

PETER, PAN & MERRY #45

A zine for SFPA # 228

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Come and Tarry on SFPA 228

Southerner – Just out of perverse curiosity, is Bobby George Poulette related to the captain who served under Crock? (Boy I must be desperate to make a comment to the Southerner this time.)

TKF Weisskopf – Ct Ned: I’m sure I’ve seen this mentioned before without really noting it, but it’s odd that both you and Ned’s nephew have thalassemia as that *tends* to be clustered around people with Mediterranean blood. And that certainly would disqualify you from giving blood. // Ct Jeff: As you note, no doubt large numbers of Palestinians and Israelis just want to go back to living normal lives but the tune is the one being played by the extremists and unless that stops ultimately nobody will be the winner.// Trouble is most of the people that come to mind as “meaty character actors” are currently in leading man roles – Liam Neeson & Robin Williams for example. Of course my general level of movie watching is probably affecting my opinion in this matter. // Ct Janice: Yeah, except for Sam, all of the hobbits came off a bit younger/weaker/etc than you’d would get from reading the books. IMO that was the weakest aspect of the film. // Ct Guy: Well we don’t have a purely open border as there are immigration controls at all major seaports, airports and land crossings. It is true that traffic into and out of the country has increased but I think that’s at least as much a function of the availability and affordability of travel as of any policy changes. Still it surely is a good idea to require that visa and immigration applications be looked at with more scrutiny these days. / As for constitutional protections, it seems to me that anyone coming as an immigrant or long-term visitor has a two-way contract with the country and if they are to be subject to our laws, those laws have to be applied with the same standards as we use for our citizens. Call it a version of the rights and responsibilities of a guest/host relationship.

Ct Norm: I recently read a book (The Seven Daughters of Eve) on the topic of tracking human dispersion by genetic variation. Is it an “exact science”? Not yet but it is an interesting tool. It may take some time to get it properly calibrated and verified. Another issue is just how far back can this be used with reasonable accuracy. It is, unfortunately, somewhat difficult to verify the results by other methods if there is conflict with accepted data. // Ct me: Firstly, we don’t have to worry about nuclear plant expertise, we can always consult with the people at the plant in Springfield. / The problem with nuclear plant engineers is that a bit more than the regular shortage/glut cycle although it could “just” be looked at as an extreme example. At this time there just is no field there to go into. The flip side is that, even if we were to start building new nuclear facilities, the technology jump (it’s been over 20 years since a new one was built) means we would likely have to retrain even experience workers and it might be simpler to start from scratch. But the point is well taken that even with changes there is a lot of knowledge that gets lost if there is no passing the torch. // I hadn’t even heard of Susan Petrey. I guess I need to see about looking up her books. // Now we’re talking. Cottage cheese definitely belongs in a kugel. // As the natter will show, Corky did fine at the new kennel. It’s still not by first choice but life does happen whether you have a house-sitter or not.

Ned Brooks – Ct Richard D: “Looking Glass Decoded” sounds pretty weird. Of course I also think that books about the “hidden code” in the Bible are pretty weird. // My dictionary says that cotton is from the Middle English back to the Old French “coton” possibly via a root in Arabic “qutun”. As to naming Cotton Mather from the Hebrew, if you use the word with vowels then it would be a bit of a pronunciation bender to go from “katan” to “cotton” but if you work from the text of the scrolls you don’t have the vowels so the “k-t-n” combination has some options to it. // Ct Richard L: The AABB, which sets the rules on donor requirements, looks at recipient safety from transfusion transmitted disease. How convenient or inconvenient that is for the blood donors and blood supply is, while not irrelevant, somewhat secondary. // Ct Guy: I agree that the issue of sanity or not is semi-irrelevant to the question of guilt. It is relevant to the question of what sort of punishment is meted out though. // Ct me: Only the one insurance company balked at covering the Prius. The second was just not writing any new policies, had we had a policy with them already it wouldn’t have been an issue. / And the Prius is working out just great. It runs in the 45-50 mpg range pretty consistently, has enough pick up to drive comfortably on freeways (Kay drove it to SF to deal with her brother’s affairs and I drove it down to the Bay Area when I got Random from camp), it easy to get in and out of and has quite adequate trunk space. It’s not a tiny car by any stretch. Call it a mid-size. If you need to carry a truck or van worth of stuff that’s another matter.

