

By the WAY #14

by W. Andrew York
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Commentary

Well, my modem gave up the ghost and I can't access my Compuserve account as I have in the past. Now, some of you will call me a Luddite regarding this, but I've been more than happy using an ancient (in Internet years) program to get my Email. Yes, I'll confess, my Compuserve program is version 2.0.1 and, when I called for support three or four years back, the help desk person from India was shocked that someone was still using something so old. He politely inquired, "you do realize that the current version is 7.x". To which I responded, "and I use version 2.0.1".

In my defense, I only use CIS for Email and the program downloads things text. Therefore, I don't need to worry about getting a virus or introducing malicious code into my computer. On the other hand, when I called for support, I'd just bought a computer with Windows XP. That OS doesn't include code that will successfully launch that old of a program. So, a friend gave me an old computer of his that I was able to install the program in and get my Email - that's the modem that finally died.. And, the (cheap) replacement modem I bought last week at Fry's isn't working well with the older OS (Win 95) - even though the box said it was. At this point, I don't know that I'll spend the time to locate and install drivers that'll get it to work.

I know can completely upgrade to the latest version of CIS (opening the door to virus infections) and have my Email from my old account forwarded to the new CIS version. And, yes, you can still use one of my first Email addresses (73210,3053@compuserve.com) from the mid-'80s to get something to me - that is, once I again get access to my CIS Email. It will still be valid if I upgrade to the current version.

For now, please use my Gmail account (see above). Once I get CIS up and running again, I'll reforward all my Gmail mail to my CIS account so I can get it from home. Please note that I won't be checking my Email as often so there may be a longer delay in responding to your letters.

On the other hand, AT&T (which is looking more and more like the old "Ma Bell") just announced a new offering in the former Bell South areas - moderate speed DSL for \$10 a month - with a rebate for the cost of the modem after three months. For that cost, plus the cost of subscribing to an anti-virus program and firewall (yes, there are freeware versions of each I can use), it is very tempting to finally get "wired" and finally on the 'net full-time.

Update on the Alamo Drafthouse (see *BTW #2*) - the original Alamo Drafthouse location closes the doors on June 27 after 10 years. Due to rising rents and the conditions of the renewed lease, the owners have decided to move from the Warehouse district to a former theater (I think) on 6th Street (the center of the "Live Music Capital of the World") - the Ritz. My last visit is to see "The Day the Earth Caught Fire" on the 26th (part of the Austin Film Society's "Other Minds, Other Worlds Global Sci-Fi Cinema" series).

For those who attend the "Last Night at the Alamo", they'll see a triple feature of a "Big Night Feast" with a massive food feed, followed by "Earthquake" in Sensurround (their sound system augmented by 50,000 watts of subwoofers). The last film is "Night Warning" with Susan Tyrrell (the star) attending. Those that are lucky enough to get one of the triple feature tickets will also get a wrench - so you can take home your seat afterwards! Of course, it was a sell-out from the start....

LOCs -

Berry - I shall put "The Lives of Others" on our Netflix list, it seems very interesting judging from online descriptions. The movie (or, more specifically, the movie acting) that impressed me most recently was "The World's Fastest Indian", with Anthony Hopkins playing an elderly New Zealander determined to cross the Pacific and participate in a bike race on the last plains of Utah. ((later note)) I meant to write "the salt plains of Utah" there. These are not disappearing, as far as I know... :). [**WAY**] You'll not be disappointed with "The Lives of Others". I'll have to keep an eye out for the other one you mentioned.

Texas Spotlight & Feature: Still on hiatus - I hope to return them next time.

Review: Lone Star Navy by Jonathan W. Jordan (2006; 381p). Good, familiar, history of the Texas Navy during the period of the Republic. It is very comprehensive, covering the political in-fighting between the pro- and anti-Houston camps, the desperate attempts to obtain supplies, refit ships and pay the men by the naval command and the bankrupt Texas government trying to obtain legitimacy and retain their independence.

The navy moves from fledgling, to dominance, to non-existence. From that, it becomes the strongest force in the Gulf, then slowly slides into a force that, at the annexation into the US, only has one marginally seaworthy vessel. It becomes a receiving ship in Pensacola, but is soon broken up. The other three "ships" (only one semi-floating) were sold for a grand total of \$655. One important legacy was the transfer of the navy's remaining Colt revolvers (the purchase of which saved the Colt arms production) to the Texas Rangers which was instrumental in their becoming a force to be reckoned with in the early days of the State.

