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AGAINST THE GRAIN/Glenn Felder



PETER, PAN & MERRY #18  
A zine for SFPA # 204

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Second Zine on the right and straight on 'til comments on SFPA 203

Southerner - So you see, it was a good thing that you miss called the January deadline. It gave you insight in what you need to do (ie a 2x4 over the head) to call people attention to the fact that the deadline date is other than the usual one. Which brings up the question of whether that in the November disty was deliberate or not. (Claim that it was, it'll make you look good.) // In looking at the number of people with email addresses, I'm reminded that I've noticed a bit of a tendency to spend some of the time I had used for apac playing around on the 'puter (on or off line). And thus, here I am working on my SFPazine.

Ned Brooks - While I haven't had the chance to read the Blake story, I do thank you for it's inclusion and (to insure perusal) am placing it with the To Be Read books rather than leaving it with the mailing. /// Ct 00: So long as you don't have a deadline for when to have everything out of the old digs, the move isn't that big an issue. It's the having to be out by a certain time that makes moving a real bitch. If you have plenty of time for the transition, it's a true luxury. // As a point of curiosity, do you plan on keeping the same title now that you're moving? // Ct Arthur: Essentially, "fittest" simply means "best able to survive (to reproduce) in the conditions". Unfortunately of course, the shorthand form of Darwin opens the way for the more annoying interpretation that it applies to individuals rather than populations.

Ct Richard L: I think the problem (potentially at least) with TQM and the like is that there is a potential to look at it through the lens of always finding fault (since the goal is continual improvement) and thus undermine it's purpose. // Ct Harry: For some reason I expect, that if id does get to that point, there will be both a FAPA and a, bimonthly, Shadow-FAPA for people waiting to get on the roster. // Ct Guy: At least according to Disney Crockett lore (and I'm not going to crosscheck) he did try the grinning trick with a bear since it had worked so well on raccoons.

Ct me: I figure that whatever comic anyone uses here has probably been seen by some percentage of the members in some form or another. Still, if that prevented people from using them, at least half the membership would miss out on lots of good stuff. Between the two strips that I've been culling from, I figure I'm getting most of the off-the-wall stuff (other than Bizarro) to choose from. // If you want to stretch the point a bit, anything involving war, law enforcement, sanctions, discipline, even tantrums can be considered "terrorist acts" in the sense I was using (ie used to create fear (at some level) to gain an end). / Everyone's going to believe what they will, I prefer Occam's Razor and choose to not ascribe to conspiracy what can be as easily ascribed to error.

Ned's Port - I certainly don't always win at the Windows 95 Hearts program, but do sometimes get weird runs of "luck" - 'like shooting two hands in a row - the second of which I really hadn't wanted to even try on. Even if it isn't true to life, it is good general practice if I ever find a real game again. // In that sense, no casino is going to set up the payoffs to match the odds, they'll make sure of getting a cut off the top. // Ct Janice: Now here's a weird idea. Have all campaigns be financed out of a central clearing house for donations. You can earmark you money to a party or candidate but the whole thing would be administered by a coalition of all parties so (hopefully) everything would be on the up and up. // I believe, but am not sure of the exact ruling, that a fire that is left going can have fuel added on shabbat to maintain it. In that case the dimmer switch turned way down would be OK. // Ct George: I caught Godzilla recently. And was pleasantly pleased by it. Sort of a cross between Jurassic Park(s), Aliens and The Beast from 20000 Fathoms.

Binker Hughes - Your remark about yard work being more like jungle clearance strikes a responsive chord here. When we first bought this house, I spent most of the first year+ working on trimming back the bushes to the point where I could just get at the multiple blackberry plants that were taking over. (Around the frontal assaults I also slipped a few commando raids in near the main berry plants and cut the primary canes to minimize any new growth.) And this last year, with stretch of rain followed by sun, the grass has regularly grown long enough that the job has been referred to as "haying" rather than mowing. // Glad to hear you dad's doing better. My dad's hanging in pretty well even though (and this is probably partially his own fault) the leg with the by-pass has been swelling up and being uncomfortable for a while now. Leaves my mom with a lot of work (nothing new) but at lease she knows enough to know what she can do and what to contract out.

