BLAINESWORLD

#976
6.8.2015

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1. Reflections

Note: See Section 1E for a special invite.

Also, if you're reading this via Facebook and/or in the unlikely event you're not already a subscriber, you can make sure you don't miss an issue (and you get it earlier, too) by clicking:
http://tinyurl.com/ozgmxgs

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I:

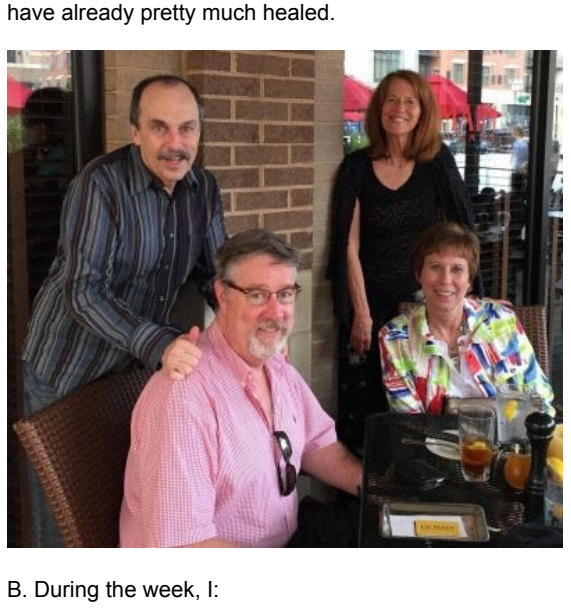
A. Joined our friends Tom and Marcy Gallagher for a delicious dinner at 131 Main--one of our favorite restaurants.

(1) Belatedly, we celebrated their anniversary.

(2) And the fact that we had good visits to two of our fine doctors: Dr. Doug Hauschild, our eye doctor in Weaverville, whom we both saw, and Dr. Todd Wilkinson, our dermatologist in Asheville, who I only saw.

This is something we try to do; i.e., schedule our doctor visits together. Then, when we have a "good visit" (meaning that nothing major is wrong), we celebrate sometime afterward.

As you might be able to see from the picture, I had two basal cells scraped from my nose, but by the time you read this, they will have already pretty much healed.



B. During the week, I:

(1) Honored my friend Brad Morris at a meeting of the Asheville Jewish Business Forum. This was his last meeting as president of the group. He will be missed.

The above meeting was held in conjunction with Carolina Jews for Justice/West. It also included a tour of Green Opportunities and Kitchen Read and included informative presentations from Chief Liam (Luttrell-Rowland), Billy Schweig , Neela McDade and Vicki Meath from Just Economics. For more pictures, please click:
https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10153313858299757.1073741867.519364756&type=1&l=af2ea8560b

Special thanks to Judy Leavitt and Frank Goldsmith, both with Carolina Jews for Justice, for their help in making the evening the success that it was.

(2) Saw an outstanding production of COYOTE ON A FENCE, a thought-provoking play presented by Different Strokes! Performing Arts Collective. Pictured, l-r: Garrett Funk, Artemis Addams, Steph Hickling Beckman, Ashleigh Millett (the director), Courtney DeGennaro, Blaine Greenfield (I wasn't in the play, but somehow managed to get squeezed into the photo), Alison Tippins and Sean David Robinson.

Many thanks to Rodney Smith of Tempus Fugit Design for not only taking the picture, but also for getting everybody to put their thumbs up!

Note: COYOTE runs through June 20. For tickets, please click:
http://www.differentstrokespac.org/production/coyote-on-a-fence/

(3) Visited Ricky Boone, a very talented magician, at Magic Central--his cool magic store. For more information about it, please click:
http://magiccentralasheville.com/

Note: See also Section 12A for information about an upcoming show that Ricky will be producing.

C. Correction: Thanks, Dave F. in NY, for letting me know:
I'm sure I'm not the first, but just to point out a little brain fart ... the movie is LOVE and Mercy, not LIFE & MERCY.

Response: He was the first to point this out. See Section 4A for my review of this film.

