

## **PETER, PAN & MERRY #38**

A zine for SFPA # 222

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Come and tarry (as opposed to Tom and Jerry) on SFPA 221

Southerner – So, per your request of a “theme”, you think this disty should be full of Fudd and Blunder?

Norm Metcalf – Interesting that anyone had the notion of Radiation Sickness prior to the development of atomic weaponry, I guess people who actually worked with the materials could have been in position to (at least anecdotally) see a cause and effect relationship. It still begs the question of whether or not that was a common idea or just something that got tossed off in a scifi story.

Arthur Hlavaty – Ct Ned: Actually, I think domestic air mail was replaced by Express Mail as the “really fast” way of getting something to its destination. But I’m not sure of the timing so there could be overlap or a gap between the two services. // Ct Guy: I don’t know if what you heard is true or not, but having the KKK maintain a stretch of highway dedicated to Rosa Parks would be a lovely bit of irony.

Ned Brooks – Ct Tom: Having Grandparents is a concept I’ve never had experience with. By the time I was born, only one was still alive (technically she was a step-grandmother) and she died early enough that I have no memory of her at all. Thanks to longevity, the next generation has had time to get to know at least some of their grandparents. // Ct me: If, in fact, the Stars and Bars was not used on a state flag prior to the Civil War, I think that it would be difficult to defend its use on the grounds of its “historical association with the South”. // As to “other strong drink” (my copy says “other intoxicants”) I don’t have anything that comments on it. A couple thoughts do come to mind. Wine, being a specific for fermented grape juice, perhaps there were other fruits or berries that people fermented. Or maybe they had the knowledge to concentrate wine into something more akin to brandy. // Ct Trinlay: Well, the sometimes difference in blood chemistry in those of African descent confers a resistance to malaria (and explain why sickle cell anemia doesn’t self limit itself out of the population). So there could be something in either the hair or the body chemistry that would confer resistance to head lice // Ct George: The catch with using a postal rate cut as a tax cut benefit is that the USPS is supposed to be a semi-independent entity that uses it’s own revenue to cover its operation. A rate cut would have to be made up for out of tax monies that aren’t supposed to go to that purpose.

Richard Lynch – Ct Steve H: Another point about his argument that I hadn’t noticed is that he was equating a drop (or even “crash”) in the stock market with a crash in the economy and I don’t think that those two go hand-in-hand at all. A lot of the drops in various stocks have had as much to do with not meeting expectations (only a 3% increase in profit instead of 5%) as from actual poor performance of the companies. // Ct Janet: NY is a Republican state? How did Sen. Moynihan get elected if that’s historically been the case?

Arthur Hlaaty – Damn. As is almost always the case, Minicon next year falls during Passover, which makes the logistics of travel more than we (a true, rather than royal, we) want to deal with

Guy Lillian III – By the time you read this, Mazel Tov on the marriage and you ought to be about ready to move into the new digs. So Mazel Tov on that as well. // Ct Southerner: As long as you and your dermatologist were going to slobber and drool, you could have thrown in a couple of Ooks for good measure. // Ct Jeff: While I have no doubt that some of the kids in Boulder are fairly avant-garde, I don't think they have a special school to teach it. // Ct Liz: Speaking of quilting projects, the lab staff put together a patchwork quilt as a baby present for our mom-to-be. I think that was the straw that got the tears flowing at the shower. // Ct Janet: The first time I ever hear the term "wombmates" was in that George Harrison classic "Zorro, the Gay Blade." // "I dropped my camera into the toilet. Fortunately before it was used." The camera or the toilet? // Alice Krige was in Chariots of Fire?

