



BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN [#535]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN spent a few days practicing his coughing this month 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)), but he's much better now. Still, he's watching out for an opportunity to get vaccinated once again, since his most recent COVID booster nine months ago doesn't seem to have deterred the nasty virus from making itself at home in his body. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #535, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 21, #6 (e-APA-NYU #211) and others who expect the uninfected, published June 2023 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**™. Cartoon above from *Frank and Ernest* by Thaves, 2 February 2023. All uncredited material copyright ©2023 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

M-M-M-MY CORONA: When I finished last issue, I figured Donna was recovering comfortably at Ditmas Park and things could stabilize for a bit. I noticed I had a slightly sore throat on Sunday 28 May, but didn't worry too much about it, and Ethan and I went over to visit her as usual. But the soreness was worse on Monday, and I felt more tired than usual. Given that the security desk always asks visitors if they've experienced fever or a sore throat in the preceding three days, Donna and I decided I'd best not visit that day. I'd read the prescription materials that came with the gabapentin, and those had mentioned possible flu-like symptoms, so I stopped taking the gabapentin to see what would happen.

Tuesday I felt even worse and had no voice, just a baritone croak. I also seemed to be developing a cough and a couple of degrees of fever. I suddenly remembered that we have a bunch of rapid-response COVID tests lying around the Cadre, so I took one—and got a positive result. This was mystifying considering that I've been vaxed five times so far, and have masked up every time I've been in an indoor public place for the past three years. Nonetheless, the two lines on the test stick were hard to dispute. I let Donna know that I wouldn't be visiting her for more than another day, and called my PCP's office. Dr. I.B. was out that day, but they scheduled me for a 5 pm video chat with his colleague Dr. B.K.

Dr. B.K. gave me the standard advice—lots of rest, lots of fluids, stay home. I asked about the new drugs they've been giving people with COVID, and he said that he didn't think they'd help much in my case, but if I really wanted him to, he'd prescribe me Paxlovid. I told him that I really wanted him to, so he did. I went out to CVS to pick it up, the only time I'd leave the house that week.

Paxlovid, a combination of two antivirals (nirmatrelvir and ritonavir), has one side effect that everyone who takes it mentions: it puts a foul taste in your mouth that lasts the whole time you're taking it. This is

because one of the drugs' by-products is excreted through your saliva. Mouthwash doesn't help. I found that chewing gum does, for 15 to 30 minutes at a time. Does anyone remember that contest I won six years ago that awarded me a year's supply of Extra sugar-free gum? I went through two and a half 15-stick packs of it over the next few days. (That was barely 2% of my winnings.)

By Sunday, the day I took my last dose, I was feeling more like myself, and tested negative using the same brand of test that had given me a positive test five days earlier. The nurse at Dr. I.B.'s and Dr. B.K.'s office advised me that I was OK to be out and about again, as long as I masked up indoors, so I resumed my visits to Donna.

Donna's been reporting that she's mostly comfortable at the rehab. She really wants to go home, but she accepts that the PT and OT folk there are doing her some good. They've got her walking with a walker (two wheels and two feet with tennis balls) but not yet with a rollator (four wheels and a seat), which she'd prefer because it lets her walk faster but also allows her to sit down if she gets tired. She's hopeful of a status upgrade soon. She's going to see the endocrinologist, Dr. D.R., the day this gets collated; that may engender a change of meds, but probably won't affect how long she stays in the rehab. She's been there for six weeks already; one of the nurses said that Medicare usually imposes a limit of 12 weeks per illness or injury. (This contrasts with the four weeks allowed by the private insurance we had the last time she needed rehab over a decade ago.)

While she's been out of the house, I've had the stairlift installed that we were discussing, so there should no longer be any issues of getting up and down the stairs (though there are still five steps from the street to the front door). The stairs aren't wide, and when I tried the lift, I had to sit up straight; slouching back moved my knees forward enough to hit the newel-posts at the top and bottom. I hope that Donna won't have a problem with it, since it's chiefly for her benefit.

I've also had Seymour the handyman come in and do the same sanding and refinishing of the floor in Donna's bedroom that he did in mine last November. And as a late addition to the work order, he's repainting the room; selecting a color was an interesting exercise, with so many kinds of greens (her color) in the chips from the paint store and Donna unable to compare them to the old paint in her room. Scraping off a peeling bit of the old paint and bringing it in to the rehab helped a bit.

One of my side gigs has finally come to an end. The American Society for Yad Vashem, publisher of *Martyrdom & Resistance*, has decided to do its editing and proofreading in house instead of using two freelancers (Yefim K. as layout editor, and me as proofreader and sometimes copyeditor). The June issue was our last. After 14 years, I was getting a bit tired of it, and the work I do for the orthodontic journal pays better, so I don't think I'll miss it too much. Thanks once again to Movie Mike for dropping the gig in my lap when he got tired of it back in 2009.