Moodling, Moodring – Steve, technically I don’t think that Iron Age man was murdered. At least there’s no definitive data for that conclusion. That he was died by the action of another is clear but we don’t know enough about the circumstances to call it murder.

Rich Lynch – Ct Ned: The expansion of novellas into novels reminds me of a MAD parody of the TV show “Cannon”. It has several boxes of him in his car. When a cop pulled him over he explained that it was this TV show with a great ½ hour story. So? It’s an hour-long show so we include 30 minutes of “driving around while looking grim”. // Ct me: At the moment there is no solid evidence either way re BSE being blood-borne and with no test available it’s simpler to screen by donor questioning. I think the risk is pretty tiny but there’s such an worry about BSE that the additional screening was set up partially as PR as partially to avoid any discovery in 2, 3, 5 years that it really is blood-borne.

Richard Dengrove – Ct Ned: I don’t know if the industry would prefer to not mention the danger of aspartame or not, but I do know that everything that I’ve seen that has the stuff in it has a warning on the package. I also think that the mental retardation phenylketonuria can cause is an issue for babies and aspartame is the least of the issues there. // Ct me: You’re more liberal than one health club re kids in locker rooms. And I think that was just a “squeaky wheel” issue. // Well, if “all men are endowed...with certainly unalienable rights...life, liberty...” then it seems to me that it follows that any of the processes (search and seizure, trial by jury, etc) that are used to deprive someone of that should apply equally whether one is a citizen or not. On the flip side, if the complaint is that rules are being enforced that had been allowed to slide I don’t see much of a case on that specific point. // Disneyland has one gate, although you can ride in from the Disney Hotel via the monorail. The catch with farthest first is that, it may help with the first ride or two, but the one’s near the gate are not going to get uncrowded as the day goes on. Use early admission to get to the one or two or three rides you really want to be on and then glide. // My best guess is that nothing in *FailSafe* was beyond the technology of the time.

Twygrove – Kay wasn't bothered by my visiting my ex-girlfriend. My dad was. // I don't recall specific dates, but I do recall that there were stretches of a week or three during which Israel specifically did not retaliate in an effort to take some fuel from the fire. // Let's see, the UN voted to end the British Mandate in Palestine and divide the land into Jewish and Arab areas. Whether or not those areas were intended to be States/Nations is another issue. In any event as soon as the British left the area, the Jewish Agency declared statehood. It wasn't done "after Israel conquered", it was before the '48 War. // It's been an up and down year. I'm crossing my fingers that, with the year 5763 firmly in place things have settled down and will start a slow climb with no more excitement. // Ct Sheila: Why couldn't a Jewish family have a Turkic name? There have been Jews all over the place, including along the silk road.

Gary Brown – At the least they managed to not have a strike this year. It would have been a particularly galling way to end a really good season (a couple of tight races in the West, Bonds' 600th homer, etc). And let's face facts that it's hard to get up lots of sympathy when all parties in the dispute make more in a month (or less) than most of the rest of us make in a year. (A friend sent me an email listing reasons why golf was so popular and it included items like "Even the top players hang out to sign autographs" and "It really is pay for performance.") Overall it probably won't affect my level of involvement with the game much though. Except maybe trying harder to get to more of the games that our local semipro team plays. / Speaking of which, they played in a tournament up in Oregon this year and won it to earn a birth in the semipro equivalent of the college world series. Unhappily they decided to pass on it. First there were the contracted games for the rest of the season that would have had to be cancelled. Plus a promised fund raiser. And finally the fact that it would have been difficult (if not impossible) to raise enough \$ for traveling expenses in the short time they had. And understandable but disappointing decision. // I'm not better off than 18 months ago but truthfully the economy per se hasn't been the cause (yes, my retirement funds have lost \$ but there's 20 years to make that up so right now it's just paperpushing). // Ct Richard D: I agree. Bush's initial responses were OK but it's how you handle things in the longer term when you have more time to gather and consider the data that will tell the tale. Much as I think we should have finished the job in Iraq a decade ago, I have trouble with the notion of a preemptive strike – even if I can see the reasoning I don't feel the benefits outweigh the risks.

