

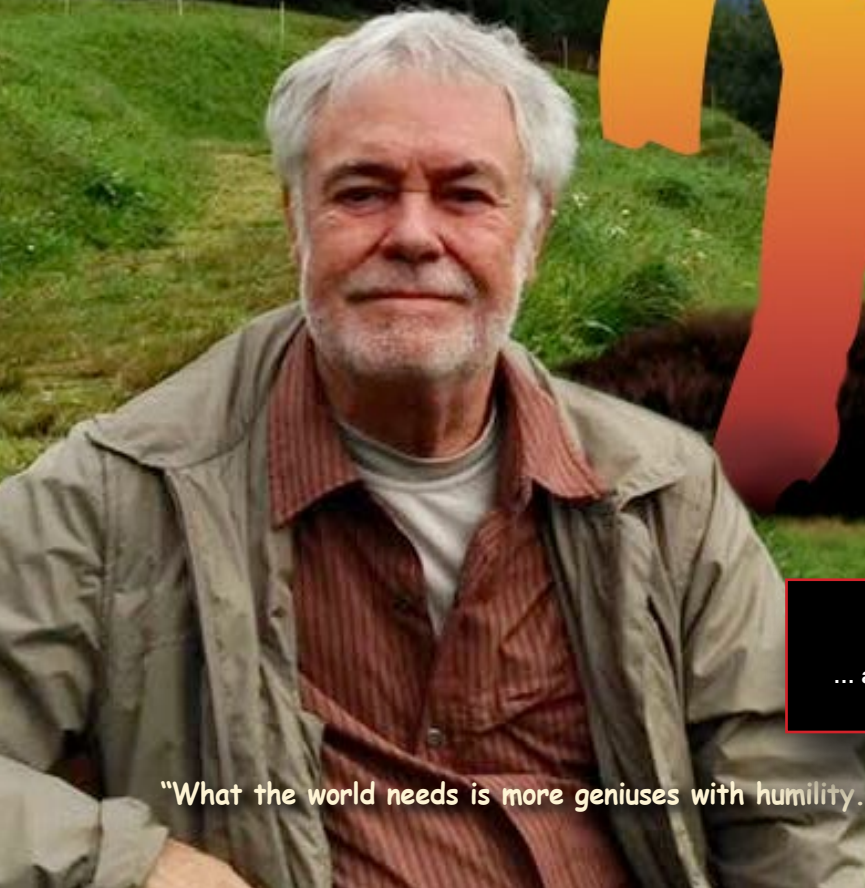
"We are better throughout the year, for having, in spirit, become a child again." ~ Laura Ingalls Wilder

Please No More in '24

I lost a lot last year: the love of my life, a beloved cat, and my faith in the future of America. I now enter the New Year with an unsettling mix of anticipation, trepidation and hope; and even this orbit of The Planet (which I intend to continue no matter what) was delayed because so few Planeteers were supplying me with "funny" to share. It feels like you, too are a little anxious, and maybe even scared.

But fear not, because I and my brilliant artistic collaborator, Cristofer Gross, hope this new orbit will lift your spirits!

Remember, fellow seekers,
as every Bozo knows,
"The Future is Now!"
– so VOTE!



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL
... and Happy to have the Old Year behind me!

"What the world needs is more geniuses with humility. There are so few of us left." ~ Oscar Levant



