

*Winnah and still champeen, with Jonathan Pattishall,
Jeremy Monroe, C. Joelle Groshek, Erik Tate,
the art of Peter Healy, our comics and The Dream Journal.*

The Blotter

May 2011

MAGAZINE

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Front cover, "Next Batch," and page
3 "Chasing my tail," by Peter Healy.
See centerfold for more.

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"Perspective"

Well, folks, here is our Eighth Anniversary issue. I'd like to say it's spectacular, but that would not be keeping things in perspective. Spectacular has certain implications and an actual definition, and this issue is IMNSHO very, very good, but not spectacular. It won't replace your shattered love life, nor pick you up and out when you fall into a well. It will not start your car when you inadvertently drain the battery by charging your I-Phone. It won't help you fight off the onset of malaria. It won't spontaneously burst into flame. It will, however assist in overcoming your general malaise, and if rolled into a tube can block out ambient light so you can see the stars at night. It can even help put off early onset Adult Boredom. It may seem to vibrate eerily, and if you bury it deep deep deep in the earth and leave it for a long period of time, it will turn into coal. Not glossy, not fifty pages, not studded with celebrity photographs and their drunken antics. Just our usual sixteen pulp pages, half of them full color. As the man says, *it's good stuff, Hilts.*

Ah, well, you might think. Or you might say, now wait just a minute there, buster. It is momentous and for a number of reasons, and that number is eight. Eight years! Can I get an amen? The Blotter is eight years old!

Alright, at the risk of jinxing everything, let's wrap our heads around this. Eight is a pretty big deal. At eight, you begin to question some of your parent's decisions, like why only two Oreos for snack and not, say, eight? You are old enough to try out for PAL baseball or test for your orange belt in Karate, but you still don't want to bat fast-pitch or get socked by anyone. (When I was eight I fell in love with Linda H., the lifeguard at the pool, and jumped in during swimming lessons without permission and had to sit on the bench the whole time.) Eight is headstrong confidence without authority. Eight is attitude without height, running faster than Mommy can, and crossing at the light (but still holding hands.) Eight is bedtime, but if you're quiet you can read for a while with the light on. Eight is the most kids you can invite to your party, the perfect number of hotdogs in a pack, the symbol for infinity tipped on its head! In hoops, eight is "elite." Eight candles on a birthday cake are enough to warm a kitchen when the power goes out because you were playing with the light switch and blew a fuse. Eight is a homophone! We love homophones! And frankly, eight is almost ten, and ten is a cheapskate's dozen.

We recently finished putting our author/artist database on the website. That's eight years of stories, poems, pictures and essays; eight years of confidence placed in us by our talented contributors. That's a lot of stuff to read, from a magazine that was never intended to be

more than a sit-down per issue. Just a little something-something to stuff in your back pocket when you're heading to the coffee shop. And this momentous issue is something we're proud of – not spectacular, perhaps, but still thoughtful, solidly entertaining, and worthy of some of your time.

For your edification, here are eight other eight year old institutions (and one to grow on):

The Beatles.

Our webmaster's Topsiders (say that five times, fast, why don't you).

Lenin's "'ism" in the Soviet Union.

My sentence in Telephone Technical Support (also known as "forever" in dog years).

Lindsey Lohan's career, if you will ignore the oxymoron.

My last moustache (now, that's the title of a NY Times bestseller if ever I heard one. Feel free to poach).

Jack Kerouac's initial search for a publisher.

The beaver dam blocking the stream at the bottom of the hill.

How long I played the oboe. Only seven years, but so badly it seemed like eight.

So, from Marty and the Gang of Eight, our greatest thanks to you all.

Garry - chief@blotterrag.com



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The Blotter Magazine, Inc. (again, a 501(c)3 non-profit) is an education concern. Our primary interest is the furthering of creative writing and fine arts, with the magazine being a means to that end. We publish in the first half of each month and enjoy a free circulation throughout the Southeast and some other places, too. Submissions are always welcome, as are ad inquiries.

