

hey everybody...
Let's make!
a zine!

WEST 23RD STREET & ELSEWHERE

PRICE: make
me an offer!

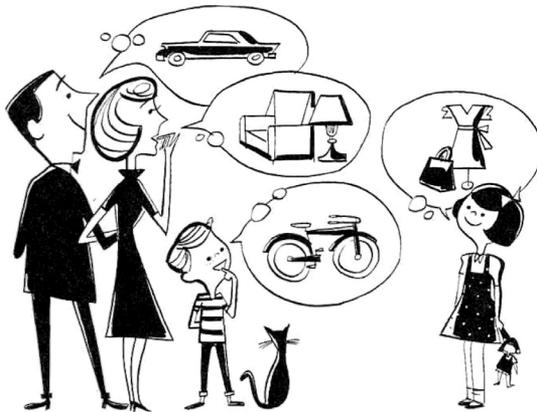


Table of Bontents*

2	52 Years in the Making...	Patrick Brooks
3	The Worm Incident	Kaveh Shafiei
4	Metropolis	Cole Hutto
5	Eden	Nina Hays
6	Lynn's Very, Very Best...	Peggy McDonald
7	Self Portrait	Thomas McDonald
8-9	UFO Sighting	Peggy M
10-11	Family History	Maria Lurie
12-13	Ike on West 23rd Street	Alice Savage
14	Death of a Fingernail	Cyrus Shafiei
15	Davis the Critic	Davis Brooks
16	Two Not-Quite Haikus	Kathy Brooks & Laura Conner
17	Musings	Robert Hughes
18-19	I For One Welcome Our...	Patrick Brooks
20	Inside Frankenstein	Luke Morrison

cover: retro collage & logo by Patrick Brooks

*not a typo, a Monty Python joke



hey everybody... Let's make a zine! Volume 1 Number 1 is published by Inch Thick Publications 2013. Copyrights presumably owned by the contributors but are we really going to go there?

52 Years in the Making... My First Ever Zine

Arguably I am too old at 52 to do something like this but it has been a long time dream of mine that I have never realized. I tried to publish zines when I was in my twenties, thirties and forties but never could get it together and come up with any completed projects. I wanted to do film zines, self-published comix, political zines and zines covering pop culture in general. None ever got much beyond the process of conception. My follow-through is lousy.

The irony is that, having worked with desktop publishing since the early and mid '90s, I have all the technical skills necessary to do an exemplary job. I just realized recently that I have been a Photoshop user for almost twenty years. Where has the time gone?

I'm not sure why, but seeing the Zine Fest Houston 2013 web site about one month prior to the event inspired me to try once more. I figured that a neat project would be to see if I could get friends to submit content and combine that with whatever I came up with under the pressure of that looming deadline of just one month's time. Most things in this zine were created during that time frame.

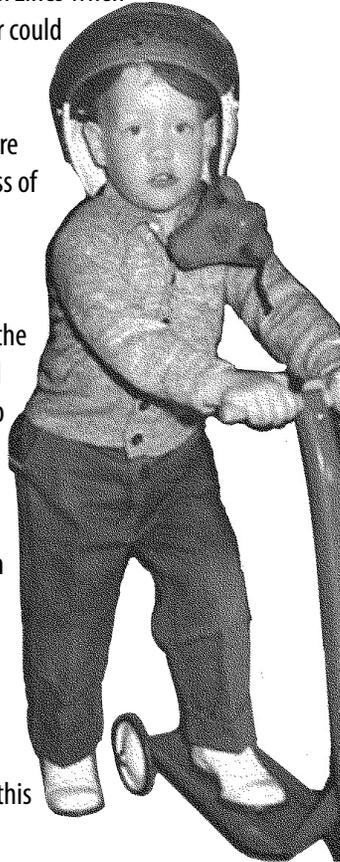
It is kind of like the "make a comic in 24 hours" challenges or possibly NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) only with a zine. It's also kind of like those old Mickey Rooney/Judy Garland "Let's put on a show" movies. "My uncle has an old barn and..."

I hope you enjoy what we came up with and I hope it will inspire you to make one, too. My thanks to all of the contributors and special thanks to my old UH pal, Shane Patrick Boyle, who first told me about Zine Fest and encouraged me to get involved.