Ct Ned: Have you tried some of those sonic critter repellents that I've seen advertised in various catalogs? I don't recall if they make any claims vis-a-vis larger things like raccoons, but it may be worth some checking on your part. (Or mine if I get a relevant catalog in time.)

Meade Frierson - While annoying, we were able to pretty well work around the NBA problems on B5. I just kept the daily taping up (rewinding over as needed) and shifted the weekly taping of the new season to program each week instead of on an on-going weekly basis. Now all I have to do is keep track of the second go-round to catch the one I missed due to our VCR resetting to regular speed instead of long play.

Richard Lynch - What can I say except that I have to envy you your (and Gary Robe's) opportunities for travel. You moreso than Gary as I'd rather do travelling in Europe than Central/South America. I realized a good chunk of that is business related, but it does offer up opportunities that you wouldn't have otherwise. / How would you compare the subway, etc in Budapest vs Vienna. My recollection from 1990 is that the Vienna transit system was really convenient and well thought out. // Ct Arthur: Well, he isn't as big headed as we would have been if he hadn't lost half his sex several years ago. // Ct Ned: Depending on what I'm trying to connect to, I've found that sometimes I can get away with skipping the http:// part of the address and sometimes not. I suspect that to be an aol issue that will go away when I get around to making a couple of changes.

Ct Steve: I'll buy that. If the economy is doing well, the best thing to do is not play around with it too much. If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it. ((Or, as I've found with equipment from time to time, doing Preventive Maintenance is the best way to insure needing to do some troubleshooting.))

Irv Koch - Ct Guy: Now I haven't attended in a while so my gut feeling may be off, but I do notice that there is a reasonably constant (albeit slow) influx of new blood into LASFS. I'm not sure how many of those are in the High School/College age bracket however. Which reminds me that it's time to shake things up and start making an effort to get us and Random back into the fannish eye at meetings and/or cons. I have some hopes for next year's Westercon. // Ct Jeff: I've only toyed with the MS Works Newsletter Wizard a tad, but have already noted that a bit more flexibility would be appreciated. Still, it is handy to get the basic format layed out for you. // Ct me: My only hope with regard to using the Hearts program on Windows is that I'll keep up whatever skill/feel I have for the game in case the opportunity to play in real life ever crops up again. Sort of the same reason I downloaded a chess program. // Yeah, there are always opportunities that one can find in the housing market. Knowing where/how to look to find them is the hard part.

Guy Lillian - Re Lost in Space: Didn't see either, but if this one fails for trying to be more serious than the original series, I presume that The Brady Bunch Movie succeeded at least in maintaining the feel of the original (even if viewed through a lens from the future). // Good on Cindy for the successful negotiation of a difficult task. // Ct Arthur: I certainly can't speak to how the votes broke down, but you seem to be presuming that Ulrika wouldn't have garnered any votes from fanzine fandom. I'd have to presume she has been at last somewhat active in that area to have been nominated so, while a LASFS block may have tilted the balance, I doubt it was Them vs Everyone Else. // The only tv show I recall seeing Sugar Ray Robinson in was an episode of Barefoot in the Park.

Coming out of the Caustic - "I think oral sex is sex." In other words, you'll take whatever you can get. // Ct Binker: For a bit of drama from the Winter Olympics, how about a) Picaboo Street's in skiing and b) the series of male skiers who went flying off the course at the top turn in the downhill? // Ct Ned: Not to say it isn't absurd, but the kid was probably passing out the lemon drops from an unmarked bag. That's in some ways the equivalent of giving out homemade Halloween candy - it makes people worried in this day and age. But for that, in itself to be considered an offense is way overreacting. // Ct Steve: If the article on major news stories of the century didn't mention the space program it may be because of your later remark that we haven't really followed up on it. Perhaps the author was looking at stories they have produced major changes in their wake and, like it or not, the space program hasn't had that sort of effect...yet.

