



Beyond the Fringefan

[#563]

BEYOND THE FRINGEFAN has been assisting his wife this month by changing her bandages, among other things, when not driving her to and from a dermatology office twenty miles east of the N.Y. Cadre (1088 East 40th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11210 (☎(718) NY-CADRE; 📧↔️ nycadre [at] acesd1 [dot] com; 🌐http://www [dot] nycadre [dot] org)). She's recovering from the experience, though he wouldn't yet say she has things

well in hand. This is **Beyond the Fringefan** #563, for readers of **APA-NYU** Volume 23, #10 (e-APA-NYU #238) and other providers of left-handed compliments, published October 2025 as a combined production of Quick Brown Fox Press and Syscrash Consulting, both subsidiaries of **THIGAMAJIG**. Cartoon above from *Loose Parts* by Dave Blazek, 26 June 2022. All uncredited material copyright ©2025 by Marc S. Glasser. Member fwa.

THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS: We took Donna to a dermatologist a couple of miles from here, Dr. S.S., in late summer to remove a cyst on her neck. While we were there, Donna asked him about a growth on the back of her left hand—the doctors call it keratosis. She'd had it for years, peeling it off occasionally, but it kept coming back. Dr. S.S. had her return a couple of weeks later to get the thing sliced off by his partner, Dr. M.T. The latter did a biopsy and reported back that it was a cancerous growth, so she needed to come back another time to get the surrounding tissue removed too. But when we returned, the doctors studied her hand and informed us that the area of suspect tissue was greater than they'd previously thought, and we needed to make an appointment at their office in Lynbrook, Long Island, to have two different surgeons, Dr. G.M. and Dr. E.M., do the job.

Dr. G.M. is a practitioner of the Mohs technique, wherein the surgeon excises a bit of tissue and then examines it in the lab while the patient waits; if cancer is found, the surgeon goes back and takes out a bit more and examines that. The process is repeated until no cancer is found. This can take a long time, especially if several iterations are needed, so we had to be out in Lynbrook at 10:30 in the morning, a couple of hours earlier than Donna usually wakes up. We managed to get there, with a lot of help from Janelle the aide (see below). Fortunately, only two iterations were needed. But Dr. G.M. had removed enough skin to necessitate a skin graft to repair Donna's hand. That's where Dr. E.M., a plastic surgeon,

came in. He took a strip of skin from Donna's upper chest to cover her hand, then closed up and bandaged both areas. We were there long enough to get caught in rush-hour traffic coming home. Donna's hand was bandaged heavily enough to interfere with most everything she needed to do for the



(Dark Side of the Horse by Samson, 1 October 2025)

next week. The bandage on her chest fell off after a couple of days, but we had to return to Lynbrook after one week to have the stitches there removed and the dressing on her hand changed. The stitches in her hand remain, and we're changing the bandages and adding antibiotic ointment every couple of days; with luck, those stitches will come out during our next return visit on collation day. (I hope there won't be still more trips out there, but I fear there'll be at least one more follow-up coming.)

We've had more turnover of Donna's health aides lately; seems the good ones mysteriously become unavailable. (I don't think it's simply that we're scaring them off, though that may have happened a couple of times; but it doesn't seem likely that if an aide seems simpatico and stays with us with no apparent problems for a few months and then suddenly vanishes, it was because something interpersonal put her off. Since most of them have been from the West Indies, and given the current political climate, we're concerned that I.C.E. has some involvement in the disappearances.) At the moment we have Natalie (from Haiti) helping out Mondays and Tuesdays, and Janelle (from Jamaica) Wednesdays through Saturdays. It would be good if they could both continue.

It grieves me to report the recent passing of Mordechai Housman, to my knowledge the only Chasidic Jew to have considered himself a member of NYUSFS. Mordechai combined fannish silliness with Talmudic discussion in his apazine *Oh, and Another Thing...*, and introduced many of us filkers to the work of Country Yossi and the Shteeble Hoppers. I remember some of us doing a Groucho walk during a hora at Mordechai and Kressel's wedding a quarter-century or so ago. He'd been somewhat out of touch with most of us since moving up to the Stoliner community in Monsey (an hour's drive north of The City), so we weren't much aware of his health issues. May his memory be a blessing.