Patrick Brooks

Houston, Texas

October 2013



THE WORM INCIDENT

The worm incident was last December when my mom let me invite 5 friends over to our house. We went in the garage and found a box of worms that said "Night Crawlers." We thought it meant glow-in-the-dark at the time. So, we took them and tried to look at them in a dark room. That didn't work, so then we had the idea to put them in water. While we were waiting for someone to fill up the bowl with water, we played with the worms by ripping them apart watching them slide through our fingers. Then Jack (my friend) put part of a worm in his mouth.

When the water was ready we tried again; they didn't glow so then Jack splashed the water on the ground: worms and water. That made a big puddle so then I got my brother and said Jack puked, and he believed it. We also chased my brother with our slimy fingers. That is what happened on that very fun day.

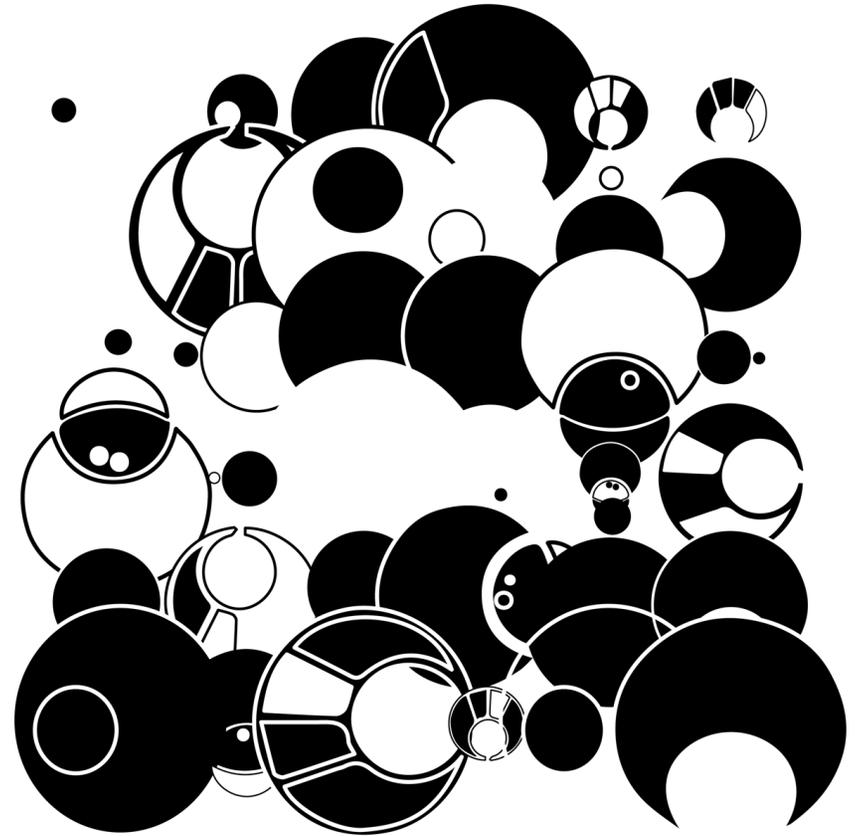
— Kaveh Shafiei



Location: Kaveh lives on West 23rd Street.



Location: Cole lives 31.8 miles from West 23rd Street.



Location: Nina lives .7 miles from West 23rd Street.

Lynn's Very, Very Best, Can't Get Enough, Crowd Pleasing, Never Before Had Any This Good, Make a Bee Line for It, Get the Group Together and Eat Yummy Stuff, Banana Nut Bread

Pre-heat oven to Bake 40-45 minutes at 350 degrees; then reduce heat to 200 degrees, cover bread with foil and cook with foil at 200 degrees for approximately 1 hour.
Grease and flour loaf pans.

Cream: 1 cup sugar
 2 cups flour
 4 ripe bananas
 1 stick butter

Separately combine: 2 well beaten eggs
 1 tsp. baking soda
 1 tsp. vanilla
 1. tsp. almond extract
 1 tsp salt



Combine mixtures and add 1/3 can crushed pineapple (drained) and 1/2 cup chunked walnuts or almonds

Can cover top with almonds or almond slivers or walnuts before cooking.

Enjoy.

