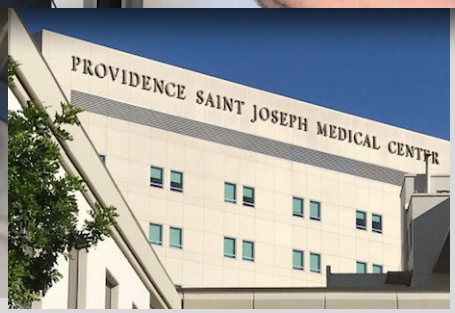


Ankles Away

Those of you who follow me on Facebook know that I've been preoccupied with my darling wife **Melinda**'s ankle transplant surgery recently and now that she's recovering at home for six weeks on our newly purchased articulated bed from Blissful Sleep, I've found some time to catch up. But the scary month of October has been so busy and challenging that this orbit may be more focused on travel than trivia. So, here goes…

Our trip back east was initiated by an invitation from **Matt Barton**, Curator of Recorded Sound for the Library of Congress, for a command performance at the end of September at its **Coolidge Theatre**. **Dave Ossman** and I (or ***The Firesign Theatre or What's Left of It***) presented ***The History of the Art of Radio*** to an enthusiastic sold-out crowd, followed by an improvised narration over rare home movies of the actual recording sessions at Columbia Square's Hollywood studios of ***Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers***, from our newly released 2-DVD set ***Everything You Know is Wrong: The Declassified Firesign Theatre***, and an enlightening Q & A to round out the evening.

We then retired to a local Chinese restaurant for Bok Choy, Booze, and a Big Brouhaha with friends, fans and family, including **David** and **Judith**'s sons, **Orson** and **Preston**, who was celebrating his 25th birthday to boot!

"It is impossible to travel faster than the speed of light, and certainly not desirable, as one's hat keeps blowing off."
~ Woody Allen

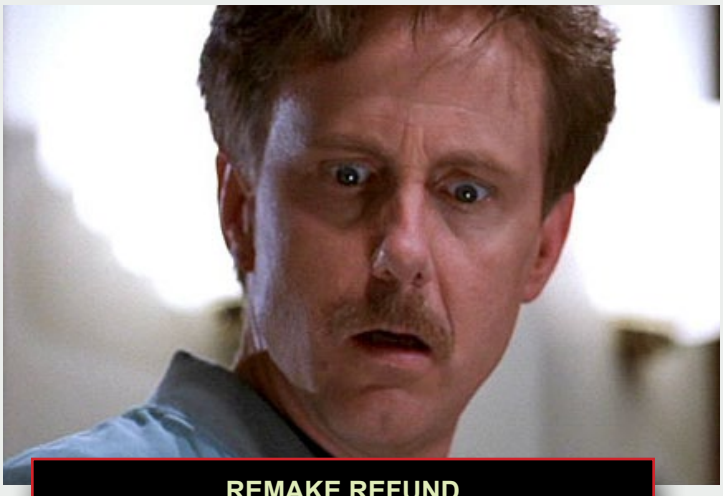
TRIPPING THE EAST COAST

Clockwise from top left: A well-cast Patient Melinda; the big time operator, Armen Hagopjanian; the site of the surgery; and Dave and I checking out the Library of Congress.

AC COME, DC GO

Melinda and I then stayed on in our spacious suite at the elegant St. Regis Hotel, a scone's throw from the all-white house – enjoying a **Sylvia Plath** and **Marlene Dietrich** exhibit at the National and a visit to the interactive Spy Museum before renting a car and driving down to Abingdon, Virginia, to stay with Melinda's brother, **Bruce**, and his spouse, **Kelly**, in their newly acquired "Crooked Cabin" home (*right*), a former B&B expanded into a spacious and comfortable dwelling from a simple log structure dating back to 1790!