Ct Harry: I agree that it'd be great to reban professional's from the games. Especially now that it wouldn't leave Eastern Bloc countries with the advantage of having pseudo-amateurs to make use of. Steroids and blood-doping are already forbidden. Minimum ages might be tough if only because you're saying that a person's talent and maturity shouldn't be the prime factor in their eligibility. The other question on that is are you only talking about the "high-profile" sports? We had a local teen (16?), Matt Ruchong, who made it to Atlanta in (I believe) skeet shooting. I see your point but think there are other considerations too.

Ct me: I'm thinking mostly of the short-time help that really doesn't care about the work because it "just" a stepping stone. Lifers, even if they get bored with the work, can generally do at least a competent job just on momentum. Still I do see where you're coming from, which is why I feel that changes, updates, challenges are good things at work since it keeps the job and the worker from becoming stale. On the flip side, there are people for whom sameness and stability are a needed security blanket. // I tend to suspect that "road rage" is a function of traffic jam commutes (directly or indirectly) so places with less sprawl and congestion will have fewer problems along that line. I suppose that part of it is that one aspect of driving is being in control and having to deal with traffic limits/eliminates your control of the situation and can thus spark frustration and anger. Maybe the fact that people feel less in control of their lives makes the need to be in control of some part that much more vital - and the degradation of that control more dangerous?

On one-shot deals like space launches, I would think that separating the wires would be less of an issue since the insulation should be reliable. In long term, multi-use things like planes it seems clear (now) that the constant vibrations (and just plain age) would make the insulation rather suspect after a while and make separation (or replacement) more needed.

In the Still of the Guy - "Have kippa, Will travel." I'll get back to you on this in five years or so. // No, not too bad for the owner, since he won his case before the Board and is now open several nights per week. // So who needs interns? // Ct Janice: As a point of curiosity, when next you receive a copy of Geri Sullivan's zine, make a point of locking that it was "a Ba-a-a-a-ad Idea". You may quote me even if you don't get the in joke. // Ct Gary R: The only serious trip to Mexico that I ever took was to Mexico City and nearby areas back about 30 years ago when my aunts were still living there. Still have one of the souvenirs of that trip, but haven't duplicated it. Other places have higher priorities on my list. // Ct Eve re the light in you bathroom: Well most of us have been aware for some time that you've got a loose bulb somewhere. // Ct Gary B: I hate to point this out, but at \$5 per for those military meals, you may as well just eat at McDonald's and pocket the difference. \$5 is a lot to spend on a meal in most cases.

Richard Dengrove - Re ideological impurities: As any metallurgist could say, it's often the "impurities" in a metal that give it it's strength. // Ct Binker: Sounds like the psychologists who "ignored past results and fell into the sleep of forgetfulness" were doing the research equivalent of the punishment of Sisyphus. / But just to be clear, the studies were on the cathartic power of expressing anger. // Ct Steve H: Well, the one time (recent) that I argued with my credit company about a payment (the check was for XXX and some cents but was cashed for the even dollar amount and so, as there was a carryover balance, they wanted to charge me interest with no grace period), they accepted my word over the phone "this one time" and stated that any future occurrences would require a copy of the check.

Ct Harry: Having it take several people working on the heat for someone to notice a closed vent, is like the person who goes up to the broken piece of equipment and plugs it in. (Did that today at work. Albeit that nobody had tried to use it so I was the one to discover that it wasn't working.) // Re Sinister Cinema's offerings: Talk about left-handed compliments. // Ct Arthur: Speaking about Minoan technology, I was reading a book recently ("Return to Sodom and Gomorrah") that, at least in passing, speculates that had Thera not blown Minoan culture all to hell, we might now be several centuries more advanced in our technology level. (This based on where they appeared to be back around 1500 BCE.) // Ct Irv: I would suspect that basic foodstuffs are pretty much immune from the effects of an economic recession since, if you don't eat in a restaurant you do eat at home. But they are subject to their own vagaries of supply, demand and disaster. Fancier/more expensive foods probably are subject to economic bad times, like any luxury item. // Ct me: I just figure that if you don't call the person's attention to the fact that a behavior is unappreciated (particularly in a fuzzy area) it's unreasonable to expect them to a) just know or b) stop.