This recipe was given to me by Lynn Christiansen who is one of those ladies who works hard all week, looks great all the time, has raised great kids, always knows just the right thing to say or do, is generous to a fault and cooks stuff like this all the time and makes it look effortless. Everyone on the Boy Scout campouts always makes a bee line to Lynn's dishes. My spouse and kids who have been on Boy Scout campouts and tasted her cooking insisted I get this recipe as the best of the best. It was either cook it for them or they were moving to live with Lynn. I did and, even I, came up with a winner.

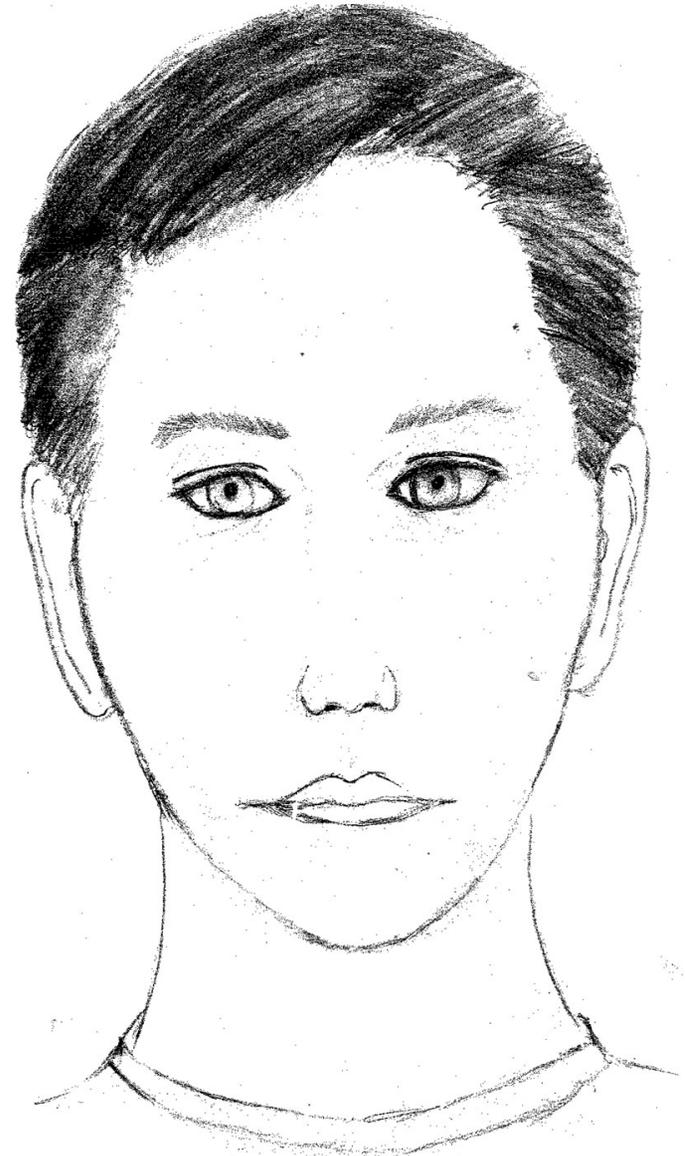
The way to a man's heart is, indeed through his stomach. Make this and get a big stick to make them line up one at a time with no pushing or shoving for a serving.

Submitted by Peggy McDonald



Location: Peggy lives 2.6 miles from West 23rd Street.

Self Portrait by Thomas McDonald



*FIRST SELF
PORTRAIT TEJM 2013*



Location: Thomas lives 2.6 miles from West 23rd Street.

FAMILY HISTORY

by Maria Lurie



Benjamin & Meyer House on Pease

Over 100 years ago, a baby boy named Benjamin was born in Houston. Benjamin was one of nine children. He had seven older siblings and one younger sibling. That's a big family! Do you have a big family, like Benjamin's?

Benjamin had fun by doing things like going to Galveston, where he once found \$5. Five dollars was a lot of money to his family. To help them, Benjamin gave the money to his mother. Years later, when he was a grandfather, Benjamin would talk about how he had helped his mother by giving her the money. Do you do things to help your mom and dad when they need it, like Benjamin did?

Another fun thing Benjamin did was to ride a pony. Here is a picture of Benjamin and his brother Meyer atop a pony in front of their house on Pease Street, in Houston. Have you ever been on a pony in front of your house?

When Benjamin was in high school, he had a teacher who later had a much bigger job. What would be a bigger job than helping kids learn? Being the president of the United States! That's right, Benjamin's teacher was Lyndon B. Johnson, who is also known by his initials: LBJ.

