



# BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN #437

**BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN** is trying to get out and enjoy the lovely August weather we've been having—at least, when it's not pouring or threatening rain, it's much more hospitable than the oppressive July weather we had last month—but still finds himself staring at an LCD screen more than he probably ought to. Some habits just die hard at the N.Y. Cadre (1088 East 40th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11210 ([\(718\) NY-CADRE](tel:7187187187); [nycadre \[at\] alum \[dot\] rpi \[dot\] edu](mailto:nycadre@alum.rpi.edu); [http://www \[dot\] nycadre \[dot\] org](http://www.nycadre.org))). This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #437, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 11, #8 (e-APA-NYU #112) and other members of the anti-social network, published August 2013 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Real Life Adventures* by Gary Wise and Lance Aldrich, 18 January 2012. All uncredited material copyright ©2013 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

**BUT THE PRESS LET THE STORY LEAK:** The biggest news around the Cadre last month was the appearance of a leak in a bathroom water pipe. It had probably been developing for a while; there had been a couple of unexpected wet spots on the kitchen counter over the preceding month or two that I'd just wiped up without stopping to analyze. When the spots became puddles and I started noticing them right after the shower was used, I realized this would not go away if I ignored it, and called Andre the plumber. Andre came by in a couple of days and said he'd have to break through the kitchen-ceiling sheetrock, to find the leak and also to clean out any mold that might have grown there; he also expressed the possibility that he might have to take the cabinets off the walls to reach the pipes. We therefore spent a Sunday afternoon emptying the cabinets—not a total loss, as we got rid of some old plasticware that was taking up space—and were ready for Andre on Monday morning.

As it turned out, the leak was at the bathroom level, and Andre fixed it there with only a couple of tiles dislocated and replaced—but the inside of the kitchen ceiling had quite a bit of mold, not all from this leak but also from a couple of earlier incidents, one involving clogged roof gutters and one involving a bathtub overflow. So it was a Good Thing that Andre opened up the ceiling and cleaned it all out; having that stuff in the house can't be good for our asthma.

In other news, HeiferCat (who may or may not be asthmatic) was diagnosed with a persistent pseudomonas infection on her last vet visit, and last week Donna found herself once again administering antibiotics by injection for five days. In spite of whatever discomfort or weakness this infection may have caused, the past month has seen Heifer climb the stairs unassisted, for the first few times since losing her left rear leg last fall; for several nights she was sleeping on Donna's bed (although she's

resumed her place on the living room chair as I type this). Not too ~~tabby~~ shabby for the equivalent of 85 human years old. The only problem is figuring out where to put her food dishes and litter boxes.

## FRINGERECEPTION: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 11, #7 (e-APA-NYU #111)

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (@Blackman) “‘he ‘wants to work right,’ do the absolute best at providing information.’ I was like that on my job until my bosses told me not to take things personally.” People often don’t want “the absolute best”—usually because “the absolute best” is too expensive or time-consuming. But “when you care enough to send the fully adequate for the purpose” just doesn’t have the right ring to it. /\*/ (çme) “‘blocking it all out on a spreadsheet’ means you have arrived.” It does? I think it means that spreadsheets have arrived—they’re so useful and

convenient that people (or geeks, anyhow, such as present company) use them for all sorts of mundane tasks that the inventors of VisiCalc never imagined. /\*/ “The car brought about

traffic problems that persist to this day because drivers act like jackasses to this day.” All classes of transport include a certain proportion of operators who behave like jackasses. Because of the destructive potential of what they’re steering, cars operated by jackasses do a lot more damage overall than bikes operated by jackasses (even if the jackass drivers aren’t actually bigger jackasses); and bikes operated by jackasses do more damage than pedestrians who walk like jackasses. /\*/ “Oh yes, why is fantasy so much more popular than it used to be?” Uh, your statistics just show that in a poll conducted last year by a website dedicated to letting readers vote for the books they’re enthusiastic about, books labeled paranormal fantasy got more votes than books labeled fantasy, which got more votes than books labeled science fiction. They don’t show that these proportions have changed from previous times. (They may just show what types of readers happen to like that site, or happen to like raving about books at websites in general. Since I don’t seem to be doing much raving about books lately, I can’t say why such folks favor paranormal fantasy.)



