



"A genius is also a man who needs to eat."
~ 'Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare'
by James Shapiro, Simon & Schuster

THAT'Z RICH

"Depending on where you stand — or the given day — [Obama] is either an over-intellectual, professorial wuss or a ruthless Chicago machine pol rivaling the original Boss Daley.

"He is either a socialist redistributing wealth to the undeserving poor or a tool of Wall Street's Goldman Sachs elite. He is a terrorist-coddling, A.C.L.U.-tilting lawyer or a closet Cheneyite upholding the worst excesses of the Bush administration's end run on the Constitution.

THROUGHOUT THE 'PLANET,' CLICKING **BOLD, DARK RED TYPE** OPENS A RELATED INTERNET LINK.

"He is a lightweight celebrity who's clueless without a teleprompter or a Machiavellian mastermind who has ingeniously forged his Hawaiian birth certificate, covered up his ties to Islamic radicals and bamboozled the entire mainstream press. He is the reincarnation of JFK, LBJ, FDR, Reagan, Hitler, Stalin, Adlai Stevenson or Nelson Mandela. (Funny how few people compared George W. Bush to anyone but Hitler and his parents.)" — *Frank Rich*



READ COLUMN

"Without a right wing and a left wing, we'd just be going around in circles."
~ *Phil Proctor*

SHOW OFFS. While one side insists her privates are private, the other demands a return to Bluth Family values.

■ CONTINUED

"It is a great thing to start life with a small number of really good books which are your very own."
~ Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 'Through the Magic Door'

RATZ IN THE VAT

(Haiku by Frank Dwyer for the Huffington Post)

*Most Catholics don't
give a Ratzinger's Mass for
his kind of papal bull.*

"The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving."
~ Oliver Wendell Holmes

