



Beyond the Fringefan [#548]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN finds that despite the recent change in personnel, he's still feeling a vast sense of déjà vu as the political machinery lumbers onward. Strong, outspoken woman vs. wannabe dictator (on day one)? We did that, what, eight years ago.... So he'll watch as little of the proceedings as he can get

away with, from the comfort of 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)), and go out and vote when the time comes. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #548, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 22, #7 (e-APA-NYU #224) and other non-deplorables, published July 2024 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Real Life Adventures* by Wise and Aldrich, 3 October 2012. All uncredited material copyright ©2024 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

DON'T PAY THE FERRY, MAN: The Ferry meeting was a bit small this year—six of us heading out to Staten Island, where we waited for a latecomer who'd gotten on the subsequent boat, so that seven of us headed back. Since I'd brought two pizzas, everyone had seconds and some of us had thirds, so we decided by acclamation to skip the dinner expedition. Instead, after returning to Manhattan, we spent most of an hour chewing over how best to get two fen on rollators back to where they needed to be, given the scarcity of ADA-accessible subway stations in the MTA's system.

For the moment, I'm attributing the low attendance to the oppressive weather plus the late date; though we've been doing it this way for more than 40 years, it seems that people aren't remembering that we have the meeting a week later when the Fourth falls on a Thursday. I sent out a reminder on the #nyusfs e-mail list, but only about a dozen people are on it since I had to recreate it after Jailbait's server crash three years ago. (I really wish more of the surviving NYUSFS members would rejoin....) As a longtime Mets fan, I can only say, wait till next year.

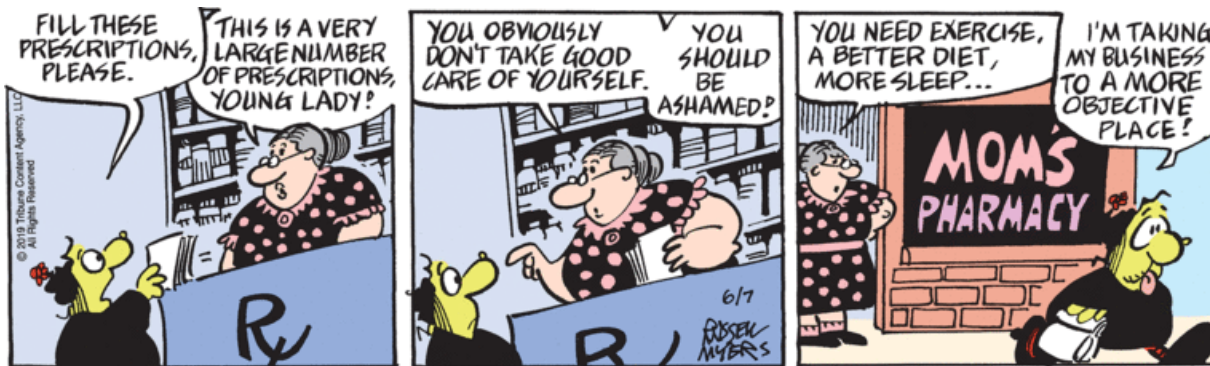
And that brings us to NASFiC. Or rather, it didn't bring us to NASFiC. We finally heard from the concom's accessibility person, just twelve days before the convention was to begin. He was very apologetic about his long period of being incommunicado—family health issues, he said—and said the con wasn't actually coordinating scooter rentals owing to low demand (which seemed odd in itself), but he gave me a URL of a company called Cloud of Goods, which he said he used regularly. However,

when I contacted Cloud of Goods, I got messages about being unable to fulfill my request. The company said it would try to find a “local affiliate” that could help. The following Tuesday—one week before the day we’d be leaving if we were going—Cloud of Goods sent an update that it was unable to find anyone else who could help either. Since ordinarily it’s necessary to reserve scooters a month or so in advance, we weren’t greatly surprised.

Donna’s been having a bad summer healthwise, and this was pretty much the last straw; neither she nor I expected to have much fun at the con with me having to push her around in the wheelchair all weekend. So we bowed to the seemingly inevitable, let a few folks know we wouldn’t be there, and cancelled our hotel reservation. I typed this paragraph on the first official day of the con; I hope the folks had a good time.

Donna, as I say, has not been doing terribly well. Edema in her legs has cut back on what mobility she has left, though changes in her meds seem to be helping a bit. Her (ten-year-old) CPAP broke in late June, and we’ve been attempting to jump through the hoops needed to get Medicare to supply another one—a visit to the pulmonologist to get the prescription, a sleep study, another visit to get the results, and a lot of waiting. Because of Donna’s mobility issues, each visit becomes a major effort in logistical planning. (Without the stair lift we put in last year, it would be pretty much impossible.)

We’ve also been getting the runaround on getting the proper medication for her nebulizer that won’t give her bronchial spasms; the doctor sent the prescription to the pharmacy, which said a prior approval was needed, which the doctor then sent to the pharmacy, which said it needed a diagnostic code, which the doctor sent, but the pharmacy claimed it never received. Somewhere in there, there was a call to Donna’s Medicare Part D (prescription) coverage, which informed us that it could cover the medication only if Donna was in a managed care facility (nursing home), but that, because it was part of the supplies for “durable medical equipment,” it was still possible to get it covered by Part B (outpatient care), if we could only get that diagnostic code from the doctor to the pharmacy...