Out of Richard's Tree - Well, if scholars were using an assumption of 7000 years from Creation to Judgement, then we have a way's to go yet no matter which calendar you make use of. // From what little I know about Mesmerism, it seems odd that anything having to do with gases would have a relationship to the fad. But who can say? / All things considered, the connection between breathing and life is so clear that it would be surprising if numerous groups didn't associate breath with the soul. // What's interesting is that, in day-to-day life there's a big push for crisis intervention, deescalating situations, etc to head off as much personal violence as possible. But, for some anyway, the same tactics don't seem to apply in larger scale situations.

Careful, you're being Ashkenaz-centric. If Maimonides used Hebrew letters to spell Arabic works, it would probably be considered a variant of Ladino rather than of Yiddish. For all I know, it may be a major part of Ladino. // I suspect that Bond works better a bit tongue-in-cheek for reasons similar to why Die Hard works (with a much greater amount of tongue-in-cheek). It needs to compensate for being some degree over-the-top. // Ct Jeff: From what I can distill from my sources, a fact is an observation or measurement, a theory is an explanation of (and predictions from) facts, a law is sort of a generalized fact (eg for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction). Probably oversimple, but a starting point. // Ct Eve: I'm hoping that, against all genetic odds, I too take after my dad in the realm of hair loss. Over 90 and still a pretty full head of the stuff (as opposed to all my maternal uncles).

Arthur Hlavaty - Ct Harry: My memory and the dictionary agree that Liszt was Hungarian. The supposition, therefore, is that he spoke that language. // Ct Liz: Not claiming to know them all, but Trygve Lie doesn't ring any bells as being a UN Secretary General. Whenabout did he hold the job? // Ct Jeff: Around here, "Mr McCutcheon" gets a lot more calls and letters than does "Mrs Schlosser", although she's not ignored.

Janice Gelb - Well, a couple years ago when we had new gutters put up, I had to wait almost two months from the time I placed the orders because there were so few non-rainy days that it took him that long to go through a couple weeks worth of work to get to us. // Ct Richard L: Still no Titanic viewing in this house either, so don't feel left out. // Ct Binker: I was puzzled for a moment but realized that you didn't say that a good friendship wasn't a basis for a marriage, just that the two weren't synonymous. // Ct Harry: Absolutely, let the burglars come when there isn't anyone at home. It's traumatic enough with no personal danger to add in. // The sales tax may be 8.75% in the Bay Area, but not all of that is state sales tax. I think 7.25 is the state rate and anything above that is local taxes added on. / I usually figure both ways and, if the price is close, will go ahead and buy locally rather than send the money out of the area.

Trivial PurGelb - Ct Guy: Speaking of "The Apartment", did you happen to catch any of the AFI "Greatest 100 Films" advertising special? I found it interesting that, off the top, I was able to name 4 films that would be in the top 10 (Citizen Kane, Casablanca, Gone with the Wind, Wizard of Oz) and 2 more that I thought deserved it but wasn't sure would get the nod (Schindler's List & Singin' in the Rain). I guess the fact that popular opinion matches up with the AFI poll serves to validate the process. // Ct Jeff: I have trouble with reading the Song of Solomon as any sort of spiritual metaphor. IMHO, it serves as a strong reminder of the importance of earthy and fleshy matters. With all the proscriptions that abound in the Torah this serves as a reminder that joy, love, sex, etc are to be embraced ((in their place)) in life, not hidden away.

Ct me: The timing was good, but it wasn't all that prophetic. There have been a few recent airline accidents where the investigations ended up with findings that were quite relevant to general air safety (the small planes with the deicing problem come to mind). Still, if you want to tout my psychic abilities I'd be willing to cut you in on any profit. // If some sort of self-directed Soc Sec investment plan is arranged, I think the way to go would be to offer it as several investment options that would be administered by the gov't ((eg Bonds, Mutual Funds, more and less aggressive stock funds, etc)) rather like I can choose which funds to invest my retirement money at work in but the specific funds are all chosen by one firm.