Ct Janice: While using the internet for quick stuff, I still prefer to use letters if I want to get into more detail about things or just be chattier. Email is the letter equivalent of the phone answering machine. // Ct Guy: I have no idea when they started doing recording of "official citizenship" but there had to be some concept of that from the beginning since it involves the ability to vote. In fact, my presumption about citizenship is that that is when you start accruing privileges within your new country, not when you can claim the right to its legal protections. // Ct me: Seems to me that, if there's to be any league contraction, MLB should let simple economics have their way. If a team can't cover its debts and make payroll, then it should be allowed to fold on its own. Isn't that that the only way teams have closed up (not counting rival league mergers)?

Jeff Copeland – They did do a fine job of translating Spidey to the big screen. I have a strange feeling that it's going to be an interesting Dramatic Presentation Hugo next year with this, Two Towers, Harry Potter, Reign of Fire and Minority Report. Not even mentioning SWII. // For the moment methinks Harrison Ford holds the Jack Ryan standard although I think Alec Baldwin might have done well if he'd had more than one film with the role.

All the Jeff – OK, fine. From LASFAPA 105 in 1985.

Ode to a Slice of Velveeta

Oh Plastic Cheese, I salute thee
The very color of my pee
You sit and melt so very well
You do not have much of a smell
You do not rot at any time
To throw you away, a terrible crime
Your slices wrapped in plastic clear
Are still mold free after many a year

on hamburgers many you turn to goo
and in my arteries you form a glue
not made from milk still from a cow
made from cow fat we know now
Oh Plastic Cheese I thee salute
you do not need to make me poot.

Chris still knows me too well. // Ct Ned: I'll go along with the start of that working definition of terrorists as those who *intentionally* target civilians but have the feeling there is something more that needs to be included. Damned if I can put my finger on just what it is I'm looking to add in though. // Ct Dengrove: Not that it excuses a bit of sloppiness, but I would guess that Burke was referring to the total number of books in Christian Europe of 1450, not in the Moslem part.

Although 1450 may be a bit late for that distinction. Or maybe Spain just doesn't count? //

Ct Lynch: While my dictionary does list "fanzine", it gives no history of the term. // Ct Guy: One possible way for Amtrak to lower it's cost is to go back to the Old days and run long distance passenger trains less frequently. Say on a weekly (or, at most, twice weekly) schedule while letting the commuter routes run as is. As the longer routes are usually used by vacationers or people moving it shouldn't hurt the ridership so you would get more passengers per run. // I have no intention of doing the longitudes and latitudes to get a geographic SFPFA center, but the average zip code is 48497 for whatever good that is.

Ct me: a) Sure you can vote against the President with a war on. We've had elections during every war this country has been in. b) Even if you don't vote against the President, you can still repudiate the Republicans by voting against them in House and Senate races. // I don't think it's so much that people don't care about the principles on which the country was founded as that a) it's a given and so doesn't need to be protected/fought for and/or b) a non-understanding of what those principles are. // Ct Irv: At this point it seems that the relevant Arab/Palestinian leaders aren't after a state so much as an excuse to kill Israelis. That the various Palestinian factions have only now thought to get together and figure out things like "What do we want" and "What tactics should we be using" says something not very comforting. /// And now Florida has another weirded up election on its hands. Some days you can't win for losing.

Irv Koch – Any idea why CDC, etc don't want to even interview you? // Ct Jeff: Give my regards and wishes for good heath to Dan Taylor. I think I was still in Myriad when he took over as OE.

Eve Ackerman – Congrats on Raphi's acceptances and good wishes for his "Bright College Days". But as a point of curiosity, you have no problem with him spending the night with several young ladies from Gainesville? // Interesting Care package he got for camp. Raphi has weird friends and would do well to hang onto them. // I don't think I was aware that that party at my apartment (yes, "my apartment" as it was pre-Kay's moving in) was the first time you'd met Bruce. / And, while I don't get that many, I do dread seeing an email with someone's name as the topic. // Ct Guy: Hmm. Lap Dances for Israel. I hope they did well while doing good.

Eve's Pleasures – I suspect that the part in the comment to Guy where you talk about Random and Judo may have been meant for me. We're glad he's still interested in it (3 times per week now as long as school doesn't interfere). And, now that he's at a slightly closer school, we can add some daily walk time plus gym every other week. Hopefully that will help keep him in shape. //227//
Ct me again: As I was (more or less) in my room when I typed "Quilty Pleasures", your admonishment to go there carries rather little weight. / And I'm glad you enjoyed the remark.