Janice Gelb – Way Cool. Now you're going to be on the "list" of speakers for these conferences. Who knows but that you might become a regular on the circuit. // Sorry I had to miss you (and several others) at Westercon. // Ct Ned: Well, we use a reasonable amount of aluminum foil throughout the year, but try to bias our use of storage material to more reusable items (of the Tupperware sort). Of course, at Passover, large parts of the fridge get lined with foil so we still have places to store the non-Kp items. // I hadn't thought about it, but I guess kosher cattle couldn't be given feed that included animal tissue and that would pretty much eliminate BSE from the equation.

Ct me: I'll keep Lucy's address handy, but for the moment I think I have enough apactivity to keep me busy. // Heck, give us something for LASFAPA's 25<sup>th</sup>. How often will it come around? That reminds me that I need to put something together for that myself. // I think just letting people know a day in advance that, given the need the following areas will be blacked out, would be very helpful in planning day to day activities as well as letting emergency agencies know where a bit of extra support might be needed. // I hope you're not looking to me for an answer to the great question about Midwest and Southern cons. Maybe the sheer # of smaller cons in those areas forced less emphasis on programming and more on the social aspects. After all, how many times will people want to attend similar panels over the course of weeks? // Oh, I know the "If it's Xday, it must be..." reference is from the movie "If it's Tuesday, It must be Belgium." I just wonder how many people outside of fandom are still making references to it. // Thanks for the suggestion. Space Cadet is not one of the Heinleins on my shelf. // Macaroni and cottage cheese is a pretty good stretch to kugel in my mind. I'll concede that pasta and cheese is needed for the dish, but that combo just doesn't do it for me. // Speaking of Biennials, I just got a letter from UAHC reminding us that they have a grant/loan program to help smaller congregations with a variety of things – including the costs of sending people to a Biennial. Have to make sure that gets brought up at the next Board meeting. // We'll be in Napa in August but I doubt we'll be driving further south on that trip. // Ct Jeff: Subtle(?) revenge? I think there was very little that was subtle about the treatment that Disney conventions got in Shrek. And it really was one hell of a hoot.

Gary Robe – Congratulations on a hard-won prize. // I'll fully agree about Shrek. After the three of us saw it, I took a spare afternoon and went to see it again so I could try to catch some of the background stuff that I might have missed the first time around. My personal favorite teeny item is the parking area by the entrance to the city of Dulac. It was the Lancelot. Oddly enough, I've had to explain why I thought that was so amusing to everyone that I've mentioned it to. One very funny movie.

Gary's Trash – Ct Jeff: To keep it short. There are 365 days in a year. If you multiply 12 month by 28 days (ie 4 weeks) you get 336 days. That leaves a set of four extra copies of each day (plus one). So you have to have at least four occurrences of a fifth Xday in a month and, on a rotating basis, there will be a fifth month that has a fifth Xday. (And, in a leap year there can be one more month that will has a fifth Xday. So there have to be 4 months with a 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday and there can be a 5<sup>th</sup> month where that happens. I'm not sure but suspect that a leap year would mean more that there would be two different occurrences of a 5<sup>th</sup> month with a 5<sup>th</sup> of a given day rather than a 6<sup>th</sup> month with an extra appearance of the same extra day. (Ie there would be 5 months with 4 Mondays and 5 with 5 Tuesdays but not 6 with a 5<sup>th</sup> Monday). // Ct Steve: Actually there is a third case of external attack prompting a military response from the U. S. – The Maine. Interestingly enough, only Pearl Harbor could really be considered an attack on the U.S. as the Maine was more akin to (what we would call) a terrorist attack and the Alamo was a battle of Texas' secession from Mexico and had nothing to do with the U.S. per se. // Ct me: Isaac into Izzy works well enough. Or you could work with the other half of the name and call him Zack. // I think that CJD has been around for a while as a recognized entity (as opposed to Alzheimer's which, I believe, has a more recent pedigree). Alzheimer's becoming more noticeable has much to do with the increased life spans of the last century – just like a lot of diseases are becoming more prevalent as people live long enough to allow them to occur. // I've loaned Random my copy of Star Wars (he's been reading some of the SW juveniles) and, at some point, I'll have to reacquire the Barsoom books and he can read them then if he wants to. My main "push" is to have him at least try stuff other than F&SF (Did I hear a "What else is there?") from time to time.

