

Beyond the Fringefan [#529]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN remembers the inflated expectations he and other people have had in the past as New Year's Eve approached, and how well they've turned out. That's part of why he hasn't made any "resolutions" at this season in half a century or so. He'll spend the evening as usual at his home at 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)), watching the festivities on television and finding out if Anderson Cooper is as much fun at midnight when he's sober. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #529, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 20, #12 (e-APA-NYU #205) and other celebrants, published December 2022 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, 28 December 2022. For the last time, all uncredited material copyright ©2022 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

LOOKING OUT FROM MY LONELY ROOM, DAY AFTER DAY: My floor is now refinished, and the furniture is back in place (with felt pads glued on to the bottoms of everything to forestall any scratching of the finish). It doesn't look a lot different, but I'm glad it's been done. What hasn't yet been done is the moving back in of everything that was *on* the furniture before last month.

That includes a collection of audio and video equipment in various states of age and disrepair, none of which has been used much in the past decade or so. I've been addicted to listening to music on stereo headphones since my teenage years, so the speakers haven't gotten used much, and with everything in digital form lately, I've hardly played a CD, much less a tape or a vinyl disc. For that matter, I've seldom played a DVD or a VHS tape in a decade, either. I once had evolved an intricate system of interconnections for all of the above, with switch boxes to enable copying from one audio or video tape deck to another and sending any of it to the TV; but it's been so long that I've forgotten how I set it all up, so if I want to do any of that, I'm going to have to plan and set it all up again from scratch. It's daunting to contemplate, and I'm not sure it's even worth the effort. Right now the only pieces of home entertainment equipment I have in place are the TV and the satellite-TV box, plus of course the laptop (whose video output can also go to the TV).

SAFE AT HOME: I rented a safe-deposit box at my local branch of Manufacturers Trust Company some thirty or forty years ago. Why? Probably because my father had had a safe-deposit box at his

branch, and it seemed the thing for a middle-class technocrat to do. When my father died, we emptied out his box and found, among other things, the revolver he'd been issued while serving in the army during World War II. (We turned it in at a police station.)

I never had anything as dangerous as that in my box; I did put some stock certificates and savings bonds in there, but eventually the bonds matured, and I handed the stock certificates over into the custody of my broker. But I was getting the box rental free, first as an employee perk, then as part of a package that included no-fee checking in exchange for keeping a certain minimum balance. So I kept the box, though of course the name on the bank changed a couple of times.

This summer I received a note from Chase that the free safe-deposit box benefit was being discontinued, and if I didn't close out the box by late December, I'd have to start paying \$97.99 a year for it. This seemed a lot, especially considering I couldn't even recall what was still in the box, so the other week, I went over and closed the box out. What did it contain? Well, a number of papers concerning a term insurance policy that I'd discontinued a decade ago; some records of Donna's professional insurance as an R.N. that she'd discontinued a decade and a half ago; the original lease to the apartment formerly known as One, Two, Three, Many; the bill of sale for the Cadre; our homeowners' insurance policy; and some copies of our birth certificates—there are already other copies of those in my desk. After I shredded the outdated insurance papers, the rest will fit comfortably in a 5" by 11" envelope in a bureau in my room.

The bank person told me that they're not renting out any new safe-deposit boxes at that branch, or at several others as well, and implied that there's not much call for them lately. This made me wonder who is still keeping them, and what materials they're putting in them. Many assets that might once have been kept in one now exist in electronic form and don't need that kind of safekeeping. Clearly I no longer had any real need for one, and was keeping it only out of inertia. For Stuff with a tangible existence, there are many other ways to keep it safe, and yet more conveniently accessible if one should need it outside of bankers' hours. Is the safe-deposit box yet another artifact of a bygone era?



(Rhymes with Orange by Rina Piccolo and Hilary B. Price, 25 September 2019)

Regarding a different kind of safety, Donna finally got her bivalent COVID booster (after various medical issues had delayed her getting it for months). She felt lousy for a couple of days but seems back to her usual self now.

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 20, #11 (e-APA-NYU #204)

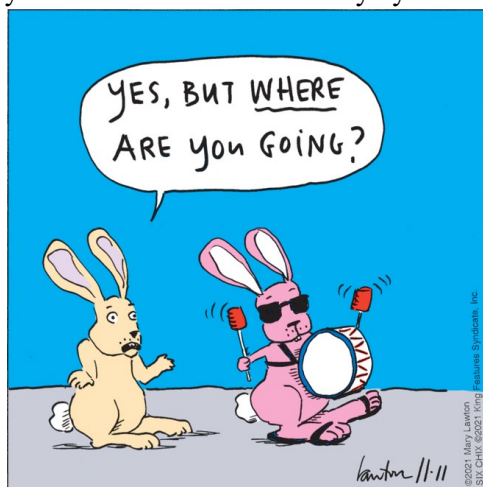
[Hard-copy] COVER (Bogin & Cini): "Missed us by that much!" was a reference to an incident in

which a 74-year-old woman lost control of her car, drove up on the sidewalk, and plowed

through a pedestrian pathway in Washington Square Park, killing five people near where NYUSFS used to gather. Fortunately for us, it happened a couple of hours before meeting time.

