



BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN

[#476] **BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN** fears his new health plan may be in need of a heart; but then, based on the proposals put forth by the newly installed wizard at the White House, there may be a lot of that going around over the next few years. He'll just have to hope that his brain and his courage will be enough to see him through it all (and that no flying monkeys will come to collect the premiums). If you want to find him to complain about this sick humor, remember that there's no place like 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** #476, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 15, #3 (e-APA-NYU #152) and other pre-existing conditions, published March 2017 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Brewster Rockit, Space Guy!* by Tim Rickard, 15 November 2016. All uncredited material copyright ©2017 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

The initial ordeal is over, and I'm now signed up for all the medical insurances I'll need or want as of my entry into the Medicare system at the start of May. As mentioned last month, I signed up for Medicare itself online the first week of February. (You can sign up anytime from three months before to three months after the month you turn 65.) After entering a variety of medical and personal data at the Web site of OneExchange (see last month), I called that organization to obtain the recommendations of some of its health insurance professionals, and to do the actual signing up. The call took 2½ hours—a lot of bureaucratic repetition of disclosures, and affirmations under penalty of perjury that the information I was providing was correct—but I'm now signed up for the AARP's Medigap Plan F, administered by UnitedHealthCare; prescription coverage from SilverScript (which turns out to be one of CVS's many aliases); dental coverage from MetLife; and the VSP optical plan. All of these are actually the companies I've been covered by for the past few years already, so I'm hoping for minimal hassle during the transition—the devil you know, and all that. But of course, only time will tell.

Next up, I apply for my senior discount MetroCard (\$1.35 a ride instead of \$2.75). The MTA accepts applications by mail, but requires that you send notarized documentation of age plus a passport-sized photograph, and then you wait a month before you receive the card. Happily, there are alternatives: a walk-in office near Bowling Green, and mobile processing units (a van and a bus) which park in various locations around town. Any of these will issue cards on the spot for people who bring the necessary documents. I'll be visiting one of the above sometime in May.

It looks as though we may be saying farewell to FISTFA in its most recent incarnation, as Tom Byro has announced that for health reasons, he's retiring and moving upstate. I'm sorry to see him go (and unhappy for the events that necessitated this move), but wish him the best in his new location. Abundant thanks go to Tom and Thom for over a decade of carrying on this honored fannish tradition.

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 15, #2 (e-APA-NYU #151)