D. Congratulations to:

(1) Mike Andrus for being named to the World Karate Union Hall of Fame, as well as for being named Grandmaster of the Year in Self-Defense.

(2) Isaac Fulk on being named the new music director/organist at Oakley UMC.

(3) Michael Trayford on the fact that Apex Brain Centers has been accepted into the Scale Up WNC program, along with 14 other cutting-edge businesses poised for substantial growth.

(4) Toni Sherwood for having the film she co-wrote with James Hilderbrandt, "Love What You Do," chosen for the SoCal Creative and Innovative Film Festival. Also, congratulations to the others involved in this effort: Stephanie Morgan, Grayson Morris, Miles Rice, Sean David Robinson, Jeff Chaffin, Andy Balla and Jamie Lomax,

(5) Tabitha J. in NC, winner of Contest #12: a copy of Jeff Messer's RED-STATE, WHITE-GUY BLUES--a terrific book about NC politics. Her caption for the picture of a child throwing a tempter tantrum in front of President Obama was: "I present to you a new work of art entitled 'Congress 2008-2015.'"

Other entries were as follows: Checking for "bugs" in the Oval Office! ... The girl is my only supporter and she just wet her pants. Ugh. ... Her Sarah Palin impression is better than Tina Fey's. ... But daddy, I'm a Republican. ... I wanted to meet the Queen. ... But you said we would meet the Princess, who's this guy? ... "Alright Boehner, unless you want to end up like your buddy McConnell over there, stop acting like a three year old child and pass some legislation." ... I wasn't ready. Someone throw the smaller one at me....I knew my ratings were down, but this is ridiculous! ... You said we were going to Disney world! ... Memo to Secret Service: guys, you don't have to taser the little ones!... "I thought you said I was going to meet Super Man" ... I sure would like to express my frustration that way!..."I repeat I said NO Tea Party Children!" ... "Is this another stall tactic by the Republicans?" ... Somebody needs a snickers bar? ... looking for Obama's "line in the sand" ...Little girl, this is what happens to little uninsured kids after they repeal Obamacare. ... Its alright everyone, can't you see she is playing with Harvey? ...Mrs O says we are having broccoli for dinner? I hate broccoli!!! I'm going to stay here until it's changed to french fries!!! ... "Don't worry, folks. Just another upset Tea Party member." ... "No worries. Congress throws these fits all the time." ... I thought I was going to see Hilary Clinton!

All told, there were 23 entries from 20 different folks (some entered more than once). And that reminds me that it's now time to introduce:

***** CONTEST #13 *****

One lucky winner will receive a copy of PROOF OF HEAVEN: A NEUROSURGEON'S JOURNEY INTO THE AFTERLIFE by Eben Alexander, M.D., the true story of what happened when a neurosurgeon's brain was attacked by a rare disease. I reviewed it in BLAINESWORLD #943 and enjoyed it.

To enter: Put "CONTEST #13" in the subject line of an email and send it to: bginbc@aol.com . . . make sure you include your name AND snail mail address in the body of the email . . . all entries must be received on or before 9 p.m. on Monday, June 22.

Note: In the unlikely event you don't already get my BLAINESWORLD blog, just send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIPTION in the subject line. You'll then get my weekly missive that contains jokes, hopefully not toooo risque; websites; information about both Asheville and my old stomping ground (PA/NJ), etc.

E. SPECIAL INVITE: When was the last time you bought a Broadway ticket for $20 dollars?

Yes, $20 a ticket is all it will cost you for a wonderful evening's entertainment at the upcoming BUSINESS SINGS BROADWAY--a fabulous FUNdraising show for Asheville Community Theatre (ACT).

Please come and be a part of the audience on Saturday evening, July 11, at 7:30 p.m.

I'll be joining Asheville area business men and women, along with community influentials, on stage at ACT to perform in BUSINESS SINGS BROADWAY ... a wonderful collection of 21 Broadway show tunes in solos, duets, small group songs and big, splashy company numbers.

I'll be participating in the ensemble songs, as well as singing in a small group number from HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING.