Subscriptions are offered as a premium for a donation of \$25 or more. Send check or money order, name and address to The Blotter Subscriptions, 1010 Hale Street, Durham, NC 27705. Back issues are also available, 5 for \$5. Inquire re. same by e-mail: chief@blotterrag.com.



CAUTION

Pushing the rather yucky-tasting envelope of Jack Armstrong the All-American-boyism since 1983 or thereabouts.

"It's Not Erotica"

by Jonathan Pattishall (followed directly by two short poems of his)

Some assholes say that certain women "exude" sex. I don't ever say that. A girl who's really sexy, who is sex, doesn't "exude" it ??? she sweats it. It's a body fluid that rolls off her chin, her collarbone, her breast, creeping down and settling on the thirsty skin of her nipple. It arcs its residue over her curves like the cupping motion that your hand so naturally assumes as you reach to wipe it away and fondle its canvas, the world's most pleasurable and peaceful exchange of two birds for one stone. Academics, tenure-track wankers in bow ties, might "exude" things when they have sex. But sexy women sweat it, and it's salty and wet. It's not erotica, but it is erotic.

This girl *is* sex. She pours it like

one giant sweat gland on the upper inside of Aphrodite's thigh. Her whole body is a gushing forth of its contents, an open container mocking the pointlessness of brims. Every movement, every turn of the head or the wiggling hips shakes loose a little bit of her hidden self. What's tucked away is suddenly revealed, an echo of the ancient apocalypse of the misjudged Onan. Sex inside becomes desire outside. Desire hops the channel to me and becomes craze, madness, singleness of purpose. It's a funnel of her desire directed through me right back at her. She is *self-reflexive sex*. The fantasy of kinky grammarians and linguists, perspiring in between satin sheets. Sticky fluids and salty fluids. Sweaty bodies orbiting and col-

liding. Erotic jujitsu. Or galaxies converging in the sauna of the universe.

The beach is a sauna, or feels like a sauna. She glistens in the oven light of the sun, glazed with an alloy of sweat and sunscreen. Dried sea-salt speckles her back, her ass, the back of her thighs. A crystal necklace broken over her sleeping body, or dressing on a coy dish. She feels my stare even though her eyes are closed. Her eyes are closed even though her legs are open. She feels the contours of my libidinous thought. My urgings. The imminent collapse of my red giant under the weight of unfulfilled desires. The stress of reflexive or intensive construction lacking its necessary and completing pronoun: myself. If I reach out and caress her inner thigh, or brush her inner lips, will I save myself? *Will I myself save myself?*



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IN: "RAD BROMANCE!"
BY CHRIS FOX

<p>"LEE MY MAN-IT'S FRIDAY NIGHT! YOU READY TO SEIZE THE BROMENT?!"</p> 	<p>"I HAVE HERE IN MY HOUSE THE DIRECTOR'S GUT OF WEEKEND AT BERNIE'S 2!"</p> 	<p>"IT CAME FREE WITH A PIZZA I ORDERED LAST WEEK! YOU DOWN?!"</p> 
<p>"MAN, AS MUCH AS I LOVE DEAD GUYS IN SUNGLASSES, I CAN'T MAKE IT! I HAVE A DATE WITH A PERFORMANCE ARTIST I MET IN SOHO. SORRY!"</p> 	<p>"BASTARD! YOU NEED TO STOP DRINKING ALL THAT HATERADE! AND FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I HAVE A DATE, TOO!"</p> 	<p>"WITH A CAN OF VEG-ALL!"</p> 

In the blazing parking lot outside of the pier and restaurant she binds me with ropes and tells me *it'll be more fun this way*. I want to object. It's the middle of tourist season. *F-U-N*, she says. She tightens the knots, savors the strain on my face, locks the subject away for later when she's alone in her bedroom. I can't move and she likes it that way. She steps back and slips out of her bikini, tan lines mapping her body in golden white lace. Skin of bronze, lace of white gold. Pink nipples, unusually hard in the heat. She's pouring buckets of sex now, reeking of it. Now she's melting, liquefying before my very eyes. Her pure sex is all coalescing, condensing at parking lot dew point. Now she's a wet puddle on the ground at my feet. By the time someone comes and unwraps me, she's already evaporated, a cloud of steam dissipating in the late morning heat.



