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PLANET NEWYEAR 2012

January 13, 2012

"Xmas was invented to knock out the health & strength accumulated in the previous 11 months & shorten people's lives 10 percent a year."
~ Sam Clemens

AN EAST COAST CHRISTMAS

We started our Holidaze visiting with **Melinda's** aunt **Margaret** in Wrentham, MA, staying at the nearby **Proctor Mansion Inn**, constructed in 1861 on the former site of George Washington's favorite tavern by **Thomas Proctor** (my Dad's name), who was a wealthy businessman and industrialist from Providence. A former blacksmith's apprentice, he earned his fortune by inventing a sharp point for screws.

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

He and his wife enjoyed the home's luxury for a few short years before his death in 1886, when **Daniel Brown**, owner of **Wrentham Straw Works**, and his descendants resided there until the present owner, **Brian Fitzgerald**, took it over. Fitzgerald continues the loving restorations which we witnessed firsthand on a personal tour. It is one of only eight existing Victorian homes to retain its original interior design.

We then drove to Melinda's hometown of West Hartford, CT where her brother **Art** and sister-in-law **Linda**, with their sons **Noah** and **Luke** and dog **Charlie**, treated us "like members of the family." Especially Charlie, who loved Melinda's feet.

Visits with other siblings and Melinda's mom, **Shirley**, filled the time before we headed down to NYC to catch plays like **David Henry Hwang's** hysterical *Chinglish*; *Seminar*, starring **Alan Richman**; *How to Succeed in Business* with **Daniel Radcliffe** and pal **John Laroquette**; *Sons of the Prophet*; and **Alan Ayckbourne's** Fascist farce, *Neighborhood Watch*.

Somehow we also found time to hang with friends **Kathryn Leigh Scott**, **Hanna Baldwin**, **Ken Burrows**, **Tulis McCall**, **Elaine Louie** and **Bob Grossman**, **Helen Englehart**, **Stephanie Revesz**, **Sally Gehring**, and my Goshen pal, **George Riddle**, and his dog **Buddy**. It wasn't a white Christmas, but it was "all white" with us! ■ **CONTINUED**



A COMIC CLAIMANT?
This renovated Victorian manse was built by Thomas Proctor, the former 'smith intern who made a fortune putting a fine point on screwing.

"What I don't like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day." ~ **Phyllis Diller**

'PEACE' HAD ITS TIME

Our amazing production of *Peace In Our Time* is over now, but not before we made *L.A. Times* Theatre Critic **Charles McNulty's** Best in 2011 Theatre list!

"The more serious side of **Noël Coward's** dramatic imagination," he wrote, "provided an opportunity for the **Antaeus Company** to display its ensemble brilliance in a musically enhanced production directed by **Casey Stangl** that convincingly brought to life a counterfactual portrait of Britain under Nazi occupation."

We shared the spotlight with productions from Los Angeles, Broadway, London's National Theatre and the West End – a fitting conclusion to a challenging 20th Anniversary season which saw successful works mounted by our former Artistic Director, **Jeanie Hackett**, and our new company-based leadership as well. On to 2012...

"Hope to see ya in the spring - if not, then on the mattress." ~ **Irish come-on**

NO CUKES!

A Europe-based Islamic cleric has warned Muslim women not to get too close to bananas, cucumbers, zucchinis or

carrots, thus avoiding "sexual thoughts." The unnamed sheik, whose directive was featured in an article in the religious tract *el-Senousa*, purportedly said that if women wanted to eat similar produce, a third party – preferably their father or husband – should chop the items into smaller pieces before serving, the Egyptian website **Bikya Masr** reported.



'PEACE' WITH HONORS.
Antaeus Company's
revival of Noël Coward's
drama cited among best
theater of 2011.

News of the statement quickly spread online, leaving more liberal Muslims embarrassed and upset by "making Islamic religious practices appear unreasonable." Questions did arise concerning the article's validity, but it led Danish/Lebanese journalist **Helen Hajjij** to tweet:

"So, if Muslim women should stay away from cucumbers and bananas, should men stay away from melons?"

READ MORE

"Republicans believe that life begins at conception and death begins at contraception."

~ From **Politics as Usual**, a play in progress by **Phil Proctor** and **Samuel Warren Joseph**

SO – WHAT?

Texas cult leader **Warren Jeffs**, locked up for 45 years for raping and sexually assaulting two underage girls, has demanded that his 10,000 plus followers abstain from sex until he is released. They also must pay a New Year's tithe of \$5,000 and surrender most of their worldly possessions. The children must turn

their toys over to his lieutenants and teenage girls are commanded to cease all use of cell

YES, YOU'LL HAVE NO BANANAS.
You'll have no bananas today. (Not without adult male supervision.)