Jeff Copeland – Ct Irv: You'd think people would be smarter than to borrow against purely paper assets. It strikes me as being essentially (if not exactly) like the stock gamble of selling short on the assumption that you'll be able to recoup the paper loss when the stock's value really plummets. I'll admit to two outstanding loans – the house and the car (although I did put down over ½ on the Saturn) – not counting credit cards. I have something like 9% of my gross going to retirement savings and hope to be able to up that a bit now that Kay's income looks to be regular and consistent so I can see what more we can afford to put aside. It's tough when her income had been fluctuating by nearly 100% over the last few years. // Ct George: Yeah, your weather is probably much like ours – summer highs in the upper 60s (warming up quickly inland) and winter lows down around freezing. People are often surprised when I point out that the lows up here are about the same as in L.A. although we get to those lows a bit more often. // Ct Gary: I must have skimmed over that. Reading advanced books doesn't make one a good advanced reader? Just what IS a "good advanced reader"? Is she saying that reading them isn't the same as comprehending them? While that may be true to an extent, I'd think it would provoke the reader to ask questions about unfamiliar words.

"Teaching to the test" is one of those terms that you have to be careful with. If it means focusing all the effort on the type of questions that will be on the test, then it's shortchanging the students. On the other hand, if it means making sure to cover the topics that the test covers (perhaps even giving them a bit more emphasis) then I have no problem with it. Hell, I'd damn well hope that the test covered topics that were important enough to deserve having some emphasis put on them. // As the travel (or other) restrictions on blood donors pile up in the interest of product safety, it gets harder for the supply to keep up with the demand. Of course it wouldn't take much of an increase in the donor population to take care of that.

Gary Brown – At this moment in time I can empathize with your tooth problems rather more than might have been the case prior to receiving the disty. Check out my natter for more details than I care to go over again. // I'm currently in the process of reading Kavalier and Clay and it does make a good read. I'd seen references to it in semi-local paper (the author lives north of SanFran) as well as in a book club offer or two. // Well, at least with regard to the "spy" plane, the fact that we were "caught spying" was rather irrelevant. With surveillance planes flying outside Chinese airspace on a daily basis I don't think what was happening was any secret to them. // But I do love the administration's position that energy conservation won't solve the problem, only more production can do it. Heck, our per capita energy usage has dropped considerably since last year and, I think, even the total usage has dropped. If nothing else I think this will put California and the west a bit further ahead of the curve in trying to develop more in the way of high-efficiency uses of power and renewable power sources. Who knows, maybe it'll even allow the rest of the country to be spared.

Ct Southerner: As you say, with SFPA it isn't the size that matters, it's what you do with it that counts. // Ct me: If the Electoral college was to the popular vote the way the Senate was to the House, then one would have to win both in order to become President. Which is an interesting idea but I'm not sure what would happen when the two have to be reconciled (as would have been the case this time around). But yes, it does serve to even out for population distribution. My favorite way to "reform" the system is to just have all states opt for splitting their EC votes in line with the popular vote in the state.

Janice Gelb – Did you point out to Neil that it was Bambi's mom that was shot by the hunters and thus it was her you would have been eating and not Bambi?

Liz Copeland - Seems to me that the cat should be named Scotty Geordi Schwarzin Copeland if he wants to stick with male engineers. // Kay and I agree that they did a rather better job of doing DUNE than the original theatrical version did. Of course, given the extra length possible with a mini-series format I would certainly have hoped so. // And we all agree on Shrek. We all loved it and I even liked it enough to go back for a second viewing to see if I could catch any background stuff that I missed the first time around.

