

Home with the Armadillo #69 is brought to you by Liz Copeland of 3243 165th Ave. SE, Bellevue WA 98008. Phone number is 425-641-0209. Email is received at lizc@nwlinc.com. Started in November 2005, for SFPA 248.

Since Nasfic, I've been doing lots of knee therapy, finishing up some stuff around the house and working on getting James to do the interfacing with the school for his special education accommodations. He's at that teenager stage where he wants to be normal more than almost anything else, so he doesn't want to call attention to himself by leaving the classroom to go take his tests, or have a scribe take notes for him, or have someone read his test questions to him. (All of these are standard accommodations that the schools are set up to provide for dyslexic students.) So, at the scheduled evaluation and IEP renewal, the counselor and I brainstormed over new approaches. We decided to try the better version of the dictation software and a laptop so that James can dictate his notes and papers in classes, and use the laptop for almost all of his writing. So, we've ordered the software from Amazon, and will be trying it out before Thanksgiving. James is looking forward to having a laptop. ☺

My other surprising development is that I got a call from a woman in SW Washington who wanted to use a picture of my 9/11 quilt in her thesis. Jeff took the original call, and the woman and I played phone tag for a bit, but when we finally connected, I had a nice chat with her about quilting & healing, and another publication for my quilting resume.

And it's now November 11, and in a big surprise move, I'm starting my

Mailing Comments

The Southerner mlg 247 I'm sorry to hear we're losing Sally, but I can certainly understand the being overwhelmed by life problem. My roster line is fine.

The New Port News 222/Ned Usually street art like the fiberglass pigs, cows, turtles, etc are justified as leading to increased tourism and exposure for the city if they're paid for by taxes. The pigs in Seattle were done by local artists as a donation and auctioned off to help fund other art but Seattle has a big emphasis on city art.

It's not just the ice on Greenland and Antarctica that are melting – all the glaciers in Glacier National Park and in Alaska, and almost everywhere are receding rapidly. But hey, global warming is just a theory, right?

Having recent multiple experiences with surgery, I can attest that my doctors all knocked me out before doing the tubing. And when I came to in recovery, the tubes are all gone. Nowadays, they have you lie down on the table and there are wings at the sides for your arms to go out on. There's one IV to start the drugs and then the facemask and that's the last I remember....

I am not in the least surprised to hear that a woodpecker could break a mirror by pecking on it. Pileateds can kill squirrels with one peck to the back of the skull. Woodpeckers peck hard enough to take an inch out of a hardwood tree several hundred times a day. They have very strong beaks and skulls. And they are very good at balancing at funny angles – they use their tails as a third “leg” for balance and can hop and cling easily to any flat surface. A car side mirror has ample room.

We had a big flap a year ago with the governor's election – it was incredibly close, being decided by only a few votes on the third recount, and the Republican party went on the offensive about the vote counting being mismanaged, improper mail-in ballots (voted after the voter died), and fraudulent felon voting. The Republican candidate won the first count, and the first recount by a smaller margin, and the Democratic candidate won on the third (and only manual) recount. Unfortunately for them, in addition to losing the court appeal where they tried to get a specific method of subtracting votes implemented, the later newspaper stories revealed that the dead people votes were for the Republican, the felons who were actually not supposed to vote voted disproportionately for the Republican candidate and lots of the alleged felons had had their vote restored or weren't felons to begin with. It exposed a hugely sloppy process for restoring voter rights to felons. I have to wonder how it works elsewhere and if it's just as sloppy elsewhere.

I tried using MSWord to create an html file of a word document when I was working at APNQ, and the resulting html was atrocious. Most people don't want to code webpages in html – there are maintenance issues, it's difficult to read, it's hard to move the site if you change service providers, etc. That's why Dreamweaver, and other software to do the html pages, are so popular.

The Fake Yorker/Jeff

Cute cover even though I had to ask about it. For some of us, subways are still a novelty that only exist somewhere else.

I assume you got Thomas Friedman's book, *The World is Flat*, from the library? I'll have to add it to my already way too long reading list.

