



Beyond the Fringefan [#505]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN is still waiting for a number of issues (mostly entomological and epidemiological) to be resolved before social activity can resume—though as noted previously, he's not all that sociable at the best of times. He's hunkered down with his wife and a load of supplies at the N.Y. Cadre (1088 East 40th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11210 (☎(718) NY-CADRE; 📠↔️ nycadre [at] acedsl [dot] com; 🌐<http://www.nycadre.org>)) in anticipation of a long dark winter, though he has hopes that things may start getting noticeably brighter by late January. Meanwhile, he sends out **Beyond the Fringefan** #505 to readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 18, #10 (e-APA-NYU #181) and other hibernators, published November 2020 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Bizarro* by Dan Piraro, 1 November 2020. All uncredited material copyright ©2020 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

STILL A FEW BUGS IN THE SYSTEM: E-Z-Pest's exterminator came and sprayed the house for the second time on the day before Halloween. Unfortunately, before the weekend was out, Donna started finding bugs in her bed again, and she continued to find them every morning for over two weeks. The company's co-owner, reached by phone, agreed that this was not the desired result, and sent another guy (at no further charge, of course) to do the treatment a third time the following week. The guy said he'd be using an extra-highly concentrated version of their spray, and we should stay out of the house for seven hours, not just five. (This time we stayed overnight at a new Holiday Inn Express that's opened on Kings Highway east of Utica Avenue, slightly closer and noticeably cheaper than the Days Inn.) Once again, Donna has found a few bugs in her bed since the spraying, but it's been less than a week, and so the situation bears watching. I don't know what E-Z-Pest will do this time if we keep seeing them.

This, of course, means we've been delayed another month or so in our intentions to Put Everything Back Together. Most of our clothes, bedding, books, and other Stuff are still packed away in the basement and the garage, and there are storage boxes and bins all over the place. I guess it's a good thing we're not going much of anywhere or having anyone visit.

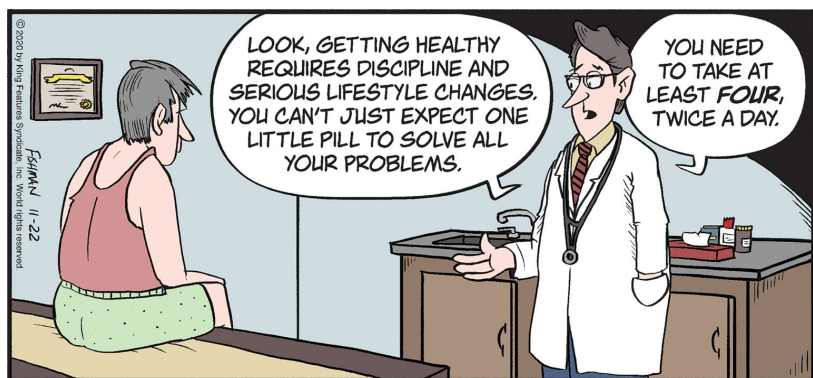
It'll be interesting to see, for Donna and me, how much our memory of the bedbug infestation will overshadow that of the COVID-19 pandemic when we look back on 2020 a few years hence (assuming we live that long). Since (thank the ghods) we've remained symptom free, and since I'm no longer commuting to work, the bugs have actually had more of a direct effect on our daily life so far (other than our newly acquired mask collections and increased use of soap and hand sanitizer). Once we've finally expunged them, we'll once again be able to focus more on the world outside the Cadre, and the misery the pandemic has dumped on the city, the country, and the world.

I don't believe that New York is doomed, as some prognosticators have claimed—at least not within the next few decades—but Life in the Big City, as well as across the country and around the world, is changing for the long term in ways that will become clearer once the promised vaccine has been fully distributed and herd immunity has been achieved. The raw death toll is massive, but people have continued their lives after other pandemics and wars. The lingering effects on those who survived infection remain to be fully explored and could tax the health care "system" for decades down the road. People in mourning, people whose livelihoods have been destroyed, businesses closed, governments too deep in debt to provide services or build for the future—the landscape we inhabit will be different from what came before even when we don't need to mask up any more. Or will we all just get used to another "new normal" and forget the differences, other than a few old (my age) cranks who won't stop harping on how it's just not the way it used to be?

Well, it appears we're getting rid of the Superspreader in Chief, and that's got to help, though I expect him to be dragged kicking and screaming from the White House on 20 January. Whether the new president will have a halfway reasonable Senate to deal with remains a cliffhanger. He's got his work cut out for him just trying to get started repairing the past four years of damage to the country's infrastructure, external relations, and internal amity and spirit of unity.

