



## BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN [#559]

**BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN** learned one crucial difference between voting and going to the movies, last week on primary day: the movies are air conditioned. He's still recovering from the experience, drinking lots of iced tea while stationing himself in front of the a/c in his room 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)). Candidates? Oh, right, there were candidates. He's got four months to figure out whether he supports any of them before November. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #559, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 23, #6 (e-APA-NYU #235) and other people's choices, published June 2025 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Pearls Before Swine* by Stephan Pastis, 27 June 2016. All uncredited material copyright ©2025 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

**HOTLY CONTESTED BALLOT:** I was notified in mid-June that I'd be doing my poll work on primary day, Tuesday 24 June, at Roosevelt Hall, a Brooklyn College building located on Bedford Avenue about three-quarters of a mile west of the Cadre. I'd worked there for the presidential primaries last spring but didn't remember much about it, other than that the room was on the second floor and that it had rained all day that day, soaking me when I went home for my meal breaks. Forecasts this time were for bright sunshine, so I figured all would be pleasant. Unfortunately, the bright sunshine was accompanied by record-breaking high temperatures, over 100°F, and the room, a gymnasium complete with basketball hoops, had neither air conditioning nor windows. The Board of Elections brought in chilled bottled water for the poll workers, but we all still felt as though we were melting all day.

As usual, I was there as an information clerk—one of a few who greeted voters as they arrived, looked up their addresses and sent them to the proper tables for their districts. There were seven ED/AD tables at the site, covering an area whose population combined African Americans, West Indians, Orthodox Jews, and apparently a few Muslims. (Many of those in the last two groups were quite heavily clothed and must have been even more uncomfortable with the temperature, but were only there for a few minutes and could probably go home afterward, shed a few layers, and turn on the a/c.) Somewhere between 500 and 1,000 voters passed through over the 15 hours the polls were open.

(As I've mentioned before, I'm registered as an independent and therefore don't get to vote in party primaries in New York, so I didn't have any proverbial dogs in these fights. I understand that in many

states, voters get to vote in primaries irrespective of their party affiliation, which seems counter-intuitive, but just may produce slates of candidates less oriented toward extremism and single-issue politics. I'd like to see it happen here, although it would mean more work for me researching the candidates' positions every spring.)

One of my table-mates, Donna by name, was fairly new at the task but caught on quickly. The other lady, Annmarie, was more experienced than both of us, and also involved with the local Democratic club; she seemed to feel that this gave her license to disappear for several half-hour intervals throughout the day. When one of the election inspectors called her on this, she denied it, and then spent much of the rest of the day trash-talking him whenever he wasn't there, cursing him out and threatening to send her husband and her grown sons to execute violent vengeance on him. By the end of the day, Donna and I were rather relieved during her disappearances.

To add insult to injury, after the poll site closed at 9 pm, and after we information clerks were done with our close-down tasks (removing signage, counting absentee ballots collected and locking up the collection box, folding chairs and tables), site coordinator Ruth seemed unwilling to release us. Three of us were standing around for 45 minutes doing nothing, when we'd all have preferred to be home showering and enjoying some ice cream. (Annmarie had already disappeared once more, with her belongings.) Ruth simply did not answer when we asked if we could leave. When some of the ED/AD table clerks began to leave, having verified and cross-checked all their vote counts, we walked out with them. I'll see whether this has any effect on the pay I receive for the day. Things should be a good deal more physically comfortable for my next assignment in November.

Final results are not yet in because ranked-choice votes take longer to tabulate, but as of this writing, the Democratic nominee appears to be Zohran Mamdani, a democratic socialist who if elected would be the first Muslim and the first South Asian mayor this city's ever had. It should be interesting to see the barrage of dog-whistled and outright bigoted advertising brought to bear against him over the next few months. Incumbent mayor Eric Adams and former governor Andrew Cuomo both appear to be campaigning as independents, and does anyone even know who the Republican nominee is? (Oy. I just looked it up. It's publicity hound Curtis Sliwa. More than enough said.)

**CHOKING IN THE CLUTCH:** The 2011 Honda Odyssey I call the Cadre Conveyance has now been serving us reliably for nine years and, I hope, will long continue to do so—it's only accumulated some 40,000 miles in all that time. But it gave us a scare the other week when we (Donna, Ruth the aide, and I) were on our way to a medical appointment. We stopped at a red light, and when it turned green, I hit the gas and the car did not move, but rather emitted a loud grinding shriek, which continued until I shifted to neutral. We verified that the noise recurred in forward, low, and reverse gears, so we clearly weren't going anywhere, and then called the AAA and the practitioners Donna had been expecting to see. Donna was sure the transmission had fallen out, and was about ready to write the car off as a total loss. I suspected it was reparable, whatever it was, but would make a huge dent in our bank account.