(Dilbert by Scott Adams, 22 September 1989)

L.S.D.\* ON A TRIPLE-H PROTOCOL (Ariel Cinī): “©opyhotter than (“ah- ah- ah”\*)” I remember that mustard commercial. /\*/ “Stay inside and try not to die” is a lot easier when one works in a place that’s kept not just cool but positively chilly the year ’round (many of my co-workers keep sweaters in their desks to deal with this condition). /\*/ “The woods may be lovely, dark and deep, but I do not camp.” I concur. Donna got me to camp with her (as befits her family name) once or twice when she was still fleet of foot. I learned from my mistakes. (See Dave

Buskin’s song “Jews Don’t Camp.”) /\*/ Excellent “Knights Who Say NI” filk. Agreed that a song will finish in its own good time; several of mine have gestated for half a decade or more. /\*/ I didn’t try to see the East River fireworks on 4 July; they opened up MCU Park for people to see the show at Coney Island (the Cyclones were playing an away game), so I decided at the last minute to bicycle down. If I’d driven, I’d never have found parking, but I was able to lock the bike up and run up the park stairs just in time for the pyrotechnics—a ten-minute show—then head home, passing a couple of other impressive displays on the way back. (I kept my distance, so I didn’t blow up; I had a real good day.) /\*/ Good luck getting satisfaction from Z-Biddy. Do report on the results. (If you haven’t already, you might try the Better Business Bureau at <bbb.org>, which claims to have helped resolve over 100 complaints against the company. The BBB rates ZBiddy.com a D minus.) /\*/ I didn’t hear Obama’s speech, but all the news reportage says that his words were not “Every war, including this one, must end” but “This war, like all wars, must end.” Does the wording of the song stand?

JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman):  
“in MS Word, my spellchecker doesn’t register errors in words in all caps.” That’s another option you can set or un-set, “Ignore words in UPPERCASE”—along with “Ignore words that contain numbers,” “Ignore Internet and file addresses,” and “Flag repeated words.” Check under “Options/Proofing” in the current versions; in older versions it may be something like “Tools/Options/Spelling.” /\*/ “a few of us had dinner in a bad Indian restaurant, Gandhi’s. (Naming an eatery after someone famous for hunger strikes should have been a warning.)” Some of us had been there a few years earlier, and it was good then. These things happen. And I should mention that there’s an unrelated restaurant called Gandhi on Bedford Avenue in Brooklyn, where several of us have dined a dozen times in the past year and never been less than pleased. /\*/ I’m guessing the “scandal” about Cap’n Crunch’s rank was started by someone at Quaker Oats to garner some cheap publicity. (Besides, they never said he was a Captain, only a Cap’n. That could be short for Capon, or Capstan, or Capricorn, or...) /\*/ (¢APA-NEWS) “Was there a Marvin Junior, Jr.?” Per Mr. Junior’s *New York Times* obit, yes. /\*/ (¢me) “Some years ago, I

proofread a friend’s book (in return for a copy & a half-mention in the Acknowledgments); he took the list of spelling corrections as an attack on his intelligence.” Occupational hazard. Clients’ responses range from that sort of thing to “Thanks for making me look good.” (Fortunately, I’ve gotten more of the latter.) Part of the on-the-job training is learning how not to take the offended responses personally, along with how to



(Rhymes with Orange by Hilary Price, 29 November 2012)

phrase queries diplomatically. /\*/ “Ceverabin also sounds like an antidepressant.” But it only works on comic-book aardvarks? /\*/ “Other meds sound like they’d make good names for Fantasy realms or characters [Clopidogrel, Carvedilol].” Lescol (a cholesterol reducer) brings to mind a household cleaning product (“There’s less call with Lescol...”). And when I was taking omeprazole (aka Prilosec) last year, I kept wanting to sing it to “Oh Mein Papa.”

MOON DAY (Ariel Cin̄): I signed. I guess now I’m on the White House’s spam list.

**BUT HIS CLOTH GOES SHINING ON:** Over the past several months I’ve made reference to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Beatles’ recording career, but as a filker I’ve been remiss in failing to pay the same respects to the late great Allan Sherman, who had his greatest success between the summer of 1962 and the summer of 1963: three chart-topping albums, with his Grammy-winning single “Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh! (A Letter from Camp)” appearing on the third. Sherman made several other worthwhile recordings, but the British Invasion (and the change the turbulent 1960s brought to the nation’s tastes in humor) doomed his market relevance; he died in relative obscurity in 1973.

I recently read a new biography, *Overweight Sensation: The Life and Comedy of Allan Sherman*, by Mark Cohen, a well-researched, somewhat scholarly work (published by Brandeis University Press, with an index, a bibliography, and 40 pages of endnotes!), which asserts that Allan Sherman not only put musical parody on the map, but “led Jewish humor and sensibilities out of ethnic enclaves and into the American mainstream.” It starts out a bit slowly with a lot of (necessary) detail about his family, but picks up steam with his college career. Additionally, it includes an appendix with over an album’s worth of previously unpublished lyrics. Definitely worth borrowing from the library. (I just found on YouTube that the author has posted a dozen unreleased recordings he found while researching the book. Goldeneh!)

>Portions of the preceding could be, only in the U.S.A.<