While a thief could pry part of the window out of the frame, since most windows come as a preassembled unit that would be a fair amount of work. And most thieves (barring a really specific goal) will pass on any job that requires extra time and risk spent in doing the breaking in. You can't keep a determine thief out, you just have to try and make it less trouble to go find someone else to bother. // As it happens, I just bought a copy of "Nobody's Fool". Haven't gotten around to reading it yet though. // Seems to me that making up a Hebrew word where none existed is at least as much a violation of "pure" Hebrew than just absorbing a foreign word (which doubtless happened many times in the past). // A small violation of a new rule hardly seems grounds for firing someone. That being the case I'd say there were solid grounds for an anti-discrimination suit. // Whatever the basis, it seems clear that the real estate agent had to have a big hand in convincing the seller to sell to you rather than his (ex)friends.

Elisheva has and hasn't worked out. Certainly she was quite well received during her visit here. But her availability for the HolyDays was uncertain (pending contract offers) so we went with someone else. I was hoping to get her "signed" for several visits this coming year, but the other rabbi is putting together a package offer in concert with a popular rabbi that visits on a semi-regular basis. Assuming they don't get out of hand, it sounds like the ritual committee is would go with that. I'm still hoping to get Elisheva to visit once or twice (I haven't been able to get ahold of her for 2-3 weeks) to give more people a chance to get to know her so she can remain a player in looking at next year.



Janice's Finale - Ct Gary B: "737 from Boston hit by lightning." That's one hell of a big bolt of lightning to hit that many people. Maybe it shot along the ground? Or is it the other meaning you missed?

Steve Hughes - Ct Guy: At first I was agreeing with your position on Karla Tucker, but something occurred to me. Murderers, in general, don't face the death penalty unless they do some extra-heinous stuff. So they don't get a death sentence for killing but, essentially, for the additional nastiness. So the argument that, by killing someone, they are accepting a death penalty doesn't hold up. This isn't to say that I disagree with having capital punishment, just that your though chain seems to have a logic twist to it. // Ct Meade: Funny, I have more trouble seeing Sheridan/Boxleitner as a politician (ie the President of the Alliance) than I did seeing him as a military man. Maybe I just don't like the new beard.

Richard Brandt - Ct Joe: I agree, I think you ought to take up Marty's open invite for LASFAPA. We need to re-expand the membership in both numbers and geographical distribution. // Ct Guy: Considering what is emblazoned across Wonder Woman's chest, I can well guess that Guy might find having the same to be awkward. // Your argument against limitations on Hugo Awards sounds suspiciously like the way I feel about term limits. We've always had term limits - it's called voting them out of office.

George Wells - While watching the tsunami wipe out NYC in Deep Impact, my first flash was on the final scene from Planet of the Apes.

Steve Hughes - Lovely pictures. Thanks for sharing.

Gary Robe - Don't know how good he will turn out at it, but Random's preference in swinging a golf club or baseball bat seems to be to go lefty, Far be it from me to try and "break him" of the habit. Now we see if the T-ball setup we got him works well enough to get him involved on an organized basis next season. My only problem is that it would require Kay to do most of the driving since I'd bet that everything happens during my work hours. // Full sympathies on El Nino powered grass. We've been getting a similar phenomenon, made worse by the seeming coincidence of it raining on my days off and being sunny on the days I have to work and thus making it almost impossible to get at mowing (or, rather, haying) the lawns. // And you do know the old saying that The Grass is Always Greener Over the Septic Tank, right?