“Runaway Truck Ramp”

-John 3:12

One day,

Sure as you're born,

A saving grace from his hand

Will solidify this dormant miracle,

From mound of earth to launch pad,

Propelling some lucky trucker into eternity.

“If the Hindenburg Had Exploded Atop the Eiffel Tower...”

The rigid dirigible *gefickt*
by the iron prick of Paris.

What grand historical irony,
if somewhat sadistic sodomy,

this Franco-Prussian reach around.

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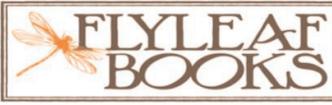
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"Fever"

by Jeremy Monroe

Beneath the light bulb
Hanging just above adult
Head height in the center of the kitchen,
The white, porcelain-topped
Kitchen table with the drawer in one side.

Upon the table, a too-small, white, bath towel

Spread upon the white porcelain-topped kitchen table.
And upon the white bath towel
The white naked body of a boy so small
The towel contained him completely.

Surrounding the table,
Mom,
Aunt Grace, his step-mom,
Uncle Bob, his dad,
And in my shadow mind, perhaps wishfully,
My father.

Where were the other five
Of us, the other children? Where were the chairs?
There must have been chairs.

Even, hushed voices echo
In the hard, hollow room.
A thermometer is turned
Between thumb and index finger



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And yields mercury's message.

The black telephone in the dining room,
I know it is there, unused.

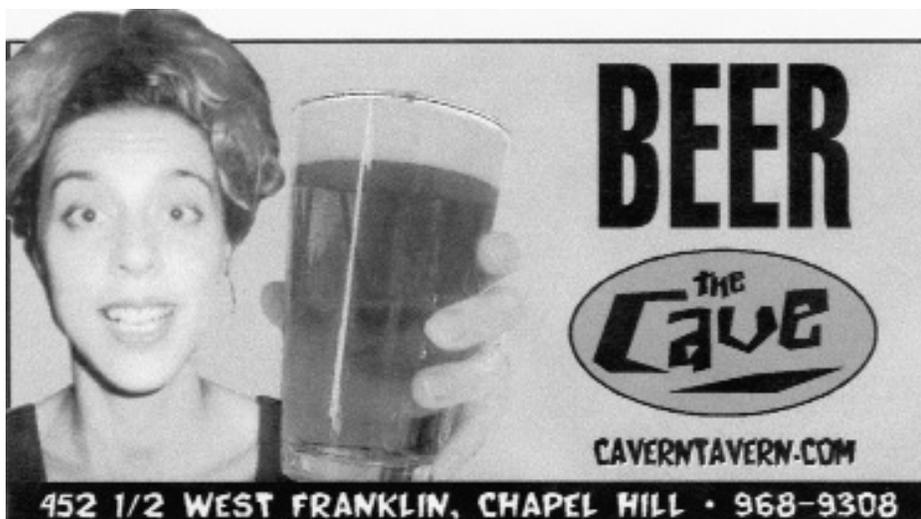
Ice from somewhere.
Cold water drips and puddles under the table,
Black water puddles under grown-up shoes.
Cool, damp white cloth on his forehead,
Turned once when warmed, then rinsed,
Cooled and replaced. Ice packs on his body.

I sit in a corner next to the icebox,
Back to the wall, knees up to my chest,
Arms lock knees in place.
I can't be seen in the quiet shadow beneath
The black back window.

Cool, gritty, foot-worn linoleum
Beneath my bare feet.

Life and death before me,
Love against evil.
Black and white.