President Johnson was the country's 36th president. He served in office from November 22, 1963 - January 20, 1969. But before he was the president, LBJ taught Benjamin and other students in Houston. Do you think that one of your teachers might someday become the president of the United States? Or maybe even you?

Today, one of Benjamin's grandsons is a teacher, like LBJ once was. He teaches college students at a school called Harvard. Harvard is in Massachusetts and is a very famous school. Another grandson works in radio. When Benjamin was a little boy, his family was too poor to afford a radio. Little Benjamin would have been amazed to know that he would one day have a grandson who works for a radio station, let alone that his descendants would have radios, TVs, computers, tablets, and smartphones. Do you do things that would grandparents would find amazing?

After Benjamin grew up, he worked as a sea captain. Maybe he learned to love the sea from his fun trips to Galveston as a boy. Do you ever do fun things that make you think about jobs you would like to have when you grow up?

Later, after he was a sea captain, Benjamin took on one of the most important jobs anyone can have. Just as important as being the president. Maybe, in fact, even more important. Benjamin became a grandfather. And he did such a good job of it, that his granddaughter wrote this story about him. Because she loves him very much. Do you want to write a story about your grandparents? If so, go right ahead. It will make you feel good.

--- Submitted by Benjamin Lurie's granddaughter, known to him as Miss Giggle Box



UFO SIGHTING

Peggy M

I was coming home from an evening movie with my then boyfriend at about 10PM in my hometown of Waco, Texas. We were tee totalers so no outside chemical influences, I swear. We parked the car in the driveway and were walking across the back yard to the back door when I happened to look up at the stars in the clear black sky.

I had seen the TelStar satellite before. TelStar looked a lot like one medium bright but smallish star except that it moved across the sky from horizon to horizon in what appeared from the ground to be a slow steady arc. TelStar I and II were the first two original communications satellites. They are still up there after 50 years and, in the right circumstances can still be seen. TelStar never turned or stopped. Sometimes the lights from high altitude airliners can be seen from the ground but they appear from the ground to fly slowly, the lights are usually colors and the lights stay in the same formation in a straight line or a long arc if the airliner is turning.

At first I thought I was seeing TelStar or an airliner but then I realized the light I noticed moving very fast was white and was brighter than TelStar or an airliner. In addition, the lone, fast moving light was one of a formation of 3 lights in a triangle shape. The formation of 3 lights would go all together amazingly fast in a track which, if mapped, would be a lot of acute triangles and then the three-light formation would suddenly stop dead still. The formations and the individual lights

that ventured out from the formations turned corners in abrupt vectors rather than turning in an arc such as an airliner. One light would break away from the three and go in zing, zing lines all over the sky with abrupt direction changes and then, re-join the other two lights at a standstill. Those three lights would zip around the sky on their own in formation and, sometimes, join a formation of two other three light formations to form 9 lights. Sometimes the three, three light formations would zing from here to there to here in individual three light formations. Most often they flew 3 together but frequently one would break from its formation and go whizzing across the sky, stop, and instantly go back the way it came.

I told my boyfriend "Are you seeing what I am seeing?"

He said "Yes."