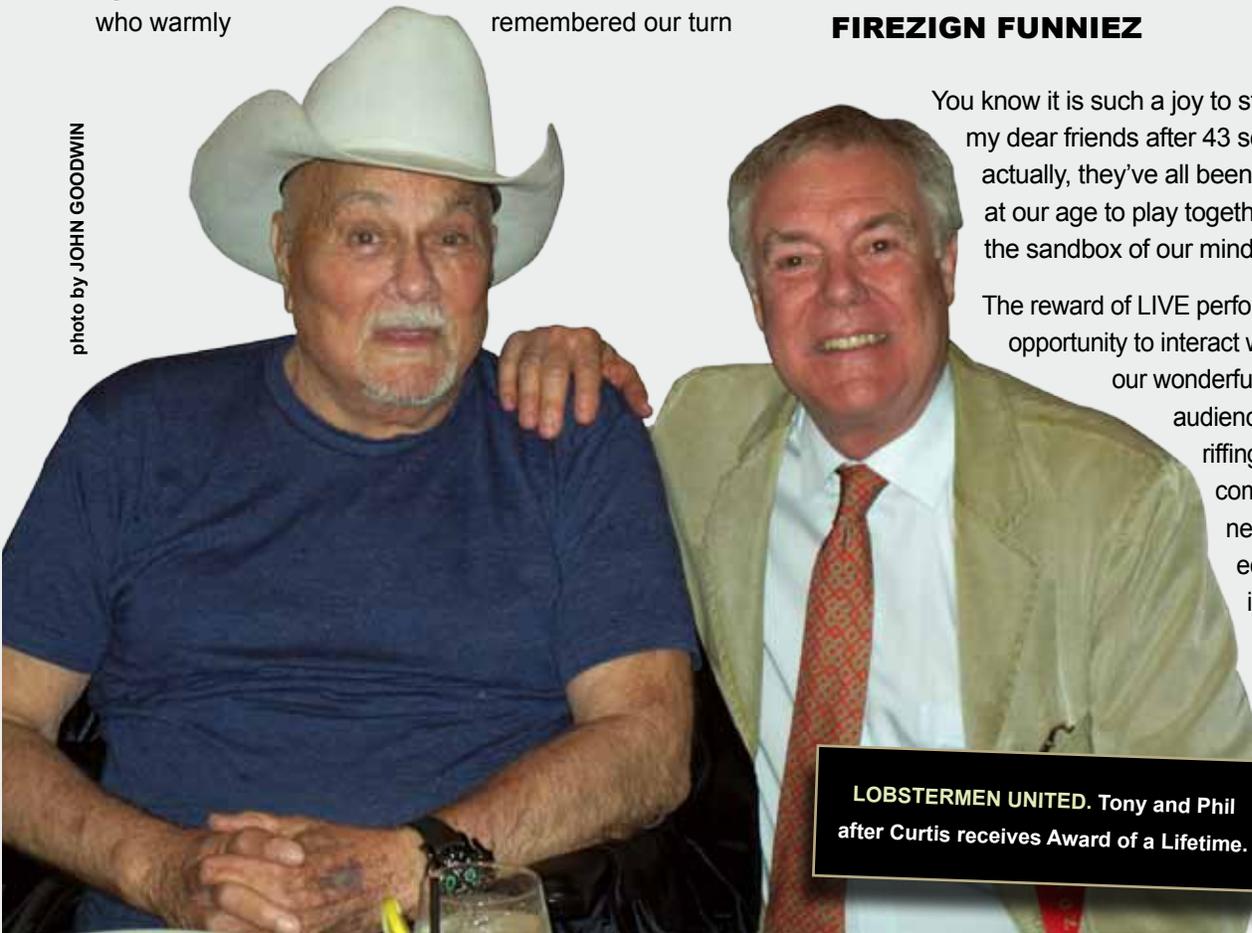
GREATZ

Thanks to my colleagues at **Author Services**, where I often appear in the enormously entertaining "Golden Age of Pulp Fiction" live audio plays, I was honored to attend the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce's 89th Annual Awards luncheon in the Roosevelt Hotel's historic Blossom Room last week, where the legendary **Tony Curtis** was presented a Lifetime Achievement award.

I got to reunite with the
who warmly

Bronx's **Bernie Schwartz**,
remembered our turn

photo by JOHN GOODWIN



LOBSTERMEN UNITED. Tony and Phil after Curtis receives Award of a Lifetime.

together in Stanley Sheff's 1989 comic cult classic "Lobsterman from Mars." His acceptance speech was moving and humbling, and the montage of his cinematic achievements reminded the star-studded crowd of the extraordinary breadth of his dramatic and comedic talents. (I sat next to the beautiful, talented **Lee Purcell!**)



And my equally beautiful and talented wife, **Melinda**, and I – also beautiful and talented – will be participating in **Norman Corwin's** 100th birthday Celebration on Saturday, May 1 at the Writers' Guild Theatre, emceed by **Leonard Maltin**.

Fellow Kentucky Colonel **Richard Fish** will also be there to represent The Norman Corwin Award for Excellence in Audio Theatre which he helped to create, and Mr. Corwin himself will receive the inaugural award on Sunday, May 2, following a screening of the Oscar-Award winning short about his amazing career, "On a Note of Triumph," at the Aero Theatre in Santa Monica.

"Sometimes falling on your face is better than bending too far backwards." ~ **James Thurber**

FIREZIGN FUNNIEZ

You know it is such a joy to still be performing with my dear friends after 43 some odd years – well, actually, they've all been odd – and still be able at our age to play together like happy children in the sandbox of our minds.

The reward of LIVE performance is the amazing opportunity to interact with one another and with our wonderful, unique and dedicated audiences like jazz musicians riffing on our own original compositions in a kind of never-ending cerebral comedy jam. Our touring show is special for us because we're able to present an eclectic mix of classic and newly conceived contemporary pieces in a liberating minimal-

■ **CONTINUED**

ist setting, allowing us to perform as we did on the radio and in studio.

We're free to surprise ourselves and our audiences every night, so that no show is ever exactly the same; and because we can hold scripts in our hands, we can introduce new ideas whenever we get the urge and thus build a new show based on audience reactions in the tradition of the Marx Brothers, whom we surrealistically embrace as our crazed kinsmen.