Richard Dengrove - Ct Lynch: It doesn't have to be rock music per se. There have been a sufficient number of songs over the last dozen years or so that I found enjoyable to listen to but was driven to disliking by hearing the damn thing on the radio just about every time I turned around. // I don't think that the Democrats "are through in California for now" – and I'd have said that even before W told the state to take a flying leap. For one thing, whether you think Davis acted fast enough or not, the deregulations that started the ball rolling here came under a Republican administration. And, was voted in by the populace. I know that the incumbent administration usually gets stuck with either blame or credit but I suspect that you won't see any great shift to the Republican side in the next elections. // Ct Sheila: Well, in the only small reference text on the topic that I have, it implies that specific clan tartans may have dated from the 18<sup>th</sup> century but makes rather little mention of the age of kilts.

Poor Richard's Gazette - Ct me: Why not have it be the religion of the "victim" be the determinant of what drives off a vampire? If they truly are "unholy" then either a) all holy symbols would work or b) it should depend on the "power of faith" generated by the victim through the symbol. After all, once they have been "turned" the vampire's original religion should be irrelevant. // While the "can't vote for a Pres and VP from the same state" could be considered excessive (or irrelevant), it strikes me as a reasonable way to force a ticket to be somewhat more broad-based. Even if, in this day and age, it can be circumvented rather too easily. // I dinna understand why one would need cottage cheese to make mac and cheese from scratch. The only cheese I've ever seen in the stuff is some sort of cheddar "sauce", although I guess you could use a milder variety as well. // I wish I had a handy reference to check the meaning of "Joseph", but somehow "add" and "remove" don't sound right. // Yeah, the warning against drinking wine or other alcohol is a good Biblical quote for Prohibitionists as long as you ignore the fact that it was speaking of a specific circumstance and not a general prohibition. And that's the problem with most quotes – if you just see the words and not the rest of the sentence/paragraph/etc then you have no idea what it really means. // But a law against suicide could only lead to prosecutions of dead people - not useful. So the effective thrust would have to be against incompetent would-be suicides and those do carry a societal cost for all the medical costs. // Ct mike weber: Nobody gives shots into the vein (except druggies). If meds need to be given intravenously then there would be an IV set up and anything injected via that tubing. So don't worry about having to learn that.

Steve Hughes - Ct Gary B: But Bush didn't just say that he wouldn't push for reduction of CO2 emissions while we worked through the power situation. He simply reneged on the whole concept of doing so and with no reference to the power supply.

Self – Ct Gary R: Well, it was a month later, but Random passed the test for the red stripe on his purple belt. I was able to catch part of it and he looked fairly sharp. He even did OK in the part that he'd been having trouble with – 10 Good pushups. // Well, our lead tech took the front end of the half-overnight shift for the late June-July stretch. Now the question comes up of who will take it for the 4<sup>th</sup> 6-week stretch. Guess that's something I'll be finding out about this coming week.

Randy Cleary – Ct me: I'm glad to have provided you with your daily dose of therapeutic laughter.

Sheila Strickland – Gee, your staff shortages sound a lot like ours. // Ct Guy: I'm reminded that the last time that Kay and I were at Disneyland pre-Random, she found a wad of money just sitting on the sidewalk. We turned it in to security and, about 4 months later, received a check for the money as nobody had claimed it. It wasn't exactly a trivial amount either - >\$200. // Ct me: Well for the time being I'm no longer doing scheduling. With so many holes that need to be filled with supervisors or by arranging to borrow from our other facility, it just isn't practical for someone who can't make those arrangements to be working on it. When (and if) we get back to having a full staff I may get back to doing it.

Mike weber – Ct Randy: Actually I found the first of the Supergirl covers to be rather more titillating than the one you used this last time.

