



Beyond the Fringefan [#558]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN, having just turned 73, notes that he is indeed older than he once was and younger than he'll be, but that's not unusual. Having demonstrated his profound grasp of the obvious, he'll make himself available as a reference source at a very reasonable price; for further details, contact him 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)). This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #558, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 23, #5 (e-APA-NYU #234) and others who are old enough to know better, published May 2025 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Hägar the Horrible* by Dik Browne, 11 February 1973. All uncredited material copyright ©2025 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

DOCTOR, DOCTOR, GIVE ME THE NEWS: The past month saw me visiting my cardiologist and my audiologist for routine checkups. I told Dr. E.T., the cardiologist, about a dull ache I'd been feeling in my chest near my left shoulder; after examining me, he said that based on the ache's position and my history, it probably wasn't cardiac but pulmonary in nature. Pleurisy, he called it, which to my mind suggested *Camille*-like gasping and wheezing, but which he said is an inflammation that would likely resolve by itself. To speed my healing, he prescribed naproxen, plus omeprazole to minimize the gut problems that that tends to cause me. (Yeah, those are both over-the-counter meds these days.) The ache is gone now, so I guess he was right.

Dr. H.K., the audiologist, made small adjustments to the hearing aids I'd gotten from her last fall, and supplied me with a bunch of replacement parts. I complained that once or twice a week, one aid or the other fails to function, apparently owing to getting clogged with earwax. This necessitates that I pull the earpiece off, clean it with an alcohol swab and a toothpick, and often replace the tiny "filter" that the earpiece fits over. This is more frequent maintenance than I'd expected to be responsible for with such pricey equipment; she said it was more frequent than she'd have expected, too, but couldn't say why it was happening with me. My inner ears don't seem to be any waxier than the average. One more (minor) age-related annoyance.

HE DO THE WALK, HE DO THE WALK OF LIFE: I switched my ringtone again, to a Dire Straits hit, before switching it to "Journey of the Sorcerer" in honor of Douglas Adams (for Towel Day on 25

May). I have a few more “walk” songs to use but may save them for after the next surgery. Otherwise, I have little new to report; I’m continuing PT as long as Medicare will keep paying for it, and I’m walking nearly “normally” most of the time. (Again, when I’m not, it’s generally because of the other hip or because of the pinched nerve between vertebrae L4 and L5. I may need to start a whole new L5 Society for people with spinal issues—it seems the name isn’t currently in use since that group merged with the National Space Institute to form the National Space Society.)

The FISTFA meeting in late May was interesting in that it included two people on rollators, two on walkers, and two on canes (plus one who’s been carrying a walking stick that’s as tall as she is for many years). The minivan’s capacity was not up to the demand. My regrets to the ones who ended up having to get home by subway and foot. (On the plus side, I managed to climb the five flights of steps from Broadway to Park Terrace East with nothing worse than having to stop and catch my breath a couple of times.)

Does anyone play Monopoly any more? We were digging through one of the vast number of boxes still unsorted since 18 months ago, and we found a collection of pieces that appeared to be from four separate sets, none of them complete. In my childhood, every family on the block had a set, usually with a piece or two missing. The one thing that was invariably absent was the rule sheet, and every family had its own variations that were not endorsed by Parker Brothers. (\$500 in the middle of the board, to be collected by whoever landed on Free Parking? Income Tax payments and Community Chest penalties added to that stash? Mortgaged properties returned to the bank?) It was a game everyone knew how to play, and was invariably suggested at gatherings of family or friends, even though usually all but one or two present passionately hated it (and the others would get sick of it after the game had dragged on for over an hour). Sure enough, I was able to cobble together a full set of Title Deeds, a surfeit of Chance and Community Chest cards, and plenty of houses, hotels, and play money, but no instructions. We dumped most of the excess (though Donna thought the wooden houses from the oldest set might be worth something as a collector’s item). Will the set I put together get used during my lifetime? I wouldn’t bet as much as the second prize in a beauty contest (\$10).



(Speed Bump by Dave Coverly, 16 January 2006)

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 23, #4 (e-APA-NYU #233)

TIME vs. SPACE (Chas Belov): I’d call it a tie because no one ever has enough of either one. /*/ I’ve now had two or three Sunday *Times* puzzles in the past couple of months in which I filled in all but one letter, or had to look up a name from pop culture to get the last letter. Annoying. /*/ I used to do the Jumble whenever I ran across it in a newspaper. Nowadays I do it sporadically online—I’ll go weeks without doing it, then something (like your zine) will remind me of it

and I’ll do a week’s worth in rapid succession. I seem to get 95% of the answers in a couple of seconds, but one in twenty will stop me cold, and I’ll stare at it for five minutes or more before it hits me. (The online version doesn’t show the letters for the final answer until you complete the short words.) /*/ Music in a language one doesn’t speak or understand poses an interesting challenge, in that one can’t figure out what the song is about, but is also liberating, in that one

doesn't need to pay attention to the words and can judge it purely on the sound, much like an instrumental. I've always liked "Sukiyaki" (a title that has nothing to do with the song but was chosen by some American record company exec



SOMETIMES I WONDER WHAT IT WOULD
 BE LIKE TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND
 SONG LYRICS WITHOUT LOOKING THEM UP

(xkcd by Randall Munroe, 15 June 2015)

as representing one of the few words most Americans will recognize as Japanese) and "Eres Tu," and have had them as earworms occasionally (and pulled them up on YouTube). "Je T'Aime...Moi Non Plus" always seemed

more silly than erotic to me. I don't think I'd ever heard "Dragostea din tei" prior to reading your blog post about foreign-language play lists (and the song didn't impress me then). Listening to the songs you mention in the post, it seems as though the foreign songs that sound like my kind of folk or rocknroll sound good to me, and the ones that use disco- or rap-style beats or sound effects are as annoying to me as English-language disco or rap recordings. But thanks for creating the playlists; I believe I'll be dipping into them at random intervals hereafter. /*/ (cme) I found a video of "Punky Bad Hip" with English subtitles. (Curiously, it had vanished by the next time I looked for it.) Punky indeed. I suspect I'll use the title as a paragraph header in a zine sometime during the coming year. /*/ The stairlift came with two remote controls as well as the one built into the armrest, so we Velcroed one to the wall at the top of the stairs and the other at the bottom of the stairs.

JAMISON, TAKE e-LATER (Mark L. Blackman):
 Oops...it appears you re-sent your January zine in for April. Looking forward to a lot of new material from you this month.

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN (me): ...and an oops on my part; when I submitted this zine, I erroneously headed the e-mail with the previous zine's date and issue number, so that's the way it's listed in the APA-NEWS. The zine itself is correct, though.

I guess I'll break this off now and go meditate on the question of whether it's ethical for an agnostic like me to pray for rain on Donald Trump's military parade. (Would the tank turrets act as lightning rods?) May the Big Beautiful Botch be a bust, and may we all survive another month.

>Portions of the preceding have forgotten the word for 10 to the 100th power,
 and will have to go and Google it.<