(Shoe by MacNelly and Lansing, 9 June 2023)

FRINGE RECEPTION: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 21, #5 (e-APA-NYU #210)

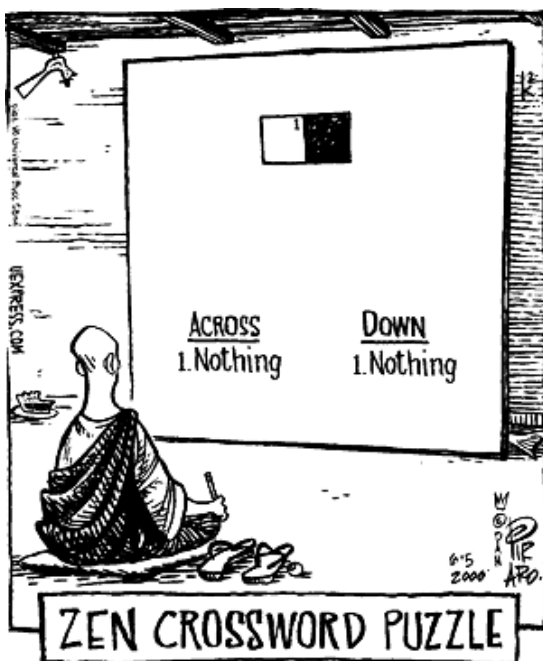
USEFUL AND INSTRUCTIVE PROSE (Richard Friedman): Like you, I hadn't reread "Nightfall" in half a century and so took the opportunity to reread it now. Thanks for providing the impulse. I'd also forgotten most of the details. /*/ And thanks for your notes. It hadn't occurred to me that "Asimov inverted his own claustrophobia and (mild) solarphobia to give the people on the planet claustrophobia and solarphilia." /*/ Like much of Asimov's work, the vast bulk of the story is not action but the proverbial "talking heads," but it still works.

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (øBelov) "The question 'What happens to the leftovers [zine pages]?' never occurred to me, because I assumed there were never any leftovers." A lot of contributors ran off a few extras for their own archives or to send to friends who didn't get the apa. I did that then via the USPS, and I do it now via e-mail. /*/ I do the Sunday *New York Times* crossword (printing it out from the website) but generally don't bother with the daily. The Sunday *Times* also has variety puzzles which rotate among a few different formats, as well as a set of tiny puzzles each week labeled "A Little Variety." I actually prefer those. But back in February of this year, the editors posted a notice that as of the first of March, the variety puzzles would no longer be made available online, for love or money; puzzlers who wanted those could go buy the dead-tree edition. The *Times* cited

unspecified software problems as the reason, but that doesn't explain why it couldn't post PDFs that readers could print out and solve with a pencil (as I do with the Sunday crossword). So now I don't get the Sunday variety puzzles any more. But I found a couple of years ago that the *Wall Street Journal* runs variety puzzles every Saturday in rotating formats, and you don't even need to subscribe to access them online. Once in four weeks is a cryptic crossword (my favorite style) created by Emily Cox and Henry Rathvon (my favorite team). I've printed out a lot of them, so I'm set for a while; I may get caught up in another three years or so. /*/ Oh, yeah, and I do Wordle right after midnight each night before going to bed. I just now tried Nerdle and found it impossible until I found the way to switch to "colorblind mode." It was still slow going, but I got the answer. I think I'll try it a few more times.

DEATH vs. UNSUBSCRIBE (Chas Belov):

"Surprised to notice that there are apparently only five of us on the mailing list for e-APA-NYU, based on the distribution list for Marc's contributors' reminder." Actually, there are 11 people currently on the apa-nyu list, and a couple more on the nyusfs list who therefore get the hardcopy version. All but one of these have contributed to the apa (paper or electronic) at one point or another; but only five of them have contributed since we went online. (Oh, and I see that one of the people on both lists is deceased and hence unlikely to read the e-mails, so I should probably delete him.) It seems futile to send e-mail to the others asking for zines, so I haven't bothered including them in the reminders I send a few days before the end of the month. I might add that both lists had much greater membership before Jailbait's server crashed two years ago—a sort of forced mass unsubscribe—but my appeals to get people to sign on to the groups.io versions of them have met with only partial success. /*/ "Anyway, that does raise an interesting potential plot point with body-swap plots: if your swapping counterpart did happen to get somebody pregnant or committed a crime while they were in your body, and then the two of you swapped back, how would you not be left holding the bag?" If body-swapping is so rare that no one will believe that you've done it, then I think you're out of luck unless you can get a