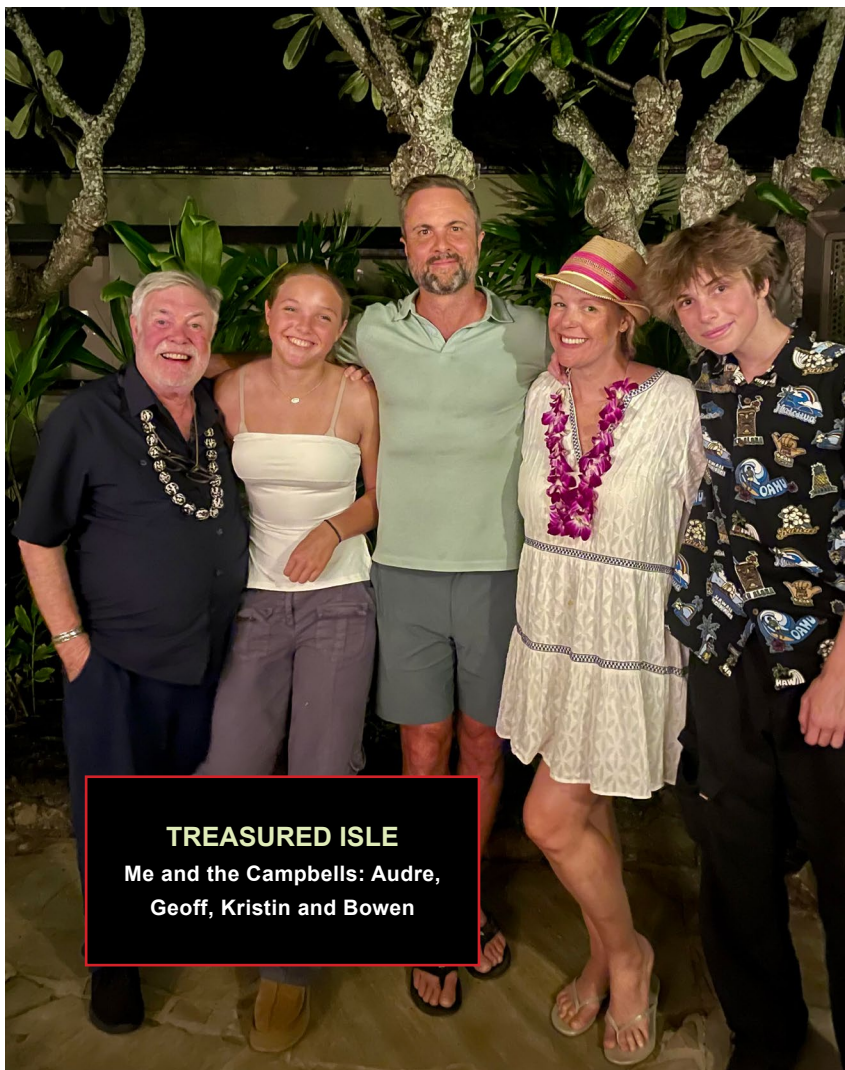
Mele Kalilimaka

AND HAHJ'OLE HIKKIMAKA! I WAS most fortunate to spend the holidays with my daughter **Kristin** and the other Campbells: **Geoff**, **Audre** and **Bowen**, and a special visit from Geoff's dad, **Gordon**, for the annual Canadian retreat to the Napili Kai resort, a short shuttle ride from the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, where I was sleeping.

Back in the '70s, Geoff's Vancouver-based relatives invested in the development of this beautiful place, ideally located on a tranquil bay, north of the tragically devastated Lahaina and Kaanipali, where Melinda and I still have time-shares.

The place was full of fellow Canadians who like Geoff have been escaping the harsh winters for 30-40 years! It was a sublime retreat for me, too, and helped me come to terms with my own great loss, as **Melinda** and I had celebrated the previous Christmas there. *Mahalo Nui!*

"Please don't dim your light, simply because it's shining in your eyes." ~ Phil's Phunny Phacts



TREASURED ISLE

Me and the Campbells: Audre, Geoff, Kristin and Bowen

The naked truth

GOT A WONDERFUL, HAND-WRITTEN (!) LETTER

the other day, from our dear friend, author and produced screenwriter **George Ferris**:

"It was only yesterday when I went to Facebook, which I do only rarely, that I learned of Melinda's passing. I send my deepest sympathies.

'I met her in 1970 at the Trotwood Circle Theater in Trotwood, Ohio. I arrived there as a replacement for an actor who had taken another engagement, but the first play was already running, so I first saw her from the audience. The play was *The Rainmaker*. Melinda's ease on stage belied a total absorption in her character.

"Later from the vantage of Delivery Man or Prince #3, I got to watch Melinda close up. She was about craft, that's for sure, no lust for celebrity there. She worked her craft breezily on the outside and assiduously on the inside.

"Maybe TCT was too small to have a caste system. As an actor, I was one notch above scenery, but you'd never know that from the way Melinda befriended me. I was a clueless 19-year-old, and if I wasn't exactly under her wing, she made sure I avoided some major theatrical potholes. Don't think I wasn't grateful.

"There was another Phil in her life then, **Phil Hillgartner**, who drove a ramshackle VW bus. We had Mondays off, and I had no wheels, so Phil and Melinda invited me to join them, which was very generous, considering that I would be a third wheel. So we set off for the environs of Dayton, and I remember stopping by at churchyard. The moment may have been fueled by equal doses of cannabis and **Ingmar Bergman**, but we we ended up stripping and running starkers through the graveyard. It was raining, and that made it even better. Fun, reckless, and something only actors and would-be actors would do. We were only lucky that no one cracked a kneecap against the headstones. I'll give this to Melinda, she got game! When it came to youthful impetuosity versus mortality, she knew where she stood.