(Broom Hilda by Russell Myers, 7 June 2019)

We have had altogether too many days on which, thanks to waiting on hold and awaiting return calls, I never got to leave the house at all, or left only to pick up prescriptions.

On the plus side, Dr. D.D. the hematologist says Donna’s blood tests show no indications of the myeloma he had alluded to in a previous visit.

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 22, #6 (e-APA-NYU #223)

JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman):
“...another duel with the MetroCard killbot (I was again a nickel short). The (small) clerk said

that my problem with the machine was that I was too tall, so looking at it from a bad angle, and needed to tap below the tabs, not on them.”

When I was using those machines more often, I found that each machine's touch screen was calibrated a bit differently. I could usually figure out, from the response to the first couple of taps, how to adjust my angle of attack for the rest of the transaction. /*/ (¢APA-NEWS) "My sister & I got German measles during that big epidemic in the mid-'60s." My sister and I did, too. I believe I also got regular measles at some point, but I don't think I ever got chicken pox or mumps (the other "childhood diseases" of that era). /*/ If I'd had to mention "It's a Small World," I might have had second thoughts about honoring the Sherman brothers. Fortunately for us, by the time we got to visit the Magic Kingdom with Ethan, he was up for older kids' rides. /*/ (¢me) "Can you set up a clothesline in the backyard?" We probably could, if it came down to that, but it would require someone handier than me to attach the pulleys to the back wall of the house and the corner of the garage. I hope we don't get to that point again. /*/ "Brain's Plan for Pinky," as created by ChatGPT, did in fact include a couple of "narfs."

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢Blackman) "2024 is ... the 50th birthday of the only Joel Nelson most people have seen." Who might that be? I'm not aware of anyone more famous than you with that name. I remember print ads for American Express in the 1970s that often showed a credit card with the name Joel Nelson on it. /*/ (¢me) "I think you and I used one [mimeograph] at the 'Tute to print a few things." My recollection is that it was a ditto machine. The blue or purple print that smells like alcohol (when fresh) is ditto. /*/ "What do fans of various ages think of 'SyFy,' the name of a cable channel?" I recall a bit of discussion when that channel changed its name from "SciFi" 15 years ago, the gist of which was that the new name was silly but not of great significance. /*/ Regarding the disappearing and reappearing oil-dot trail behind your vehicle, remember that problems that go away by themselves often come back by themselves. You know what to do. /*/ "Stepping down with the right foot and stepping up with the left foot on curbs was easy..." When Donna was rehabbing after one of her hip surgeries, her physical therapists gave her a mnemonic for which leg to use when going up or down: "Good goes to heaven; bad goes to hell." Glad to hear things are improving.

FANCY WHEAT FIELD BAKERY vs.
 SUNSHINE WHEAT FIELD BAKERY vs.
 HARVEST WHEAT FIELD BAKERY (Chas Below): We don't have any Wheat Field Bakeries around here; searching on the name only got me a bunch of links to reviews of the ones in your town. /*/ "I'm guessing that at some point [the *New York Times*] made an editorial decision to make the Sunday crosswords easier." I Googled [more precisely, I DuckDuckWent] "Have New York Times crosswords been getting easier" and found a 2021 article from *Paste* magazine in which a crossword fan enlisted some friends to time themselves solving three weeks of *Times* puzzles from 1995, 2005, 2015, and 2021. The results were startlingly consistent: the puzzles were the hardest in 2005 and had been getting easier ever since, with the newest ones notably easier than even the 1995 ones. The article's author speculated that it was a matter of more customers coming back to the paper when they had the positive reinforcement of being able to complete the puzzle—in short, it was profit driven. I also found an interview with Will Shortz, the *Times*'s puzzle editor, who admitted that he'd made a conscious decision to make the puzzles more "accessible." Now I feel less proud of myself for being able to finish them. Bah. /*/



(*Strange Brew* by John Deering, 22 January 2024)

The *Times* does accept unsolicited crossword submissions. Good luck! /*/ "Caveat reader." I've seen "Caveat lector." /*/ (¢APA-NEWS) The radio station WPLJ did take its call letters from the Frank Zappa song: a little inside joke perpetrated by the progressive-rock management

when the ABC network decided to stop calling it WABC-FM. /*/ “Nowadays, the only extended drum solos I can think of are In A Gadda Da Vida and Concerto for Group and Orchestra.” There are a couple of Ginger Baker solos that come to my mind (“Toad,” with Cream, and “Do What You Like,” with Blind Faith), plus John Bonham on Led Zeppelin’s “Moby Dick.” Oh, and Ringo’s 16-second contribution to the cause

during “The End.” /*/ (çme) “¿What about ditto?” What about it? I believe I used it a few times in my college days (see my çNelson above). /*/ If you knew anyone with children (or anyone with childish entertainment tastes) in the 1990s, I’m surprised you’ve never heard of Pinky and the Brain. /*/ Two whole days without Internet? Congratulations on maintaining what’s left of your sanity through the ordeal.



(Looks Good on Paper by Dan Collins, 10 March 2024)

27 June 2024: I biked past a truck belonging to a plumbing company that does drain service. Slogan:
LINES SO CLEAR...YOU’LL WISH WE DID SEARCH HISTORIES!

Not much more to say as we sweat out the summer doldrums and await more medical results. If anyone reading this is heading to Glasgow for Worldcon, have fun, and may the airline’s systems not be under the control of CrowdStrike.

>Portions of the preceding will not be visiting the Frog and Peach to order “Toad” with Cream.<