Research Scientist Prepares for the Olympics

Amongst strong denials that he toys with the military, our photographer caught an expat-Aussie, Georgia State University scientist preparing for the downtown Olympic commute. ‘Sure I can tele-commute’ he said ‘but sometimes you just need to go in to the office, and I intend to get there.’

The FOTS (Forceful Olympic Transit System) shown above is a beautiful example of swords to plowshares via modern weapons research. It was intended to cut people down like a scythe, but only ever succeeded in hurting the operator. Better than any horn or intimidating pneumatic suspension system the FOTS is due for volume production after these trials in Hotlanta.’ I doubt if I’ll have to use it, much,” he said,’and it may also come in handy come the end of term, it’s an excellent way to attract a students attention.’

Lan Chile: best in-flight service, free wine.

A recent survey has shown that Chilean national airline, Lan Chile, has the best dressed service staff. ‘They are a proud people’, one recent traveller said, ‘I liked the individually tailored outfits the cabin staff wore, and the wine service was really constant.’

His companion pointed out what can be done if you remove draconian labor laws that do not allow employers to fire people for being ugly.

As for safety, we were assured that if they can not see the mountain tops, they never try to land. This will upset non-Spanish speakers as it can appear as if you are making several strafing runs at the airport accompanied by important sounding Spanish announcements from the pilot. Fortunately, however, this usually only results in a long delay and more free wine.

The food is cheap and plentiful if not always health conscious, pizza topped with fried egg is a favorite. The streets have a very European feel, apart from the guards on the prison walls. Transport is the taxi. The best report of travel in Chile we heard was from a foreign astronomer who said that ‘we went for a 25 minute flight and we still got a great meal and lots of free wine.’

San Francisco

Theo was counted among the cool in the astronomy set by winging an invite to the 80th birthday conference of Dr. Charlie Townes, inventor of the laser, at Berkley University. The January weather, freezing everywhere else, produced only one squall in an otherwise mild and sunny week. That the squall occurred during the one afternoon the astronomers had off was counted as only one of the slapstick moments of the jaunt.

Another such moment was the perplexation of the conference members when the motivational business meeting being held in the next room burst into a lusty verse of corporate moral boosting to the tune of the Flintstones theme. The next jolly jape was getting a gang of the lads (and the lone wife)
out to dinner, at the same table and doing maths with the check. I’ll leave the scene with the calculator to your imagination. At the grand occasion of the testimonial dinner itself, several of the guests were perplexed to find their decidedly casual gear was a tad out of place.

The Lone Wife Ranger jumped on subways and ‘buses to peruse the Haight-Ashbury district and rolled around in the opshops and atmosphere like a dog in a cowpat. On the squall day our heroes WALKED up and down those famous San Fran hills through Chinatown to the wharf and snubbed the crab because they weren’t alive. They perused Alcatraz and rode a trolley back up and down the hills to the bookish Berkeley and the lovely marina their hotel was next to.

“All in all we decided San Fran reminded us of our own dear Sydney and that there were worse people to hang out with than these gentle giants of the astronomical field” they enthused. Finally to prove Theo’s status in this celestial cloister, upon meeting Dr. Great

Cacophony Corner: Road to Ruin Band members visit Nashville.

Great inroads were made into the music scene this month when the singer/songwriting team Cruise and ten Brummelaar bought “Cakewalk Professional,” a software package that allows them to play the keyboard straight in to the Midi and have it come out as a full score from the printer. They can then edit notes using the mouse and when it’s played back each part can use a different synthesized sound. The ditty duo said “We’re not sure why we have it as, actually, neither of us can read music.”

This techno-leap came after the doodling duo toured Nashville with their Mum and Dad. After wowing them in Asheville and Pigeon Forge (home of role model Dolly Parton), they were booked for a cultural exchange with the Cherokee Indians who, due to an unfortunate calendar mixup, were closed for the season. Mum and Dad reportedly enjoyed the trip but complained to this reporter “They kept lying to us. We couldn’t tour the The Tobacco Museum because they couldn’t open the doors to the car or the museum because the war on poverty was being fought there and when they promised a tour of the Parthenon and the statue of the Greek goddess Athena they took us to a park and just showed us a model, I mean it was very nice, but even the cafe was just a man with a bit of shaved ice and some cordial.”

Nashville itself was a triumph, performing at The Country & Western Hall of Fame, The Grand Ole Opry and several bars and line dancing honkytonks where Mum & Dad showed up the greenhorns by hoofing it in style at the Wild Horse Saloon. They ended up at the RCA recording Studio surrounded by gawking tourists where “there was a bit of a mixup and you can’t hear us on the recording because of the noise the tourgroup made, so we are making our own studio next year and maybe the Sallie and Theo Times will be a multimedia event!”

Stop Press, Late News

After talks with their immigration advisor today Theo now has a ‘too valuable to the project’ visa. Unfortunately this is also a ‘you can not get the stamp inside the USA and you gotta run madly around Frankfurt getting one, and your wife most certainly can not work’ type visa. ‘We used to try and understand these things’, they said,’ but it was keeping us up at night.’ All in Georgia hope the visa thing works out or there’ll be an expensive (but not unwelcome) fly-by Sydney. Sallie may work again, but now it means GREEN CARD!!!

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Ed,

A month ago the scuttlebutt on Messrs. ten Brummelaar & Cruise was their return to Sydney. Now their upcoming silly season hol seems to put that rumor on the fairytale list. Can you throw any light on this murky morass.?

Consortium for the uninformed (i.e. those not on email)

Dear Consortium,

Here is the situation as it stands this June. There was great hope amongst the punters that the Australian Government, in it’s finite wisdom, would decide to accept the offer to join ESO (the European Southern Observatory) thereby creating new opportunities in Oz. Due to one thing and another, including a change in said government, not only has this not happened but all University budgets have been cut 12.5%. Let’s hear it for the clever country. While they claim that their plan is to return to Sydney, increased wages and trips to Europe may yet buy them off. They speak of no fixed plans other than to see the silly season in Sydney.