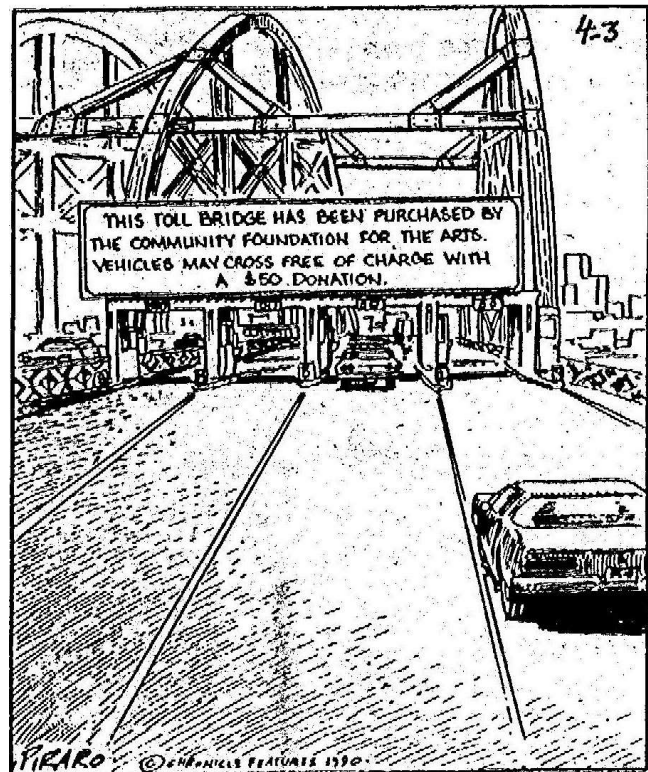
SEX* ON THE JANUARY SUB-ORBITAL

DENOMINATION (Ariel Cinī): "This meant she actually read the book! This is an almost-moment for me. I've broken past the form-rejection letter ever-so subtly. So, here's to being future-famous!" Congratulations on another baby step. /*/ "So it's a custom. A *tradition* requires organization...." Not so, unless you accept that the degree of organization involved in deciding where to go for dinner fills the bill. Lots of folks, for example, have a Philcon tradition of traipsing into Chinatown for Saturday dinner. The dictionary includes "custom" as one of the definitions for "tradition." /*/ I suggest, though, that anyone figuring to join up with one of Deb's Friday (or other) dinner missions adopt a custom of checking the location with GoogleMaps or the like, to preclude another incident like yours. Deb, like any of us, is certainly capable of making mistakes in giving directions. /*/ If the government of Mars looks a lot like the government of Canada, that's a hopeful sign. What are the immigration requirements? /*/ You might find it noteworthy that when I looked up "Domin' Over" to see if the song actually existed yet, I found "Domin-over" on Urban Dictionary, defined as the unpleasant feeling you get after eating Domino's pizza.

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

MAY BE AN APPROACHING TRAIN (Deb Wunder): "it also helps that I discovered ARRO, an iPhone app that allows you to literally reserve a yellow cab." As you know, I seldom use cabs or other car services, but this sounds like a welcome development. (Of course, it took the competition of Uber, Lyft, and their ilk to bring it about.) Please report on how well it works on cold, rainy nights when finding cabs (with drivers willing to schlep out to Sheepshead Bay) is hardest. /*/ Headspace [the meditation app] seems to be not actually free, but rather a 10-day free trial. I may install it sometime when I think I'll actually have time to use it before the trial expires. Meditation has never done much for me in the past (other than put me to sleep). /*/ (¢me) I think the difference between a nonprofit that

asks you to join and one that asks you to donate is mere semantic window-dressing. No matter how many "members" of the former may demand that the organization take a particular step, the head honchos are under no legal obligation to follow through (though in either case, it behooves them to pay attention, if they want people to renew their memberships or donations). Either kind of group may survey the people who send in money to find out what they believe the group's



(Bizarro by Dan Piraro, 3 April 1990)

priorities are or should be. /*/ (¢Blackman) Per the latest subway map, the four new Second Avenue subway stations are all handicap-accessible. (The last old station on the line, 57th Street and Seventh Avenue, is not.) It's a lot easier to design it in from scratch than to retrofit.

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢Wunder) "On the next to last day of last month I found someone who would be willing to accept the sixty pounds I would like to give away." Where do you find the surgeon willing to perform the transplant? /*/ "Puzzles keep one young." I try to solve one on

the subway each morning—usually from *Harper's*, the Sunday *New York Times*, or the Saturday *Wall Street Journal*. (The last has an online archive of puzzles, including the Saturday variety puzzles, going back five years. I'm up to March 2015.) */ (çme) “Looks like I have just four more years of unlimited [work hours] left, then.” Not sure, as yours is state civil service and Tom's was federal (Social Security).

JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman):

Ooh! Forgot to include “Sir” on John Hurt's In Memoriam listing. By coincidence, I've been hearing a lot of Tom Paxton's song “Did You Hear John Hurt?” lately, though the John Hurt that song refers to was a U.S. citizen and so would not have been knighted. */ I'm glad you were only in hospital for a few days, but agree with your uneasiness at the doctors' inability to state just what caused your symptoms in the first place. (The same applied to my pericarditis 4½ years ago: it was caused by a virus, but whence did the virus come and how did it get into my pericardium?) And I still don't understand how the charger I brought had the kind of plug your phone took, and worked to charge my phone, but didn't work to charge yours. */ “Anxiety aside, lying in an ER quickly gets boring, so I let a strolling Lubavitcher Chasidic rabbi have me lay *tfillin* (my first time since 1974).” The first time I'd ever put on *tfillin* was when I was in hospital awaiting my gallbladder removal in 2010, though the rabbi wasn't Lubavitcher. I wonder how many Jews have their first encounter with *tfillin* courtesy of hospital chaplains. */ (çWunder) “We'll forgive [Hamilton] for founding the NY POST.” As if today's *Post* had anything in common with Hamilton's creation, other than the name. A lot can change in two centuries, or even