Fortunately, we were less than two miles from home and less than four miles from the garage I mostly deal with. The tow truck guy, Andrew, couldn't get Donna and Ruth and the



(Carpe Diem by Niklas Eriksson, 1 April 2024)

wheelchair back to the Cadre—there wasn't enough room in the truck cab—but he was kind enough to wait while we called a car service to take care of that, and to wait again when the driver refused to take Donna because “the car isn't big enough for the wheelchair” (not true, since the wheelchair folds) and we had to get the car service to send a minivan instead. But they got Donna home safely while Andrew got me and the Conveyance to the garage.

When we got there, they weren't too busy (perhaps because they know me) to look at the Conveyance, first out on the asphalt and then on a lift inside the garage. Three different guys were poking and prodding around the rear axle and discussing the issue in a variety of accents (this being Noo Yawk after all). Ultimately one of them told me the story—I couldn't make out everything he said, but it had something to do with the linkage between the transmission and the axle. I took a bus home, and was surprised when they called me in less than two hours to tell me the job was done. I bicycled back (I can just barely manhandle the bike in across the back seats of the Conveyance with room to close the doors) and paid; the total cost was under \$400, nearly two orders of magnitude less than the probable cost of a replacement minivan, so I heaved several sighs of relief as I drove home. I think we ~~dodged~~ Hondaed a bullet.

#### FRINGE RECEPTION: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 23, #5 (e-APA-NYU #234)

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢Belov) “I have noticed the same [getting better over time and thus ‘I've trained my brain in a new skill’] with me involving the daily 6x6 KenKen, Nerdle, Strands, and Wordle. I rarely need the million-word book for Wordle nowadays.” I believe the Wordle words are drawn from a much smaller universe—a few thousand rather than a million. I often look at the Wordlebot analysis after I finish the puzzle, and have to remind myself that the 'bot's logic is based on it having access to the full list, while mine is based on what words surface in my brain when I look at the letters. /\*/ Someone in an online forum recommended Strands to me a few weeks ago, and now I've added it to my after-midnight routine. (No wonder I never get to bed early!) I needed a lot of hints at first, but I'm starting to get the hang of it. /\*/ (¢me) The Kid is doing pretty well, and continues to come by weekly to assist in decluttering, anything that requires deep bending or heavy lifting, and tech support on the Linux laptop he set up for his mother. /\*/ I installed Waze on my phone a few years ago, after Google Maps sent me in circles for half an hour trying to get home from the Philcon hotel, but I still tend to use Google as a default when I need directions. I should try a few A-B comparisons and choose. /\*/ We don't have a lawn mower. But we have a weed-whacker, and in the warmer weather, The Kid deploys it every few weeks on the patch of weeds that serves as our front lawn.

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN (me): It occurs to me that my allusion in the clause “he is indeed older than he once was and younger than he'll be, but that's not unusual” was obscure enough to have likely passed by all my present readers. (The few I might once have expected to get it are no longer on this mortal plane.) It's from a verse in “The Boxer” that Simon and Garfunkel did not originally record, but which they (and Paul Simon as a solo) sometimes performed live. It's in the performance on *The Concert in Central Park*, at about the 2-minute mark, where the instrumental break occurs in the studio version:

IT MAY NOT MAKE ME HIP, BUT NOTHING  
BEATS LISTENING TO THE SAME OLD  
SONGS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

IT'S LIKE HANGING  
OUT WITH FRIENDS.





“Now, the years are rolling by me; they are rocking evenly./I am older than I once was and younger than I’ll be, but that’s not unusual./No, it isn’t strange: after changes upon changes, we are more or less the same./After changes, we are more or less the same.”

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

“The Machine ate my \$5 bill and spit out my MetroCard uncredited for the \$5.” How many bills have now been eaten by those machines? Have you asked the *\*anachronism alert\** token clerks how to complain and request a refund? /\*/ “...in the hospital, where any semblance of privacy was denied me.” Um, that’s pretty much s.o.p. at any hospital, isn’t it? /\*/ I had problems with the food services at Ditmas Park too (missing and wrong items, uncalled-for sodium restrictions), which I ascribe to incompetence rather than malice, though that doesn’t do anything to remedy the situation. /\*/ I’ve experienced being addressed by Latinos as “Papi” intermittently for a couple of decades; it doesn’t seem disrespectful, and is probably better than “hey, old man.” /\*/ “my local branch [library] is currently ‘closed for maintenance’, so I have to travel a mile to another.” Is that the Kings Highway branch? Wasn’t it closed for months just a few years ago to set up a new tech center on the upper level? /\*/ (¢me) I asked; “NAS” just stood for “no added salt.” I never saw “NCS” on my charts, and can’t imagine how that means sugar-free. I tried the coffee once at Ditmas Park and switched to tea for the rest of my stay there. /\*/ “My diagnosis ranged through ...something that had a name like, but wasn’t, pneumonia, an inflammation, rather than an infection.” Could it have been pneumonitis (pronounced “Newman-itis”)? I was diagnosed with that once in college, but no one at the infirmary would tell me the difference. /\*/ “We are currently clear on OPSEC — that is, operational security,” Secretary of Defense Hegseth wrote in the now-infamous Signal chat that included the *Atlantic’s* Jeffrey Goldberg. /\*/ Second zine: The Firesign Theatre album with ДЛЛ НДІЛ/МДЯХ/ЛЕИИОИ on the cover was titled *How Can You Be in Two Places at Once When You’re Not Anywhere at All*. /\*/ I didn’t really find having a home health aide all that helpful either, except in carrying the groceries in when I went shopping, but then I’d already regained a lot of mobility by the time they sent him. (Maybe an aide could have done the