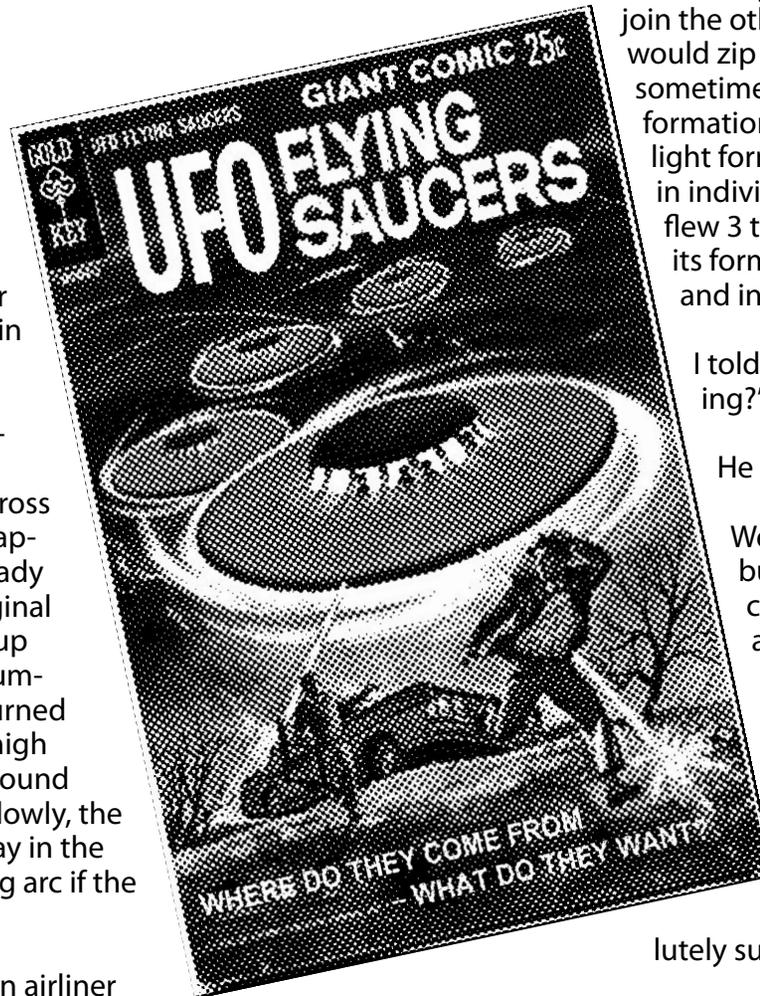
We wondered whether we should call someone but whom to call? There was an air force base close by. The police? Who would believe us and even if they did, what could they do.

So we watched the amazing lights for about 45 minutes until we got tired and went inside.

Every night sky I have seen in the decades since, I have looked for them again. I have never seen them again. But. I did, for absolutely sure see them that one time.

A sight like that stays with you.

They were certainly unidentified, they were flying and, I'll bet they were also objects 



Location: Peggy lives 2.6 miles from West 23rd Street.

Ike on West 23rd Street by Alice Savage

One of the eeriest moments of the great hurricane of 2008 was right before Ike swept through Houston. In the last hours of daylight, the normally busy street outside our house was suddenly empty. The light was yellow where it wasn't purple, and the tops of tall trees were starting to sway in a light breeze. Pulled outside by the strange light, we went for a walk.

Earlier, families all up and down West 23rd had been nailing plywood over windows. Marty had arrived with an electric drill to help Masoud. Patrick and Russ gave us advice on our new generator. I had spent the day filling containers with water, digging out the camping stove and sorting candles.

Our neighborhood, usually teeming with life, looked like a ghost town in the yellow dusk. The grey street was empty. Boards covered windows and even doors. All our cars were in garages. We looked up at the ancient Pecan tree over our small bungalow, then at the sycamores, the giant oaks, and redbuds, and suddenly the trees did not seem so benign. A breeze had begun to flutter in their tops. Did they know what was coming?

It was so quiet.

And then in the middle of the night, Ike came and did his damage.

The next morning dawned wet and windy. Somehow, we had slept and the trees were still upright, but outside the window was a completely different landscape. The yard, the street, the sidewalks, everything was waist-high in green debris.

Neighbors began wandering out of their houses in waterproof clothing.

"Are you okay?"

"Yes, are you?"

"Power's out I guess."

"Yeah."

Patrick appeared. He was cradling a baby squirrel and looking for Pedialyte. He thought he might be able to save it and other babies that had come down when the branches broke and fell.

Julia and Gina, got out their big white truck and began hauling away overturned trees with Julia's father. Some of the men helped clear the road so that there was a narrow twisting track heading off towards Yale. Looking up, we could see great holes in the canopy that had not been there before and the wet grey sky beyond.

For the next few weeks, we camped in our homes and explored the new terrain. The boys were delighted. They had access to what had once been high branches twenty feet above their heads, and they spent happy hours roaming in packs, climbing

into branches and exploring the root balls. The moms stayed home with their doors open to let in the breeze. At lunchtime we gathered for sandwiches just like a 1950s television show.

Our neighbors, Molly, Jim and Monica, ran an electrical cord over the fence so we could share their electricity from a natural gas line. We kept the refrigerator and one lamp going, which made our house a hub for meals.