STILL YET LATER vs. NOT THAT MUCH

LATER (Chas Belov): “However, I do keep recording tunes (on a digital recorder) as they pop into my head, hoping some will stick. Unfortunately, they tend to pop into my head when I’m trying to get to sleep or when I awake in the middle of the night.” Can you keep your cell phone by your bedside and sing the tunes into it as audio memos when you get inspired, then transcribe them to the digital recorder when convenient? /*/ “I’ve long given up on reading novels after several episodes of getting halfway through them and being unable to continue; not sure whether that’s choice of material or my age showing.” I’m suffering something similar: I find I don’t get much book-reading time, so if I start a book, I may read a couple of chapters and then not get back to it for days or weeks (and then have to back up several pages to recall what was going on). It may take me months to get through a novel. Probably I could find more book-reading time if I spent less time in front of the laptop. /*/ (¢APA-NEWS) I don’t pay much attention to royalty myself, and the main thing I did to commemorate QE2’s passing was sing “God Save the King,” replacing the fannish-traditional “God Save the Queen,” at midnight on the way home from FISTFA that weekend. I don’t anticipate singing it again for a while. /*/ (¢me) “I am avoiding indoor gatherings larger than two or three close friends.” I’m willing to go as far as eight or ten close friends if I know they’re all fully vaccinated; any more and I mask up. /*/ I don’t remember much about the talk given by the guy who’d traveled cross-country by local transit,



(Mary Lawton for *Six Chix*, 11 November 2021)

beyond what I wrote the other month. He gave a lot of details of system names that just didn’t stick in my head, and he ran out of time (in the talk) before he’d gotten as far as crossing the Rockies. /*/ Regarding the navigation of the entire New York City subway system on one fare, I don’t know if my friends accomplished it in the 1970s, but apparently at least 70 people have since 1940; look up “Subway Challenge” on Wikipedia. Times have changed as parts of the system have been shut down and others added, but it seems to take between 21 and 29 hours, depending on whether one is required to stop at each station or can just pass through on the express track. /*/ “Thirty days have September,/ Mapril, Goon, and Cucumber.” I seem to recall a variation that ran “Thirty days hath September,/ April, June, and no wonder.” Also, Walt Kelly once had a character in *Pogo* recite something that began “Fourth, eleventh, ninth, and sixth:/ Thirty days to each affix.” All of these and more can be found on the Web if you ask your friendly neighborhood search engine.

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

(¢cover) “On reflection, I also suspect that wanting poll workers to be Republican or Democratic goes back to & was part of not recognizing the CPUSA to keep them off the ballot.” That seems plausibly devious. /*/ (¢me) “Hmm, on QL:TNG the possessed don’t appear in the image chamber.” That bothered me too. Worse yet, the character who claims he was once possessed by Sam—presumably during the run of the original show—doesn’t have any memory of being in the image chamber either; he claims he just blacked out, and came to when Sam left his body. That’s a continuity violation. /*/ I remember looseleaf binders from my school days, but no pocketed folders (as in Trapper Keepers) to fit in them.

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢me) “Did you write in anyone this year?” Yes; many years ago I got into the habit of writing my father’s name in for one of the judgeships that usually feature candidates running unopposed or cross-endorsed by all the major parties. I trusted his judgment and thought he’d have done a good job if he’d been elected. I continue to do this, figuring that almost three decades after his demise, he’s probably better than most of the political hacks. /*/ “I hate it when weathermen in fall and especially winter say stuff like ‘today’s temperatures were six degrees higher than they

are supposed to be this time of year.” Agreed. I’d accept “higher than usual/typical/expected.” Climate is what you expect; weather is what you get. /*/ “the 7-day average of daily new USA Covid cases ... dropped down to thirty thousand for a while but now is beginning another upwards move, having already reached forty thousand by now and expected to reach at least two hundred thousand early next year.” Two hundred thousand? That’s pretty scary. I see it’s been hovering around sixty thousand the past few days, which is bad enough.



(Bizarro by Dan Piraro, 11 August 2021)

I’ve located a cache of rolled-up old posters, some of them dating back to my college days, that were sitting in a corner of my room until very recently. Maybe I’ll put a few of them up on my freshly painted walls and see if they make the room feel more like it’s mine. (Regrettably, the Groucho posters seem to have disintegrated with the years, but I’ve found a Beatles photograph, a Mike Oldfield album cover, a *Bloom County* strip, and Abbott and Costello as drawn by Al Hirschfeld, with the complete “Who’s on First?” dialogue.)

Once again, a safe (but not safe-deposit), sane, healthy, and even joyous New Year to everyone...not to mention a Discordian ’23.

>Portions of the preceding fondly remember old Mr. Lang and his neon sign.<