(Bizarro by Dan Piraro, 6 June 2000)

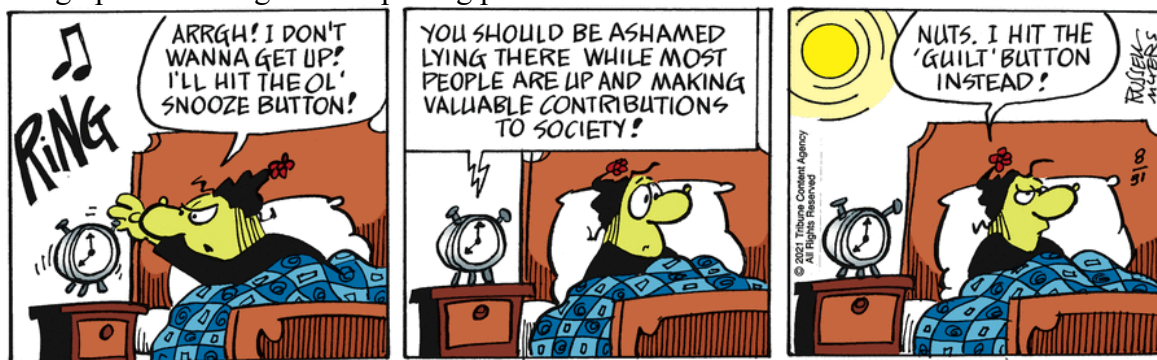
temporary-insanity defense to hold. In a world where it happens often enough to be accepted as a possibility, someone will figure out a way to prove that the person in your body when the act was committed wasn't "you," or at least cast reasonable doubt—it'll turn out that there's some physiological or psychological "tell." But it may never be possible to prove who it really was in there. /*/ (çme) I think "tsuris" is usually treated as an uncountable noun and thus not pluralized. Merriam-Webster says that it's already plural: "Yiddish *tsures*, *tsores*, plural of *tsure*, *tsore* trouble, distress, from Hebrew *šārāh*" /*/ "¿Do you think any cockroaches who take part in the NYUSFS ferry ride this year will consider themselves members?" I don't think New York cockroaches have yet achieved sentience. If they have, I'd like to negotiate a truce with them that will keep them out of the kitchen. /*/ Stan Freberg did take off on "A Christmas Carol" in his "Green Chri\$tma\$," but I'm pretty sure the "Bah, humbugs" in that are not "Bah, Hamburg." (If he'd recorded it a few years later after McDonald's went nationwide, he probably would indeed have found a way to work "Hamburg" in.)

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

When you enumerate the topics discussed at a meeting, if some of the topic descriptions are

lengthy and contain commas, please delimit the topics with semicolons rather than commas, for clarity; otherwise it's hard to parse out where each topic ends. /*/ I'm watching FreeCycle and rooting for you to acquire the microwave oven you need that way. It could be a few months, however. /*/ I thought the Celtic otherworld was "Tír na nÓg," not "Tír na gÓg." /*/ (çBelov) "Apparently 'decollate' is only distantly related to 'décolletage'." If that's a joke, it's a total bust. As far as I can tell, the words are totally unrelated. /*/ Talk-to-text is worse than useless unless the user proofreads and corrects the results. And yes, "Autocorrupt" is a more accurate name than "Autocorrect." /*/ (çme) The workings of the stairlift seem simple enough to me, but we'll see what happens when Donna gets back and tries to use it. /*/ Last time I was called in for (state) jury duty, about 15 years ago, I spent a few hours trying to find someone in charge to whom I could explain that I was a nearly full-time caregiver to an elderly, mobility-impaired person. I finally found such a person, and he marked something on my papers such that they haven't called me back since. Having served on three juries that actually rendered verdicts, I think I've fulfilled my civic duty.

I volunteered to be a poll worker again this year, and they have me working the full 17-hour day on primary day, 27 June (before collation but after I submit this zine), at a school in the Mapleton neighborhood, about two miles west of the Cadre. Since it will involve mostly judgeships—no president, no governor, no mayor, no Congressperson, ~~no bloody A, no bloody B, no bloody C, no bloody D~~—I don't expect the polling place to be terribly busy. The hardest part may be staying awake the whole time after getting up at 3 am to get to the polling place at 5 am.



(Broom Hilda by Russell Myers, 31 August 2021)

Once again, remember that the Fourth of July Ferry Meeting will be on the sixth of July this year, less than a week after this collation goes out. Hope to see a bunch of you there. Happy fireworks, everyone.

>Portions of the preceding were not found in the bathroom at Mar-a-Lago.<