"The soul of a fully lived life leaves an impression – a sort of human intaglio – of worthy deeds and precious memories. In that way, the friendship and family we've lost lives on in ourselves. Phil, for you, I earnestly wish that the sorrow you feel for Melinda blends soon into sweet remembrances."

Thank you, George.

"Accept who you are. Unless you're a serial killer."
~ Ellen Degeneres

Ban the bares!

SINA WAS A REAL MOVEMENT – UH, SORT OF. It was founded in the 1950s by a man named **Alan Abel**, and its principal spokesperson was **G. Clifford Prout**. The goal of this society was to put clothing on all the animals, all over the world. "Decency Today Means Morality Tomorrow," was one of their slogans. "A Nude Horse Is A Rude Horse" was another.

People started joining the society, and there was a regular newsletter published by Mr. Abel. They got quite a lot of publicity, including reports on television. On August 21,



MIND THE BOLLOCKS

Alan Abel guests on the Mike Douglas Show in 1964 with conceptualization of pasture panting. Below, Buck's fake ID.



1962, Mr. Prout was interviewed by Walter Cronkite on the "CBS Evening News."

That broadcast, however, stuck a pin in the bubble, because quite a few people recognized "G. Clifford Prout" as

writer/comedian **Buck Henry**. The whole thing was a gag! Abel actually kept publishing the newsletter for a few years after that, because by this time there were quite a lot of members who really believed they were serious.

I'll never forget Buck Henry doing this put-on with **Johnny Carson**. Future *Firesign* fodder, indeed...

■ CONTINUED

"If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people things they do not want to hear."

~ **Masha Gessen**

Hamilton, not the musical

“WHEN A MAN UNPRINCIPLED IN PRIVATE life, desperate in his fortune, bold in his temper . . . despotic in his ordinary demeanor – known to have scoffed in private at the principles of liberty – when such a man is seen to mount the hobby horse of popularity – to join in the cry of danger to liberty – to take every opportunity of embarrassing the General Government and bringing it under suspicion – to flatter and fall in with all the nonsense of the zealots of the day – it may justly be suspected that his object is to throw things into confusion that he may ‘ride the storm and direct the whirlwind.’”

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." ~ **Albert Einstein**

What's so funny?

“THE PROSPECT OF A SECOND TRUMP term is terrifying for many reasons,” said **David French**, “but what I dread most is how his reelection would accelerate the ongoing cultural transformation of red America.

“In towns like mine in Tennessee, Trump is, without question, the ‘single most culturally influential person’ – revered far more than any pastor, politician, coach, or celebrity. My fellow Christian and Jellico evangelicals treat Trump as a prophet, with his followers emulating their cult leader’s grievance-filled extremism, and ugly behavior.

“The result is a religious movement Steeped in fanaticism, but stripped of virtue. American evangelicals no longer think a politician’s personal and public morality matter. In fact, Trumpism has led to a wave of what has been dubbed vice, signaling, in which Trump’s core supporters convey their tribal allegiance by being deliberately rude, transgressive, or otherwise unpleasant, just to demonstrate how little they care about conventional, moral norms. Many now justify threats of violence and actual violence against Trump’s opponents, and are described by friends and family as lost. A Trump win in 2024 would absolutely convince countless Americans that virtue is for suckers and Weiss is the key to victory.

“Trump is both ripe for, yet impervious to, satire — he may be our first post-satire politician. He’s definitely not in

danger of being defanged by a single withering portrayal. Whether that’s a product of siloed audiences (his most ardent supporters likely aren’t big SNL fans) or simply some Trumpian superpower, the question becomes: If you oppose him, can you still joke about him? For **David Kamp**, a longtime humorist, the answer is an urgent no.”

"If you can't be kind, at least be vague." ~ **Judith Martin**

Pick up lines for Seniors

Hey, Honey! Wanna go to my retirement home and see my medicine cabinet!

My arteries aren't the only things that's hardened.

Do you know how strong an artificial hip is? Enough to break the ice, cutie.

My teeth and I no longer sleep together, but you and I definitely should.

I would sink my teeth into dat booty but they might just stay there.

How about I take you back to my place and get into an argument about social security.

Getting lucky usually means finding my car in the parking lot, but tonight you can change that.

Wanna buy some drinks with my retirement fund?

How'd you like to be in my will?

But the best line I came up with is simply:

“Hey, sweetie! I’ve fallen here – can you pick me up!?”

"A diamond earns its sparkle from the pressure it endures." ~ **Matshona Dhilowa**

BAM!

