

The Craziiness of Keeping Sane

Written by Alex Baer
Friday, 05 October 2012 18:00

If you've not noticed in this enchanting election cycle -- now heading into its eternal, unending, 19th year -- reality as we once knew it has dived into a hole somewhere, hiding out, on hiatus, with a shakily-lettered sign hung out that reads, "Go Away!"

While grim political candidates and their even-grimmer supporters are taking major psychotic breaks from reality, facts, and the truth, I'm content taking much smaller time-outs from this bat-guano-crazed world.

After the fever-dreams and sensory hallucinations of a long dizzy-dance with the flu, after all, it's good to be back on solid ground with the regular, everyday crazy stuff again.

Like pondering the world's most expensive shoe, a high-heeled number encrusted with more than a half million dollars of white diamonds stuck to it. *Sure.*

At least it gives princesses, Cinderella, and those with more dollars than sense an opportunity to contemplate something other than Murano glass slippers drenched in 24-karat gold, also available, of course.

Both are available for a look-see via the "BornRich.com" website, "Home of Luxury and Most Expensive Things." After a few minutes there, you're likely to come away with a few observations and thoughts, some maybe like my own:

- One could buy a pretty watch here, or, for the same money, run the whole country's school lunch program for an entire year;
- No matter how weirdly fascinating, this is, in essence, a "wealth porn" site;
- The absurdly rich live in ways unfathomable to 99.9% of the world's population;
- This baloney sandwich tastes a bit less alluring at this particular moment in time;
- I'd pay money to see Ann Romney work a can opener, breaking into some Beefaroni.

That last one would be at least as entertaining as the time when a coyote ambled into a downtown Chicago Quizno's and hopped up into the refrigerated case, sitting quietly among the

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juice selections.

Chicago's Cook County "Coyote Project" calls itself the largest urban study of coyotes in the world. Aside from juice-case squatters, interaction with people by the area's 60 or so coyotes is extremely rare: they stick to green spaces, hunt small rodents at night, and are timid of any dog -- even a yipping Pekinese.

It's an amazing and improbable story, just the thing for getting my land legs back after a bout with the 103-degree movies one's head makes in meltdown, in between headaches.

Oh, and there's the McDonald's television network, a stomach-churning idea that seems to pop up every few years to test the direction of the wind and hot (marketing) air. The "M Channel" will distract diners from their meals with a flurry of fluff pieces, sports, and local stories. Diner distraction could be just the thing to boost sales and increase patron satisfaction -- certainly lots cheaper than improving the food.

Another story you may not want to consider while chewing is one in which all-bets-are-off eating styles are considered from history. If, however, you view yourself as an artist, and food as intriguing pigments for your stomach's canvas, you should check out this tale of gourmet sampling -- a little something for your palette *and* palate, perhaps.

However, even with the humor found there, I'm unsure if even a peanut-butter-and-jellyfish sandwich would qualify as very challenging fare for these voracious feeders.

Like I said, there's a lot to catch up on while I've been away, looks like...

There are all those tempting *hors d'oeuvres* from the sidebars to contemplate: streams of water once flowed on Mars; however, skinny dippers on Earth just missed out on a world record. Plus, there's the confusing-sounding, Indiana-Jones-esque tale of an ancient statue discovered by Nazis -- one that had been carved from a rare meteorite.

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Sky's the limit here, is the byword, just like the coming bids for the Albert Einstein "God letter" that will be hawked on eBay in the next couple weeks. The opening bid's set at \$3 million, with expectations of bring two or three times that amount -- not bad for the seller's \$400-grand investment 4 years ago.

In the letter, Einstein wrote, "The word God for me is nothing more than the expression and product of human weaknesses, the Bible a collection of honorable, but still primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish. No interpretation, no matter how subtle, can (for me) change this."

Stout views from a brilliant mind. For those who still prefer a 180 on that thought, just Google "Jesus wife parchment" and catch up on the fury, row, and opinion-blasting evolving about *that* one.

For me, calmer ports await as I come back up to speed: Some new Beatles footage has been found, looks like, showing the boys sharing fish and chips in a shop during the making of "Magical Mystery Tour." Just in time for a BBC special and re-airing.

And, in the home stretch, here's a dozen snaps to consider of costumed "Star Wars" wannabes caught in contemplation at an Orlando, Florida, fan convention. From comments made at that page, it appears the photo's subjects are members of a costuming group that raises money for charities.

That last is a nice homey touch, added to all these spacey, unexpected, obliquely engaging, curiosity-snagging, and ultimately sublime ways of catching up and getting back into the swing of this so-called ***real life***.

Like the sign says: You don't have to be crazy to be here, but it sure helps.

Now then: *What was this I heard about Mrs. Mitt's worrying about Willard's mental state being too fragile, if should he fall into that weighty office?*

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It's OK, you can tell me -- I'm better, and strong enough now, so, go ahead. *Hit me.*

Spendy shoe 1: <http://www.bornrich.com/500000-diamond-heel-worlds-expensive-shoe.html>

Spendy shoe 2:

<http://www.bornrich.com/entry/q-by-pasquale-bejeweled-glass-slippers-will-give-you-a-shoe-fetish/>

Chicago's coyotes:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/krulwich/2010/12/08/131876027/60-wild-coyotes-patrol-chicago-and-occasionally-stop-at-convenience-stores>

M Channel: <http://www.delish.com/food/recalls-reviews/mcdonalds-television-network-m-channel>

Historic eating:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/krulwich/2012/09/27/161874316/who-wants-to-eat-jellyfish-omelettes-dolphin-meatballs-mouse-on-toast-these-guys>

Water on Mars:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2012/09/27/161896238/streams-of-water-once-flowed-on-mars-nasa-says-photos-prove-it>

Skinny dippers: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-19685041>

Meteorite statue: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-19735959>

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Einstein letter:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/10/02/us-einstein-letter-idUSBRE89117820121002>

Beatles footage: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-19786002>

Star Wars pics: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2012/10/04/162244566/inside-every-stormtrooper-is-a-beating-heart>

Worrying about ol' Mitt: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/09/29/us-usa-campaign-annromney-idUSBRE88S00820120929>