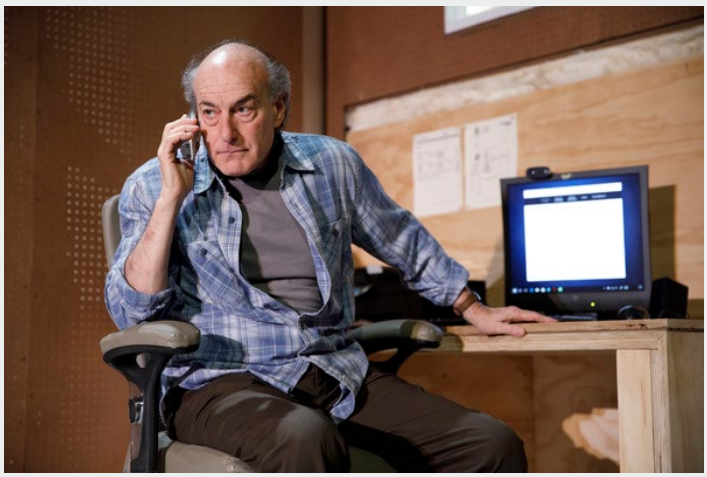
We then drove on to **Harry Anderson**'s haunted house in Ashville, NC, staying in the "Jay Johnson Suite" where we spent several giddy days with Harry and **Elizabeth** and their funny dogs, **Sweeney** and **Seamus**. Since Harry had starred with **John Ritter**, **Richard Thomas** and **Tim Curry** in the original 1990 TV series of **Steven King**'s "It," we went to see the latest big screen version and afterwards, Harry said, "I know you paid for the tickets, but I want my money back!"



REMAKE REFUND

Harry Anderson, above, as he appeared in the 1990 'It,' and, coincidentally, after viewing its 2017 update.

It was Irish immigrants who replaced the carving of turnips with pumpkins. **~ Phil's Phunny Phacts**



THE REST OF THE STORY

We then flew on to the Big Apple where we saw Melinda's Hofstra colleague **Peter Friedman** (*above*) in ***The Treasurer***, a wonderful new play by **Max Posner** at the Playwrights Horizons, and connected with our friend **Tulis McCall** *(right)*, performing her own one-woman show ***All in Good Time***, and

CONTINUED

HISTORIC PAIRINGS
Austin and Tom, left;
Me and Melinda, below.

then with Yale buds **Austin Pendleton** and **Tom Ligon** *(above)*, longtime Firesign contributor **Alan Gross**, and documentarian **Luke Poling**, who shared a rough cut with us of the ongoing Firesign film!

"The best camera is the one that's with you."
~ Chase Jarvis

BEST HARTFORD

And we ended our trip by staying with Melinda's brother, Art and his wife Linda and son Luke, in Melinda's hometown, West Hartford, to participate in her 50th high school reunion for Hall High *(right)*. It was a blast!

I don't like political jokes. I've seen too many get elected. **~ Phil's Phunny Phacts**

WHO'S COUNTING?

I went to the drug store and told the clerk "Give me three packets of condoms, please." She asked, "Do you need a paper bag with that, sir?" I said, "Nah, she's purty good lookin'." When you're 70, who cares?

Then last night, I was talking to a young woman in the VFW. She said, "If you lost a few pounds, had a shave and got your hair cut, you'd look all right." And I said, "If I did that, I'd be talking to your friend over there instead of you." Cost me a fat lip, but when you're 70, who cares?

I also told another gal about my ability to guess what day a woman was born just by feeling her breasts. "Really?" she said, "Go on then, try." But after about 30 seconds of fondling she began to lose patience and said, "Come on, what day was I born?" I said, "Yesterday."

I also saw a hefty woman dancing on a table, and I said, "Good legs." The gal giggled and asked, "Do you really think so?" So I said, "Definitely! Most tables would have collapsed by now." Cost me six stitches, but when you're 70, who cares?

I saw a very large woman wearing a sweatshirt with "Guess" on it. I said, "Left Tackle?" You know…

We do not quit playing because we grow old.
We grow old because we quit playing.
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

A New York attorney representing a wealthy art collector phoned his client. He said, "Saul, I have some good news and I have some bad news."

The art collector replied, “I’ve had an awful day, let’s hear the good news first.”