VISIT OUR SITE for June tour info.

*"The Internet is a telephone system that's gotten uppity."
~ Clifford Stoll*

OZ

From the "LA Free Press" online: "It was less than a month ago that Radio Free OZ was resurrected – as always, ahead of the times as Easter had yet to come. And there they were, our old friends, the four fire signs that made up the Firesign Theatre: **Peter Bergman, Dave Ossman, Phil Austin, and Phil Proctor.**

"Each of those glorious Sunday nights, their comedic virtuosity was on display, a mix of old times and new thoughts; great guests, and music, too. Always a night of conversation that makes you think, sometimes turn your perspective upside down, and helps you find humor where you might have thought there was none.

"And now, instead of that live Sunday evening show, there

will be

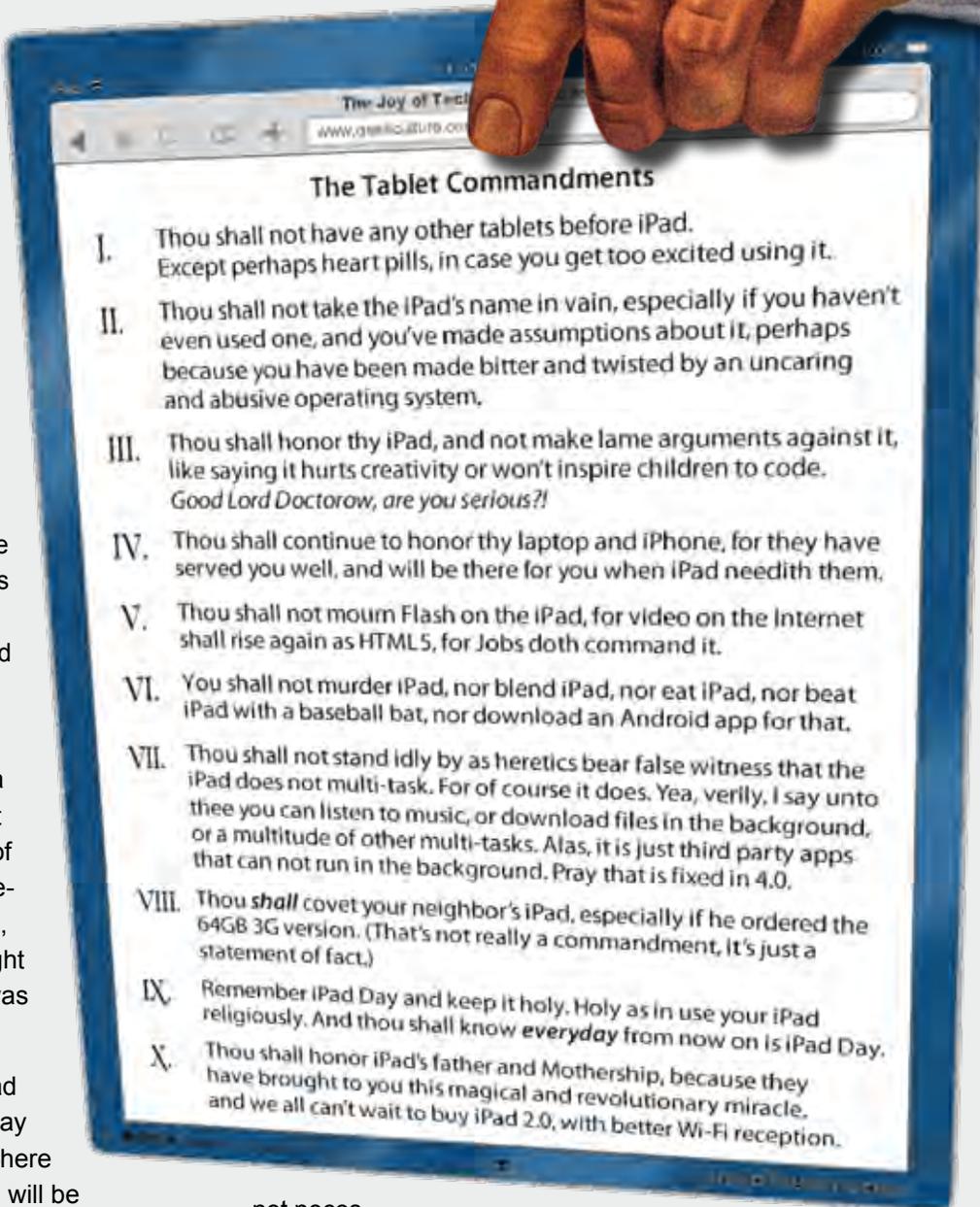
new segments on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday!

