

THE ALL-NEW LIGHTNING BOLT

VOLUME 3

END OF THE YEAR REVIEW 2016

NUMBER 5

ON SCHEDULE? DIDN'T HAPPEN. THAT'S HOW IT GOES.

WHILE I WAS OTHERWISE ENGAGED...

A NOT-SO-SUBTLE ATTEMPT AT AN EDITORIAL,
AND AN EXPLANATION.

I had been trying to maintain some sort of regularity in my scheduling of putting out these fanzines. (That was, originally, the idea behind them.)

As has been demonstrated, that didn't happen.

I have tried to juggle all the things I've been doing of late, including writing articles, essays, screenplays, photography, special effects cinematography, editing and composing visual effects (with the relatively new software I found that is considerably cheaper than the comparable programs from Adobe), and doing what needs doing in our day-to-day life... If, by some chance, I get something done, it's usually at the expense of four or five other things, and since the daily operations are priority, this usually entails a cut-

back in some of the other areas.

And so it has been.



WINTER: THREAT OR MENACE?

I write this the week of my birthday*, with the first real snowfall of the year just fallen.

{* The 16th of December, FYI.}

We had, in our particular part of the Detroit area, approximately ten inches of white crap.

I deem it fortunate that it wasn't extremely heavy to shovel... just sticky on the morning after, when the temperature was marginally above freezing.

The bad part? There will, according to most of the local meteorologists, more snow by midweek, with overnight temps going into single digits (this is in degrees Fahrenheit, for those outside the United States) by the end of the week, and wind chill indices well below zero.

We are not amused.

So it seems that outdoor activities

of any sort will be limited almost until the Solstice/Yule/Christmas/Saturnalia holidays, which occurrence, truth to tell, doesn't put me out much at all.

My disregard of most holidays is another story, one best told after this season goes away, I feel... So that's when I will discuss it.



THE ELECTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES:

A SOMEWHAT CAUTIONARY TALE

On Election Day, I was about as gobsmacked as anyone when Donald J. Trump, a liar, coward, and a poltroon (in my almost-unbiased opinion) was declared the winner of the election, and all that remained was to count and certify the electoral votes and inaugurate the mistake on the

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twentieth of January next.

Then Dr. Jill Stein filed petitions in three states (Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Michigan) for a manual recount of the votes because of allegations of improprieties in the voting.

A friend of ours, who is, like us, a former conrunner here, and who is, not like us, a member of the Michigan Bar, alerted us to the need for observers at recount sites in all 83 counties—some sparsely populated ones were to be consolidated for the count, especially in the northern Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula.

Since Megan, due to her health issues, could not see her way clear to volunteer, I volunteered for the position of an observer (some call it “challenger”, but the Stein campaign discouraged the use of that term).

I underwent an hour of training online, on a “webinar”, and was assigned to my county’s site, which was in the Oakland County Intermediate School District headquarters, across Telegraph Road from the County Office Building, Courthouse, Sheriff’s office and County Jail, and most other offices. I scheduled myself for the afternoon shift (1:00 PM to 5:00 PM) for the days of the recount, which was supposed to end by the 13th to meet the requirements of the vote and certification of electors which is/was scheduled for the 19th, for dispatch to Washington, D.C. for the official tally on the 3rd of January.

In the meantime, our Republican Attorney General, Bill Shitty Schutte was filing suit to stop the recount, as were people for Trump, and we were

told that we were to keep at the recount effort until the courts told us to stop.

A Federal appeals judge had issued a stay, allowing the count to go on, but after the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled against Dr. Stein, and the Michigan Supreme Court upheld that decision, the recount was stopped. A few — shall we say, interesting? — problems were discovered in the process, however.

Michigan’s law for conducting a recount specifies that if a count of the ballots in a sealed container does not match the number in the poll book, and the poll workers cannot be located to explain any difference in the totals, then that entire voting precinct must be excluded from the count. If the container with the ballots does not have a seal whose number matches that in the poll book, the precinct must be excluded.

It seems we in Michigan have the strictest manual count laws in the entire country.

Happy happy joy joy.

All told, I worked three days on the recount before it was shut down, and I found it an educational experience. Someone else on Facebook wrote of their experiences in another county, and they had Trump observers, as I read, circulating the recount area smelling for blood in the water to stop any precinct from being counted. I must say this did not happen in my county, for which I offer thanks; Allah to Zeus, take your pick.