Come and be dazzled by the musical talents of Asheville's business community at this once-a-year FUNdraiser as the theatre enters its seventieth (yes, that's 70th) season!

The event is directed by ACT's "Mr. Musical," Jerry Crouch, with renowned Asheville Musical Director Lenora Thom on stage accompanying the performers. Michael McMurtrey WILL BE the Master of Ceremonies.

Here are the talented business and community performers who'll be joining me onstage:
Kelli Mullinex, Mark Jones, Ellen Pappas, Ruth Planey, Doug Hauschild, Mike Martinelli, Annemarie Brown, Marvin Sadovsky, George Pappas, Joanna Beck, Murphy Funkhauser Capps, Bruce Martin, Robby Russell, Frank Salvo, John Crawley, Rick Mason, Paul Clements, Stuart Williams, Joe Scully, Joe Brumit, Cathi Durham, Bray Creech, Mike Burk, Rebecca Bernstein, Stuart Littleton, McRae Hilliard, Ben Falcon and Tom Donnelly.

You can reserve your tickets today by calling the ACT Box Office at 828.254.1320 or simply click this link to order online:
https://ashevilletheatre.secure.force.com/ticket#details_a0S0000006r31vEAA

I can't wait to see you on July 11th!

PS. Please help us promote this awesome event by copying this in this invite and sending it to 437 of your closest friends and relatives, posting it on Facebook, etc.

BUSINESS sings BROADWAY

***** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD *****

Thanks, Michael Trayford, in NC, for his nomination for this week's winners. Michael recently had emergency surgery to remove an unfriendly hunk of nucleus pulposus that would not stop pestering his nerve roots.

To quote from his recent Facebook post:
I cannot thank enough Drs. Eric Rhoton and Margaret Burke from Carolina Spine and Neurosurgery Center. Dr. Rhoton for his superb skills working in a very delicate area of the spine leading to already spectacular results (the greatest being at least 50% improvement in strength of a dying muscle), and Dr. Burke for getting me with the best surgeon in the region for this type of procedure in a pinch before the rapidly progressive weakness led to permanent damage. Although they know it, I'm extremely grateful for my girls and their support; I'm a very lucky man! I'm also incredibly thankful to all of you for your positive thoughts (read them right up until I went in) as that no doubt had an impact on the outcomes as well.

Note: For more information about Carolina Spine and Neurosurgery Center, please click:
http://csandnc.com/docs.html

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2. FYI

My amazing friend, Trisha Gallagher in PA, has come up with still another idea for helping others. It follows. Please read about it, then support it by sending her some greeting cards. Thanks in advance.

Baby Bridget goes with me to bring flowers and to visit Auntie Anne on Wednesdays! (See pictures below.)

My goal is to collect 1,500 greeting cards. Not only for Aunt Anne, but for the other residents of the nursing home as well. Then they will all have cards to open each day.Please send your greeting cards with an enclosure if you would like--such as a recipe, prayer, joke, cute picture, inspirational article, riddle, etc. ... anything that would be a conversation starter or a day brightener for Auntie Anne and the other lonely ladies who do not receive many visitors, cards or tokens of joy.

Feel free to also write a few words in each greeting card you send, include an enclosure if you like and then seal it. Do not write on the outside envelope.

Put all the greeting cards that you will be sending into a larger envelope. Mail that larger envelope to:
Aunt Anne and Friends Sunshine Club
c/o Patricia Gallagher
Box 561
Worcester, PA 19490

Please spread and SHARE this request with others, so we can reach our goal of 1,500 Get Well and Cheer greeting messages. Your consideration of this request is much appreciated.