These all air live, at 12 am, each one 50 thought-provoking minutes,

not necessarily in that order.

"For those of you – Freepers and all – who would prefer to get this measure of intellectually smart, sit-around-the-table fun, with music that is often magic, at some other time than the early morning hour, just click on the web-radio button at **WWW.RADIOFREEOZ.COM** and there it is!"

*"I'm having premonitions about my flashbacks."
~ Steven Wright to Craig Ferguson*



STONE LOVE. Moses gets the reboot.

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LOZT IN TRANZITION

"I may have told you this a long time ago," writes **Roger 'The Rastaman' Steffens**, "But the 'NY Times' had a fascinating piece years ago about the alleged 72 virgins waiting for the madmen who blow themselves to smithereens believing they will encounter them upon the reassembly of their various parts in the afterlife.

"In fact, according to the 'Times,' this misunderstanding began with a mistranslation of the Koran whose original text actually refers to 72 white raisins, an incredible delicacy in the mid-east back in the 5th century.

"My other favorite mistranslation, also revealed by the 'Times,' concerns the Mark of the Beast - the number 666. In actuality, according to the text of the earliest known Bible, it is 616 - which just happens to be the area code for southern Michigan."

"Time will one day heal the wound to that confidence that will be inflicted by today's decision [Bush v. Gore]. Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year's presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear.

It is the nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law."

~ Justice Stevens

YOU KILL ME

Recently, 'LA Times' Op Ed contributor **Gregory Rodriguez** interviewed Ohio State University historian **Randolph Roth** about his groundbreaking book, 'American Homicide,' which posits "something like a unified theory of why Americans kill each other at such a high rate and what can be done about it."

"Tracing trends in violence and political power in the U.S. from colonial times to the present, Roth concludes that high homicide rates 'are not determined by proximate causes such as poverty, drugs, unemployment, alcohol, race, or ethnicity, but by factors ... like the feelings that people have toward their government and the opportunities they have to earn respect without resorting to violence.

"The Civil War,' Roth says, was 'a catastrophic failure in nation building,' when a large percentage of the population lost faith in government and eyed their countrymen with distrust.' That antagonism plays out today when elections leave half the nation feeling empowered and the other half feeling disenfranchised...

If people feel their government shares their values and acts on their behalf, they have greater trust and confidence in

their dealings with others. Conversely, those who feel out of power and mistrustful of government carry those attitudes into everyday relationships with murderous results.

"As Roth sees it, even activists and politicians -- from the right or the left -- who sew bitter disdain for government are indirectly encouraging the mistrust that breeds violent behavior..." Finally, Rodriguez asked the author "to speculate on what could happen if the right continued its violent rhetoric and didn't gain seats in November or 2012. He suggested looking back at the 1960s and 1970s, when left-wing activists were preaching their own disdain for government. As trust of government evaporated, the murder rate doubled."

"Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country."

~ Franklin Delano Roosevelt

OBITZ

I have to start with the pastor of the L.A. Church of Religious Science, our beloved **Dr. David Walker**, who made his transition last week. "Today, a great light passed from this plane to the next," noted the official announcement. We will miss him greatly but his teach-

ings will continue and Melinda and I will continue to support these wonderful teachings. "And so it is..."