And we had many candlelight feasts that week. Masoud's niece came over with king salmon from her brother-in-law's restaurant. The Tates joined us for lamb from our freezer. There were potlucks with the Brooks family, the Hajovsky-Gregories and Julia and Gina, almost all of it cooked on the grill just outside the kitchen window.

Two weeks after Ike petered out somewhere up in Canada, the power came on at Travis Elementary, Helms, at Lone Star College, and on West 23rd Street. We went back to work, and the kids went back to school. Our little hiatus from the busy world had come to an end.



Location: Alice lives on West 23rd Street. Obviously.

Death of a Fingernail by Cyrus Shafiei

The solid metal sledgehammer swung down with a clang as it smashed my finger between the pipe, and solid lead. A millisecond passed by in ten minutes as the hammer fell to the wet grass. Already blood was beginning to lead for the crack that ran through my nail. I stared at it, wondering why I wasn't feeling anything.

Then it hit me. A massive wave of pain that forced me to begin sprinting around the yard, spewing blood and high pitched screams across our green lawn. My dad looked over to see a screeching child waving his hand everywhere and blood all over the freshly mowed grass. With a shout he ran at me and told me to calm down. At the age of 7 this wasn't very successful but he was able to grab my arm and take me inside our yellow, soon to be orange, house.

My head was blank as I tried to comprehend the pain I was in. Without even knowing it I was beginning to sob. Screaming to the world about how much it hurt. I took a second from screaming to see how bad the damage was and almost threw up when I saw my nail hanging by a thread. Underneath was a mass of red, wet gore and blood. The skin around my ex-nail was slick with the pulsing blood coming from underneath my nail. With another wail, we were able to get the bathroom and my dad threw open cabinets looking for gauze to stop the bleeding.

Within seconds we had my finger wrapped in 3 inches of layered cloth, already turning red my dad went looking for more telling me over and over again about how I should hold my hand over my head, and put pressure on it. After 20 minutes of holding my hand above my head. I was able to calm down enough to turn my screaming wails into a more subdued moan. My dad began unwrapping the bandage from my wound and turned a little green when he saw what damage had been done.

My finger was red with gore, and my finger nail had a huge crack through the direct center of it. My finger almost looked deflated and I couldn't help but gag a little as I looked at my horrific wound.

Hours later my mom came home from yoga, feeling calm and relaxed, to find a blood spattered yard and sidewalk, and a note on the door that said, "Masoud took Cyrus to the hospital, we are watching Kaveh at our house."



Location: Cyrus lives on West 23rd Street.

Davis The Critic



Pie in the Sky

Local neighborhood pie bakery/restaurant Pie in the Sky has been a favorite of many people including our critic. But most of the customers were shocked that owner/baker, Marlene Stubler, has given up the Heights location. But she is still offering Pie in the Sky pies at Table 19. Even though Heights Pie in the Sky is no more, there is a location in Conroe but that is too far for our critic. The all-powerful critic rates the pecan and chocolate silk as the best pies. Overall, our critic gives it four stars for the pies and the restaurant.



Torchy's Tacos

Local Mexican taco restaurant, Torchy's Tacos, recently came to the Heights. Our critic visited it and gave it four stars and commented that the salsa was extremely addicting. He said it was very much worth going to and the very large line that was there confirms that. Our food critic will be sure to stop by again and advises you to also.



Location: Davis the critic lives on West 23rd Street.

Two Not-Quite Haikus

*The yellow-crowned night heron
Visits the school
On rainy days*

- Kathy Brooks



*Brooks family in situ
Warmth wrapped around them
Pets find respite*

- Laura Conner



Location: Kathy lives on West 23rd Street. Laura lives 12.4 miles from West 23rd Street.

Musings by Robert Hughes

Hiker

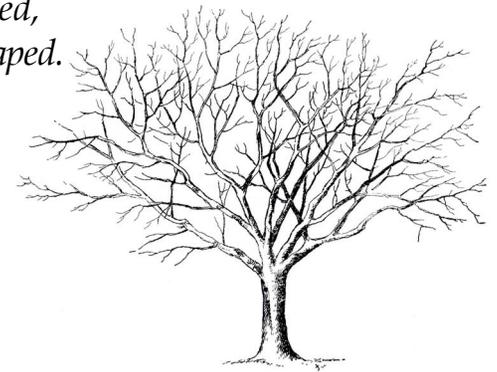
*The rutted road curves from sight,
a look behind, the same.
Future and past alike vanish in leafy tunnels.
Walking curve upon curve,
in the sunlit brilliance of now,
I wonder.*