Whatever this brings, and the process isn’t done yet as I write this, I can say for certain right here and right now that the 2016 election is

not going to be forgotten anytime soon.



COLOPHON:

This is *The All-New LIGHTNING ROUND* Volume 3 Number Five, sometime after the First of December, 2016. Since this is a science-fiction fanzine, science and science-fiction WILL be mentioned, or even discussed in its pages. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.**

This is another Totally Superfluous Publication by Alexander Bouchard, who disavows any knowledge of his actions. Bill no posts. Two spaces after a period (I’m old school, yo.). Edited by Al Bouchard. Published by Megan Bouchard. **eFanzines.com** has copies, and others available by whim.

Letters of comment, summonses, general inquiries, provocative photos of Eleanor Roosevelt, one-liter bottles of club soda, and unexpurgated transcripts of the Nixon White House tapes should be addressed to:

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If this had been an actual flatulation, you would have been given gas masks.

No fans were killed or maimed in the production of this fanzine. (*Minor injuries don’t count.*)

**NO, YOU CAN’T HAVE MY RIGHTS —
I’M STILL USING THEM!**

**THE IDEA IS TO COMFORT THE
AFFLICTED, AND TO
AFFLICT THE COMFORTABLE.**

LOC'N'LOAD

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September 29, 2016

Dear Al:

My apologies for responding to Lightning Round Vol. 3 No. 4 so late. You probably know that Yvonne and I spent two weeks in England, having Harry Potter and steampunk adventures, and also that I am continuing the never-ending job hunt, and that's had to take precedence for the time being. I hope I can find something soon.

No problems with your own schedule...the next issue should come out when the next issue comes out. You do these things in the time you have. You are the editor and the managing editor.

I did read about the record for so many Rosie the Riveters. Recently, I saw a photoshopped photo of Hillary Clinton as Rosie the Riveter. What an insane election you're going through right now.

We have had a few more shows over the past few months, in Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton, where we sold our steampunk jewelry and costume pieces, and we've had mixed results. The last show we did was in Hamilton, the Locke Street Festival, and it was hell on wheels, trying to make sure our merchandise wasn't soaked by the torrential rains, or our tent didn't blow away in the heavy winds. We were recently in Niagara-on-the-Lake attending the Grand Canadian Steampunk Exposition, not as vendors, but as attendees, and we had a great time. We have four more shows this year, with our next one in Burlington.

Well, a two-page fanzine won't get much of a loc, but I have written what I can. Hugs to Megan, and hope to see another issue of this zine soon.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Lloyd:

Your loc isn't late. My reply to your loc, on the other tentacle, *is* late.

From what little I heard, due to my own not paying attention to the Net, I gather your two weeks in Old Blighty were enjoyable and happy. Good show, old chap!

I, too, hope you can find something in the way of steady employment soon, if it hasn't happened already. (I *really* need to pay more attention...)

I hope your steampunk vending is going great guns, and that you and Yvonne are *très heureux*.

I get that I didn't provide many comment hooks, and what you wrote was what you wrote. I appreciate it all the same.

And yes, you're right... the entire election cycle (and it ain't over yet, by a long chalk) has been something like Monty Python directing a Herschel Gordon Lewis film.

And if that don't scare you, nothing will. (It certainly does me...)

Hugs for Yvonne, and we'll see you when we see you.



WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

John Purcell, Guy H. Lillian III,
Henry & Letha Welch



WHAT WE HAVE HERE...

A BRIEF LOOK AT WHAT THE FK IS GOING ON HERE, AND WHAT (IF ANYTHING) WE CAN DO ABOUT IT**

Are we really in the Last Days before the Apocalypse? Is the election of Donald J. Trump the beginning of the end for the United States of America in particular, and the world as a whole in general?

After extensive thought and research, and barring unforeseen efforts by persons not on the radar of people who get paid to worry about this shit, my best answer to the questions above comes down to this:

Damfino.

The orange egomaniac could get a burr up his bung about something and launch a full nuclear strike.