We also were shocked to hear of the death of our voice-over colleague and sublime Jack Benny impersonator, **Eddie Carroll**, at age 76. Canadian-born Eddie Eleniak was also the voice of Jiminy Cricket for Disney and active in our in-



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PLANET CLICK

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RIGHTWRONGZ

DAZE

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JEWZ

CHINEZE

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CLEANZ

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FASCIZM

ZEAL LOVE

TURBOZ

VIOLENZE

Happy Birthday
Kristin!!

CLICK THE WORD TO GO TO THE SITE

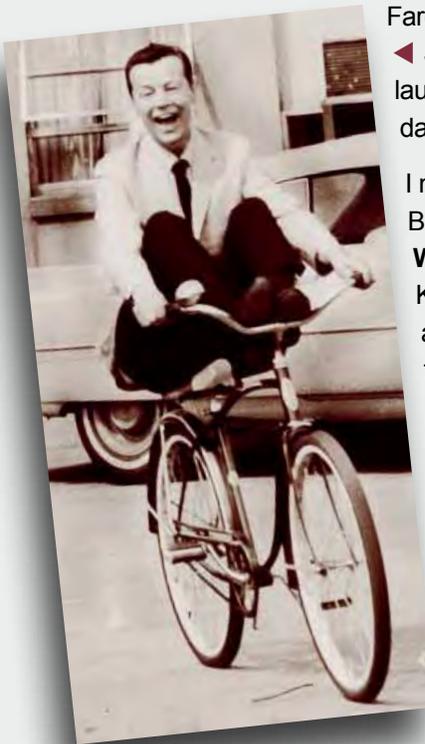
dusty right up to the end. I so enjoyed chatting with him at our CESD Talent agency and will miss his great stories and greater heart.

Farewell to the amazing impressario
◀ **Johnny Kenley**, who exited, laughing, after 103 years and 252 days. (That's a long run!)

I met him on a tour of "Bell, Book and Candle" playing **Betty White's** brother "Nicky" at his Kenley Players in Ohio. He rode around on a bike, and I was told that he spent his winters in Florida – as a woman!

ONSTAGE, online, notes that he was born John Kremchek to a Slovak saloonkeeper near Denver in 1906, made his stage debut at the age of 4, and later performed "as a female impersonator, acrobat, dancer and 'stooge,' an audi-

ence plant who yelled so the performer could get off a witty jibe." There goes Johnny!



And finally, I just heard of the passing of **Allen Swift (AKA Ira Stadlen)**, with whom I acted in "The Barroom Monks" Off-Broadway at the beginning of my career and who introduced me to the potential of a future voice-over career.

"Life gets the last laugh." ~ **Irv Bechner**
in "Wicked Wit of the West" by Hank Rosenfeld

PICKZ

Ray Lesser, Garry Margolis, Rich Carlson, Victor Kopcewich, Kenneth Wilhite, Jr., Bridget Flanery, Peter Johnson, Jeffery Cannata, Jayne Stahl, Nick Oliva, Eddie Deezen, Don Ross and Patti Deutsch, "The Week" magazine – and special thanks to everyone who came to see me in "The Psychic" by **Sam Bobrick**, which closed to sold-out houses at **Garry Marshall's** Falcon Theatre in Burbank last weekend. I'll miss our amazing cast – **Jeffrey Cannata, Dana Green, Bridget Flanery, Cyrus Alexander, Richard Horvitz**, our stage manager, **Deirdre Murphy** and our incredible director **Susan Morgenstern**, more than I can ever say...on to the next.

"Male, 45 to 55. He is a zillionaire. Not in a fake, cartoony way...Just warm and buttery - the sound of money." ~ **Copy directions for a pretzel spot**

"Doing nothing is very hard to do. You never know when you're finished" ~ **Leslie Nielsen**

FIRESIGN CDs: <http://www.laugh.com>

FUNNY TIMES: <http://www.funnytimes.com>

BEARWHIZ BEER <http://www.eagletshirts.com>

FST: <http://www.FiresignTheatre.com>