I'll be working the polls once again next week, this time at the grade school three-quarters of a mile away that would be my regular polling place, were I voting that day (but I vote early at a different location). This time they have me assigned not to my usual role as an information clerk, but as a "line management clerk." The poll worker training manual describes the functions of this job thusly: "• Assigned to work the line of voters by looking up ED/AD information. • Announces frequently that voters dropping off mail ballots should go to the front of the line. • Reminds voters to have their Fast Pass Tag or Card ready for check-in." That first (looking up ED/AD information) is what I normally do sitting at a table. If there's a line, I may find myself using my smartphone to do the lookups. Alternatively, if the polling place isn't busy enough to develop a long line, they may just have me sit at the information table with the other information clerks. I hope I'm not standing on my feet all day.

Fringe Reception: Comments on APA-NYU, Volume 23, #9 (e-APA-NYU #238)

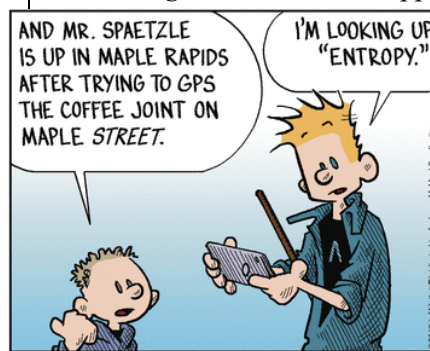
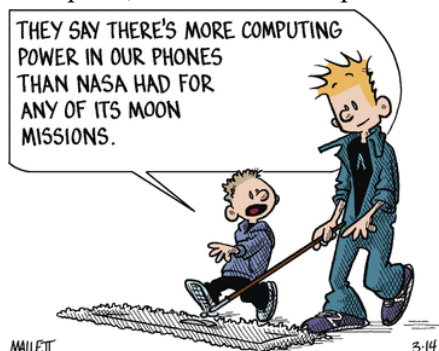
JAMISON, TAKE e-LETTER (Mark L. Blackman):

As you mentioned to me, the MTA has mobile service centers that show up at shopping malls and local politicians' offices and allegedly provide services like transferring funds between MetroCards (that are being phased out) and

OMNY cards. I went to my assemblyman's office three miles south of here the other week to use the service, as my MetroCard was set to expire on Halloween. (The MTA had mailed me a senior-fare OMNY card with no balance six months ago.) I waited on line three hours to

transfer about \$15. If I'd known it would take that long, I'd'a' just slept late and let the \$15 lapse. (I haven't had occasion yet to use the new OMNY card, so I don't know what glitches that will present me.) *// (¢me) When anyone on the phone asks me to "verify" personal information, I say, "Sure. You tell me what information you have for me and I'll tell you whether it's correct." No bona fide caller has ever balked at that. Plenty of scammers have. *// (¢Belov) "...it was years of doing crossword puzzles before I realized that most if not all were reverse-symmetrical, that the top & bottom several squares mirrored, eg, if the top row squares were 4-5-3 letters, the bottom row was 3-5-4." The puzzle editors of the major newspapers have made rotational symmetry *de rigueur* over the years, like the no-unchecked-letters rule. Some of the puzzle magazine publishers don't bother with it, and practically none of the cryptics and other "variety" puzzles do. *// "US hotels eventually realized that Labor Day wasn't as dead for bookings as it used to be." I think it was more that DragonCon in Atlanta moved in on that weekend a quarter-century ago and won't give it back. Worldcon organizers found it pretty hard to compete with a professionally run, for-profit convention that was pulling ten times the attendance.