Toni Weisskopf – Glasgow in '05? My, my. That would be nice since we want to do a “repeat” on our Scotland trip of '95. // Ct Trinlay: Umm. Low iron is not a trait associated with Thalassemia – which is why you can overdose on the stuff if you try to treat the anemia with iron. Generally low iron is a dietary issue although it can be from some sort of chronic disease state or blood loss. // // Ct me: Hopefully, now that I’ve had to miss Westercon, the rest of the summer will show steady improvement. At least it’s looking that way for the nonce.

Jeff Copeland – So what does one say about a chocolate covered manhole cover?

Don Markstein – It’s possible that, for the nonce, people are still finding enough wonder in saying “2000” or “2001” instead of “20-01” that that is influencing the “preferred” terminology. It certainly is one of those milestone marks, but I’m sure that using “20-X” will eventually turn out to be the primary choice. // Ct Gary B: Well, going back and forth from air conditioning to outside head doesn’t cause a cold even if it predisposes you to coming down with one. Whether you choose to consider that a nitpick or not is up to you.

**APAC = NC<sup>2</sup>** (Natter x Comments)

I guess I should add to the tales of work woes first. Since last I wrote, two more techs have given notice for mid-late June, one of our morning assistants has left for another job (at the clinic where Kay works – I had words for her about that) and one of our evening assistants is likely going to be gone for most of the summer. The upshot is that we’re (the cheeses, not me) trying to cobble together a schedule based on 12-hour shifts in order to keep the lab covered. It can be done (I came up with one after about 10 minutes of fiddling) and even allow enough flex for short vacations, but the question of covering those night shifts doesn’t go away yet. 6pm-6am is not an attractive option. I like the idea of splitting the overnights in half with 3am and 3pm being the shift starting times. All I know is that it’s likely to be a nasty summer or longer if we don’t find some bodies.

May 20<sup>th</sup> was my last General Meeting as temple president and it couldn’t have been a better finish. The budget passed with barely a ripple (not much there anyway aside from an increase in school tuition – still a bargain), our Mission and Vision statements had some mild haggling over exact wording (most of us who were happy with the way it was, also had no objections to the minor changes to make everyone happy) and even the vote on whether to start a rabbi search went smoothly. I had semi-expected a lot of fuss but everyone followed my ruling that anything about specific people or job arrangements were not in order, was polite & made worthwhile contributions to the discussion. Smooth as silk. And we are now ready to start looking for a rabbi again.

That same weekend was a rather busy one (in an enjoyable way). On Friday, Alex and I drove up to Oregon to play a new course called Salmon Run. Lovely thing that was built through a nature preserve area – which was why you can’t walk the course – no bridges over much of the winding stream or the pools so there’s no direct route. It was also interesting that, from just about anywhere on the course, the only part of the course you could actually see was the hole you were on. It really blended in that well. The next day we played another new course (and one already rated very highly) further up the coast at Bandon Dunes. Bandon (and it’s new sister Pacific) Dunes is built on a stretch of coastal dunes and cliffs and has very much the feel of a Scottish links course. Expensive, but still tempting enough to make we want to try again (maybe after the Nov 1 change to off-season rates). In any event, it was a lot of fun.

The subtitle of this next natter section is “The Agony and The Ecstasy”. About halfway through May I noticed some tightness in my left leg. Had I been smart I might have put two and two together and come up with four, but I just assumed that it was a tight muscle and treated it with a bit of massage and heat.

So, on the morning of June 15 I woke up planning to go golfing. The leg was stiff and sore, but some stretching loosened it enough to convince me that I could play. Well, it was a rather erratic round with me being rather more all over the place than usual. Come the 8<sup>th</sup> hole I really didn't know what to expect, but certainly not what happened: I hit the ball, see it land on the green and then lose it in the morning glare. Then the groundskeeper watering throws his hands up and it's high-fives all-around – my first ever hole-in-one (and just a couple weeks after witnessing my first ever ace on the same hole).