Shallow, quiet breaths, out of the way
Watching, waiting, wishing they fought for me.







Peter Healy -

Enniskillen: Co. Fermanagh: UK

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<http://73scribbles.blogspot.com>

“Benefits”

This guy I used to know had a
friends-with-benefits arrangement.

They'd meet every Wednesday at the
Radisson Copley,

dine in the restaurant
on filet mignon with garlic mustard sauce,
and a cabernet
before going upstairs.

To hear him tell it, you'd think
he was
James Bond,

very proud of himself.

But he was living beyond his means:
the room was \$325 a night and
the meal was another \$150.

He mentioned that he was
considering
ending it,
that he couldn't afford it any longer,

so I suggested that he scale it back instead of
wining and dining at a
posh hotel.

He wouldn't hear of it.

“But you'd be giving up MARATHON sex if you ended it!” I told him.

“...and a world-class Cabernet if I scaled it back!”

I'm a beer man, myself, so I couldn't relate.

I guess it's just what one gets
used to.

"Recess"

Fourth grade during recess, I chased Belinda Emory around the playground until one day I caught her by the arm,

tightened my grip as she tried to pull away and my fingernails dug into her and drew blood,

at which we were both surprised. She started crying and ran for the teacher while I pleaded with her not to.

That afternoon, before anyone could get on with their lessons, the teacher made me stand at the front of the class and offer a public apology to Belinda, amidst giggles from classmates as I choked back sobs.

Then the teacher made me repeat the apology because she said that it wasn't loud enough to be heard.

Apologies have always been difficult after that.

I started biting my fingernails again following the incident, and I still bite my fingernails more often than not.

DRAGIN



"The Space Between"

by C. Joelle Groshek

I am
two b e t w e e n
places.

No place is mine, my home.

I am the synapse,

The gap
two b e t w e e n
front teeth,

The cleavage
your b e t w e e n
breasts,

The ocean
two b e t w e e n
continents

The silence
two b e t w e e n
languages.

I am the *ZERO* in the quotient.

I inhabit no place.
I am the absence of place.
But, I am not

NOTHING. To the contrary—I am *EVERYTHING.*

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Three different places:

I'm sitting in an old Yankee Stadium-upper deck-view blocked by a pillar bad seat in a classroom of grad-school literature, studying some author of the fifties whose name escapes me because I haven't done the reading. I have the book in front of me – title all initials in that way that the we're so smart do to make the working at it as hard as we can feel less so. My callous-mates have taken notes, know what's the haps and without meaning to, one of them makes me out to be a misplaced idiot-child by handing me the pages torn out of her copy of the book, because her notes are on them. "Go make a copy," she says.

In the copy-room, there is a line, of course. One man is running illegal copies of a piece of sheet music. One is stitching up the waistband of his trousers, and he turns to explain how to do such a fix without creating a new stress-point. "One doesn't want to put all of the weight of one's belly on a single piece of thread," he says.

Now I'm out in the woods, daytime, springtime (I can tell because the leaves on the ground are quieter and the daylight reaches all the way to the ground in more places – where there are deciduous they have not sprouted their new canopy of shade.) Looking down I see an odd sight – an antler from a buck, seven points visible and one point nibbled off by the sharp teeth of mice. Creatures starved by winter's lack of minerals will eat anything that has the salt or calcium and the minute that the buck dropped this trophy, it became food. I want to pick it up and save it, but for what purpose? I will never be that hungry.

G. O. - cyberspace



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Best In Show

by Phil Juliano



CONTRIBUTORS

Our friend **Jonathan Pattishall** is an insufferable absolutist with an insatiable desire to contradict pre-tension pretentiously. He enjoys appropriating bible verses into basketball contexts, quoting Milton's satan to increase arousal, and general sin, temptation, and wrath. He longs to return to his birthplace and heart home, New Jersey, and he thinks sea turtles should be used to solve world hunger. And the energy crisis.