ICONOCLAST (Joel Nelson): (¢self) "I ... discovered they print the 2003 Doonesbury comic strip Mondays through Saturdays." Yes, Mr. Trudeau has been in semi-retirement for several years now and does new strips only on Sundays. *// (¢Blackman) The AARP website is full of useful information about the latest scams, especially those targeting us senior citizens. It also features a podcast called *The Perfect Scam*. *// I had a GPS a couple of decades back, a gift from Ethan. The GPSs of that era offered periodic map updates that you could download, at a price, and install to keep the directions current.



(Frazz by Jef Mallett, 14 March 2017)

I thought the price too expensive and declined to purchase the updates until the availability of Google Maps and Waze made the issue moot. *// It seems to me that the function "mechanic (2012)" should return the name of the person who was your mechanic in 2012. I think if you're buying milk at a Stewart's located where your mechanic used to be, you're buying from "business-then (address-then (mechanic (2012), 2015))". *// It's good that you've remedied your car's blatancy. Cars with noisy exhaust systems are a major irritant to drivers who must share the road with them.

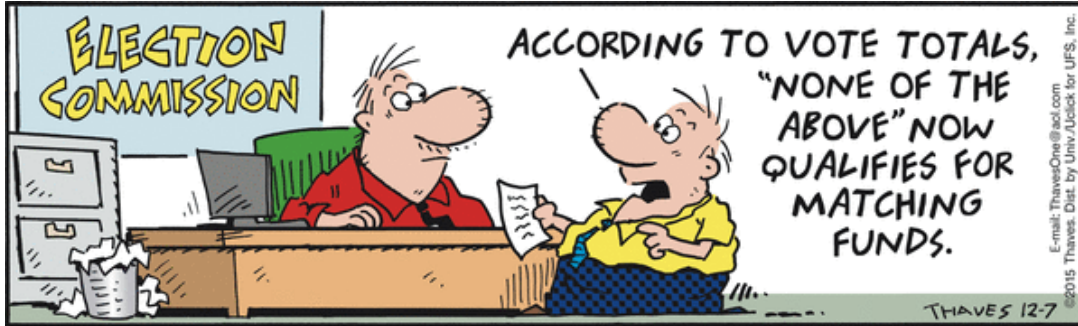
ICONOCLAST vs. ECONOMY CLASS (Chas Belov): I don't know why I use ragged right for the comments but full justification for the natter; I just like the look of it that way. I also use a slightly smaller font (11 point vs. 12 point) for the comments. *// I've encountered "aro" ("aromantic," someone uninterested in forming romantic relationships) twice in crosswords in the past year. It seems strained and perhaps deliberately obscure to me, but it seems to be in current use among some segment of the population. I haven't seen "ace" ("asexual") anywhere yet, even in crosswords (except now I've seen it in your zine and in this sentence). *// (¢Blackman) I've always thought of "tsuris" as non-countable—you might have "less of it" but not "fewer of them"—but per the Chabad website, the word is actually plural:

Tsuris means "problems" in Yiddish. It is a direct adaptation of the plural form of the Hebrew word for "narrow" or "constriction," *tsar*.

When a person is beset by troubles you can say that they are *af tsuris*, "on troubles." And when they are getting a real walloping, you can describe their situation as *gehakte tsuris*, "chopped troubles."

So I guess if you only have a small problem, it's a tsar. And may God bless and keep the tsar... far away from us!

I voted early (and deposited Donna’s absentee ballot) and got a red sticker with an image of the Brooklyn Bridge on it. That may be the most appealing thing about this election. I’m not terribly happy with any of the mayoral candidates this year, so, not atypically, I held my nose and filled in the ellipse for the guy who seems the least untrustworthy. Whoever wins, the next four years will likely be as...um...interesting in this town as they’re being in D.C. (But I don’t think the new mayor is likely to drop bombs on foreign nationals, or demolish a wing of Gracie Mansion to build a ballroom bigger than the mansion itself.)



(Frank and Ernest by Thaves, 7 December 2015)

So go out and vote, and hope that it helps, and we’ll see if we have anything to be thankful for in another month.

>Portions of the preceding say “Let’s have a big hand for the little lady!”<