



BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN

[#470] BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN has heard them say everything can be replaced, and that every distance is not near; so he'll remember Daisy the minivan even as he drives her replacement whatever distances are necessary from the N.Y. Cadre (1088 East 40th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11210 (☎(718) NY-CADRE; 🖨↔️ nycadre [at] acedsl [dot] com; 🌐http://www [dot] nycadre [dot] org)). This is **Beyond the Fringefan #470**, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 14, #8 (e-APA-NYU #145) and other drivers of hard bargains, published August 2016 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Frazz* by Jef Mallett, 19 October 2011. All uncredited material copyright ©2016 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

WELL, THE DANGER ON THE ROCKS IS SURELY PAST; STILL I REMAIN TIED TO THE MAST: After ten years, we've embarked upon another Odyssey. May it last as long as the previous one.

The new vehicle, which has yet to tell us its name, is a 2011 Honda Odyssey EX, gold in color, with 48K miles on it; we paid a bit more than one-third more for it than for its predecessor, the late Daisy. Part of this may be attributed to the effects of inflation, part to the lower mileage (Daisy had 65K), and part to the fact that we decided to go to an actual Honda dealer and get a Certified Pre-Owned vehicle, which has certain additional guarantees associated with it.

All the things Frankie the mechanic suggested I try in July failed to get Daisy to keep her CHECK ENGINE light unlit long enough to pass state inspection; as of the end of the month, we were technically in violation of the law every time we drove her, so we were on borrowed time. Remembering the assorted hassles of car shopping 10 years ago, we decided that like Obi-Wan, we were getting too old for this sort of thing, so to simplify matters, I just looked on Cars.com for certified used Odysseys in Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island. (Anywhere else would require paying lots of tolls when we went to look at the cars and when we went back to make the actual purchase.)

(The AARP claims to save members money through its car-buying service, but when I tried a search on its Web site, it turned up fewer cars, and wouldn't even tell me where they were until after I sent my personal information to the dealers. Where the cars it showed were also listed by Cars.com, the prices were the same. I called the AARP and got shunted to TrueCar, the operator of the service; someone there claimed that as an AARP member, I'd save \$100 to \$300 on any used car I bought, but apparently

I wouldn't find out just how much I'd save until after I committed to the purchase. It sounded pretty sketchy to me, so I decided it wasn't worth the extra hoop-jumping and the likely resulting spam.)

I spent the last Saturday of July fighting Belt Parkway traffic to get to dealerships in Levittown and Glen Head, Nassau County. (Donna wasn't up to the travel and Ethan was out of town, so I went alone.) I saw two cars that both looked OK; schlepping home, I felt that Dan the salesman in Levittown had been a bit more trust-inspiring than Jad the salesman in Glen Head.

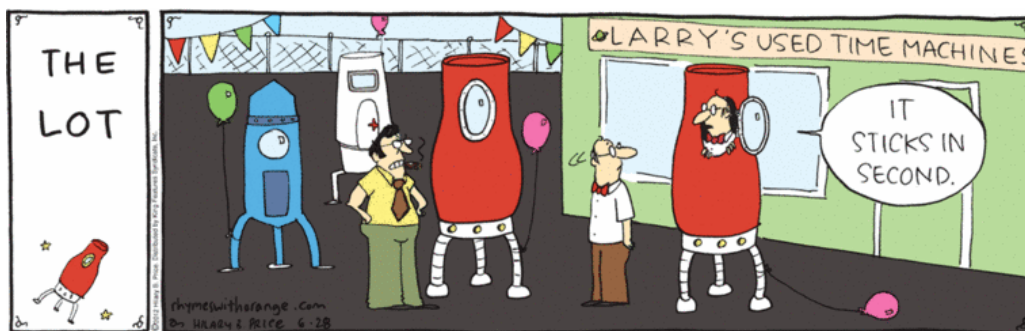
One complicating factor in all this was Donna's extra-wide electric wheelchair. With previous minivans, we'd been able to take the middle seats out and drive the wheelchair up a ramp and into the space where the seats belonged. But the Odyssey has a narrower side-door opening than the Dodge Caravan (the model we'd had before Daisy), and we could just barely get the wheelchair in with millimeters to spare. It turns out that when Honda redesigned the Odyssey in the mid-aughts, that side-door opening got an inch or two narrower. I measured several recent models; there's no way to fit that electric wheelchair through the doorway any more.

On the other hand, we'd only been using the electric wheelchair once or twice a year for the past half-decade or more, and the shelf life of its pricey batteries was only a little more than a year, which made its continued use an expensive proposition, so we'd pretty much effectively stopped using it anyway. We discussed the issue and concluded that the door width was not the dealbreaker it would have been 10 years ago. All our resources said the Odyssey was the best-made minivan available, so we decided to go for an Odyssey and let the wheelchair sit (thus saving me tons more online research and days of running around to dealers).