Hmm, if I had to pay to read email, I'd have to cut back on my lists – I get a couple of hundred messages a day. Either that, or start posting more so I get paid. ☺ Between the quilting and the birding lists, there are about 4000 people reading posts. At a penny apiece, posting once a day to each list gives me a very nice income, yes? Of course, this also means I'd need some way to sort out email without loading it so I could avoid people who are being chatty just to make money...

Also on my reading list is *What's Wrong with Kansas?*, a book entirely about red states voting against their own interests. It's gotten good reviews but the last time I got to the top of the waitlist at the library, I just couldn't cope with reading it. Maybe after Xmas...

Speaking of immigrants assimilating into the American myths, Allie has an interesting story about Vietnamese families forcing their children to sleep in separate rooms because that's how Americans do it. You might ask her about it.

I loved the A&E Nero Wolfe series. I think both actors cast for Nero and Archie were wrong physically, and Chaykin yells way too much, but the show captures the essence of the books quite well.

Yes, it's good that you're getting more involved with James. I think we're running into some of the cross-gender parenting issues that made sparks fly between you and Allie for several years. James is less volatile so he just doesn't talk to me and I get frustrated. And some stuff, I just can't help with right now because I'm the Mom (and a girl on top of that).

Okay, I gotta ask, how is holding down the shift key as the CD tries to autostart an obvious thing to do? Was this part of the download to your MS chip implant?

Thanks for the cartoon. That you are such a supportive and wonderful sweetie is one of the major bright spots in my life

Another book to add to my list: *The Family Trade* by Stross. I regret not printing out his blog page about writing a series. He had some interesting things to say about the plotting and how he approached it.

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #96/Richard
commenting to me so regularly despite my anemic zine output!

Thanks for

My mother was terrified that we 3 kids would fight the way she and her siblings did after her father died so she specified that everything in the estate was to be sold at auction and the proceeds split. My brother was executor, and he has done a speedy and efficient job of handling things. We've received almost all of our inheritance already; the deadline for creditors was the end of September, and once that was past, he sent us checks for everything except a few thousand he wanted to hold back for any late medical bills or any other unexpected expenses, plus the lawyer's 2% fee. I am grateful that we didn't get into any type of family squabble and I am also grateful that we kids decided to slightly ignore the will and take a few mementos. Also without squabbling.

My knee problem is not arthritis. Also, we sleep on a heated waterbed so my legs are already warm at night. I fell and injured my knees 20 years ago, and they've just gotten worse over the years. The surgery has helped quite a bit and I am almost back to full functionality.

I laugh at your comment about me being made from tissue paper. I must be made from titanium or I would have died by now from all the things going wrong...

Spiritus Mundi 209/Guy Thanks again for keeping us posted on how the NoLa crew was doing during Katrina. I may not have been good at keeping in touch with everyone these last few years, but I did worry.

From your description of your trial win, I guess you're settling into Shreveport okay. I'm glad.

We fed a couple of feral cats when we lived in Venice. The male never would come inside although he eventually let me pet him. The female was very slow to let me approach. I had to sit on the steps, and move the food bowl slightly closer to the steps each day to acclimate her to me. She not only let me touch her eventually, but did come inside when the winter rains started. Ruby and Tawny, our first time with a pregnant momma cat and the ensuing kittens... For your sleeps sake, it's probably just as well that the feral cats Rosie is feeding don't come inside. And one important tip, female cats go into heat when the temperature increases which is supposed to be a sign of spring but cats' systems didn't get the memo about central heating...

Umm, the mayor who trolled the Internet for gay sex partners was in Spokane not Seattle. Other side of the state, out where it snows every winter, and looks like the central valley of California with brown hills spotted with sagebrush. They have farmers, we have high tech.

Speaking of Tarantino, as you were to Jeff, we borrowed "*My Name is Modesty*" from Bruce and Tina and enjoyed it quite a bit. A nice bit added on to the DVD was an interview with Peter O'Donnell in which he discusses Modesty vs. James Bond among other interesting bits. Of course, Tarantino didn't actually direct it – he "presents" it, whatever the heck that means. And according to the comments made on Amazon, this was a low-budget quickie prequel made to retain rights by Miramax so they could do the movie Tarantino really wants to do. If you like Modesty Blaise at all, this direct to video movie is worth seeing.