Steve Hughes – Ct Norm: By damn, "Forbidden Planet" does have a rather similar plot to "The Tempest". // Correct me if I'm wrong, but doesn't Congress set the SEC's budget? And that being so, why blame Clinton for it (although, yes, the President can argue for and against specific budget proposals)?

mike weber – It's a trivial point, but the bookstore in LuAnn is a take-off on Borders Books, not Barnes and Noble. // That story about the man and his dog walking along the road to heaven sounds suspiciously like a Twilight Zone episode that I recall. And I certainly wouldn't doubt that the story predates Serling's use of it.

Janice Gelb – We've already talked about Neil. I just hope you have some upbeat news for us this time around. // Ct me: The variety of unscreenable potential weapons is why they should just get on with hardening the cockpit doors and hiring sky marshals. If they can't get what they want – it control of the plane – that pretty much makes action on their part a futile gesture (at least on the level they want to attain, clearly individual passengers (or the entire plane) could get hurt or killed). // Re Mel Brooks: The other day, after finishing a video (Some Like it Hot), we saw a few moments of the I Love Lucy 50th Anniversary Special and were reminded of just how damn funny some of that was. / During Rosh Hashanah, a friend of ours was here as "Guest Soloist" and we invited her over for dinner. She mentioned that she can't find any video to rent for the family (they have a VCR but don't watch TV per se) and I brought up that we'd had good luck with things like Casablanca, Beau Geste, Great Race, John Wayne movies, Marx Brothers, etc. Seems she'd never even thought of dipping into the fund of great older films while for us it seemed just the most obvious thing in the world. We pick carefully, but Random's liked everything we've thrown at him so far.

Ah, "they are acknowledging the fact that they are bar/bat mitzvah by doing those things for the first time". Precisely. They are having the ceremony. It doesn't make them any more bar or bat mitzvah, it's the acknowledgement of the status. That's why I was specifically calling them "Adult Bar(t) Mitzvah Ceremonies", to emphasize that they were going through the ceremony as adults. / I hereby agree to disagree with you. // We're all glad there were no injuries in that collision. As I said though it was lucky that it happened in a minimal speed situation. // Yeah, the Prius is pretty cool and has no loss of pickup or drivability from its hybrid status. In fact it seems to be displaying a remarkable extent of hybrid vigor. // Ct Gary: My impression about Spidey's costume was that the first one had to be tossed together by the next morning so he had little time or material to work with. The later costume came with some time and material with which to work.

So, are you planning on investing in a chain of Gold Class theatres domestically? / And can you now explain cricket to the rest of us?

Guy Lillian – Will you be observing the situation vis-à-vis those two judges with enormous ~~schwanstucker~~ interest because you see a potential job opening for yourself? // Ct Rich: It's been a while since I've seen The Third Man, but I still have pictures from my visit to Prater Park outside Vienna. Gee, it was only 12 years ago. // Ct Norm: As I'm now seeing ads for the new season of Enterprise, I'm presuming it was renewed. Now if I could just find out when it will be broadcast here ((I looked at it's timeslots from last year with not success and as we don't get WB I can't expect it to appear when WB runs it)). // Ct Richard: While I have little doubt that the authors of the thing would find some of the interpretations of the Constitution more than a little puzzling, on the flip side they did write it with some room to flex in – one of the smarter things they did (whether fully intentional or not) – and thus make it a living document rather than an artifact. / And I wonder if that father who brought the suit in the first place (re “under God”) also refuses, as a matter of principle, to use cash. // Why didn't Uncle Owen recognize C3P0? It was just a C3 unit that he encountered some decades ago. Why would he have remembered? Besides, unless you are in regular contact with one, aren't they all designed fairly alike?

Ct me: I showed Kay your comment, so consider it passed on. // Due to my schedule I don't see as much Simpsons as I used to, but it does have its share of choice bits and references. // My incisive removal of fleas as a method of transmission of werewolfism unfortunately does not preclude the possibility of being bitten by a were-flea. // Seems to be that the Declaration's statement that “All men are created equal and endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights” would imply that any statement of rights – such as found the Bill of Rights – applies to all, not just citizens. In particular as citizenship was a rather murky question at the time anyway. // Hey, if you want a Galadriel/Goldberry tale, why not commission one for Challenger? // Truthfully I think that Sherman's march to the sea had less to do with Reconstruction than Lincoln's death did. Had he stayed in office he might have been able to make the reunification an easier process. // Ct Sheila: Oh yes the BBC production of LotR is very much commercially available. I have a copy and have seen it advertised in various catalogs.