FYI, part 2

A. Clips

(1) Bruce Stoller (on piano): Troposphere
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gf2lc5TtHlo

(2) Chuck S. in NJ: A Compilation of Robots Falling Down at the DARPA Robotics Challenge
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0TaYhjpOfo

(3) Kellly M. in NC: The Twist: Chubby Checker
https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=18&v=im9XuJJXylw

(4) David F. in NC: Lady Marmalade - Charity Single - Moulin Rouge - Out of the Blue
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvLHBLDUkE8

(5) Ruth B. in NC: Johanna channeling Aretha Franklin!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9vto-eWPaY

(6) 100 Year Old BFFs
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipnGPeRly2k

(7) In Performance | Ruthie Ann Miles
http://www.nytimes.com/video/theater/100000003727748/in-performance-ruthie-ann-miles.html?partner=rss&emc=rss

B. Other

To read each of the following contributions in full, please click:
http://wp.me/p1g9Ev-1Vr

(1) Finding the right balance. (2) Millionaires Who Are Frugal When They Don't Have to Be. (3) The evidence points to a better to way to fight insomnia. (4) With This Many Buskers in Asheville, a Discordant Note Was Inevitable.

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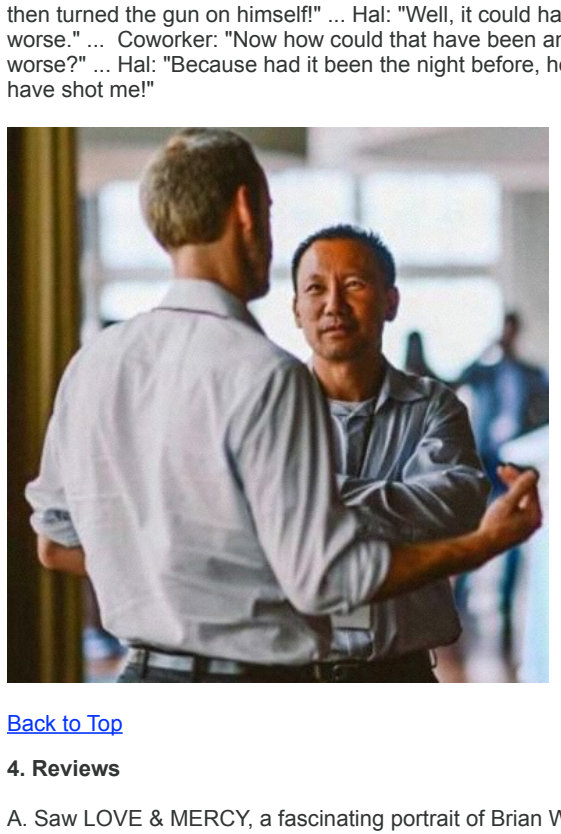
3. Joke 1

Hal was the most positive guy in the world. Every time anyone said something negative, Hal would always say, "It could have been worse." One day, his coworkers decided to come up with a scenario so bad that Hal couldn't say that it could have been worse. When he arrived at work, one coworker asked, "Hal, did you hear what happened to Sam last night?" ...Hal: "No, what?" ... Coworker: "When Sam got home last night, he found his wife in bed with another man. Sam shot the man, his wife and then turned the gun on himself!" ... Hal: "Well, it could have been worse." ... Coworker: "Now how could that have been any worse?" ... Hal: "Because had it been the night before, he would have shot me!"



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4. Reviews

A. Saw LOVE & MERCY, a fascinating portrait of Brian Wilson--the singer, songwriter and leader of The Beach Boys. Paul Dano and John Cusack are both excellent as, respectively, the younger and older version of Wilson. Make sure you stay for the credits to see the real performer. Rated PG-13.

Thanks, Dave F. in NY, for sharing the following video that will give you more insight into the above:
Academy Conversations: Love & Mercy
https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL1310A316C0413CD3&t=43&v=SdB71BA9HOI

B. FOCUS is now out on DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #963 follows:
Saw FOCUS, a crime comedy about a con artist who takes on an inexperienced apprentice. The two leads (Will Smith and Margot Robbie) have very little chemistry, but the film was nevertheless entertaining. B.D. Wong shined in a small role. Rated R.

C. Read FIND THE GOOD: UNEXPECTED LIFE LESSONS FROM A SMALL-TOWN OBITUARY WRITER (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill) by Heather Lende.