In health news, Donna's had her annual checkup and seems to be in no worse shape than last time. She also survived a root canal in one of the teeth covered by the new upper bridge. That bridge is still a temporary, with the permanent one due to be fitted in December if we can manage it.

I saw my cardiologist for a routine checkup. I asked about a dull ache in my chest that seemed kind of familiar, and after some blood tests, he determined that I was having a slight recurrence of the pericarditis that first hit me eight years ago. He said recurrences are not unusual, but each one is less severe than the previous. This one, I'm relieved to report, did not land me in hospital, but added some colchicine (for six months) and some ibuprofen and omeprazole (for a month or two) to my daily intake of pills. I'm still overdue for an annual physical with my PCP, but I've been waiting for the various crises to ease off, and it looks as though I may have a while more to wait.



(Mallard Fillmore by Loren Fishman, 22 November 2020)

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 18, #9 (e-APA-NYU #180)

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

Apparently Halloween *was* unnecessary this year. We got zero trick-or-treaters. Anticipating something like that, I'd only bought one bag of candy, so I didn't have too much to ingest lest it go to waste (or waist). /*/ "The ~SUPER~ ... needs to replace a kitchen sink pipe (what are they using that corrodes through every 2 years?)." Maybe they're recycling the old phone batteries you've gone through. /*/ (¢APA-NEWS) "(Besides overinflating footballs, Tom Brady tried pilfering Seaver's 'Tom Terrific' nickname.)" I hadn't heard. Did he succeed in getting anyone to use it? /*/ (¢me) "I've only seen 'diatoms' referring to the water at murder scenes on tv or in mysteries helping forensic investigators solve the crimes." Per Wikipedia, they're aquatic microalgae (numerous species) that incorporate silicon into their cell walls, which makes them durable; investigators can find them intact in otherwise decomposed human bodies and determine that the victims were drowned, and in which body of water. It's those cell walls of silica that become diatomaceous

earth when compressed and dried. /*/ (¢Belov) "Trump lost one attempt to politicize [the Census] (the citizenship question was unconstitutional), but succeeded with his second (ending it early to undercount 'Democrat cities')." The citizenship question was unconstitutional, but the lengthy commotion about it before the court finally made that decision certainly made a lot of immigrants anxious and mistrustful, and probably dissuaded many of them from responding; so that attempt wasn't a clear-cut loss for Trump at all.

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢me) "'Tis the Season of Bent (the 40 days leading up to Election Day)." Some of the participants have remained bent long after Election Day, and may stay that way right up to Inauguration Day and beyond. /*/ It hadn't occurred to me that a power outage at home would have much worse effects on telecommuters than on ordinary commuters. (We had a couple of Internet outages in the spring, but fortunately they were on days I had off.) Well played in working around yours.

I just read of the death of Geoffrey Palmer, who co-starred with Dame Judi Dench in the BBC series *As Time Goes By*, and showed up in *The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin* and in episodes of *Doctor Who* (first, third, and tenth Doctors) and *Fawlty Towers*. He also played Admiral Roebuck to Dame Judi's M in the James Bond film *Tomorrow Never Dies*. I'd first encountered him in a slightly obscure 1980s series called *Fairly Secret Army*, playing curmudgeonly ex-army man Harry Truscott, who deplores Britain being taken over by "socialists, social democrats, social workers, social idlers, anarchists, nihilists, Marxists, Trotskyists, shop stewards, hooligans, quitters, rapists, Papists, Papist rapists, women's libbers, ad libbers, ad men, do-gooders, do-badders, Reds, wets, bedwetters, Reds under wet beds, long hair, short hair, fringe theatre, National Theatre, punks, hippies, junkies, squatters, rotters, potters, muggers, joggers; all the spare-the-rod-and-put-on-the-mockers arty-crafty airy-fairy namby-pamby silly-billy brigade." (Yeah, I liked the writing.) At 93, he wasn't exactly cut down in his prime, but I'll miss him nonetheless.

If I knew of any people reading this in Georgia, I'd remind them to go out and vote—again—but instead I'll just wish a merry, bright, and spiritually restorative solstice festival of your choice to all. Remember, The Vaccine Is On Its Way, if we can hang on long enough. Stay safe and sane.



(Real Life Adventures by Wise and Aldrich, 26 March 2016)

>Portions of the preceding ate Thanksgiving dinner with chopsticks. Got a problem with that?<