Liz Copeland – Man it has been a bad year in the SFPA family. At least it's over now so we can hope for things to be better over the next 13 months.

APAC = NC² (Natter x Comments)

Not a lot to report on. My back, after 2-3 visits to the chiropractor and an ongoing bit of nighttime heat and morning stretching, has been doing pretty well. At the least it's been letting me play golf and toss a ball around with Random and generally do some chores around the house so I guess that's all I can ask for. I've been trying to schedule a massage as well, but between people being out of town or booked up and my schedule, it looks like that may not happen until we get to the cheap resort portion of our vacation this coming month. (You know, the “Visit for a couple of days, get some free benefits and listen to our sales pitch” thing.)

Said trip is planned, again, to coincide with Random's week at Camp Newman down in Santa Rosa (it just struck me that I ought to clarify that Camp Newman is run by the umbrella gp for Reform Judaism, and has nothing to do with that Catholic, college organization). As long as he's interested and we can afford to send him I think this could turn into a nice arrangement for Kay and I. This year, we'll be driving all the way up the Oregon coast to Astoria, cutting across to visit with Greg Brown and Jenny Montaire (it's odd to think that the three of us may be almost the only people who see her that still call her that) before heading back down central Oregon via Bend and Klamath Falls before returning home the day before we need to pick up Random. Some beach time, some golf time, some scenic driving, some hanging-out by the pool. Should be good.

Random's birthday party was held at the health club we use. It's a pretty decent deal, with about an hour of supervised pool time plus another hour or so of play time in a separate room. Food supplied by us. Had a decent turn out and he got stuff that he wanted. Still, I think that was a one-time effort. We have more fun other ways.

July saw the resignation of our new night tech (he's going back to the Phillipines to help care for his father (who's moving back to live out his life)) as well as that of a long-time tech who had worked at our reference facility but doesn't look to be able to handle the changed duties and pace at the hospital lab. (It was a Hobson's choice for him as he won't do any blood-drawing or skin test and thus can't be the only tech on duty at our current outpatient facility but isn't equipped to handle the pressure in our setting.) We hope to have that sorted out soon as we have an applicant for the night job (who's been working double-shifts plus on-call where he is now) plus are training in a part-timer. So in the interim, rather than be juggled a lot, I offered to take the front half of the split nights for most of the upcoming schedule.

Massage is nothing to talk about. A steady amount of work at the regular seated-massage gigs but not a lot of added work for full massages. Oh, we got a call from a friend of Kay's brother in Alameda – seems that the massage table we salvaged from the apartment was his. Now we have to try and get it back to him when we drive down to L.A. at Thanksgiving. Fun.

After more fuss and bother, it looks like Kay will be getting this home-based business up and running today (at least with the first sputters) and we'll see if it ever pays for itself. She'd taken out a big advance on her credit card at a low interest that expires next month and we got an offer of a 0% interest on balance transfers through next August on one of our cards. (Yes, there is a small fee.) So I'm making sure that card is zeroed out and put away so we can do the transfer and give Kay a year to whack it down without having the interest to deal with.

July and August have been interesting. For one thing, Corky has a new favorite "toy" – the neighborhood skunks. In the last month or so he's been hit 4-5 times. The first two were young 'uns that had come into the yard and got themselves eliminated for their troubles. But the next few have been outside the back fence and unreachable to the fearless pole cat killer – albeit not unreachable for them. So the pooch has been bathed several times in a peroxide/baking soda/detergent blend that our vet recommended. It works OK but the odor still takes a while to clear – and with repeated doses we haven't yet reached really clear since we started. At least he hasn't been hit in the face yet – chest, hip, back, etc – but not the face. Of course at this rate he'll become a peroxide blonde pretty soon. This would be a simple problem if not for the other horn of the dilemma. As long as his diabetes isn't under control, we can't leave him inside at night since he'll end up peeing on the kitchen floor. Yes, I know, which problem do we prefer on a given night is sometimes the choice that has to be made. Still I'm hopeful as, just before our trip, we moved back to a twice daily dose of the insulin and it seems to be having the desired result in less drinking and peeing. Maybe tonight we'll take that chance again.