“ONE OF THE SADDEST LESSONS OF history is this: If we’ve been bamboozled long enough, we tend to reject any evidence of the bamboozle. We’re no longer interested in finding out the truth. The bamboozle has captured us. It’s simply too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we’ve been taken. Once you give a charlatan power over you, you almost never get it back.” From *The Demon-Haunted World* by **Carl Sagan**.

"The practice of violence, changes the world, but the most probable change is a more violent world."

~ **Hannah Arendt**

■ **CONTINUED**

Coincidence? I don't think so

“ **ALWAYS THOUGHT THE** word **serendipity** was American and modern, from the 20th Century. But it was coined by an English writer in 1754, who based it on a Persian fairy tale, ‘**The Three Princes of Serendip**’ – who were always lucky enough to discover beautiful things they were not looking for. (And guess what?)

THROUGHOUT
THE ‘PLANET,’ CLICKING
DARK RED TYPE
OPENS A RELATED
INTERNET LINK.

“In fact, Serendip was the ancient name of Sri Lanka.” Thanks to **Alan Abel**.

“Jesus loves you because he doesn't know you.” ~ **Steven Wright**

PLANETCLICK DREADFUL JOKES

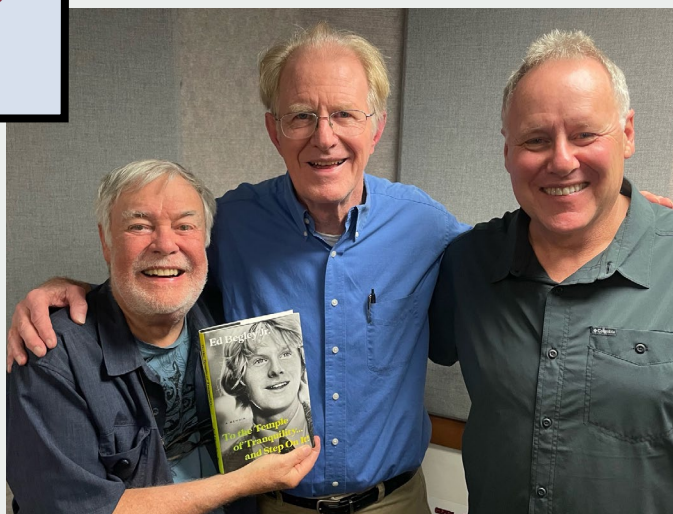
**NUDES
DEMONS
POET'S
BOOMERS
CHANCES
BOOKS**

Kiyoko, for Jamie's great 75th surprise birthday feast!

And my own daughter **Kristin** and our assistant, **Nereids Carillo**, for keeping me on track, and of course to trainer

Allison Barenbrug for keeping me running around the track!

... And lastly, congratulations to my friend for decades, **Ed Begley, Jr.**, for his amazingly revealing, daringly honest, and, of course, very



Attention, Seekers!

JACK POET LOVES YOU IS A 72-MINUTE compilation of real **Firesign Theatre** ads from 1968-2000, including their beyond-belief TV and radio ads for *Jack Poet Volkswagen*, *Carnation Instant Breakfast*, *A-1 Slacks*, *International House of Pancakes* and more, plus rare advertising records for *Warner/Reprise/Seven Arts* and four ads for stuffed-crust pizza starring **Nick Danger**.

The fully illustrated download comes with a 36-page booklet with historical essays, vintage ad art and rare photos, and more! It debuts on Bandcamp for \$8 on February 6! **CLICK HERE TO GET IT!**

“Fallacies do not cease to be fallacies, because they become fashion.” ~ **G. K. Chesterton**

Helpful Folks

THANKS TO **ALAN MEYERSON**, **TAYLOR Jessen**, **Ted Bonnitt**, **Bill Kates**, **Melanie Chartoff**, **Shadoe Stevens** and **Jamie Alcroft**, **Sarah Kawahara** and their rock-star daughter, **Haley**

funny memoir **To the Temple of Tranquility... and Step On It** [**BOOK AVAILABLE HERE**], who recently appeared on **Phil & Ted's Sexy Boomer Show**.

And then “bravo” to **Steven Paul Leiva** (another Sexy Boomer alum) for the release of his second Fixxer adventure, **Hollywood is an ALL Volunteer Army**. And much to my surprise and delight he has dedicated this “digital indie” to ...ME!

Thank you so much, my talented friends.

“To see takes time,
like to find friends
takes time.”
~ **Georgia O'Keeffe**



Dedication to 2023 Edition
For
Phil Proctor
A funny man. A talented man.
A good man. A kind man.

“The universe is under no obligation to make sense to you.” ~ **Neil deGrasse Tyson**

Visit the new **FIRESITE** and the old **BOOMERS**
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