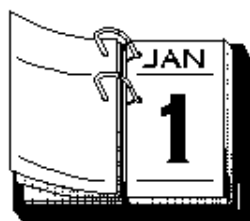


Happy NYU Year

from



Beyond the Fringefan

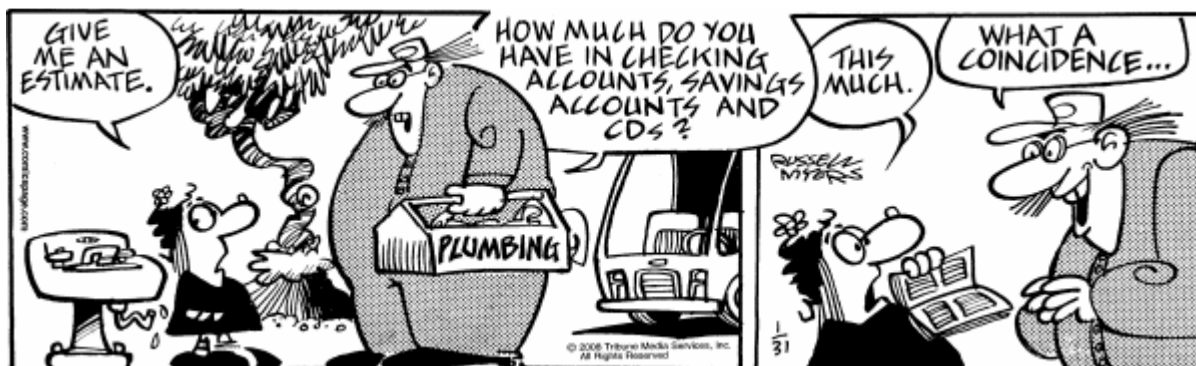
[#463]

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WRING OUT THE OLD, WRING IN THE NEW: I wrote last month of some leaky steam pipes beneath the floors (one of which actually ran across the basement ceiling) that Andre the plumber was replacing. I noted my conjecture that putting in new radiators in October had resulted in greater pressure on the old pipes, perhaps engendering their failure. The Cadre is more than a century old and contains lots of old pipes; as a math major, I really should have put two and two together.

Since then, we've developed leaks in a couple more pipes; one was adjacent to the one in the basement that Andre had replaced. It was a barely perceptible drip in the moderate weather we were having this fall. Then it got cold enough for the heat to go on—and suddenly the drip turned into a forceful spew of steam.

Some of you who visited the Cadre a couple of decades ago may remember a convertible sofa in the basement. Some of you may have slept on it. That's been impossible since before the turn of the millennium, however; both the sofa and the six or eight feet of space in front of it have gotten piled high with boxes of books, papers, games, toys, old clothes, video- and audiotapes, miscellaneous housewares, and probably Jimmy Hoffa's remains. We've made tentative attempts to clear out some of the Stuff, but



(Broom-Hilda by Russell Myers, 31 January 2008)

priority has usually been given to the clutter upstairs (which has often resulted in even more Stuff being relegated to the basement).

The spew of steam, it turned out, was aimed primarily at the back of that sofa, with some veering off in other directions. The upshot: the sofa got thoroughly soaked, as did the piece of shabby old rug in front of it, and the bottom of every box that was resting on either.

We got Andre to interrupt his holiday week with his wife in DC to come back to Brooklyn and do an emergency replacement of the spewing pipe. (We're now in the midst of having him replace *all* the old steam pipes in the house, and we intend to follow it up with a pressure test of the system.) Meanwhile, Ethan and I began bringing boxes up to the living room and sorting out the still-dry from the drowned. Some of the undamaged stuff went into the available space in the garage, too.

When we got down to the bare sofa, we discovered that it was a mass of mildew; apparently some degree of leakage had been going on unsuspected for an undetermined length of time. I declared it a total loss. I was able to rip out the worst-infested swatches of cushioning and get them out of the house, but the carcass will have to be carried out by one or more someones much stronger than I. Ethan and I got the rug out too.

So we began the New Year with a chorus of "Mold Lang Syne" and the first of several rounds of sorting and recycling. I hope we don't need to have anyone over between now and summer; there's no room amid the boxes for anyone to sit or put anything down in the living room or the dining room.

[In a seemingly unrelated development, a hot-water hose between the kitchen sink and the dishwasher chose one night the first week of January to break open and start pouring gallons of water through the cabinetry and out onto the kitchen floor. I was able to locate the shut-off valve in minutes and stop the flood, but spent the better part of an hour mopping it all up afterward. Fortunately, the area of the basement directly beneath it is a space with the furnace on one side and the washer, dryer, and freezer on the other side; it's an area that's gotten wet so many times in the past that we now keep it clear as a matter of course. Boy, it never rains but it p—uh, maybe I shouldn't finish that one.]

[In yet another odd coincidence, the old sink in the basement that the washing machine drains into decided the following weekend to develop both a clog and a leak in its drain, so that when we ran a wash, the sink overflowed, and when it was finished doing that, the water that hadn't overflowed continued trickling out the drain onto the floor. And when I tried to run a quick rinse cycle as a diagnostic test, the

washing machine's motor suddenly conked out completely. Is this something about the phase of the moon? Or does it have to do with the sun approaching Aquarius?]



