



# SPARTACUS no. 60

**A zine of opinion and bluster from GUY LILLIAN III + 1390 Holly Avenue Merritt Island FL 32952-5883 + [GHLIII@yahoo.com](mailto:GHLIII@yahoo.com) + GHLIII Press Pub #1333 + Oct. 2022.**

I feel almost embarrassed to write about **Hurricane Ian**. Middle Florida, starting in Orlando about 50 miles west and continuing all the way to the Gulf and almost all the way south to the Everglades, is as I write a soaked ruin. We eye the TV scenes of drowned cars and piled-up boats, shredded roofs and inundated streets in Fort Myers and other west coast cities and recall storms we've endured in years past: Katrina of course, Juan, Camille, and for Rosy, Andrew. (She helped comrades in her Coast Guard Auxiliary search their wrecked homes south of West Palm Beach.) We recognize destruction we've seen in New Orleans and the surge-trashed yards of Waveland. It's like that in Florida in these earliest days of October, only worse: the Gulf Coast here is more densely populated, with more cities, more islands, more bridges lost to the sea. This will likely be a *half-trillion-dollar* hurricane, worse in every way except casualties than any other meteorological monster America has seen before.

So how was it here in Merritt Island, just south of where Ian finally left the state for the Atlantic and points north? We woke to a light, cool breeze, blue skies, and although our neighbors lost a tree, our major damage was a yard strewn here and there with twigs, our worst concerns during the storm two short stints of power outage. Like I say, I feel almost embarrassed.

But not so embarrassed that I can't thank Gary Brown for getting us the word that not only his family but Alan Hutchinson's came through the storm all right. As October opens and I begin this issue, I await word from Eve Ackerman and Orlando fan honcho Juan SanMiguel. Ordinarily I loathe turning on the TV and finding Governor Ron DeSantis' repulsive face, but if the s.o.b. actually does his job voters may forget his fascist cruelty in dumping immigrants on northern states and give him a fresh look. But politics seem unimportant. Florida, the state where I live, is trying to regain its footing after being smacked, hard. By the time this *Spartacus* is read, we'll know how well it's done. Wish these good people luck.

\*\*\* Since my dear countrymen generally have the attention span of mosquitoes, I doubt that, come election day, the voters of Florida will remember DeSantis' September stunt with immigrants. As you recall and as *The New Yorker* put it, "the Florida governor, who often seems as if he is campaigning to succeed Donald Trump as the nation's Provoker-in-Chief, staged his latest political stunt: using Florida

taxpayers' money to charter two planes to fly about fifty undocumented migrants, mostly Venezuelan, to Martha's Vineyard. DeSantis was not even relocating the group from his own state—the flights originated in Texas.”

The governor claimed that he was trying to protect Floridians from Hispanic refugees, whom he claimed – like Trump before him – came directly from South and Central America's criminal element. A lie, of course: he was pandering to the racism and sick pseudo-nationalism of the right, slandering pathetic people fleeing poverty and political danger in their native lands with hopes of a decent future here, in the country that has always promised it. He figured that by sending helpless refugees to blue – Democratic – states, he'd embarrass libtards by exposing their/our unwillingness to share America with dirty foreigners. “Own the libs.” A filthy misuse of power.

Martha's Vineyard fooled DeSantis and his brownshirts by welcoming the immigrants he sent them with kindness and care – but that group numbered only 50 or so. If DeSantis and the Texas governor, his partner in slime, *really* started shipping refugees north, it could do real damage. Ironically, if not fortunately, DeSantis now has other matters to occupy his time: his real job, rebuilding Florida.

No matter what DeSantis does or doesn't do, I doubt he'll have any trouble being reelected. My major worry is that he'll pull Florida's worthless senator, Marco Rubio, along with him. Rubio's opponent is a superb candidate, but also black, female and susceptible like all Democrats to slander. If Herschel Walker, running for the Senate just north of here, has a chance at victory, despite his obvious idiocy, Rubio does too. And that, gentle readers, sucks.