Owing to time commitments, though, I wasn't able to make a return visit to the dealerships until the second weekend of August. This time Ethan accompanied me just in case I missed asking any important questions; and ultimately we decided to buy the gold 2011 Odyssey from Dan in Levittown and have done with it. We could have driven it back the same day, but the dealership wanted a cashier's check, and the Chase branch down the block had closed about an hour before we got there—so I had to waste another Monday getting the cashier's check, driving out there, and getting stuck in traffic getting home.

Oh, another difference in dimensions: the door openings may be narrower, but it turns out that the newer Odysseys are an inch or two wider overall. I found this out the hard way when I pulled the new minivan into our narrow driveway for the first time. Well, I guess now I don't have to worry about when that inaugural scratch will occur...

In the first week of driving the new vehicle, I took it to Frankie the mechanic, who found nothing to complain about, other than a bit of wear on the front brake rotors (which he didn't think was enough to bother bringing the car back to a dealer). Then after FISTFA, someone noted that the left center seat was missing its headrest, which *is* something to bother the dealer about. Dan the salesman conveniently went on vacation last week; let's see how soon he gets back to me about it.



(Rhymes with Orange by Hilary Price, 28 June 2012)

FRINGE RECEPTION: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 14, #7 (e-APA-NYU #145)

APA-NEWS: Uh-oh, down to two contributors. I guess switching to electronic delivery only helped so much. (Yes, I acknowledge that my failure to keep to a consistent schedule over the past few years is a factor.) Is it finally time to give up on this thing? Does anybody care?

JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman):
“Things talked about [at July FISTFA] included ... Arthur C. Clarke, CSL, the early TREK cons, ...” What’s CSL? /*/ (çme) “Despite family in Israel... I can’t abide (black or green) olives.” They’re fine with me as long as the pits have been taken out. Otherwise my lifelong distaste for having to work to separate food from its

inedible component kicks in (it’s the reason I hardly ever eat cuts of meat that aren’t boneless, or fish that aren’t filleted). In the event of an apocalyptic collapse of civilization, I’ll be one of the first to starve. /*/ “‘Putin’ can be hidden in ‘Rasputin’ (and recall what ‘Ras’ means).” I’m not aware of “Ras” meaning anything in Russian; Google Translate renders “Raz” as “Time”. /*/ “If you tie guitar strings around your fingers, you won’t forget your chords.” That wasn’t exactly what I was fretting about, but why be picky? /*/ (çself) I thought it was thoughtful of someone to leave that mattress right where it would break your fall after you tripped over it.

The Brooklyn Cyclones beat the Aberdeen IronBirds handily, 7-2, at the game we attended in July (after losing to them the previous night). Go Cyclones! “Star Wars Night” turned out to involve some of the local light-saber aficionados running out onto the field between innings and acting out a continuing skit involving the Sith invading Brooklyn while hunting down Obi-Wan Kenobi. (I couldn’t hear the dialogue very well, so I may have missed something.) They ran back onto the field after the game and did some light-saber drill-team routines in the dark that counterpointed the fireworks being shot off up above, so I felt I got my money’s worth. (Even if the free “glowing” Cyclones cap doesn’t glow.) With 20 games left in the season, the Cyclones are still third out of four in their division, but only three games out of the lead, with a 30-26 record, so there may yet be a new hope.



(Frank & Ernest by Thaves, 10 May 2008)

I will actually attend a game at Citi Field for the first time in late September, as my employer bought a block of tickets for that night (Mets vs. Phillies). The team has mostly priced itself out of my comfort zone at the new field, but seeing the place on someone else’s dime is a hard opportunity to turn down—even if it means getting home after midnight on a work night. The seats are in right field, in an area called the Coke Corner. (It was previously the Pepsi Porch, but the sponsorship changed this year and hence the big advertising sign over the section. ~~No Pepsi, Coke.~~) As I type this, the Mets are 11½ games out of the lead in the NL East, with the Phillies 3½ games behind them, so both teams may be out of the running for postseason play by then.

I was stunned to learn of the death this month of Rosemarie Krist, one of the last surviving founding members of NYUSFS. (I think only Mayor Friedman is left.) Rose was the founding secretary of the group and was thus responsible for drafting the club’s constitution, with its cogent declaration that a NYUSFS member is any sentient being that considers itself a NYUSFS member. She will be missed.

>Portions of the preceding aren’t with Her; they’re just scared of Him.<