Two interesting assertions are that, without the Texas navy preventing a naval resupply of the Mexican army, the victory at San Jacinto would have been followed by a defeat to the still numerically superior forces that were beset by a lack of reinforcements and food. Later, the Navy prevented a reinvasion in 1843 by successfully breaking the blockade of Campeche (a scene engraved on the Colt 1851 "Navy" model), allowing the rebels in the Yucatan to continue their fight against the centralist government and preventing the transfer of Mexican forces to the Texas frontier. Interestingly, at the time, the Texas Navy was entirely funded by the Yucatan government! In short, the undercurrent of the book is that the existence of Texas is due to the efforts of the Republic's Navy.

Very interesting read, I learned quite a bit about this aspect of my adopted State's early history.

Movie Watch: *Le Temps Du Loup* (The Time of the Wolf) B+; *African Adventure 3d: Safari in the Okavango* (IMAX) A-; *Black Book* B+; *Disturbia* C+; *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer* D-; *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* B; *Waitress* B-; *Ocean's Thirteen* B-; *Cosmic Voyage* (Kosmicheskoy Reys: Fantasticheskaya Novella) B+ [[1936 Soviet Sci-Fi film about the first trip to the moon. Tsiolkovsky was the science advisor!]]

Observation: This is a bit of an echo on my observation, and changed opinion, in BTW #11 - plastic car parts DO make sense on the non-structural parts. A few days ago I was on my way to pick up a friend to go to another friend's wedding. While trying to avoid a person on the onramp, I ended up hitting something (piece of wood?) that was on the other side of the onramp in the median. It was a little bump and didn't really seem like much.

So I didn't worry about it, thinking I'd nudged the object out of the way, but when I got to my friend's house, I looked at the bumper. Well, whatever I hit must have disintegrated (thus the little bump), but it did a number on the bumper. Instead of great big dents (and a BIG bump), I had scratches that can be polished out. The turn signal cover was ripped off (and the one on the other side cracked due to the shifting plastic). Instead of needing someone to beat out dents and repaint, I've spent about \$40 on two turn signal covers, \$20 on parts to reattach one turn signal cover to the bumper and a little time to rub the cosmetic scratches out.

Note, I still have a problem with a "doughnut" for a spare instead of a proper tire. I wonder if this opinion will be revised in the future like my "plastic" car one that I once had.....

Playlist for this issue: Kyle XY (The Homecoming), Hell's Kitchen (Week #3?); Weeds DVD and commentary on three episodes; KASE (Top-40 Country Radio), Good Eats (Milk Made and Pretzel Logic)

Coming up Next Time: Report on the next Harry Potter movie, in 3D, on an IMAX screen, opening night. Texas Spotlight will be the delayed wildflower piece and the Civil War Preservation Trust will be the focus of the Feature.

=====GAME SECTION=====

On TAP:

Scattergories! (Join Now - it's early! Open to Anyone at Any Time!)
Let me know what else you're interested in seeing here.....(sorry, we're out of Sam Adams)

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SCATTERGORIES!

Each round, you are given five selections and a letter of the alphabet. The player is to choose something that matches the selection and starts with the given letter. The goal is to pick something that no one else chooses, or the fewest folks match. After ten rounds, the person with the lowest score is the winner. The GM will disallow an entry that doesn't fit the selection and letter (i.e., Letter "B", Selection "Color of Sky", Entry "Blonde" or "Azure"). If modifiers are used to match the letter, they will be disallowed (i.e., Letter "B", Selection "Eye Color", Entry "Bright Red"). If an entry is disallowed, the player will score the highest amount for the selection. All entries must be in English.

Anyone can join at any time, starting with the highest score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the maximum score from the round added to their cumulative total. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to.

NOTE: I always acknowledge an Email submission. If you've sent something in and don't hear back from me after a couple of days, send again or check with Jim. I let him know if I expect to be away from the computer for any extended period of time.

Round Three

Round Three Results:

- 01) Type of Candy: Jawbreaker 4, Jujubes 2, Jaffa 1, Jolly Rancher 1, Jelly Babies 1, Jelly Beans 1, Junior Mints 1
- 02) Book of the Bible: Judith 3, Jeremiah 2, Jude 1, Joshua 1, Joel 1, Jonah 1, Judges 1, John 1
- 03) Item of Clothing Commonly Worn Today: Jersey 4, Jumper 3, Jumpsuit 2, Jockstrap 1, Jellin Insole Fillers [DQ] 4
- 04) Vegetable: Jicama 4, Jerusalem Artichoke 2, Japanese Cucumber 2, Juniper Berry [DQ] 4, Jalap [DQ] 4, Jumping Beans [DQ] 4
- 05) Captain on Sci-Fi Series: James T. Kirk 3, John Sheridan 3, Jean Luc Picard 2, Jonathan Archer 1, John Robinson [DQ] 3, <<no answer>> 3

Individual Scores:

01) Brendan Whyte	Jaffa, Jude, Jumper, Juniper Berry, Kirk	= 20 + 13 = 33
02) David Burgess	Junior Mints, Jeremiah, Jersey, Japanese Cucumber, Kirk	= 22 + 12 = 34
Edi Birsan	Jelly Beans, John, Jellin Insole Fillers, Jumping Beans, Picard	= 21 + 13 = 34
Rick Desper	Jelly Babies, Jeremiah, Jumper, Jicama, Sheridan	= 21 + 13 = 34
05) Berry Renken	Jawbreaker, Joshua, Jersey, Jerusalem Artichoke, Archer	= 24 + 12 = 36
Marc Ellinger	Jujubes, Judith, Jumpsuit, Jicama, Sheridan	= 22 + 14 = 36
Doug Kent	Jolly Rancher, Judith, Jumper, Japanese Cucumber, Sheridan	= 24 + 12 = 36
08) Steve Koehler	Jawbreaker, Judges, Jockstrap, Jicama, Kirk	= 24 + 13 = 37
09) Cal White	Jawbreaker, Judith, Jumpsuit, Jerusalem Artichoke, Picard	= 29 + 13 = 42
10) Kevin Wilson	[[no entry received]]	= 29 + 17 = 46
11) Kent Dyer	Jujubes, Joel, Jersey, Jicama, Robinson	= 35 + 14 = 49
12) Fred Davis	Jawbreaker, Jonah, Jersey, Jalap, <<no answer>>	= 33 + 17 = 50
13) Nathan Simmons	[[no entry received]]	= 35 + 17 = 52

Best possible score: 5. Best score achieved: 12 by **David, Berry** and **Doug!**

WAY's Commentary:

- 01) Type of Candy: Choices, choices, my pick would have been jawbreaker - just like many of you! Jelly Babies would have been on the top of my list if I'd thought of it!
- 02) Book of the Bible: Plenty of "J's" to pick from. My take would be Judges.
- 03) Item of Clothing Commonly Worn Today: Hmmm, I really hadn't thought much about this one. The popularity of Jumper is interesting, but not the Jersey (all too many of them out there). The comment about "commonly worn" was to avoid things like Jodhpurs. The inserts were disqualified as "Jellin" is a modifier to the "Inserts". I'd have said Jeans.
- 04) Vegetable: Interestingly, I never had jicama until I started getting it once and awhile in my veggie box from my CSA (see *BTW #04*). When I mentioned to my mother that I'd tried that vegetable, she immediately commented how she enjoyed it when my grandfather (J Gower Chapman) would harvest it at their house. This comment was repeated so many times, that I've decided it is "story #22" and when she wants to relate it in a future conversation, all she needs to do is say "number 22" and we can skip to the next topic. And, yes, I do like jicama (both the green and purple varieties), usually slicing it and putting it into my afternoon veggie snack container for work. Juniper Berry and Jalap were disqualified as they are spices and Jumping Beans are actually seeds with moth larvae inside (not something I'd eat as a vegetable!). I was going to disqualify japanese cucumber, but it has a separate entry in my reference book unlike ones such as japanese radish (see daikon). No one for a Jalapeno?
- 05) Captain on Sci-Fi Series: I was surprised when I started to look at this - I think "J" is the most common first letter in television sci-fi captains! For the Babylon 5 universe, it does make sense with J Michael Straczynski naming the first two captains with JS as their names (John Sheridan and Jeffery Sinclair). Then, there's James Kirk, Jonathan Archer, Jean-Luc Picard in the Trek universe; John Koenig from Space: 1999; John Robinson from Lost in Space (though he's a professor, not a captain) and a few others. What gives?? In any case, I'd have chosen Sheridan.

Player Commentary:

- 01) Type of Candy: **[Brendan]** Jaffa - chocolate coated orange nougat. Jaafa is a mix of chocolate and orange is also a popular milkshake flavour in NZ. **[Doug]** I originally wrote jawbreaker but changed it. **[Kent]** Mmmm... wax coated sugar... **[Rick]** I'll go with Jelly Babies, which were Doctor Who's favorite candy during the Tom Baker years. **[Cal]** I bet jelly bean and jujube will be up there too. **[Marc]** Jellybeans seemed the obvious answer, but I thought of eating JuJuBes in the theater as a kid.
- 02) Book of the Bible: **[Brendan]** Hey Jude.... **[Rick]** Hmm.. there's Job, and Judges and... well, I'll look this up. Oh... Joshua of course, Judith, Jeremiah, Joel, Jonah, John, James, Jude... no shortage here. The Ethiopian Orthodox bible contains some book called "Jubilees". Let's think... Judith is not in the Protestant Bible, so that makes here a possible person of interest. But, do I want that or not. I'll just go with Jeremiah, because he was a bullfrog, and a good friend of mine. **[Cal]** Eastern Orthodox Old Testament version. **[Marc]** There are a lot of books starting with J. However, this is the only book named for a woman that starts with a J. Something different, perhaps?
- 03) Item of Clothing Commonly Worn Today: **[Brendan]** Jumper - sweater to you yanks. **[Kent]** Not appropriate to wear to work, unless the big boss says that you can to support your "home" team even though they are actually 79 miles away. **[WAY]** Kent is a co-worker and he's referring to a recent HR memo which allowed the wearing of San Antonio Spurs jerseys at work in honor of their recent NBA championship. **[Rick]** A jumper of course. They are very commonly worn, at least in the UK. 'Cause that's the British word for what Americans call a sweater. **[Edi]** ? the 'J-String' like a G-String only higher and tighter up in the alphabet. **[Cal]** Depends on what kind of bar you hang out in as to whether or not these are worn "commonly". **[Marc]** Brutal. Then again, seeing fat people in jumpsuits is also brutal.
- 04) Vegetable: **[Brendan]** I can't think of any! **[Doug]** Is Japanese cucumber permissible? **[WAY]** Yep, but just barely.. **[Doug]** if not, please use jicama. **[WAY]** Will do. **[Berry]** I've never seen one (Jerusalem Artichoke). Nor did I ever consciously come across any other vegetable whose name

starts with a J; this must be a rare quality indeed among vegetables! According to Chris' Cookery Page the Jerusalem Artichoke "isn't an artichoke and it doesn't come from Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Artichoke is actually related to the sunflower. The bit we eat is an ugly little tuber (like a small thin potato) that tastes amazing. It has a smoky taste that really excites the palette." **[Kent]** I've seen it a HEB - the local supermarket, but I'm not man enough to try it. **[WAY]** It's sorta crunchy with a mild taste. I usually cut it into slices and eat it raw as a snack or shredded on a salad. **[Fred]** Mexican plant. **[Rick]** I wonder what you are thinking of here. I'm looking at the Wikipedia page for vegetables, and I see "Jerusalem artichoke", which I think is a lame answer, and "jicama", which is some kind of Mexican turnip. I think I'll go with the jicama. **[Cal]** If adjectives are not eligible for the "J", I'll go with jalapeno, which my wife swears is a veggie. DQ me on THAT and you answer to her....). **[WAY]** See Berry's commentary above, the "Jerusalem" in this veggie is not an adjective it is part of the name of a mistakenly named veggie. **[Marc]** I used to eat this out sometimes, before I went on the carb diet and laid off starchy things like this.

05) Captain on Sci-Fi Series: **[Brendan]** Who else is there? **[Berry]** A rather boring and unappealing character (Jonathan Archer), hopefully to such a degree that nobody else will think of him. **[Kent]** from Lost in Space. **[Steve]** Maybe everyone else will find someone else. **[Rick]** Well, the most obvious answer is James T Kirk. The slightly less obvious answer, and possibly most popular is Jean-Luc Picard. Martin Landau played John Koenig in Space 1999, but that only had two seasons. There's John Robinson from Lost in Space, but he wasn't a "captain" by title. I was tempted by Captain Janeway, but the J is with her last name, not her first. ooh - oooh... OK, I'll go with John Sheridan from Babylon 5. **[Edi]** Well this is an obscure one that I am sure no one will match: Janice Lester. In one of the best acting jobs by William Shatner in Star Trek - The Turnabout Intruder Janice Lester takes over Kirk's body and becomes in effect the captain of the Enterprise. **[WAY]** Nice try with the logic, but Kirk was still captain even if someone else was "controlling" his body. **[Edi]** If that is not acceptable then I guess the big three choices are Jonathan Archer, Jean Luc Picard and James T. Kirk and I will go with Jean Luc Picard. **[Cal]** I'm taking a flyer here and betting no one will say this. I can think of at least one more Jonathan Archer from Enterprise, for example, but I'll try this. **[Marc]** This was so obviously pointed at Star Trek...that is until I starting thinking about it. James Tiberius Kirk and Jean Luc Picard and for that matter Jonathan Archer (Enterprise). But I really enjoyed Babylon 5, I'll go with Bruce Boxleitner's character.

General Player Commentary:

[Marc] This was a fairly difficult category. I had to think long and hard about anything but the most obvious answer (Jellybeans, John, ??, Jalapeno, James Kirk). The clothing one was tough all the way around (I guess it could be a jock?). I'll be curious to see how this one shakes out. Thanks for putting this together. **[WAY]** My pleasure!

Round Four

Letter: "Any Letter"

- 01) Primary Color in the Visible Spectrum
- 02) Planet in "Our" Solar System
- 03) Continent on Earth
- 04) Major US PC Manufacturer
- 05) Permanent Country on the UN Security Council

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Deadline is: July 21, 2007 at high noon Central Time