On the 14th we took Random down to camp and used the trip as an “excuse” to make a visit to Trader Joe’s in Santa Rosa for a few supplies. I have to say that there is something about driving for 8+ hours in a day and ending up back where you started that just doesn’t set right.

The next day we dropped Corky off at the new kennel we’re trying out – Happy Dog. I’d checked it out a few days earlier and it looked OK. It was even better when we got there as the owner was around and it’s clear she knows what’s doing with taking care of animals (at least she talks the talk well). The cages are good sized and the dogs spend most of the day outside in large gang runs (segregated by how they get along, how active they are and whether they’ve been fixed or not) so exercise and companionship aren’t an issue. And, as I may have said, they’re OK with giving the shots.

From there it was onward and upward on the coast route. A short stop in Crescent City ((No Guy, not *The Crescent City*)) for forgotten supplies also netted me the chance to try out the newish Vanilla Coke – we both thought it was pretty good. Nice flavor and the vanilla cuts down on the overly sweet taste I get from the stuff. The next hour or so of the drive was spent in a rather significant amount of smoke. For anyone who wasn’t aware, the latter part of July and much of August saw a rather large fire in the southwest Oregon/Northwest California area (The Biscuit Fire) that threatened several towns, closed US 199 and otherwise ruined many days. While partially under control at that point, it was still putting out a lot of smoke.

Fortunately Gold Beach, where we stopped for lunch was north of the airflow so we were able to stop at a nice fish place (The Porthole) on the harbor and enjoy both the meal and the view before heading across the first of the almost innumerable bridges of ~~Madison County~~ Oregon – the 2000’ McCullough Bridge over the Rogue River. (Seems like whenever the highway builders came across a river, stream, bay, etc they just threw a bridge across rather than spend any time looping inland.) I have to say that all of the bridges are impressive and most are clearly products of the CCC and WPA from the ‘30s. It’s a style that’s difficult to mistake

Onward to our Motel 6 in Coos Bay (for the history buffs, that’s where ‘70s track star Steve Prefontaine grew up) – a motel complete with hot tub and sauna, but lacking a pool. After checking in, Kay and I crossed that bridge ((the bay itself looks like a fat letter “n” with the town sitting on that interior spit of land)) and wended out way to the community of Kentuck and their golf course – a mostly flat one built in what is clearly flood plain. With Kay walking along, it was a nice start to the week. The weather was warm, the game was decent and it generated a definite appetite whetting for dinner (Tai’s Dynasty – Chinese). Kay also affirmed what she had suspected – that walking along while I’m golfing is cool with her.

Friday morning, breakfast was at a place called The Pancake Mill. All they do is breakfast and lunch and they are, apparently, very good at it. At least the meals we had more than met our exacting specifications on how the eggs should be done and how the hash browns should be. Beyond that, what else is there. This was the long day of our trip as we were going all the way to Portland along the coastal route.

First stop was Sea Lion Cave, near Newport long the highway. The attraction is an entry into a large sea cave (supposedly the largest on the west coast) used by seals and sea lions for however many centuries as a home, shelter and nesting ground. Tough to get pictures, but you can see, hear and smell the occupants with very little difficulty. You can also walk over to the other end of the viewing area and see where the original stairs used as an entry had collapsed (or been allowed to decay) after the elevator was installed. You could also see why nobody had tried to recover any of the old wood – the rocks were slimy with the accumulation of guano. Oh yeah, “stairs” and “elevator”. The cave is about 200’ below the level of the highway and the store/entry. Speaking of that being the “largest sea cave”, whilst continuing our drive, we also encountered the “world’s smallest harbor” – Depoe Bay and the “world’s shortest river – the D river. Something about this place seems to breed extremes. For that matter we also found two places claiming to be “Oregon’s Best Kept Secret”. Now it seems to me that either a) they are defeating the purpose of the thing by advertising the fact or b) somebody in their advertising agency is unclear on the concept.

From Lincoln City (where we usually hit the coast after leaving Portland), we continued on 101 slightly inland to Tillamook of cheese fame where we stopped for a bit of lunch at the Blue Moon Café and totally missed the turn off that would have let us see the largest waterfall on the west coast. Most of the drive from Lincoln City to Tillamook is through hills and woods and generally not as varied and interesting as the coastal part of the trip. From Tillamook the road turns around Tillamook Bay and heads back out to the beach and such towns as Brighton before reaching Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia River. Probably the main feature of interest there is the rather sizeable bridge that spans the Columbia – one that Jenny Montaire freely admits to being scared to drive.