■ **CONTINUED**

phones and social media – or face expulsion, as reported in the *Denver News*. Is Kool-Aid far behind?

Nonetheless, *USA Today* reports that a recent **Baylor University** survey of religious beliefs suggests that there is a growing trend away from institutionalized dogma:

46% say that they never wonder if they will go to heaven; 44% don't spend any time seeking eternal wisdom; 18% don't believe that God has ordained a destiny for them; and an increasing amount of Americans now believe in "nothing in particular."

But **Rabbi Micah Greenstein** says, "I do believe that most people see life more as a mystery than as a machine." And, he concludes, "I would call that God, even if they don't."

"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the things you can think up if only you try!" ~ Dr. Seuss

HAPPY TAILS TO YOU

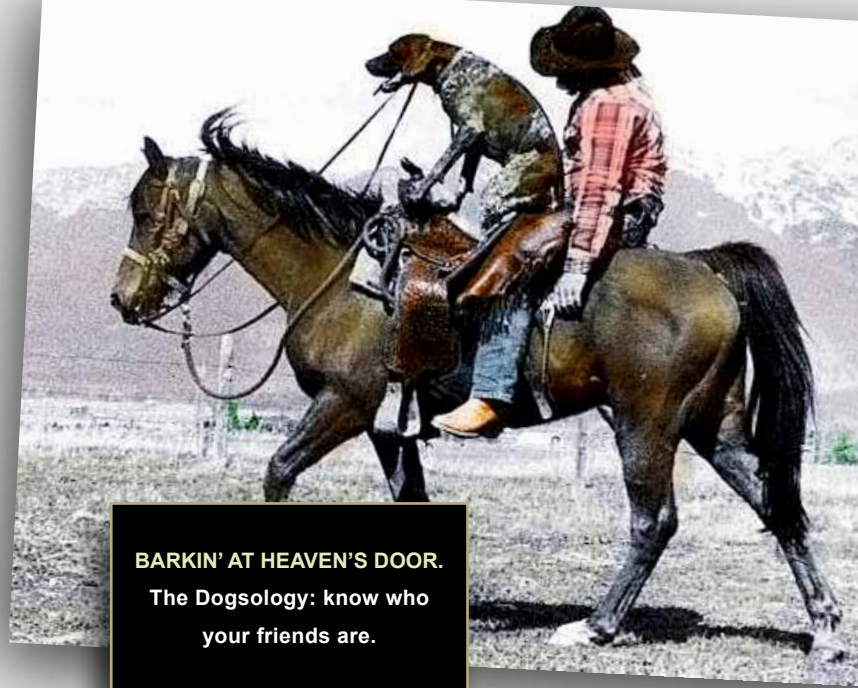
An old cowboy was riding his trusty horse followed by his faithful dog along an unfamiliar road. The man was enjoying the new scenery when he suddenly remembered dying, and realized that the dog beside him had been dead for years, as had his horse. Confused, he wondered what was happening, and where the trail was leading them.

After a while, they came to a high, white stone wall that looked like fine marble. Standing before it, he saw a magnificent gate that looked like mother-of-pearl, topped by a golden letter "H" glowing in the sunlight. The street that led to the gate looked like gold. He rode towards it, and as he got closer, he saw a man at a desk to one side. Parched and tired out by his journey, he called out, "Excuse me, where are we?"

"This is Heaven, sir," the man answered. "Wow! Would you happen to have some water?" the rider asked. "Of course, sir, come right in and I'll have some ice water brought right up." As the gate began to open, the cowboy asked, "Can I bring my partners, too?"

"I'm sorry, sir, but we don't accept pets." The cowboy thought for a moment, then turned back to the road and continued riding, his dog trotting by his side.

After another long ride, he came to a dirt road leading through a ranch gate that looked as if it had never been closed. As he approached the gate, he saw a man inside, leaning against a tree and reading a book. "Excuse me," he



BARKIN' AT HEAVEN'S DOOR.

The Dogsology: know who your friends are.

called to the man. "Do you have any water?"

"Sure, there's a pump right over there. Help yourself."

"How about my friends here?" the traveler asked, gesturing to the dog and horse. "Of course! They look thirsty, too," said the man.