James is old enough now to leave with Bruce & Tina, and she's offered to take him if we want to go away for a weekend, so we might be hitting DSC again soon. I'm rooting for Westercons to be added to our convention schedule. We went to Nasfic, but frankly, I think Worldcons are too big and too expensive so we probably won't be going to those. What does your convention going schedule look like?

Well, I like The Fifth Element too, but I have a teenage son who spends inordinate amounts of time watching the sci-fi channel or playing xbox shootem up games. I'm afraid the low taste required for teen boys has rubbed off on me... Especially since the line that gets quoted in our family is "Anyone else want to negotiate?"

I'm looking forward to seeing Dolbear's story in Challenger. I'd love to hear him tell it – his story telling voice and style is so distinctive I still carry it in my head.

Variations on a Theme #45/Rich

Sounds like you and Nicki had fun in your travels. Jeff is already saving for the Japan Worldcon and wants to spend an extra week there so he can show me Japan. I'm hoping it's the first of many trips we get to take once the kids are out of the nest. (No Empty Nest Syndrome here... Allie claims she has photos of the boot print I left on her butt when I kicked her out the door.)

Peter, Pan & Merry #63/David

I like the idea of Clinton running for governor of California against Schwarzenegger!

Of course, I also like that the election repudiation of Bush caused the drilling in ANWR to be pulled from the budget bill. We can only hope things get even better...

I like your comment to Tom about Social Security. I was thinking about how much money we've paid in car insurance over the years and how little we've gotten back in claims. Ditto for Unemployment. And then I think about how much money my mom and my grandparents paid in and how much more than that they got out. Don't get me wrong, I'd like to get some SS money in our retirement as we don't quite have enough saved up to do without it. But, it's not all we're counting on for retirement.

Yea, Jeff and I have had the same sort of conversation about missing Reagan only we picked Nixon instead of GB1. When you consider that Nixon was in favor of federal daycare, a livable minimum wage, and national health insurance, it's almost enough to make you overlook a little breaking & entering especially compared to what GWB is doing to trash the constitution.

Yngvi is a Louse/Toni

Dang, I just gotta hear Dennis' stories... Blackhawk helicopters, oboy.

Hmmm, well I don't know Toni, I think I may just have to give you a lot of crap about not doing mailing comments because of a trivial little thing like lots of convention travel. Nothing less than a surgical procedure is an acceptable excuse nowadays, don't ya know...

More seriously, it was great to see you and Hank at Nasfic and I'm glad we got so much time together. Next time you're out here, we'll see if we can't take Naomi's suggestion and go to The Herb Farm.

Thanks for the write up on the Starman Jones panel. I'm not sure I ever read this Heinlein but if my library had it, I must have. Anyway, I'm going to go reread it and maybe pass it on to James. He really liked Have Spacesuit, Will Travel and I think he'd like this one too but it works better if I pre-read it to tell him about it and get him enthused enough to start it.

Interesting column by Pat Gibbs. I agree with him on these decisions by the court and as we all know, I'm a liberal. What does that mean?

Hank: Thanks for the nice words about Allie & James. They really enjoyed the con. And they give me hope too especially when Allie comes home appalled at her peer group's excesses.

As I hope Toni has already pointed out, Alphas are not necessarily always male. But yes, there are natural leaders. This doesn't mean that society should be structured to ignore the non-leaders, which is what tends to happen when we drop the lip service to equality.

As for the comments about Bush, I'll just point out that while Democrats do like spending on social programs, they actually raise the taxes for them, unlike the "borrow & spend" Republicans like Reagan & both Bushes.

A Black & White World.../Jeff Don't worry – James and I will take care of the grass next summer and there'll be none left except for the small strip along the garage. A sand pile for him in the back, and paving stones with a bench in the front for me to sit and admire the roses.

We should have a report on our weekend in Victoria in the January mailing. Cross fingers and hope nothing major goes wrong between now and then...

Umm, it's Sammamish Slough not Slew. Guess I need to start proofreading your zines again, eh?

Well, it's possible that I watched all of March of the Penguins because I'm a birder, but then that doesn't explain Allie's fascination. Maybe you need to get caught up on your sleep...

Does this discussion of Clear Channel and concerts mean that they're the ones getting bit in the butt by the recent downturn in concert attendance locally? Talk about your silver linings...