We saw it, but had another route in mind for the drive to La Center. Highway 30 runs near the river until it (the river) turns south toward Portland. At that point we used highway bridge that crossed the river into Kelso WA, thence to I-5 and south to La Center thus entirely avoiding Portland’s afternoon rush hour – an advantage not to be sneered at even if the last part of the route does leave something to be desired aesthetically.

Saturday morning we hung out at the Browntaire Country Estate for the last time before the name change. Approximately two weeks after our stay, with Greg’s office shutting down, he’s moving back to Phoenix. Jenny is not. Longish tale and not mine to tell here. Anyway, we arranged to meet Michelle and Harry Howard for dinner (Michelle is the former Michelle DeLude of LASFS) and spent (what an appropriate word) part of the afternoon in the redesigned Powell’s Book City working on our various librarial needs.

Newport Bay Seafood must have been having an off day. The service was slow, our section (semi-outside) was cold while everywhere else wasn’t, and our server often acted as if he didn’t know anything about food, drinks, etc. Still a good time as had by all as the conversation nicely filled in the time gap whilst waiting – and beyond as we took up lobby and sidewalk space for close to an additional hour.

Sunday it was off on the road again for the drive to Bend (in Central Oregon). We opted for the route along the river – boy is that puppy big – and then cutting in by Mt Hood. The odd thing about that part of the drive was that we had about six or eight really beautiful views of the mountain but at none of those points was there a vista point or so much as a wide spot in the road to let us get a picture from. It was really rather frustrating.

Lunch was in the desert town of Madras and both the meal and the town produced no real impression on us. From there it was on to Bend and our traditional Motel 6. (No spa this time, but a very nice and warm pool that allowed us both some good swim time before dinner.) While Kay took a quick afternoon nap, I took the time to check my directions and make sure I could find the golf course with no trouble the next morning. An easy 15 minute drive. We were set.

Monday morning, after checking out, it was over to Lost Tracks golf course – so named because, while working on it, they uncovered an old set of tracks for one of the log trains. It's a pretty course build among pine trees, lava outcroppings, surrounded by a new housing development and featuring several views of The Three Sisters (a set of mountains, not an overlook at a skinny-dipping party. We (Kay walked along again) were paired up with a twosome and it made for a pleasant morning of walking, talking and playing. I'd like a couple or three shots back but was happy with my play – doubly so for not having seen the place before.

Another feature of the course was the large number of small critters running around. Aside from the invasive ground squirrels (one of the other guys had his banana raided and his nutrition bar stolen from the cart and we almost lost a bar out of my bag when we had the pocket unzipped to for a minute while we were standing right there) we also saw rabbits and a marmoset hanging about.

After a bite of lunch back in Bend, it was off again. This time south to Klamath Falls – but with a side trip to Crater Lake. As we'd been told, the road from 97 to the park entrance is 16 miles long, rises about 3000 feet and is nearly dead straight (until a slight turn about a dozen miles in, you can damn near see the whole length of the road). Parts of the park reminded me of scenes out of LotR: The pumice desert would do well as an example of The Brown Lands, and some of the rock formations in the crater itself give the cliff face a look like that I imagine for the mountains around Mordor. Unhappily, due to another fire, there was a lot of smoke in the air and the view of the lake was less than spectacular. Still it was worth the visit and we know it's place to go to with Random. The smoke followed us to Klamath Falls and left us worried about the weather for the next day.

The Running Y resort is built on part of a working cattle ranch along the edge of Klamath Lake (West coasters may have heard about the irrigation vs fish issue with water release from the lake). While the lodge tries to give that rustic look, having both sets of big double doors at the lobby open as you approach doesn't quite go with the image. Probably the nicest surprise about the place was the price of the ancillary stuff. We opted to hit the coffee shop on site for a bite of dinner and discovered that the prices of stuff there was well within reason (\$5 for a sandwich with chips, \$1.50 for a good soda, etc) and the cost in the store and restaurant fit nicely with what you'd have found in the outside world. Among the amenities: Hiking/biking paths, equestrian trails, fishing pond, canoeing, golf (both regular and a full 18-hole putting course), gym, pool, tennis courts and a nice deck to just sit and take in the scenery.