The orange crush could resign (or die) before he's inaugurated, leaving the Presidency to Nehemiah Scudder from Indiana. (*Read your Heinlein if you don't get the reference.*)

Some kind of revolt in the Electoral College could occur, with enough electors deserting the orange one to throw the election to the House of Representatives, which would put the top three up for a vote - Clinton, Trump, and Gary ("Where's Aleppo?") Johnson.

The Electoral College could flip enough votes to give the Presidency to Hillary Clinton. (I find this one a little far out, myself, but it is still within the realm of probability.)

The giant meteor we've all been wishing for could strike the Earth, causing an extinction-level event. In which case, there's nothing to worry about.

Politics... it's a gas. (Usually corrosive, teratogenic, and banned by the FDA.)

You probably see why I don't like writing about it very often... it roils the stomach and deranges the sleep patterns.



In other stories...

Twenty-sixteen is still racking up the death toll, with just over two weeks left to go, as I write this.

I watched a video about the noted people who have passed this year, and the names are staggering. David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Alan Rickman, Anton Yelchin, Muhammad Ali, Theresa Saldana, Ken Howard (Remember *The White Shadow?*), Garry Marshall, George Kennedy, Patty Duke, Doris Roberts, Gene Wilder... astronaut, Senator, and icon John Glenn...

Kenny Baker, Abe Vigoda, Steven Hill (This tape will self-destruct in five seconds... the original leader of the IMF), Prince, Robert Vaughn ("Open Channel D, please"), Florence Henderson (Mrs. Brady!), Harper Lee (author of *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *Go Set A Watchman*)...

I'm sure there are many I've missed. I'm sure there are many I've never heard about. I'm sure there are millions of people who have not, do not, and probably never will know who I am and what I have done.

There's no sense crying about that; it's as may be, since I have really done nothing worthy of note.

I write things few people read, I diddle around with writing music, I piddle around with film/video/digital media, I draw cartoons almost no one sees, and I kid myself I'll one day write the quintessential screenplay, or stage play, or make a spectacular film

that will attract attention from seasoned professionals.

One thing with that... if I don't make it, or write it, or draw it, or compose it, no one will ever see it.

If no one sees it, no one can judge me.

If no one judges me, no one can call me a failure.

(Instant psychotherapy... just add depression and insecurity.)



GOING LIKE SIXTY

A SUPPOSED MILESTONE BIRTHDAY

On the sixteenth of December, I will have reached the sixtieth anniversary of my original debut, in a Catholic hospital, which is no longer there, in Chicago, Illinois.

I have lived in, and gone to school in, many places in those sixty years, but most often, I have been here, in the Detroit area.

My people lived here... they are, for the most part, buried here also.

Thanks to my Dearly Beloved Wife, Megan, I now know a bit more about my mostly missing paternal line, since the man was gone before I was born. There were a few surprises in there; I found I was a collateral relative of Richard Lee, a signer of the Declaration of Independence from Virginia, of "Light Horse Harry" Lee, also of Virginia, who was a noted general under George Washington during the Revolutionary War, and of a certain West Point graduate by the name of Robert Edward Lee, also of Virginia, who was the commanding general of the Army of Northern Virginia during the Civil War.

These facts were filed under "interesting to know", like the fact that one of my Canadian ancestors

was the second wife of Canadian patriot Louis Riel, who was instrumental in the settling of the Canadian West, and was hung as a traitor by the United States for trying to foment insurrection among the First Nations tribes along the border between Canada and the U.S.

I have three or so great-uncles who were members of Theodore Roosevelt's First Volunteer Cavalry, known as "The Rough Riders", who fought in Cuba during the Spanish-American War at the turn of the Twentieth Century. My grandfather on that side, as well as several of his brothers and a couple of sisters, volunteered for the Canadian Army in the First War, and my mother's three brothers were all in the Army of the United States during the Second World War. Two of these uncles fought in Korea, and one was killed on 14 July 1953, two weeks before the Treaty of Panmunjom.

Yes, I speak with pride of my people... they have stood for their country, and some paid the ultimate price. I do not belittle their efforts, nor do I say that what they did was a waste. I respect them, I honor them, and I feel pride that their blood runs, at least in part, in my veins.

I don't talk about this much... I think younger generations than I don't really see things the way I was brought up to. They seem to be committed to looking for the easy way out, to not being responsible, to letting someone else do what needs to be done.

Maybe it's just the way I was raised. But I'm pushing sixty... and I'm not likely to change now.