The trio went through the gate, and sure enough, there was an old-fashioned hand pump with buckets beside it. The traveler filled a cup and the buckets with wonderfully cool water and took a long drink, as did his horse and dog. When they were full, he walked back to the man who was still standing by the tree. "What do you call this place?" the traveler asked. "This is Heaven," he answered. "That's confusing," the traveler said. "The man down the road said that was Heaven, too."

"Oh, you mean the place with the glitzy gold street and fake pearly gates? That's hell."

"Doesn't it make you angry when they use your name like that?"

"Not at all. Actually, we're happy they screen out the folks who would leave their best friends behind."

*"In Heaven there is no religion, thank God."
~ Mahatma Gandhi*

THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIOUS

Willard (Mitt) Romney's son, **Matt**, evaded a question in New Hampshire last year regarding his Dad's refusal to release his tax returns by suggesting that **President Obama** should first release his own birth certificate – although he already had.

■ **CONTINUED**

Junior's choice to resurrect this canard rattled skeletons in the Romney family closet, notes **Robert Kennedy, Jr.**, since Mitt's dad – then Michigan Governor **George Romney** – was haunted by his own “birther” issues during the 1968 Republican primaries. Nixon supporters had argued that a Romney presidency would be unconstitutional since George was born in Mexico “where his grandfather and five wives had fled to evade America’s polygamy laws.”

Ironically, adds Kennedy, under the current Citizens United Supreme Court ruling, “there is nothing to stop foreign governments or foreign-owned corporations from secretly donating hundreds of millions of dollars to Super PACs enabling them to pick favored candidates and destroy their opponents.”

Meanwhile, Senator **Bernie Sanders** is promoting the Saving American Democracy Amendment, which states:

“Corporations are not persons with constitutional rights equal to real people. Corporations are subject to regulation by the people. Corporations may not make campaign contributions or any election expenditures and Congress and states have the power to regulate campaign finances.”

Do you agree? **MORE INFO**

“Does corn qualify as amber waves of grain?
Not exactly, but you get the idea.”
~ **Mitt Romney** in Idaho

WHAT’S SO FUNNY?

“All the comedies I’ve done have been hard to film,” says fellow Yalie **Austin Pendleton**. “Film is an anomalous environment for it because you don’t know whether they’re gonna laugh or not. So you’re doing this stuff in total silence. Also comedy is hard to master. In theater when you do a comedy, you rehearse for a few weeks and you begin to feel the rhythm. In film it’s an arbitrary rhythm usually that has to look like a truthful one to work. It’s very pressured and difficult.

“I’m not complaining. I’ve been in some of the best comedies ever made. But I have never been on the set for a comedy where you don’t feel like you were in trouble all the

time. This is true of bad comedies I’ve been in and the good ones. You’re just exhausted.”

Since I’m about to reprise my role in the film adaptation of **Samuel Warren Joseph’s** play *Window of Opportunity* I’ll keep that in mind, Austin...

Former House Speaker **Newt Gingrich** addressed speculation about whether he would leave the race: “Not unless it gets cancer.” ~ **Andy Borowitz**

PLANET CLICK

PRANK YOUSE

**BUD
SUPERNEWT
CUT
CAT
KILTED
BLACK JEWS
B-B-B-BLUE
SING ALONG
SPEAK
CHIPPY
X-MASS**

**CLICK THE WORD TO
GO TO THE SITE**

IN THE NOOSE

A new minority report from the **House Committee on Energy and Commerce** notes that in the first session of the 112th Congress, House Republicans voted 191 times to weaken environmental protections, making this “the most anti-environment House in the history of Congress.”

And if you think that’s hot, a guy named **Vermin Supreme** is on the New Hampshire ballot. And on his website he declares himself as the sole candidate who supports government funding for time-travel research, so we can travel back in time and kill Hitler before his birth. He would also make brushing one’s teeth mandatory, declaiming in his Dental Manifesto, “Proper dental hygiene is essential to proper social order.”

To which I say again - “Papoon For Resident! Not Insane!”

“We’re Not Perfect - But They’re Nuts”
~ Democrat **Barney Frank**

THANK YOUSE

Jim Reynolds, Victor Kopcewich, Brian Westley, Kurt Ericson, Kenneth Wilhite, Jr., Richard Laible, Barry Pearl, Brian Howe, Phil & Oona Austin, Kent MacCaman and our newest honorary member of the **FUNNY NAMES** Club of America – **Beezow Doo-Doo Zoppittybop-Bop-Bop.**

“Those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end, for they do so with the approval of their consciences.” ~ **C. S. Lewis**

“There are two ways to conquer and enslave a nation. One is by the sword. The other is by debt.” ~ **John Adams, 1826**

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

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

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

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