The author, a columnist for the ALASKA DISPATCH NEWS, shares what she has learned in the following passage:
If indeed all the wisdom I had in my heart was to be summed up in final words and it was difficult to speak more than, say, three words, would I rasp before my soul flew up the chimney?

Find the good.

I surprised myself with this pretty great motion.

find the good. That's enough. That's plenty, I could leave my family with that.

Lende then shares other insights she has gained from writing obituaries in this short, heartwarming book. Among them:
Cry a lot after a friend dies. Then, when you've had all the sorrow you can handle, take a walk down by the river to wring yourself out. Invite a new friend over for coffee. Begin again.
The secret to aging more cheerfully is to play like a child.
There is a reason the band continued to play as the Titanic sank, and I think it has been much maligned. I'm going down with the horn section, swinging when my time is up.

I especially liked this one:
Lives were saved at the finish line of the Boston Marathon because bystanders ran toward the explosions to help, rather than away from them. This is what Fred "Mr." Rogers' mother wanted him to notice when he was frightened by scary news. "Look for the helpers," she told him. "You will always find people helping." Mr. Rogers passed along that advice to millions of other children (and their parents) who were scared or angered by violence or tragedy, and it helped them, too.

After reading FIND THE GOOD, I now want to read Lende's other books.

D. Heard HUG YOUR CUSTOMERS: THE PROVEN WAY TO PERSONALIZE SALES AND ACHIEVE ASTOUNDING RESULTS (Hachette Audio), written and read by Jack Mitchell.

The author, CEO of Mitchells/Richards/Marshs/Wilkes Bashford, four very successful clothing stores, describes how "hugs"--personal touches that impress and satisfy customers--can make a difference to selling just about anything.

I liked how he talked about one customer who came in for a free cup of coffee and wound up making $2,000 in purchases and then said that it was the most expensive cup of coffee he ever had.

I also liked how much of what Mitchell talks about isn't rocket science; it's just plain common sense. For example, it children come in with their parents, take care of them. Have a large screen TV for them to watch Sponge Bob. Provide lollipops for them, too. And for their parents, if they want to watch a sporting event, have a second TV in the store.

In addition, consider doing such things as the following:
Remembering the name of your customer's dog.
Calling a customer to make sure he's satisfied after a purchase.
Knowing your customer's golf handicap.
Introducing customers to business contacts.
Letting our customer use your office to make a personal phone call.

HUG YOUR CUSTOMERS will provide virtually any business with ideas that can easily be put into practice--and will help their bottom line.

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5. TV alert

A. THE MAKING OF THE MOB: NEW YORK: Mondays, at 10 p.m. on AMC
The lives of notorious gangsters, including Lucky Luciano and Bugsy Siegel, are explored through reenactments and archival footage.

B. DEUTSCHLAND 83: Wednesdays at 11 p.m. on SUNDANCE
According to TV GUIDE, this German-language series (with subtitles) is a "gripping spy thriller."

C. THE FRIENDS OF ENLISH MAGIC: Part 1 on Wed., June 17, at 11 p.m. on BBCA and Part 2 on Sat., June 20 at 10 p.m. (Other parts will also be at 10 p.m. on Saturdays.)
This 7-part miniseries is an adaptation of Susanna Clarke's fantasy novel for adults, which has two magicians with very different approaches teaming together to help fend off Napoleon.

D. TRUE DETECTIVE: Sundays at 10 p.m. on HBO
The series returns with new stars: Colin Farrell and Rachel McAdams. That pairing should surely make it watchable.