Gary's Trash - Ct Harry: I like that method of dealing with unwanted junk mail. Have to put that into the repertoire. // Ct Liz: The 60:60 allocation of your time reminds me a bit of how our Lead Tech position is set up. Supposedly 25% of the time is Lead while the rest is at the bench. While this is probably about true, the 25% includes a lot of time that you can't schedule for very well so there tend to be times when the person is supposed to be on the bench doing regular work and is needed there, but they have to attend some meeting or whatever. It can be a drain all around. // Ct Meade: Now that Byron and the telepath thing is over with, B5 seems to be back on track with the Centauri conflict (which leads in to stuff alluded to in earlier episodes -again).

Gary Brown - I remember having a few wasps nests under the eaves of our house in L.A. I got some of that long-range wasp killer and, made sure I was within momentary reach of a doorway each time I used it. No stings. // If I make it to South Florida again, I'll have to add the Cartoon Art Museum to my list of places to check out. // Ct Harry: Not really to defend Nixon so much as run some side light on him, I get the impression that a) foreign policy-wise he's still considered to have been very sharp and b) his biggest flaw may have "simply" been sheer (very sheer) hubris in his own judgement and ability that he felt a nearly despotic need to be in control and "take care of things" "for the common good". // As long as they are making self-stick stamps, why not make some of them in larger denominations instead of just the basic letter rate? I'm sure OEs would buy a share of self-stick Priority Mail stamp sheets. // Why not try storing your apa mailings in lucite?

Ct me: So the question is, how bad a beating are the Marlins taking at the turnstile? And would the next step be a move? // I'm already a bit nervous watching what goeth on in L.A. town (even if Peter O'Malley says he'd have done the same) with Piazza and Nomo. It may just be business as usual, but it does send up a warning flag. // Ct Eve: I resent that remark. I wear short-sleeve dress shirts when it's warm and do I look like a geek? // I was just looking at the Super Trivia quiz and there's one question I can't answer. It's the last one because I have no idea who "Tony Stork" is. Is this from one of those funny animal comics? (;-)

Eve Ackerman - I still recall my only almost speeding ticket. I was cruising home to L.A. down I-5, doing a casual 70-75 mph when I realized that the car I was passing was a police car. Whoops. He did indeed pull me over, and I was ready to take my lumps, but the only thing he did was give me a warning on the speed and wrote me up for having a "defaced" license (ie it was getting old and ratty). Suffice to say I made no complaint at all, got a new license when I got back and cleared the citation.

Eve's Pleasures - Ct me: More'n welcome. I admit that remembering your birthday is easy and it feels natural to send cards to both you & Janice. I have another friend who never fails to comment on my remembering her birthday, but as it's in a month with 3 birthdays and 2 anniversaries, it really isn't all that much of a trick to remember. // Speaking of RUBES and FAR SIDE, I read that either Larson or Watterson was getting geared up for another project. // As I type, my (first) term official begins in about 3 hours. Shit, Random's birthday is July 1 - the start of both the fiscal year and our temple's term cycle. So my term starts on his birthday.

Ct Janice: I just ran Adon Olam through to The Star Spangled Banner, to you can also sing it to old English drinking songs. / Which reminds me. At the first of the local baseball games we went to this year, the opposing pitcher sang the anthem...skipped a verse...doubled back on the song...lost his place...and, embarrassed, muttered "Oh shit" into the mike. At which point the audience picked up where he had gotten lost and finished the anthem before cracking up. // Careful about who you mutter say that near. I can just hear someone get all offended and reply, "Who are you calling an Ass-Burger!?!"

Liz Copeland - Random was invited to the birthday party for the daughter of one of my coworkers. That was in the local gymnastics school and he had a great time. Probably almost as good as the time he had at his own party this last weekend. It was in one of our local parks and came on the only sunny and warm day for a week on either side.

mike weber - I come up with 233 dates that are unambiguous. Of 365 days, only 144 could be ambiguous since a number above 12 is clearly the day. And of that 144, 12 are the same either way. So only 132 are ambiguous and 233 are unambiguous.

