The last item of business was a summons for Lady Karina to approach the throne. Good heavens! I thought. Why do kings always have to surprise people? I still haven't gotten over Twelfth Night when I read out the proclamation for the creation of the Order of the Silver Molet up to where it said And therefore do We call before Us: -- turned to the King, and he said Call Sir Bela of Eastmarch and Sir Robert of Dunharrow. I nearly swallowed my teeth: Bela of Eastmarch is my own lord and husband, and the King hadn't warned me. And so, this time, I stomped back up and said "Karina of the Far West was unable to attend the tourney. I, Altyntai, stand here in her place." Well, I didn't stand; I knelt. Lady Karina would have done it. So what was it all about? -- They were giving me a surprise birthday party, with an enormous cake, and gifts of wine and jewelry and books, wrapped in gilded paper and brocade of gold. . . .

October. The trip to Denver for Mile Hi Con, where Poul was guest of honor, a flight over golden hills and golden clouds. A small convention -- only 300 people! It seemed I spent half my time talking S. C. A. business, and remembering that I was in the Kingdom of Atenvelt I had to preface nearly every statement with "In the West, the rule is ---" They're sadly isolated in Caerthe; the capital of Atenvelt is in Phoenix. I hope I was able to help them; at any rate, I got to know a number of people who had theretofore only been names.

It was a pretty good convention. There ~~xxxx~~ was multiple programming, which seems invariably to pair up the items I want to attend, and leave holes where there's nothing that interests me -- the only exception I can think of is the AAAS conventions; they leave no holes -- I refer you to Jerry Pournelle's AAAScon report a few months back in Galaxy. One of the items I opted for

was a film called "History of the Conquest of Space." The parts I saw were assembled somewhat out of order -- instalments 6 and 7 were on the first reel, the 4, 8, 9 on the second reel -- but aside from that and some other evidences of amateur preparation, the footage was all highly interesting. Parts 8 and 9 had a great deal of Russian material I'd never seen before. (And you didn't even have to know Russian to realize that one whole sequence about Valentina Tereshkova's training was flopped left-to-right.) Never before had I seen shots of the interior of a Russian spacecraft in flight; never seen cosmonauts clowning around just like on the great Wally Walt & Donn Show. These films are available from the Denver Public Library, I understand; probably the rental fee isn't too high. A Russian translator would help: in those sections, the English voice-over is silent for stretches of time where there is commentary -- and even cosmonauts' voices -- on the sound track. But even failing a translator, even if you may have seen much of the Gemini and Apollo material already, see this whole series if you get the chance. It adds up to several hours? Horas que yo siento de oro.

Aside from the conventioning and attendant partying, Mile Hi Con provided a Tourney, Court of Love and Revel. I implied up above there, didn't I, that the Barony of Caerthe was tied in? Co-chairman Judith Brownlee is also Judith de Beaumont, founding and ruling Baroness. (There are no less than three kinds of Baron/Baroness. Founder of a barony -- title retained as an honorific after retirement; Ruler of a barony -- who may or may not be the founder; and honoris causa, at the Crown's pleasure. Poul and I -- that is, Sir Bela and Lady Karina -- hold the title honoris causa. The favor of Kings is better than fine gold.

It would be tedious, even to me, to list all our honors in the S. C. A.; but I'll just say that it was not out of empty politeness to the guest of honor and his wife that the Baroness of Caerthe proclaimed me - as Lady Karina - "Queen of the Tourney and Revel," and Poul - as Sir Bela - "Guest of Honor of the Tourney and Revel." Yet at the same time I had not expected it, and I was no end pleased. Each of us was given a handsome scroll to commemorate the occasion.

--- The above pages were typed the Monday and Tuesday before the November deadline. So what happened Wednesday? Flu. Lasted a couple weeks. But let me tell you about December --

## HOW I ARRANGED A LIE AND IT CAME TRUE

To start with, you have to realize that Poul's mother is pushing eighty, hasn't much money, and dearly loves all her relatives but especially those in Denmark. Her half-brother (who married her best friend) will be celebrating their golden wedding this spring. So she couldn't very well fly here from Ohio for Christmas, could she? With her other son's family including two small Christmas-size girls right there in town?