(The New York Post, 15 April 1983)

half a century: today's *Post* doesn't look much like the liberal *Post* owned by Dorothy Schiff from 1939 to 1976. */ “Freund's readings pretty much require a bus ride from the Atlantic Ave. station.” Depends on your mobility status. It's half a mile. */ “Manual blankets (is that the right retronym?)” Funny, no one seems to have come up with a good retronym for a non-electric blanket. Perhaps few enough people are using electric blankets that the old kind are still what everyone thinks of when the unmodified word is used, and hence no retronym is needed. */ (çme) “33 1/3... wasn't that Jesus' age when he was crucified?” Most Christians say “about 33,” but scholars have no consensus—the gospels don't say explicitly, and there are some inconsistencies in the events reported there vis-à-vis secular historical sources. Authorities as far back as the second century CE were guessing anywhere from 32 to almost 50. */ “(I'm curious about who's on the mailing list; there's no Pseudo-Roster.)” Since you asked, here's the list of names, transcribed as of 26 March. They're in alphabetical order by e-mail address, but they're the names people have supplied when signing up (except for the fourteenth one, apparently a Ms. Nakhleh, who left that field blank).

AK

Amy Fass
 I Abra Cinii
 Alex Whitaker
 Fred Katz
 Neil Belsky
 Sean Murphy
 Amy Bergenfeld
 Paul Birnbaum
 Cynthia Cascante
 Dee Dorough
 Chas Belov
 Dora Buck
 Stephen Hartman
 Eliza.Nakhleh@zeusmail.org
 Eric Serxner
 Fred Phillips
 Fredrik Coulter
 Rich Friedman
 Galana Winterbreucke
 Tom Byro
 Jeff Grimshaw
 JB
 Joel Nelson
 Jeff Grimshaw
 Jon Baker
 Lucy Schmeidler
 Lynn E. Cohen Koehler

Mark Blackman
 Ivan Burbakov
 Michael Feldman
 Joshua Kronengold
 Michael Wendel
 Ozzie Osband
 vjb
 Marc S. Glasser
 Deb Wunder
 Gary c Tesser
 Mildred Riley
 Rennie Levine
 Rosemarie Krist
 Lisa Rogers
 Richard Onley
 Madeline Switzer
 Starwind51
 taviep@gmail.com
 Michael Moslow
 Virginia Fleming
 Mark Richards
 Joshua D. Goldberg
 weller
 Robin Beckerman

I see a couple of individuals in there whose identities I'm not sure of, at least one duplicate listing (Jeff G., do you want me to remove one of those addresses?), and a few deceased persons (talk about your deadwood—but of course, Death Will Not Release You). /*/ "I'm puzzled why doctors & nurses have so much trouble getting blood out of my arms when

it flows so readily from my neck when I shave it." Um, would you want them to be puncturing your jugular vein whenever they need a blood sample? Talk about cutthroat competition... /*/ Well, either #45's ability (with the help of the Republican Congress) to destroy the country and the planet is finite, in which case we all need to keep watching him and doing whatever we can to minimize the damage—or else he's unstoppable and we might as well shut up, roll over and die. I haven't yet decided.



(Rhymes with Orange by Hilary B. Price, 13 November 2016)

MOUNTAIN ASH, WINTER GREEN (Donna Camp): Good to see you writing in these pages and elsewhere again. /*/ OK, we got you a Swiffer mop. Happy? /*/ I think we are owed thank-you letters from some of those dentists' kids whom your mouth and our savings have put through college.

Late-breaking news: During routine maintenance of our furnace, the oil-company technician discovered a leak in an oil line (from the tank to the burner) under the basement floor. It constituted a fire hazard and needed to be replaced immediately. Fortunately, the replacement did not have to be buried, and ran us only several hundred dollars rather than several thousand. Chalk up one more for home moanership.

And that about wraps it up for March. Be sure to save your daylight; we'll need it during the dark days ahead. An inspiring spring holiday of your choice to all.

>Portions of the preceding see dead people...and send them e-mail.<