Jeff Copeland - Altho, unlike a joke, a frog is usually dead before the dissection starts. On the other hand, it's generally the jokes that are DOA that have to undergo the indignity of dissection. // Y'see Jeff, it was a left-handed chainsaw that was used in The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. That being the case it was decided to stop making them lest someone out there take inspiration from the movie. // Who needed a calendar to figure out the Friday the 13th question? I just did a brute force tracking of the days in my head. // Ct Arthur: In thinking about it, I'd say that a solid majority of the current citizens did not have ancestors that were here during the slavery years (and even more so if you separate the free states from the slave ones). Between that and the fact that slavery has already been acknowledged as wrong, I don't see how an apology is relevant.

Ceci n'est pas une Jeff - Ct Dick L: I think it might have been really amusing if, in that Lucy episode, there was a literal translation into English of each step in the questioning. A wonderful game of Telephone could have been run through as a bonus. // "Humperdinck! Humperdinck, Humperdinck, Humperdinck!!!" // Sounds like and and my sister do foreign travel in the same manner - eat what and where the locals eat. What's the point of going there otherwise? ((I admit to fluxing between the two methods depending on what's convenient when I want to eat.))

Ct Binker: No yours isn't the last honest r sum  around. Mine has no extraneous stuff, although some of the very old stuff that is no longer relevant has dropped off over time (ie working in htg & a/c during college).

That's if for comments, after appending the stored natter and dealing with the repro/collating/mailling, it looks like Liz's warning will have had the desired effect.

$$A = NC^2 \text{ (Apac = Natter x Comments}^2\text{)}$$

Speaking of President-Elect, one of the ex-Presidents complimented me recently that - even before the election - I've been acting presidential and moving to get things going and set things in motion already. I suppose that is a good thing, but it's just another aspect of my laziness. I have to feel that it's easier to make sure things are (and continue) in motion now, than to discover that something's come to a grinding halt with the change over to new officers.

Of course the fun stuff right now is the 2 month dance on arranging a rabbi for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. The only way to relate it is in order:

- 1) Rabbi visits for Shabbat (possible candidate) Good feedback
- 2) Ritual committee meets, near split on who to ask. Ask other rabbi.
- 3) Wait...wait...wait...
- 4) Get OK to inquire of 1st rabbi - won't know until gets responses on job applications.
- 5) Wait.
- 6) 2nd rabbi visits - Poor feedback.
- 7) I email all that we should arrange for another rabbi to visit as A & B are still waiting on outside factors.
- 8) Visit arranged for 3rd rabbi
- 9) Realize we need to tell contact person for 2nd rabbi to NOT make a commitment (even if he is available) until after the committee meets after the 3rd visit. Thrill the committee chair by pointing this out to him.
- 10) Set "drop deadline" of June 7-15 for making decision - if anyone still isn't sure, tough.

That's an extreme synopsis, but gets the highpoints. Who knows, this may even prove to be somewhat fun. Oh, the committee chair's wife suggested that I ought to talk to the contact person for the rabbi in question under my aegis as "Temple President". I "reluctantly" pointed out that, as I didn't yet have the job, it wasn't in my authority to do so yet. Maybe next time.

In a way I think this could be a problem because the contact person for the rabbi is friendly with him and I suspect he may feel some affront at this change of heart by the committee. In future it may be a good idea to avoid having the contact person be too tied up with the choice - even if that does make the contact easier to arrange.

Well, I find myself feeling somewhat disappointed today. A bit surprisingly so. I'd applied for the Lead Tech position at the lab (as, in fact, had 5 others) and yesterday was the interviews. Gang interviews - with about half of the lab staff it seemed. In the aftermath I thought I'd done pretty so-so on the interview but was assured by one person that I'd done quite well with it (this was later). Anyway, I didn't get the nod. And I have no argument with the person that was picked (that's a situation I've seen before). But even though I wasn't 100% sure I wanted the job, it bothers me a bit that I didn't get it. So now I'm not sure if what bothers me is not getting a job that I wanted or just not coming out on top in the selection process, or a bit of both.

It's a bit of a strange feeling because I have been passed over before & it's never bugged me like this. I don't know if that's related to age or some level of job insecurity or what. And I'm almost as much bothered by the fact that it bothers me as by the situation itself. Oh well, this too shall pass. (Preferably not like a kidney stone.) (And, about a week later, it did indeed drift away and stop bothering me.)