\*\*\* On October 4, 5 and 7 I retired the Greenhouse backyard to witness a glorious if familiar sight – rocket launches from Cape Canaveral. All were great events, but that on the 5th was especially so: it carried people.



*These* people – in a ceramic-looking capsule as advanced over the spacecraft of the past as a Stealth fighter is beyond a DC-3. Rosy missed the Broderick Crawford Day flight – “10-4,” get it? – but she was with me to cheer the manned launch, and father-in-law Joe Green was ecstatic. The girl on the far left was, y'see, the spacecraft commander, and the pigtailed QT next to her is a cosmonaut – the first Russian to ride an American rocket in 20 years. With political heat flaring between our country and hers, science can serve as a conciliator, and the former NASA honcho sees human salvation in that.

\*\*\* Speaking of Russia, the Nobel Peace Prize for 2022 went to a human rights crusader named Ales Bialiatski of Belorussia and two rights organizations also centered in that area of the world, Memorial from Russia itself and Ukraine's Center for Civil Liberties. How else can this ultimate honor be interpreted but as a giant lifted finger to Vladimir Putin?

The Greenhouse where we live is located about equidistant from Cape Canaveral – which handles both civilian and military satellite launches – and Patrick Air Force Base, which concentrates on strategic missiles. Come Armageddon, this little barrier archipelago is certain to get popped. Strangely enough, this eventuality doesn't scare me, because I'm not scared of Putin. True, he is profoundly egomaniacal and dangerously desperate – his war has tanked: the Ukrainians are cleaning his clock and his countrymen want nothing to do with it. (Very reminiscent of my generation's experience with Vietnam, methinks.) He's been reduced to nuclear saber-rattling to scare Ukraine's western allies, since it seems that oil hasn't proven to be a decisive tool for blackmail. From what I see, he isn't about to ensure the total destruction of his society by crossing the nuclear line. He isn't *that* crazy – and even if he is, the Russian military is not. They've had their ears pinned back in Ukraine and are looking for surcease and recovery.

*This* is what they get instead.



\*\*\* In health news, I've completed physical therapy for my aching left foot and am begging my G.P. to prescribe therapy for my arthritic shoulders. I have a set of foot exercises to continue – and a new *walk* to learn. They want to replace my usual splayed duckwalk with a straighter stride, heel down, toes ahead. A dizzying feeling, to be *aware* of one's steps ... Never mind why I need my gastroenterologist.

\*\*\* If anyone has any doubts regarding my opinion about the near *billion-dollar* judgment leveled against Alex Jones in the slander suit brought against him by Sandy Hook families, they can follow my whoops of joy. That pig accused parents who lost children in the massacre of conspiring to fake the event and thereby abrogate his precious Second Amendment. The parents became subject to threats and harassment and suffered having their grief mocked and their lost children slandered. The jury handed Jones his head. Though the plaintiffs will probably never see a penny, they've won the judgment of civilization and treed a cruel, soulless, obscene and reprehensible liar. Good. Moral victories *count*.

\*\*\* Quick media notes ... *Rings of Power* ended its first season with three terrific episodes, surpassing *House of the Dragons* in 2022's Battle of the Fantastic Fantasies ... but only for the night. The *Game of Thrones* prequel matched *Rings*' excitement and energy in its penultimate episode of the season, and I giggle with anticipation for both shows' return. Usually repelled by "cute cop" shows, I've stuck with *The Rookie* for its ongoing villain, the luscious redheaded "Jaqueline the Ripper," Rosalind.

Speaking of lethal ladies, in films, *Pearl* exceeds *X*, the horror masterpiece of which it's a prequel; it's a niftily conceived, directed, paced and acted nightmare. Glorious last shot, reminiscent but not derivative of *Psycho*. Awaiting us, *MaXXXine*, third in this trilogy. I found *Smile*, the season's other big horror success, well-made but comparatively standard and not particularly original.