Well, I can tell you that I found the Ipod software easy to use and I'm really enjoying my Ipod. (And gosh, how surprising, Word doesn't recognize Ipod as a word...)

Newsflash – you're eligible to join AARP when you're 50 and that will be several years before the next Venus transit.

When contemplating Democratic candidates for President, I find myself regretting that I didn't read John Edwards webpage before the Democratic caucuses here in Washington. I think he's probably the best one in the front-runner pack right now.

Yea, David Caruso is the reason we watch all of the CSIs except for Miami. Even the NCIS makes the list but not Miami.

There was an article in this last weekends paper about fund management fees rising because of the number of boomers who will no longer be adding to their funds and will start drawing out of them. I need to get our money re-organized now that your 401K is going into a fund that matches our strategy.

I'm not scared by our house being worth more than our retirement funds – I'm scared by the talk about a housing bubble.

Love the Apple store! And I have a little list of Ipod accessories...

Ohmigawd! There's a Kipling story I haven't read?!? Let me at it... "With the Night Mail". Did you find out where it was first published? (And Word didn't recognize Kipling either. It suggested "Kip ling" in the list of alternatives. Don't know why I'm obsessing about this today but I am.)

Home With the Armadillo: NASFIC 2005/me I forgot to mention that Ray & Hanya got invited to lunch to meet Hank in part because their wedding ceremony included a large sword. Ray and Hank were at the other end of the table from me but they seemed to be having a nice chat and I sure hope the subject of swords came up.

That tall young man on the left of the last picture on the back cover is James, now the tallest in the family, and closing in on his 16th birthday in a few months. Just for those of you who haven't seen him since the beach DSC where he played with the Robe boys and got locked out of the room.

gone/mike weber I got a real laugh out of your 5 hours of installing Windows XP but I have to ask, why are you bothering with Windows? Looks to me like you want Linux or a Mac X, which is really Unix under the hood. One of those would probably be easier to start too.

You must have missed the study done particularly to tell if it's talking to someone else or talking on the phone that is distracting about cell phones. It turns out people tend to focus their eyes away from directly in front of them when talking on a phone and this includes cell phones. Hence, cell phone using drivers don't notice stuff right in front of them as well unless they make a particular effort to keep eyes front. I know I don't look at the person sitting in the front seat while I'm talking to them but I do the shifting eye thing when on the phone.

Maryjanice Davidson seems very popular at our library. I did a search online and there were 18 books and all but 2 had multiple holds already placed on them. I'll have to add her stuff to my ever-growing list...

That was sneaky, putting the id of the conspiracy theory website author at the end. Makes it even scarier. He has pointers to a book, Painful Questions, which apparently has the photos he's talking about. Somehow I missed this conspiracy theory. I must be more out of the loop than I thought.

Your story about Chastain and the Yuppie Scum who sit at their box seat tables and talk through the performance make me stick a comment in here about the Hollywood Bowl in hopes that Jeff (or David or even Janice) will remember the details better than I do. I remember the boxes with tables being further back at the Bowl so as to prevent exactly thus sort of thing. But then, Hollywood cares about what the actors want, at least once in a while. I also have a vague memory about the dinners being catered and served before the performance so as to minimize interference but I could be way wrong here.

My memories from living in Texas are that "ranch" means a certain very small number of head of cattle living there and a fairly small minimum amount of acreage. This lets people write off their vacation homes as agricultural and thus get a lower tax rate in addition to various tax deductions. Do keep in mind that the Texas legislature is pretty blatant about believing that rank has its privileges and rank in Texas means a certain amount of money. Prestige by owning big business or high profile political office only means more privileges, such as quashing charges against your daughters for using fake ID in a bar.

Oblio #160/Gary

I hope your sister is doing okay. It's a scary thing to have

a relative in ICU.

I wish I'd thought of the blank check for getting my name high up on the Box Scores. I probably don't stand a chance otherwise.

One of the things I appreciated is that my mom got rid of a lot of her stuff before she moved to Iowa. That meant we had very little to sort through after she died. During the year she was sorting, she shipped stuff to us every so often. Allie got some vintage hats and jewelry that my grandmother had bought in the 30's or 40's, and I got some of her blue glass collection.