The next morning I was stiffer than ever and left a message for my chiropractor to schedule me for Monday. I went twice that week and on Thursday woke up in enough pain to a) have Kay call me in sick and b) get yet another appointment. (Note that I was hurting enough to make Kay do the calling.) That adjustment plus Friday's and I was feeling better (a good thing as I was working days that weekend). (Side note: I had not been in the Saturn all week as folding into it was just too uncomfortable. I'd also been waking up about 3am every day with leg cramps.)

Monday and Tuesday were more of same but with another adjustment I was feeling better on Friday – no morning cramps and less trouble on getting up. So I take the dog for a walk and it's less than 10 minutes before the hip's hurting again. This is not right. Saturday is back to square one so I drop by the ER ((Kay drove and, as usual for this period, I was on my stomach in the back seat.)) A diagnosis of sciatica and a prescription for some pain reliever that did a bit but not a lot. So on Sunday (July 1) I opted out of the first part of Random's birthday celebration – laser tag, movie and lunch – as sitting was not a good plan.

The second part of the birthday was a sleepover with some friends (I'll skip the details). In any event, around 2am I rolled over to get up and, as I started to stand, something spasmed or pinched because the pain went from 0 to 8+ immediately and I flopped flat onto the bed in a litany of agony and loudly whispered curses and moans. I was so immobile at this point that I couldn't even move my left leg enough to get the bedding out from under it.

By 11am I was still in the same position with only slightly greater ability to move my leg and I convinced Kay that I wasn't moving and that we needed the ambulance to get me to the ER. Loading me on the backboard involved one paramedic lifting me a bit by the waistband to take my weight while I slid over onto the backboard – facedown. And awayyyyyy we go.

Two doses of pain meds and some muscle relaxant finally got things calmed down (although I did have some lovely cramps and chills as (I think) my muscles finally calmed down. The walk to the car was slow, but the moving did help. That night I was in bed by 8, Kay woke me at 10 to take my meds and I slept straight through, plus a bit of morning napping. The combination of lack of sleep and a lot of drugs left me rather dopey in the morning but fit for work that afternoon.

Of course, not being able to sit comfortably made a lot of things bad ideas – including being in the car for the 8+ hour drive to Portland for Westercon. Scratch that. \*grumble \*mumble. Oh well, as I quipped to my chiropractor, the money I saved on that trip will cover his bills.

A follow-up visit to my regular doc has led me to getting some physical therapy (the opinion is that the problem is at the L5 vertebra and we're trying out a bit of traction to see if that helps speed up the healing process). I apparently have a classic presentation and, as I have some nerve involvement (calf weakness and some foot numbness) the prognosis is actually better than if that weren't the case. I'm also told that, if I did absolutely nothing it would probably resolve on it's own in 6-9 months. Kay is now insisting that I get an adjustment every 3 months or so (oil change, lube and chiropractic). For what it's worth, since the onset of the drugs (and I've cut them well back) I'm much better – although I don't like being on my feet all day and am essentially back to normal albeit with a bit of a limp for as long as the calf weakness holds out.

I did mention Random's birthday – the big One Oh. Thus why he was given a bit more leeway in how to celebrate than we usually offer. I gave him the present from us (a new set of golf clubs) a few days early so he could have them in time for the lessons I'd scheduled him for. He also got a major gift from the Grandies - \$140 – much of which has been used on a Gameboy and games (parental usage guidelines included). All told however, I think his favorite gifts were the two Supersoakers that he received. Not only does it give him more ammo for the next water games at day care, it means we can each have one when I'm able to take him on in the back yard.

Despite issues, we've managed to catch 3-4 of the local semi-pro baseball team's games this summer. It ain't the majors, but the fact that you're close to the field, can see everything, and get a good quality game makes it a lot of fun. On a good day there can be over a thousand people there, which is pretty impressive if you ask me. I wouldn't have thought it when we first moved up, but it's as much fun as watching a big league game, just in slightly different ways.

Anyway, it's time to package this up for printing and mailing. If the natter is a bit more disjointed than usual, blame the back.