The last weekend of June we held Random's birthday party. Last year when we did that, it rained and we had to go to our fallback position of using the kids area at the mall. This year we caught a break and had the single warm, sunny and gorgeous day for almost a week in either direction. Turned into a real success with about a dozen of his friends turning up along with a few parents who stayed to socialize. They all had a fine time playing on the apparatus, climbing among the tree stumps and checking out the woods.

Two incidents stick in my mind though. One was when we couldn't find three of them (Random, Chelsa and Brennan). Seems that Chelsa knew of a neat place on one of the trails and wanted to show them where it was. Well, it was a ways off and they didn't tell anyone what they were doing so three of us parents (independently) went tramping around looking for them. While there were some repercussions, the scoldings were pretty mild - mostly "TELL US NEXT TIME." The other was cuter. I was walking over to where Random and Chelsa were talking atop a fallen tree and I saw them give each other a big hug. There may be a picture in the camera of a second hug but I had to work fast so we'll have to see how it turns out. ((Chelsa, by-the-by, is a really nice and articulate girl about Random's age. I wouldn't mind if they were to stay friends - and no, that's not matchmaking.))

The gifts were, at request, kept to a minimum. But we did arrange for the sports gear to start showing up: A bat and tee, soccer ball and shin-guards & a kid's set of lefthanded clubs is on order. Oh yeah and he got some \$\$ from my folks that he promptly invested in a larger Lego set. And we have been practicing a bit with his batting so I have hopes that next year may be workable for some organized t-ball.

One other thing we've done this year is tried again to take Random to the local semi-pro baseball games. The last time we tried it he was so fidgety that we gave up and arranged to leave him with friends for the game. This time he's really getting into the game, cheering, checking the score, even heckling the other team (which we try to keep a leash on). Makes both Kay and I happy since we'd rather bring him along if we can.

Speaking of Kay, her job has mutated again. For over a year now, the office where she's been working since December has been negotiating with the St Jo system top get under the umbrella for some management services. That was finalized about a month or so ago to go into effect on July 1. What was unsure until a couple of weeks ago was what the fate of the office lab would be. Well it isn't going to be there but, due to commitments, StJo has to find work (with roughly comparable hours) for anyone displaced by the agreement. So, after some discussion and debate, Kay will be trained to work at the small lab in one of the clinics in Arcata (about 6 miles from here) and will cover it 1 (or 2) days per pay period, plus vacations. Not quite the ideal situation, but better than a lot of alternatives. And so, after hiring in to StJo when we moved here and then leaving, we come full circle and we both work in the same system again. And, aside from a vacation coverage times, this should have minimal impact on our childcare arrangements.

In the fannish world, I'm looking at the possibility of our making it to next year's Westercon if I can move the semi-planned cousins reunion up about a month. The original discussion was for August up near Colville WA - about two hours from Spokane. Doing the trip twice in a month+ seems unlikely but if there's no major schedule conflict for the others... It'd be nice to get back on track, see old friends and give Random the right start. Just have wait and see what sort of responses I get.

Also a friend from L.A., Glenn Glazer and his girlfriend, Allison Hershe, were up for a visit, en passant. In one of those convoluted setups that occur in life, Alison is a childhood friend of a woman who - with her husband - own and operate The Blue Ox Millworks here in town. (Blue Ox is nationally known for using restored, old-style equipment to repair or recreate various items for older buildings.) In any case, when Glenn walks in he takes one look at a hanging wire sculpture and asks if they know an Elizabeth Berien. He knows her from working convention art shows and Elizabeth is the resident artist at the Blue Ox (ie she has her workshop there).

Aside from that, we also went with them to a nearby restaurant so Glenn could sample the elk, buffalo and boar meat that they offer on their menu (the elk, for sure, are from their own herd). I skipped the boar (~~but talked with Allison~~) in favor of an elk & buffalo stroganoff. In any case a good time and fine meal was had by all.