We could have bought her a ticket easily enough. But the more we thought about it -- and it would be Business for Poul, at least, if he and his brother the geology professor were talking about a textbook (which they are) -- But we should, er, Poul should, also go to New York and talk to all the publishers in sight. A little geology here, a little science fiction there.

But me? Can we convince the revehoers that it's business for me too?

Funny thing, that. It was. I mean, even aside from the more-or-less social remark life from Ben Bova -- "Hey, Karen, are you going to write something somwtime?" -- I was actually commissioned by both Ballantine and NAL to do double-page map spreads for the books (one each) of Poul's that they have in the works.

Great Blue Whales! I haven't been a professional cartographer since 1952! -- Well, the Corps of Engineers spent six weeks training me; and even before that I'd picked up some useful techniques for times when you don't have pantographs or reflecting projectors.

It is nice to settle down again with inkdipper, ruling pen, crowquills, etching knife -- Must say the nonphoto blue pencil is a bit of a stranger --

New York was much the same as always. We stayed at the Algonquin for two reasons; the first of which is that it's convenient to most publishers' offices. Many of the people we'd have liked to see, though, were too far away.

We did get together with the Bovas, the Asimovs, and the del Reys; also, on Saturday afternoon, with some local SCA people; and we saw the Royal Shakespeare Company production of the old William Gillette play Sherlock Holmes. Nothing to complain about there!

In fact, that brings me to the other reason for staying at the Algonquin. The airline had this theatre/hotel package with which, for about five dollars over airfare, we got two orchestra tickets to any play, and two nights at our choice of several hotels. And the theatre district is in walking distance from the Algonquin.

Sherlock Holmes is an old-fashioned melodrama. Gillette wrote it, produced it, and took the title role; the first production was in 1899, but I believe revivals of it -- with Gillette, of course -- continued to about 1930.

The play lacks the dignity of the stories -- I said it was a melodrama -- and ends with Holmes falling in love with the heroine. (Gillette asked Doyle's permission. Doyle didn't give a damn.) Yet the play is full of little details that only a devout Sherlockian would recognize. And the current production is completely straightfaced; oh, it's been altered, but it hasn't been camped up. I'm very glad we saw it. We might not have bothered except that Dick Eney had recommended it; thanks again, Dick.

Oh yes. Walking distance from the hotel.. We did walk. Only hazard was a sprinkle of rain. And taxis don't have the armor-glass partitions like five years ago!

Other things in New York. . . I'm interested in medieval cookery, as I've mentioned before; but the spices are some\* times hard to find. We went to a shop in Greenwich Village called Aphrodisia, where I bought things like hyssop and rue and grains-of-paradise. I'm beginning to experiment with them. So far I like them. . . . And we spent part of an afternoon (not nearly long enough) at the Metropolitan Museum. Let's see, if the Nebula banquet is in New York this year, and Judy-Lynn likes the maps I'm doing ---

And so, on to far-off exotic Ohio. Naturally Poul had to confer with John about the geology text. Also I had to talk to John about ice ages -- this relates to the other set of maps I'm to do, for a novel Poul is just starting. Besides that, though, it was the first time we'd all been together for Christmas, ever. Astrid came up from New Orleans for a week, going back before New Year's Eve. We stayed in Kent until January 2nd.

Poul's folks didn't have any extra space for us -- well, there's room for a cot in his mother's attic, but Astrid had that -- so we stayed at a neighbor's house. Roundabout by a street was three times as far as cutting through back yards, and that's what we did. There seemed to be plenty of light reflected from the sky and snow, and we didn't bother with flashlights; so that's how I sprained my thumb. In three places, beginning at the wrist. Amazing how much a person relies on the left thumb. It still isn't back to normal. Meanwhile, I managed to slash my right thumb on a tin can a few days ago. -- Poul is pretty good about helping in the kitchen.