My reading has been spotty but my father-in-law did direct me to a good, if lightweight, thriller writer – Jennifer Hillier, obviously Seattle-based, no James Lee Burke or T. Jefferson Parker but worth a few hours' read. I feel I must address one particular paragraph from page 369 of her *Wonderland*. The sexy female sheriff is addressing the bad guy. "I'd be more than happy to wake up a public defender, if you want. You know, someone who's fresh out of law school and who wasn't smart enough to get a job in a private firm, who won't know how to argue for bail, or will get you stuck with a million-dollar bail or more."

\*ahem\* In the 23 years I spent as a public defender in Louisiana, not quite "fresh out of law school" but close enough, graduating on Law Review but only cursorily applying with granite-staircased, billable-hours white-glove firms, choosing instead to defend the broke among the broken, I never had to argue to reduce a million-dollar bail, but I did guide a thousand or more miscreants through a system which otherwise would have crushed them like slugs beneath a boot, making sure that they got the rights of every human being accused of a crime in this country, including the right to force the government to prove their guilt by fair means, saving one pitiable fool from execution and most of that thousand from extra decades behind bars, working alongside other dedicated public servants whose first desire from their profession wasn't to fatten their wallets, public servants Ms. Hillier's character mocked and defamed ... Thank you very effing much! (I'm reading her first book, *Creep*, now. No *Silence of the Lambs*, but not bad at all.)

\*\*\* **OFF ON A COMMENT!**

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Suddenly got two issues of *Spartacus* one after the other, 58 and 59, so a letter on the two will have to do.

**Spartacus no. 58** ... The Freas Uhura. Kelly's *Star Trek* art was always great, and we wish we'd been able to get our own sets. Nichelle is gone, unfortunately, and a lot of people will miss her. Yvonne and I were at some of the early Trek cons in NYC. Yvonne was at Febcon '80, and in 1981, we were at two of them, Febcon '81, and Star Trek America later that year. We enjoyed ourselves, mostly because it was new to us, and we'd only read about these conventions, and it was a thrill to actually go to one, or three. Yvonne had made Motion Picture uniforms for us, but we were definitely in the background, if we were ever noticed at all.

Merrick Garland doesn't have much profile here [*in Canada*], but I gather he is doing a great job as A-G, which means he is reviled by the Rethugs. I would dare to say he's doing more as A-G than he would have as a Supreme Court justice. Things are happening in the A-G office, while he would have simply been in the minority at the Supreme Court.

Congrats on your N3F award! Well done. I received one some years ago as Best Fan Writer, but they've found far better than my toiling in Warner's Dungeon. I have learned not to do bucket lists...for sure, I'd come up with a list far exceeding my back account, but if I did have one, a high-up one would be working on *Amazing Stories*, which I have done, and I am very pleased with that.

I haven't been to a Worldcon since 2011, so that's 11 years. I probably wouldn't recognize it right now, and I know we wouldn't go. We didn't even go to Chicon 8, and our first one was Chicon IV. The appeal is gone, probably with the politics involved now, and the fact that so many still find American cities unsafe. I grudgingly admit that I have seen none of the top

SF series or the top SF books over the past 15 years. Local libraries can't afford to get the newest books, and we refuse to spend money on streaming services.

**Spartacus no. 59** ... We faithfully watched the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, some on the CBC, and most on the BBC World Service. It was real for us, for we'd been there, too, in Westminster and elsewhere. We grieved ... Elizabeth was the only monarch we'd ever known, and we feel older knowing that we have a King. I am sure Charles will be good and frugal.

I know there is a group of people who manage WSFS, Inc., but is that the so-called Worldcon control board? I will be pleased to not attend Chengdu, and find out what happened in reports here and there, and see a full report on *File 770*.

I am hopeful that the refugees that Florida and Texas shipped north will consider a lawsuit against those states for what some might feel to be kidnapping to make a point.