Autumn, 1992

*A naked maple
Standing in a puddle of yellow leaves
Bare to the bitterness to come
With no thought of spring*

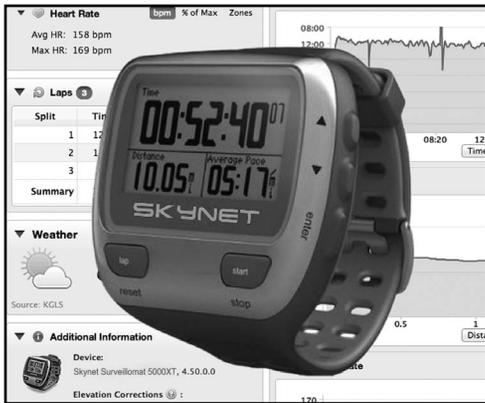
sic transit gloria mundi

*Thoughts are like vapors:
Unless they are condensed into writing
They will be lost forever.
Alas, my kettle has boiled,
And the vapors have escaped.*



Location: Robert lives on West 23rd Street.

I For One Welcome Our New GPS-enabled Training Device Overlords



Some Thoughts on Running and Technology

by Patrick Brooks

Last year I was running out of time to train for the MS 150 so I decided that, even though different muscle groups are used in biking vs. running, I'd start seeing if I could

run four times a week to build up stamina and endurance as quickly as possible. Since then, I have been consistently running minus a few periods of injury and busyness. By my standards this is a huge increase in fitness activity.

I have been enjoying the running and it is very easy to do as we have a very nice bike path at the end of our alley that leads all the way downtown. I typically run an average of 2.75 to 3 miles on an easy day and push it closer to 4-5 miles when I am able. The end of a run leaves me winded, very calm, and feeling like I did something worthwhile. As a little kid I ran around all over the place but by the time I was in high school I don't think I could even run one mile without a herculean effort even though I was anything but overweight. I think my body has long *wanted* me to run and it seems to be rejoicing in my new pastime.

I am pretty slow and am passed by younger folk and occasionally older folk fairly frequently but I don't care. I'm only trying to increase *my* fitness and not to compete with them. People often ask me if I'm training for something and I have to tell them "Nope" that it's just for general fitness.

After I had been doing this for some time, my former coworker, Dermot, gave me a GPS-enabled fitness watch as a parting gift when he left our company. This device has utterly revolutionized my running. I can see metrics for my distance, time, elevation (not an issue in flat Houston), calories burned, and heart rate sliced and diced in numerous ways. I can

compare old workouts with newer ones and track my fitness progress over time. It has proven to be a great motivator to keep improving my fitness.

There's but one hitch. By default I have to upload my data to the vendor's web site to do the analysis. There is software to do this locally on your PC but I have not yet done that and I suspect that most people won't because they are comfortable with sharing their data online via social media.

Getting too comfortable with this monitoring of our activity strikes me as a troubling trend. Yet another avenue where social sharing enables surveillance by "The Man" - be he of the corporate or NSA variety.

In the 1959 British film *I'm Alright Jack*, much of the plot revolves around the union's vehement denial of management subjecting the factory workers to "time & motion" studies of the efficiency of their work. GPS-enabled devices and their ilk have the potential to be the ultimate "time & motion" monitors in the workplace and it's probably only a matter of time before they start to become a standard method of tracking workers and analyzing their work.

The very morning that I am writing this piece, NPR's Marketplace ran a segment mentioning that a food blogging company "encouraged" its workers to wear a device that tracked their motion. This device, the Jawbone Up, is worn by the workers 24 hours a day and allows their co-worker to "... see what time her coworkers fell asleep and woke up, their exercise routines, how many steps they've taken and when throughout the day." Activity trackers like this are not actually GPS-enabled but they are capable of comprehensive monitoring of a person's daily activity.

British grocery store Tesco's warehouse workers are already wearing activity trackers to monitor their performance. If *I'm Alright Jack's* union shop steward Fred Kite (Peter Sellers) were around, he'd call a general strike.

I'd like to say a lot more on this topic but... I've gotta run. 



INSIDE FRANKENSTEIN

by Luke Morrison



Location: Luke lives 0.6 miles from West 23rd Street.