(Off the Mark by Mark Parisi, 6 March 2002)

My dismay at finding stuff that's been damaged and needs to be discarded has been tempered by the knowledge that the vast bulk of the stuff we had down there has been essentially—well, just a vast bulk of stuff: stuff that, were we more rational, we would have been culling and either giving away or throwing away long ago. Several dozen books seemed unsalvageable and have gone out; they hardly made a dent in our accumulation. Two or three reams of my parents' financial records? It was long past time to shred them anyhow. Some memorabilia from my college years, including seven or eight issues of a campus humor magazine that I helped create? On the one hand, sad to lose those souvenirs of that bit of my life; but on the other hand, I hadn't opened that box since we moved into the Cadre—hell, probably

since we moved into One, Two, Three, Many. The whole run of LASFAPA in which FRINGEFAN appeared? I doubt that anyone was about to distill the best of my mailing comments into a philosophical blockbuster (*Well, That About Wraps It Up for Marc*). Mostly it's depressing to have it so indisputably brought home—literally—how little control over the elements one possesses, how suddenly and randomly the things one owns can turn into toxic assets. (And unlike what Mark B. has suffered, there aren't even any humans whose malice is responsible for the loss here and whom I can rail at.) First-world problems again.

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 13, #11 (e-APA-NYU #138)

LSD* AT THE END OF THE TERRESTRIAL YEAR (Ariel Cinñ): "Its internet radio plugs in regularly to *Machinengeist.org*, which is a mostly successful attempt to duplicate the interior noises of a working starship." Whatever feeds your warp drive. At work I tend to let my internal soundtrack play; anything external tends to disturb my concentration (though if an earworm threatens to take over, I'm not above pulling up YouTube for a few minutes to exorcise it). /*/ Thanks for



(Real Life Adventures by Wise and Aldrich, 27 October 2015)

bringing up the issue of the dying USB hub. This just may have something to do with the trouble I've been having with a flash drive that functions normally on the machine at work, but which my laptop keeps telling me needs to be reformatted. (I can usually fix the issue temporarily by uninstalling and reinstalling the driver, until the next day when I get home and plug the flash drive in again.) This seems to happen less often when I plug the flash drive directly into the laptop. Perhaps a new USB hub belongs on my shopping

list. /*/ "...and the election of the first female POTUS." It's been two decades since the acronym POTUS came into common use, but when I hear it, I still think either of French soup or of a caustic chemical similar to lye.

JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman): (¢APA-NEWS) "Zuccotti Park, the site of the Occupy Wall Street protest camp...it was a privately-owned public space – whatever that is." City building codes and zoning laws have at various times in the last half-century required corporate builders to include "public space" in their new edifices—open plazas, vest-pocket parks, lobbies with seating—or rewarded them for including it (with tax breaks or by allowing them to build higher). The idea is to make the structures more user-friendly rather than bleak and foreboding. Sometimes it works; other times the space is built but, for reasons they're still trying to figure out, feels inhospitable and sits empty. /*/ (¢me) I'd also thought that the "Indian" in Indian summer carried the implication of falsity; thanks for the correction. /*/ "Btw, St. Mark's Books is in trouble, has been since it moved from 8th." Ooh, so I see; it has a GoFundMe campaign <www.gofundme.com/savestmarks> with a fundraising goal of "\$150,000 to restock the store." (And it's only raised one-eighth of that as of mid-January.)

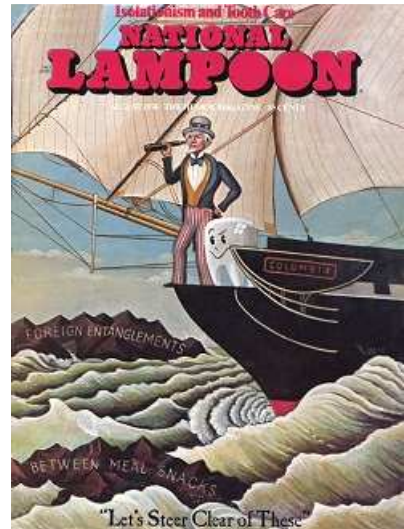
ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢me) "But I thought you labeled yourself a fringe fan, at least in your zine's name." No, my zine name asserts that I'm *beyond* that status. Note that I've never specified which direction the "beyond" refers to: a former fringe fan who's grown beyond that stage into trufandom, or one so far away from the core of fandom that even fringe fens doubt his fannish credentials. /*/ "I get my wings not from Red Bull but from my mechanic": As I've said before, if you have a trustworthy mechanic, be very nice to

him/her. (The Magliozzi brothers recommend bringing brownies to the garage.) If he/she can make your engine run on all cylinders instead of all but one, this is Very Good. /*/ "...one of the

people manning the LR table for the band I had missed." What's an LR table? The place where they sell recordings and T-shirts after the gig?

My dentist, Dr. G., for whom I've been copyediting the orthodontic journal now for three years, suggested to me in December that I should join the American Association of Dental Editors & Journalists (AADEJ)—at his expense. Well, why not? Then he asked if I'd care to attend an event the AADEJ runs in February, titled "Dental Editors University." It's two days of sessions—I don't know yet whether they're more like lectures or seminars. I guess I'll find out in a month, because Dr. G. offered to pay my way to that, too. I presume that holding it in Chicago in February is a good way of ensuring that attendees are really there to learn, not goof off and enjoy the gorgeous weather...

So another year begins and we grab the shovels, not only for the approaching snow but also for digging out of the chaos in the basement. One more thing to keep me busy. A good Arisia and Boskone to those who attend them, and see you next month.



(Richard Hess for *National Lampoon*, August 1974)

**>Portions of the preceding find that their enthusiasm for homeownership
has been considerably dampened.<**