Tuesday morning I went off to golf while Kay went for a trail ride. Both activities were enjoyed by the relevant parties. The course (an Arnold Palmer design) goes along the wetlands and through a stand of pines and is quite scenic. I even had a companionable partner and a good round. What better way to start the day? (Other than...well, you know.)

After lunch we had to pay the piper of the visit and listen to the sales pitch. In all honesty it was pretty low key and I like this arrangement better than the earlier time-share arrangements. But that's evolution for you and it wasn't around 15 years ago. After that, Kay and I ventured onto the putting course for a rather exciting round. The course is the "true golf" equivalent of miniature golf with each hole running from 50 to 150 feet in length over curves and sloped greens. The highlight was on #16 (a "Par 5") that I holed with my first shot. Even if it did mean I had to retract what I had said to Random about a hole-in-one on a Par 5 being impossible.

Dinner was at the on-site restaurant and was quite good (I had the rosemary chicken and Kay a pasta dish) but the kitchen was very slow. At least our waiter kept us apprised and, in fact, arranged for us to have a dessert on-the-house to make up for the delays. Yes, he got a good tip.

Wednesday, after getting most things packed up, I went for the second freebie – a ½ hour massage. Turns out the person did shiatsu style and it had a rather nice effect on the lingering issues from last year's pinched nerve. Methinks I now know what to look for to replace my no-longer-practicing massage therapist. Then 'twas on the road again via 97, around Mt Shasta to I-5 and thus to Redding and across the mountains and home. Dog was fine. Cat was fine. All was well. Except for that slight leak at the bottom of our water heater.

That night we had yet another skunk incident and, as I was leaving early to pick up Random, Kay got the pleasant duty. The kid had a great time at camp and we spent most of the drive home swapping stories from our vacations (at least until he fell asleep – they'd stayed up until about 2 or 3 am the previous night partying).

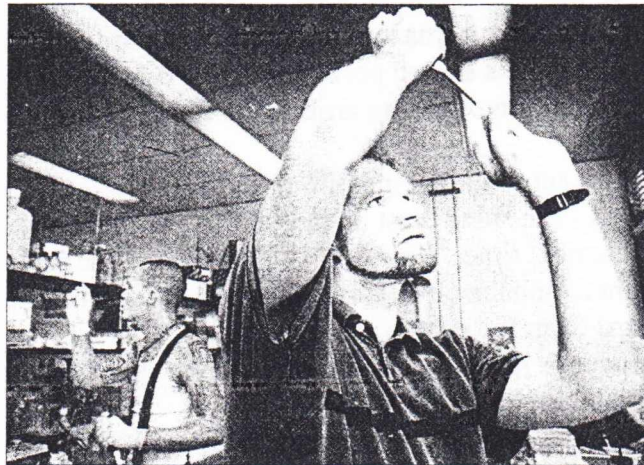
For a bit this last week we had come to the conclusion that it was time to send Cheeky to that big litter box in the sky. Between eating little, losing weight, running at both ends (and often missing the damn litter box) it was looking pretty discouraging. Well the day or so after we had come to that conclusion he's started perking up a bit and any action is now on hold. Whoops, spoke too soon. With the addition of peeing around the house to his other woes, we decided that it was time.

I had the pleasant job of taking him to the vet. (Kay offered, but didn't agree to stay with him) It's been along time since I last had to do this job and don't think I'll get away with another 13+ years before the next time. He purred and rubbed at me right up until the sedative took effect (tranquilize first, then euthanize). Hard as that was, it was almost harder a few days later when we got a sympathy card from the people at the vet's.

For the nonce we haven't gotten a new cat, but Kay is starting to feel deprived so we may do a little looking around in the near future.

That brings us to the now. So I have to stop until it's later and I can tell you if anything interesting happens.

AUF WIEDERSCHREIBEN



FREDRICK D. JOE/THE OREGONIAN

Portland State University microbiologist Ken Stedman (right) spreads *sulfolobus* cells over an "indicator lawn." Some cells may be hosting viruses, in which case Stedman will see a hole in the lawn where cell growth is slowed. Random Diessner, 23, a PSU undergraduate biology student, prepares culture slides for examination.