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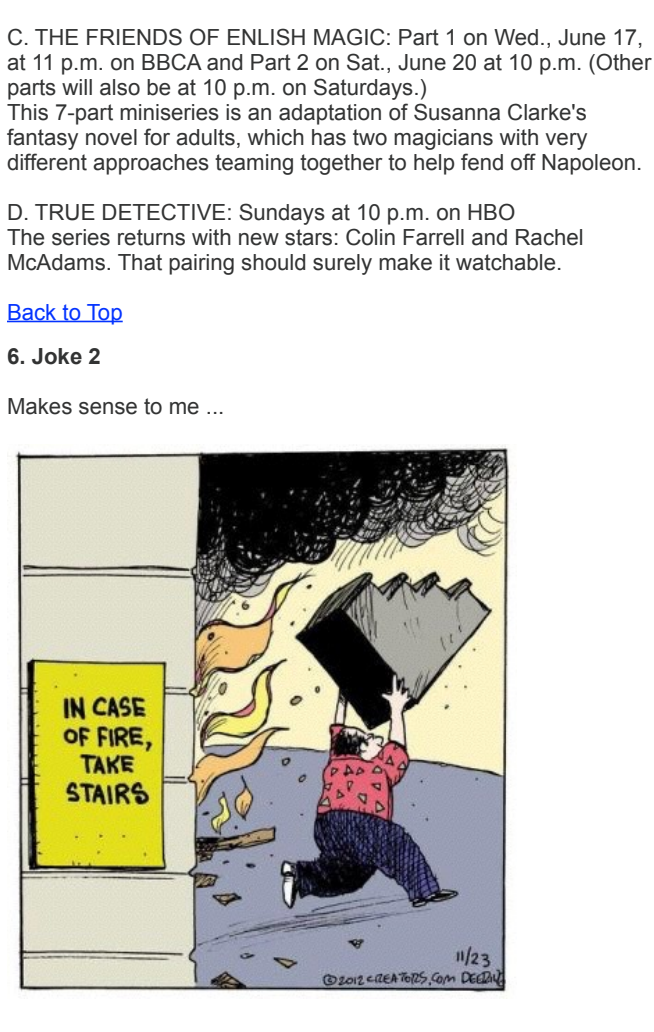
6. Joke 2

Makes sense to me ...


IN CASE OF FIRE, TAKE STAIRS

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7. Websites

A. 30 of the Most Bizarre Research Paper Topics of All Time
http://www.online-phd-programs.org/bizarre-research-paper-topics/

B. Debbie H. in PA:To Life: Vanessa's Wedding Surprise
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgZ4ZTTfKO8#t=35

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
http://www.blainesworld.net/

To check the accuracy of something you read on the Internet (or via Facebook), please click "Blaine's Best" to the left and then "On What to Believe."

D. Are you on Facebook? In the unlikely event we have not yet connected as friends there, please feel free to send me an invite by clicking:
www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield

Like us on Facebook

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8. Technology tip

New iPhone bug reportedly crashes users' phones with a text by by Daniel Roberts

A single line of text can reportedly freeze and shut down iPhones.

Technology blogs are reporting that a specific text message, when sent to an iPhone from any device, causes the phone to crash, shut down, and turn back on-and in some cases, some users are still unable to access messages again until the offending sender sends another text message. (The recipient can also return the phone to normal by responding to the sender from a different device, like an iMessage-enabled Mac or iPad, some sites report.) Users on Reddit have been discussing the problem and how to fix it.

For the rest of this informative article, please click:
http://fortune.com/2015/05/27/iphone-text-crash/

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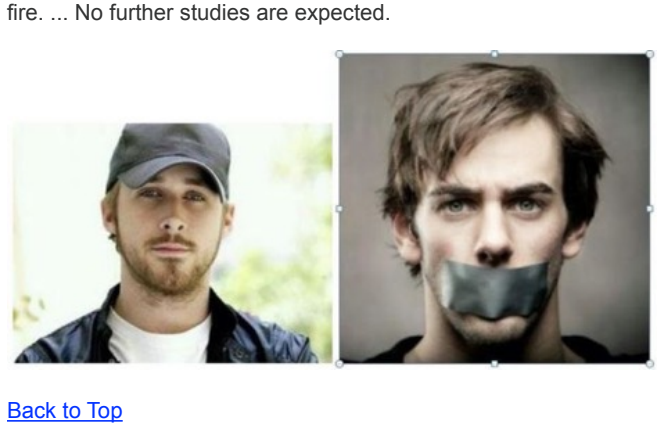
9. Joke 3

A study conducted by UCLA's Department of Psychiatry has revealed that the kind of face a woman finds attractive on a man can differ depending on where she is in her menstrual cycle. For example, if she is ovulating, she is attracted to men with rugged and masculine features. However, if she is menstruating or menopausal, she tends to be more attracted to a man with duct tape over his mouth and a spear lodged in his chest while he is on fire. ... No further studies are expected.



