



Beyond the Fringefan [#487]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN sorrowfully bids farewell to Harold Stein, a man who, it often seemed, was providing tech support to half the known universe, and who could deal with any computer problem no matter how odd. Having just returned to 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)) from Harold's funeral, he's momentarily at a loss for anything terribly funny to put here. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #487, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 16, #7 (e-APA-NYU #163) and others who are feeling bereft, published October 2018 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Tina's Groove* by Rina Piccolo, 5 August 2014. All uncredited material copyright ©2018 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

Harold became a major filk fan a couple of decades ago; since he himself didn't play, or sing, or songwrite, he applied his talents to sound and programming at cons, to producing and engineering CDs (credited as Floating Filk Studios)—and also to archiving and organizing the vast chaos of analog and digital recordings (not to mention lyrics and sheet music published in songbooks and fanzines and apas) scattered around the nation and the world. That his whole family was into Scouting no doubt had something to do with the fact that he made it his business to be always prepared, and never seemed to have an unkind word to say about anyone, and was ready to volunteer practically before anyone knew there was a need. Apparently his inclination for being IT go-to guy was not limited to fandom, but also extended to his synagogue and its congregation, and to his Scout troop.

Josh Kronengold wrote a finer eulogy about Harold than I think I could; he's agreed to edit and submit it here for next collation. Meanwhile, I recommend that people with access to Facebook hunt it down there. What it boils down to, though, is: Harold was a mensch, and we lost him far too soon (he was 48).

Meanwhile—me? Yes, I missed another month, but at least a few of the many issues mentioned last time have finally been resolved. The IRS finally decided to accept our response to its June letter, and has explicitly stated that we don't owe any more income taxes for 2016. One of the repair people with whom Sears contracts finally came up with the solution to our fridge's problem: the ice maker was fine all along, but the water valve that permitted it to fill—apparently a separate part that has to be ordered separately—was shot. He replaced it just in time for the end of summer. (Follow-up: it stopped working again 10 days later, following an incident in which the whole thing froze over. Foo.) I had my annual

checkout, which revealed nothing frightful about my state of health. And I finally got some satisfaction in the matter of my crashed hard drive.

Brett, my contact at the Ohio office of Secure Data Recovery, finally sent me a second list of recovered files on 29 August. Unlike the first list he'd sent, it was a very short list, containing only the files directly relating to my e-mail client (Thunderbird) and my chat client (mIRC)—the files I'd specifically said that I needed restored or I couldn't sign off on the job. After some inconclusive back-and-forth about the precise meaning of "!"DamagedFiles" prefixed on the file names, I decided to sign off and take my chances; otherwise I'd have to say goodbye to any chance of ever seeing my data again. It took another week and a trip to the FedEx depot at JFK to get back the new drive with the recovered files, and when I plugged it in, all the files in that second list were conspicuously absent!

I sent Brett a rather angry e-mail—I believe it ended with "At long last, sirs, have you no decency?" And when I hadn't heard anything back after one and a half business days, I filed complaints with my bank and with the Better Business Bureau, and posted a lengthy screed on Yelp.

By what I'm sure was pure coincidence, just a few hours later, I got some communications from a gentleman named Jeremy in Secure's Toronto office. The missing files were available as a ZIP archive on that office's server. It took a couple of days, but I was able eventually to download the archive, unpack all my files, put them where they belonged, and once again access what appears to be all my old e-mail and contact lists. As lagniappe, a week later, Jeremy sent a flash drive containing about 60 gigabytes of downloaded audio files from a couple of directories whose names I'd been able to recall. So I believe the bulk of my missing data has been restored, with only a couple of nonessential files irreparably damaged. (I'm not happy that I don't have a complete list of everything that was on the drive, but I guess if there were file directories that I haven't been able to remember in three months, I can probably manage without them.) So I canceled the BBB and bank complaints, and filed a follow-up to the Yelp review.



www.patreon.com/laylines

(Lay Lines by Carol Lay, 20 May 2016)

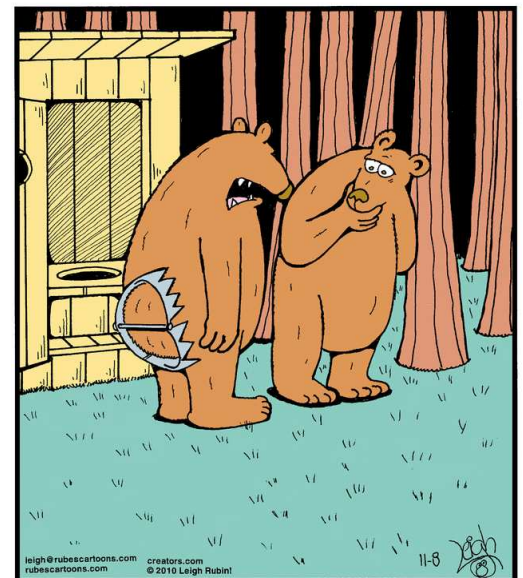
I hope never to have to go through this again, and to that end, I'm trying out some software from Acronis, which claims to create a backup so complete that if the hard drive should be destroyed, the backup can be restored to a previously blank drive and I can carry on immediately. Now I need to borrow a computer with a blank hard drive on which I can test this proposition out.

THERE'S THIRTEEN HUNDRED FIFTY-TWO ALLIANCE EMPLOYEES IN NASHVILLE, AND THEY CAN BUILD A PORTFOLIO WITH BETTER RETURNS THAN A TEN-YEAR T-BILL: Not only is AllianceBernstein's move of its world headquarters to Tennessee proceeding apace; it seems to be going faster than originally expected. Per the latest unofficial word, the relocation of my group might begin as soon as next summer. I'm hoping for a soft landing for my boss and all my co-workers, all but one of whom are younger than me, but I can't really do much to help them. I'll miss this gig, but I'll be all right, what with Social Security and my JPMChase pension to cushion the blow.

FRINGE RECEPTION: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 16, #6 (e-APA-NYU #162)

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

(øme) "Btw, it seems that the tune [of "To Anacreon in Heaven"] was around even before that song." Where'd you hear that? All reports I've been able to find credit the tune to John Stafford Smith, who was a member of the Anacreontic Society (and was in his twenties when he composed it). /*/ Paul Simon's journey from the East Side to the Park was not "rough and tumble" but "light and tumble" (whatever that may mean). Did anyone ever notice that the song also mentions another area of Central Park, the Ramble? (The Ramble isn't near the Zoo, though.) /*/ Your further details regarding the Charmin bear commercials are not in any way motivating me to investigate them any further. Perhaps we'll be fortunate and the commercials will hibernate soon.



"Apparently, they possess detailed knowledge of our most intimate woodland behavior and use it against us when we are at our most vulnerable."

(Rubes by Leigh Rubin, 8 November 2010)

I ordinarily shy away, as is my cowardly leonine wont, from arguments in these pages about religion, politics, and the Great Pumpkin, but in the wake of the recent killings—most visible in Pittsburgh but going on all over—I want to urge everyone to look for the candidates who are likely to stand up and do something against violence, bigotry, and irrational hate, and keep them top of mind when you go out and vote.

>Portions of the preceding are hoping that these midterms don't turn out to be the finals.<