They've been searching the elderly for years now. My stepfather, who died in 2002, and was basically in a wheelchair for a year before that, was stopped when he was still using a cane. They took the cane away, gave him nothing to support himself with, and tried to take the cane apart. Then they wanted him to open his baggage himself, and stand there without the cane while they searched. My mother was outraged.

I could understand the way the board treated me if any of them had tried to call me while I was gone but I only got one call and I handled the questions right then. Unfortunately for all of us, the board president decided that I must have been on my birding trip when she called because one of my brother's foster kids was laughing in the car when I answered the phone. Of course, she said nothing to me about this until weeks later. My biggest problem with the board was that none of them asked me about things they were having a problem with; they just talked to each other. For instance, I spent most of a week each month preparing for the board meeting between writing my report and getting research questions answered for the board, and getting together information they needed to make decisions. Some of them decided that this was ridiculous because it certainly wouldn't take them that long to look it up on the Internet.

Of course, the woman who decided this had the fastest DSL connection at home and I had a 56K phone dialup at the office. I never knew this was an issue until she was in the office after I had resigned and she wanted to use the Internet connection. She sat down, brought up the browser and then said "Why is it so slow?" Both Megan, the new director, and I said "56K modem" in unison. There were apparently multiple things like this. I think this has all worked out for the best though – I could do the show administration and the office work, but I took the "executive" part of the executive director title seriously. I expected the board to set policy and let me implement it. They wanted to micromanage every detail. I can't say I wasn't warned though. Anne told me as much when she was training me.

Trivial Pursuits #121/Janice Great news about you and Stephen. I hope the move goes well. So, was this the Australian Prospective Marriage visa application? It sounds almost as nosy as the American one.

The only major worry with selling the car is if the frame was bent. Just losing a radiator is nothing.

Speaking of cooking for 2, my friend Lisa recently recommended a cookbook, Small-Batch Baking. I've gotten it out of the library, and have perused it enough to tell that we would really use it so it's been added to my Amazon wish list in anticipation of Christmas panic on my children's part. Amazon has several cookbooks for smaller size cooking; a natural consequence of boomer aging and moving into the empty nest era. But I must admit to liking the idea of only baking enough pie/cake/cookies for 2-3 people rather than 4 dozen, if only because it means only spending 20 minutes in the kitchen rather than a couple of hours.

Ah, tiara fandom moves to sf fandom. Who would have thought? Quilting email lists have been specifying wearing something distinctive, such as tiaras, at quilting conventions so members could identify each other for over a decade. It's nice to see our quaint little custom go further.

Hmm, I wonder how many SFPA zines I've done. Not counting Shadow-SFPA, of course. I'll have to go check my file copies and report next mailing.

Thanks for running the intelligent design column. "It's wet, it's deep, yet it's frothy; it's design without dogma" is probably my favorite line. I get this mental image of Buddha swishing his hand through the air.

I agree on Hillary being a bad idea for a candidate. I much prefer Edwards if we don't have someone new come to the fore.

Thanks for the good wishes about my knee. It's slowly recovering and I hope not to damage it too much on our December birding trip to the Salton Sea.

Tennessee Trash #67/Gary

We once spent 6 hours in the Atlanta airport due to a thunderstorm. Allie was 6 months old, I had put my contacts in and packed the case in the suitcase that was checked, and things went downhill from there. 20 years later and I still remember the trauma.

Your London experience sounds like fun. I hadn't heard about The Eye before. I'm not sure when we'll get to London – I think Jeff is planning a trip to Japan first.

This is the second reference to Sudoku puzzles I've heard this week. Another trend sweeping the nation, eh? Isn't it nice to get the solo seat when traveling with the whole family? Makes a break from entertaining the kids.

Given that I'm doing a 10 page comment zine, there must be hope for you.

Revenant #33/Sheila

A third Sudoku reference. Yep, I am definitely out of the loop. Fortunately, I've found a webpage with puzzles and can get caught up on it all.

I'm glad you weathered Katrina & Rita relatively well. And your cats. Our brainless fluffy tailed one runs at any loud noise and was terrified when we had thunder this last summer. I think if we had some noisier weather, she'd actually go hide under the bed.

And that's it, complete mailing comments from Liz! Mark the day on your calendar...