shopping for you when you were feeling less mobile.) He didn’t particularly get in the way, so I was OK with having him here as long as Medicare was paying, and will probably do the same next time. /\*/ “Despite horror stories about their unreliability, I’m applying for Access-a-Ride.” It’s better than nothing, I hear. /\*/ And this November will mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the events of the “Alice’s Restaurant Massacre” (but only the 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the album’s release). But Arlo has retired for health reasons, so I don’t know if he’ll be doing anything to mark the occasion.

1-877-KARS4KIDS vs 1-877-CARS4CIDS (Chas Belov): I find the jingle for that organization so obnoxious that when it comes on, I change the station, turn the radio off, or leave the room. (Charity Navigator gives the organization only 2 out of 4 stars for reasons of inefficiency and lack of transparency; if I ever have a car to donate, I know there are other groups that accept cars.) /\*/ “...or taking part in a game of Exquisite Corpse.” Not a game with which I was familiar. Have you ever played it? /\*/ “Zabadak by Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mich and Tich is definitely non-English.” But it has two verses in perfectly good English between the non-English choruses. So if that’s non-English, then Ross Bagdasarian/David Seville’s “The Witch Doctor” must also be. And probably John Lennon’s “Sun King.” /\*/ (¢me)

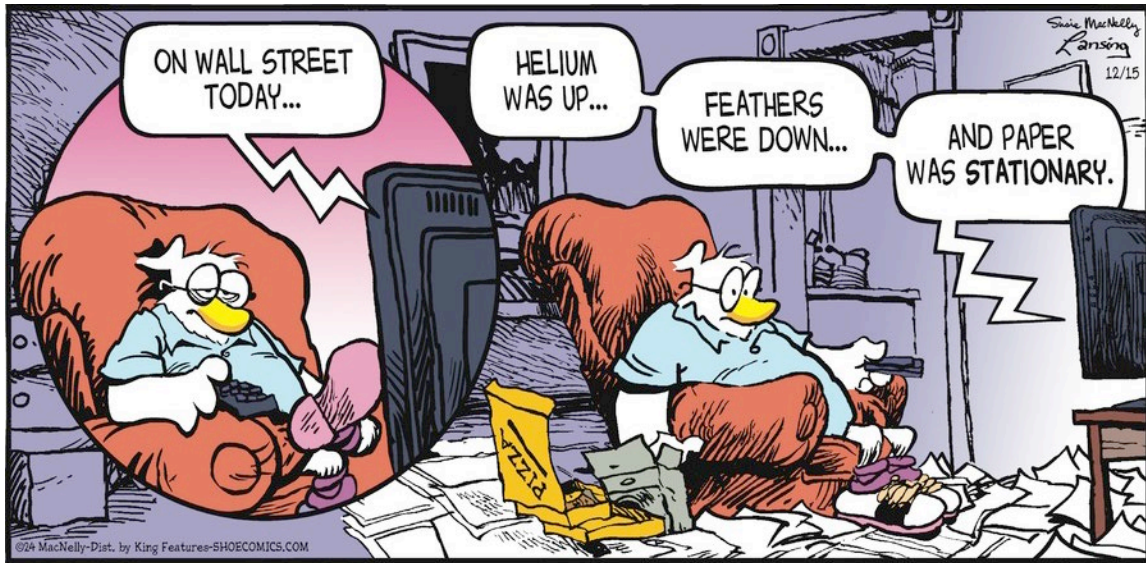


(Bizarro by Wayne & Piraro, 25 April 2025)

Fortunately, when the surgeon unstapled me, he opted not to also decollate me. He was the wrong kind of surgeon for that, anyway; if I'd wanted decolletage, I'd have gone in for mammoplasty.  
 /\*/ The earwax remover my audiologist

recommended is carbamide peroxide (sold as Debrox, but I bought the CVS generic). I didn't see any wax removed when I used it, but she said my using it softened the stuff so it became easier for her to remove on my next visit.

After Mr. Trump's latest act of war this month, I was expecting to see plunges in the various financial markets like the ones that occurred during his off-again-on-again tariff charades. I was surprised that no such drops occurred; contrariwise, all the major indices have climbed to new heights. I suppose my expectations were misguided; after all, it's long been a commonplace that war is good for business. Daddy Warbucks didn't make his fortune selling flowers and love beads. So I guess the rich investors



(Shoe by Susie MacNelly and Ben Lansing, 15 December 2024)

have one more reason to support the present regime. (But watch for backlash as prices of gasoline and other consumer goods rise.)

I'll be hoping to see the stalwart surviving NYUSFans at the Ferry meeting next week. May we all still be here for next year's. Till next month...

**>Portions of the preceding are trying to stay cool but avoiding the ICE.<**