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10. A quote I like

Been there, done that ...

SPEED LIMIT 25
EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON. SOMETIMES THE REASON IS YOU'RE STUPID AND MAKE BAD DECISIONS

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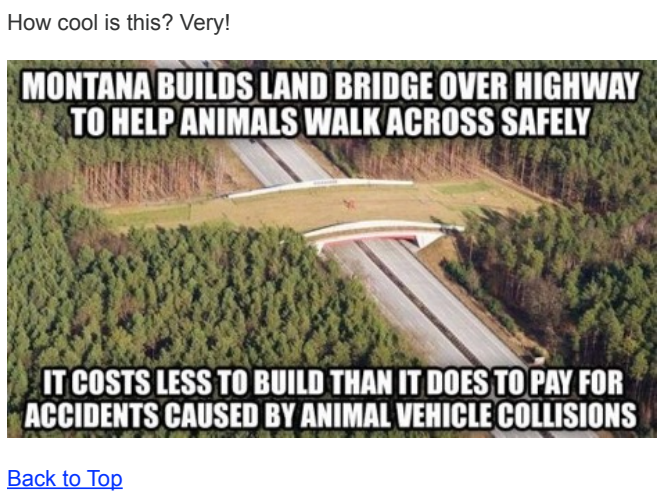
11. Thought for the day

How cool is this? Very!


MONTANA BUILDS LAND BRIDGE OVER HIGHWAY TO HELP ANIMALS WALK ACROSS SAFELY
IT COSTS LESS TO BUILD THAN IT DOES TO PAY FOR ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY ANIMAL VEHICLE COLLISIONS

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12. Advance planning department

To read about each of the following events in full, please click:
http://wp.me/p1g9Ev-1Vr

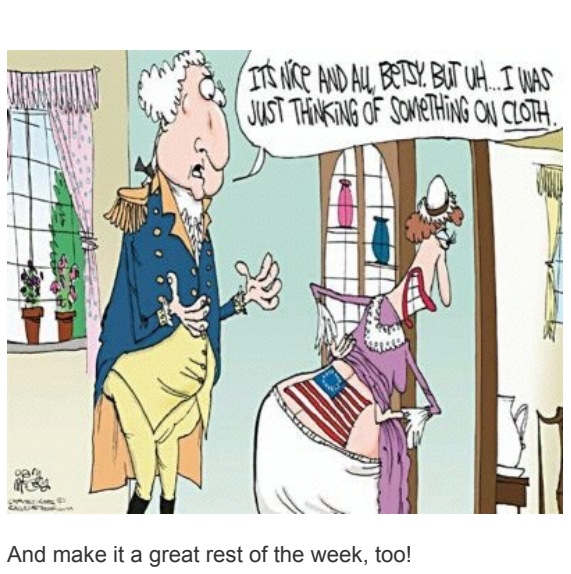
A. NC events

(1) Magic, Mirth & Meaning, hosted by Ricky D. Boone. (2) Gary G. in NC: You're welcome to check out Midsummer nights Dream at Montford Amphitheater.

B. PA/NJ event

Tobi S. in PA: Join me on Thursday, June 25 for a movie under the stars!

PS. HAPPY FLAG DAY! ... Do join me on Sun., June 14, in celebrating my favorite holiday by showing-off your tattoo, displaying the flag or watching the incomparable James Cagney in this clip:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxZvDTnlvKM


IT'S NICE AND ALL, BETSY, BUT UH...I WAS JUST THINKING OF SOMETHING ON CLOTH.

And make it a great rest of the week, too!

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