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My family – myself, wife and then-12-year-old son – went to London for a summer vacation in 2016. We were there just after the Brexit referendum and on one of the hottest days in recent summers. We probably shouldn't have been surprised that the English don't really know how to make sunscreen – it was thick and gloopy! – and I wondered why they just don't import it from Spain or somewhere else nearby. We were impressed by the ready availability of inexpensive healthy lunch options as we walked around London. I said all that to say that, even if our travels to London might have been different (did you go to All Ages Records, Forbidden Planet, Mega City Comics too?) [*no, yes, no*] we saw some of the same sights. Having done so helped make the Queen's death more meaningful and personally relevant.

While I was also impressed by the new king's drawing on the actions and concerns of his mother during the succession speeches, I was also struck by more petulant moments caught on camera. Exasperation over the placement of a lamp. Frustration with a specific pen. You might be right that he will focus on love and the future of England, but the succession also raises questions about the value and role of the royal family, class divisions, inherited wealth and privilege, and personal ethics – the succession also returned attention to the king's marriage with Princess Diana, his relationship with the now Queen Consort, and the politics of royal marriages. I hope he's able to cope with big challenges with more grace than he exhibited than he exhibited facing those small challenges. They might also be exceptions to the rule.

*C'mon ... even kings have the right to get p.o.ed at malfunctioning equipment like pens and lamps. It's not quite the same as burning priests.*

Do you know whether anyone has collected and published Hugo and Nebula acceptance speeches such as that of Arkady Martine? Are they generally made available otherwise? They might make for interesting reading over time.

*I've never heard of such a collection, and until Chris Garcia went crazy with joy picking up his first rocket, I don't think anyone had ever sought out a Hugo thank-you after the fact. That moment you have to **watch**, not just read.*

"Who is this Girl?" made me chuckle. Dadnabbit, now I have to return to *The Terminator* to watch that scene.

*I can't watch it anymore. I'm too old.*

Inspired by your commentary on Larry Montgomery and DeepSouthCon, I secured a membership for DeepSouthCon 60. Later this month, I shall think about him and Southern fandom. Thanks for bringing him to my attention. I shall mourn him even though I never met him; we need more Larry Montgomerys.

*Not many around like Larry.*

I was thrilled to read your mention of “apac” as well. I’ve been trying to locate a decent definition, [but the word] doesn’t seem to be as widely used as it might have once been. The best I’ve been able to figure – and if this pegs me as a neofan, so be it; once a neofan, always a neofan (I *am* wearing a propeller beanie as I write) – is that “apac” is short for “apa contributions,” or what I’ve been calling “apazines.” Maybe it means “apa comments.” I could ask local fan friends, but here the term is in your fanzine, so I ask you. Set me straight, Mr. Lillian. Set me straight.

*“Apac” = “amateur press activity.” Sounds like something a duck would say in a commercial, doesn’t it?*

*Regarding **Spartacus** no, 56 ... and mass shootings ...*

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Our national sickness has to run its course. All I can do is stop what I can and practice kindness and decency as much as I can. I don’t want to understand the motivations behind mass murderers. I want them to stop because we as a people will no longer tolerate this behavior.

I find your comments on the dust up over the usage of “colored” to be exactly the way I felt over the overboard reactions of the MeToo aftermath and the tarring of Al Franken over a stupid joke picture (that he apologized for). Why is it that it takes only one outraged person to cause such an overreaction? I see this happening over and over these days; that we are overly sensitive about seemingly tiny *faux pas*, and yet are so insensitive about the slaughter of our populace by deranged and deluded persons with automatic weapons. What exactly is going on with us as a people here in the U.S.? I just can’t wrap my brain around these behaviors.

*And lest I be accused of completely ignoring fannish matters, another response to Curt Phillips’ LOC of several issues past ... Check out Spar no, 58 on eFanzines and write a response yourself!*

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I think Curt Phillips’s sounding the tocsin was overstated. I had a reasonably good time at Chicon but I agree that the con had problems.