Jeremy Monroe was born in Chicago in 1939 and lived there through high school. Twice married and twice divorced, he is the father of a son in Chicago, IL and a daughter in Raleigh, NC. He holds a BA from Linfield College, McMinnville, OR (1993) and a JD from the University of North Dakota (1996). He is a former banker, attorney, highschool janitor, and credit union clerk, in that order. He says reading and writing has always, for 20 or 30 years anyway, been his true vocation. Poetry became his first love when, as a janitor, he rode herd over high school kids during lunch periods at a Raleigh high school. He read them poetry to calm things down - and it worked! He says he was only called to the principal's office once over his choice of poetry. "Fever" comes from a childhood memory.

He retired in 2010 and lives near Ajijic, Mexico in the Lake Chapala area (about an hour's drive from Guadalajara) where he works on his writing and participates in an active and supportive writers group. His fiction has been published in El Ojo Del Lago, an English language monthly in the Lake Chapala and Puerto Vallarta areas.

Peter Healy was born in Rural Fermanagh, Northern Ireland in 1973. His international background; born in Ireland, degree in illustration from recognized UK university, and a living, working experience in Amsterdam has exposed him to multiple cultures. It has diversified his style as an artist and his perspective on life and society as a person. He has a diverse skill set and manages to express many types of art through multiple styles and media. Peter is an idealist, and a professional and has the ability to find a fine balance between art expression as an artist, and as an art professional. In his children's book illustrations he manages to bring individual, personality to each character with bright colors and thoughtful expressions.

Erik Tate of Burlington, NC writes, "'I'm a huge fan of Allen Ginsberg and the Beat Generation poets and writers. I enjoy abstract photography. I'm serving notice to the literary world that I'm currently trying to find a publisher for my book of poetry.'" Don't leave him hanging, folks.

C. Joelle Groshek is a wandering soul, flitting from one place that strikes her fancy to the next. Heralding from rural central Wisconsin, where the land is flat, the rivers deep and cool, and the forests lush, she spent roughly a year living in Eastern Europe. From her bases in Poland and Hungary, she also traveled to ten other countries, dodged riots in Athens, cursed Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull while stranded in Rome, volunteered on an organic farm in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps, and taught English in frosty Northern Poland. Now, her lust for life has led her to a small organic, biodynamic farm in Pittsboro, North Carolina. There, she weeds, plants, and foliar-feeds vegetables and flowers by day and clackety-clacks on her keyboard by night. Also, she firmly believes that a handful of chocolate chips and walnuts are a perfectly good substitute for a bona fide chocolate bar.

Chris Fox cracks me the heck up. And that's saying something.

Phil Juliano and **Michael Cole** used to be the one-two combination for the St. Louis Cardinals, followed by this guy who couldn't get the ball over the plate. A lot like Spahn-and-Sain-and-pray-for-rain. It was "Phil and Cole then save-your-soul." You know, or something like that.

Final Tidbits: I dunno, it's just not the kind of spring I was expecting. Everyone's all down and messing around with their taxes and not spending any time smelling the flowers. Well, then, that's enough of that - you have to go outside and take a snack and a sippy-drink and go see what the sunshine is doing. If you need something good to read - and who doesn't - go get a copy of Ron Cooper's "Purple Jesus." Funny? Have I ever lied to you? He's coming to Chapel Hill in June - to Flyleaf to do a reading and I expect to see you everyone there with clean shirts and smiling faces. We've been selling books and paintings and prints for our first release "Tree" for a couple of months but I still haven't seen your pre-order. Lots of fine people are helping with the project and we want you to do your part. Talk it up, think about who you like giving gifts to, and go on over to paintbrushforest.com or pencilpointmountain.com and do it. While you're mulling that over, consider a donation to The Blotter (www.blotterrag.com) as your good deed for the year! And visit your local independent bookstore, they have hot cocoa! I don't want to hear any of you saying, "I'm bored." Got it? Good!

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