The lawyer said, “Well, I met with your wife today, and she informed me that she invested $5,000 in two pictures that she thinks will bring a minimum of $15-20 million. I think she could be right.”

Saul replied enthusiastically, “Well done! My wife is a brilliant businesswoman! You’ve just made my day. Now I know I can handle the bad news. What is it?”

The lawyer replied, “The pictures are of you and your secretary!”

“A society is moving towards dangerous grounds when loyalty to the truth is seen as disloyalty to some supposedly higher interest.” ~ **Marilynne Robinson**

PLANETCLICK

CLICK WORDS TO OPEN

FALLOW

SCAREDY CATS

GUILTY DOGS

HOWARD/HARVEY

BRAND NAME

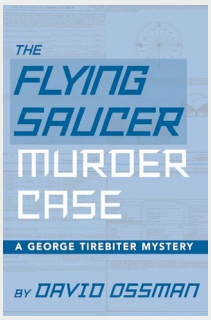
SIMON

“He who knows not and knows not that he knows not, is a fool—shun him.
He who knows not and knows that he knows not, is a child—teach him.
He who knows and knows not that he knows is asleep—wake him.
He who knows and knows that he knows is wise!—follow him.”
~ **Persian Proverb**

BOOK ME, DANO!

Not only am I pushing my spooky self-history, *Where’s My Fortune Cookie*, but in honor of my late great partner **Peter Bergman**, I encourage you to read ***Power***, a side-splitting transcript of our ’90s comic radio serial skewering Hollywood, as broadcast on NPR’s “Heat,” produced by **Ted Bonnitt** and hosted by **John Hockenberry**, on Amazon and at Bear Manor Media. **CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION**

And you might also be enthralled by my Firesign partner Dave Ossman’s latest release, *The Flying Saucer Murder Case* … **CLICK HERE FOR MORE ON DAVE’S BOOK!**



“Nature’s silence is it’s one remark.”
~ **Annie Dillard**

PERSPECTIVES

Every day I beat my previous record of consecutive days I’ve stayed alive but that’s because I don’t do drugs. I find I get the same effect just by standing up really fast. The closest I ever got to a 4.0 in college was my blood alcohol content, so if life deals you lemons, make lemonade, and if life deals you tomatoes, make Bloody Mary’s.

Now that food has replaced sex in my life, I can’t even get into my own pants, so I signed up for an exercise class and was told to wear loose-fitting clothing. If I HAD any loose-fitting clothing, I wouldn’t need the freakin’ class! Brain cells come and brain cells go, but FAT cells live forever. Ever notice that people who spend money on beer, cigarettes and lottery tickets are always complaining about being broke and not feeling well? Shopping tip: you can get shoes for a buck at bowling alleys.

Isn’t having a smoking section in a restaurant like having a peeing section in a swimming pool? Marriage changes passion – suddenly you’re in bed with a relative! And why is it that most nudists are people you don’t want to see naked? NOTE: Snowmen fall from Heaven unassembled.

No one ever says, “It’s only a game” when their team’s winning, and please don’t argue with an idiot because people watching may not be able to tell the difference. Let’s face it, the most precious thing we have is life, yet it has absolutely no trade-in value which doesn’t matter, because we live in our own little world anyway, and that’s okay because everyone knows us there!

FOLLOW

Thanks to Planeteers **Victor Kopcewich, Joan Alleman,** our “Tin Man,” **Jamie Alcroft, Phil Marshall,** creator of PBS’ *F.S. Key: After the Song*, **Jeff Abraham** at Jonas PR for helping me promote my autobiography *Where’s My Fortune Cookie?* on such prestigious shows as Coast to Coast AM with Jimmy Church: and a grandly ginormous shout-out to Melinda’s ankle surgeon, **Armen Hagopjanian**, who is not only a recognized master at his craft and jokes with us in English and Russian but is “ankling” to Moscow as I write, to lecture on his specialty.

“Our government must forever be a kind of War of about one half the people against the other.”
~ **John Adams**

“Mistakes are little windows into what is possible.” ~ Artist Laura Owens

FIRESIGN • BOOMERS