You will recall I was expelled from Discon for the crime of not wearing my mask over my nose twice, once when I was sitting by myself in the lobby and once when on the first day of the con I was frantically trying to find a bathroom. I also was accused of calling the security person who caught me in these hideous crimes a Nazi, although what I actually said was “yes ma’am, thank you ma’am.”

Nothing like that happened at Chicon. I was told once to put my mask over my nose. And I spent a lot of the time in the consuite maskless and security did not come after me. So, this is a plus in Chicon’s favor.

Mind you the con did some things that were stupid. They did not have a printed pocket program “for environmental reasons” which meant you either had to have a smartphone or had to print out 400 pages (!!!) in advance. I was blissfully on a internet-free diet for a week with a dumb phone for emergencies. So that was a mistake I hope Worldcons don’t make.

There was also the con’s “anti-racist policy” which in effect said they were a leftist convention where dissent was not permitted. I would like to know if there were any violations of

the anti-racist policy. I was spending time in the con suite engaging in reactionary political comment without a mask. I wasn't expelled.

Is there anyone in the U.S. excited by [the 2023 Worldcon in] Chengdu? As I understand it even if I wanted to buy a membership I can't because it would violate the embargo on sending money to China. Aside from the objections to the tyranny of the Chinese government, there is also the bonus of spending two weeks in a hotel because of China's anti-covid policies. I am convinced the only people from the U.S. and Canada who will be there will be paid by the Chinese to attend.

Curt questions the Kampala bid. Well, I remember the Croatia bid. I regard both as equally specious. Cairo also probably won't happen but at least the people organizing it are fans.

I am also told that the many panels about SF in 1946 were held and no one denounced them for discussing the works of dead white males.

So I'm not as pessimistic about Worldcons as Curt is.

*If Americans can't join Chengdu because of government policy, then how will we qualify to vote in the Hugos/site selection for the next two years? Help!*

*And while we're on the subject, anyone know of any Hugo-worthy fiction? How went the 2022 WOOOF mailing?*

\*\*\* The last meeting of the Congress' January 6<sup>th</sup> Committee may not have any influence on the November midterm elections, but it served a more permanent purpose. Donald Trump's plan to frustrate the law to benefit his own need for power – no matter the cost to others – has been laid bare. The truth revealed about the 2021 Capitol invasion may have little effect on the politics of the moment, but decades to come, there will be no doubt as to what occurred, and why.

It was a childish plot, juvenile, facile, simplistic and unsophisticated. It showed a lack of appreciation for the depth, complexity and strength of American institutions. It shows that Trump and his cronies had no idea of what they were dealing with when they tried to bully the Law, that fundamentally they weren't up to it: they simply weren't very smart. And because they were, at base, dumb, they relied on thugs like the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers and crashed upon the integrity and brains of men like the smart-alek DoJ attorney Richard Donaghue ("We'll come get you if there's an oil spill!") and Congressman Adam Schiff. Schiff in particular impressed me. Great and persuasive language. I wish I had been such a lawyer.

But I can be such an American. Or try to be.



\*\*\* This is **Ginger**, born Jodi's Princess Ginger Snap on November 5, 2005. She was our compatriot and brightness for 15 years, leaving us on October 9, 2022 due to advanced kidney failure. It was time.

Ginger was the sweetest dog I have ever known, let alone owned. Some might say that her flirtatious



friendliness was due to a hope for treats, but you would never convince anyone who knew her of that. Such was her disposition; such was her character. (If you doubt that dogs have disposition and character ... well, we won't argue.)

Ginger bore at least three litters by her late mate Pepper. They were AKC-certified purebred pups whom my boss, who owned them, sold for \$1000 apiece. But it wasn't as a puppy mill that Ginger was valued. She was valued, and she'll be sorely missed, because she was proof that there is such a thing as simple living beauty up and down in Creation, forever bidding us sorrowing humans not to lose heart.