## A MAILING COMMENT OR SO

OF CABBAGES ... Sorry, Peggy Rae, but white ("Irish") potatoes are New World. The Spanish first encountered them in the Andes. The other vegetables you mention are Old World. --no, not corn and sweet potatoes, I meant the broccoli and so on. Though wild Queen Anne's lace might be as easily domesticated (a few generations) as the European form. Most beans we know are American; exceptions are fava beans and garbanzos (Europe) and of course soy (Asia). The onions we use are European (except for scallions -- Ascalon onions); but there are many wild native onions that can be eaten. Tomatoes and all the Capsicum peppers are American; black pepper is southeast Asian. Oops -- no, I think some red (Capsicum) peppers are found in India. American grapes belong to the same genus as the European ones, but have a characteristic "foxy" flavor. Most of our cultivated trees (apple, cherry) are imported. Black walnut is native.

As for animals, our wild geese are related to the European ones, but the domestic ones are directly descended from those of the Old World. Turkeys are native, chickens imported. Domestic cattle and swine are imported but can interbreed with the native forms; some stock growers are experimenting with "beefalo." Wild boar are common enough in California that there is no closed season.

Poul and I get into that kind of conversation all the time. It's a good thing we have the 11th edition Britannica.

PHILISTINE QUARTERLY "Foxy" means "having the characteristic flavor of the wild North American grape Vitis labrusca, commonly called the fox grape." We had a lot of them in Kentucky. They grew very high into the trees and were extremely tenacious; I remember we had one cut off at the top of a short hill, still meshed in the tree-tops, that we swung on for years. A fencerow belonging to the farm next door had been allowed to grow up into a miscellaneous mass of wild cherry, elm, and goodness knows what, all laced together with fox grapes. We used to make "monkey roads" ten feet off the ground. Uncultivated fox grapes, alas, are small and sour. About like wild cherries. We ate them anyway.

As for floccinaucinihilipilification: from Latin flocci, nauci, nihili, pili, words signifying "at a small price" or "at nothing" enumerated in a well-known rule of the Eton Latin Grammar + -fication. The action or habit of estimating as worthless. -- Thus the Oxford English Dictionary. Another book we use a lot around here. (We have the condensed format, of course.)

TARGET: FAPA Yes, you were much better company after you stopped playing host. Something we've learned not to do. "Here's the booze, here are the mixers, the beer is in the tub on the back step -- get what you want." It's the only way to throw a party and enjoy it. -- Chinese tacos? But you say there's a rich sauce -- when I've lost some weight I've got to try it. Why does food have to be so edible? Not that I'm managing to do much about losing weight. Tonight we had pork chops with some wild rice that I thought might be getting stale, seasoned with cubebbs and some fat from the hot Italian sausage I cooked for lunch. --Oh, cubebbs? They look like peppercorns (and are related), but the taste suggests a combination of pepper and one of the Labiate herbs (sage, mint, pennyroyal). -- Not this issue, but a couple mailings back, you were asking why we hadn't had a Chinese wine with our Year of the Tiger dinner, instead of Californian. That's simple. None on the wine list. I've run into a couple of Chinese liqueurs at bars like Li Po, never their wines. What should I ask for?

That pretty well does it for mailing comments: now what? Dammit, I was due at George Mitchell's half an hour ago to use his mimeo: Oh, yes, I mumbled something back on the first page about "details" on the flu that hit me in November. A very boring subject. Same for the other flu -- Epiphany Plague -- that came two days after the SCA Twelfth Night revel. (What can you expect when you assemble five hundred people from up and down the Pacific Coast, tire them out, and make sure they're in a room small enough that they can't avoid breathing on each other?)

I did recover from the Epiphany Plague in time to get to Rieslingshire (Fresno) for their "Thirteenth Night" revel, held two weeks later. A delightful occasion, if it did mean driving to Fresno. Come to think of it, there's a fannish and even Fapan connection there: one of the founders of the shire was Arthur Glendower (now deceased), known mundanely as Arthur Louis Joquel. No, I never met him.

On this date (February 5) in 1962 there was a conjunction of sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn; it will recur on May 5, 2000. That's what my calendar says, anyway; I didn't notice at the time.

But having been alerted by Sky & Telescope I did see the near-conjunction of Venus and Mercury last month, and will watch for the conjunction of Venus and Jupiter this month. Maybe even photograph it.

And now to George's mimeo.