Ode to E Pluribus Unum for Sunday October 27 2024

A Night Sky over the Tatra Mountains



A natural border between Slovakia and Poland is the Tatra Mountains. A prominent destination for astrophotographers, the Tatras are the highest mountain range in the Carpathians.

In the featured image taken in May, one can see the center of our Milky Way galaxy with two of its famous stellar nurseries, the Lagoon and Omega Nebula, just over the top of the Tatras. Stellar nurseries are full of ionized hydrogen, a fundamental component for the formation of Earth-abundant water. As a fundamental ingredient in all known forms of life, water is a crucial element in the Universe. Such water can be seen in the foreground in the form of the Bialka River.

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Does Humidity Make Heat More Deadly? Scientists Are Divided



A street scene in Varanasi this month. A recent, humid heat wave in India caused tens of thousands of cases of heatstroke.

Niharika Kulkarni/Afp Via Getty Images

Studies in climate chambers show humidity adds danger, but analyses of population-wide mortality rates suggest otherwise

Last summer, while the Northern Hemisphere endured recordbreaking heat, a paper in

Environmental Health Perspectives (EHP) generated a stir among scientists who study heat's risks to health. The paper pointed out a startling disconnect between two camps of researchers on whether humidity makes hot weather more deadly.

Physiologists have found strong evidence that humidity matters: at a given temperature, more humidity makes it harder for the body to maintain a safe core temperature and ward off heat stroke. Epidemiologists, by contrast, have concluded that temperature alone accurately predicts heat-related death rates; adding humidity does little to improve their predictions.

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YOU'RE RIDING A
HORSE PULL SPEED,
THERE'S A GIRAPPE
NEXT TO YOU, AND A
LION CHASING YOU.
WHAT DO YOU DO?

GET YOUR DRUNK ASS OFF THE CAROUSEL.

Homefront Dad Shows Mom How He's Caring for the Little Darling



A graphic artist living in Germany works from home while his wife leaves their baby girl with him each day as she goes off to work.

A few months ago, he got tired of her texting to check on how he was doing with the baby, so he started photoshopping responses to text back to her. I'll try and include a different one in subsequent Odes.

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State Fairs Are as American as Apple Pie



Rodeo queen Tony Anderson/Getty Images

Nothing epitomizes America more than an event that brings together boastful displays of jumbo gourds and pig races with contestants nicknamed after sitting politicians. These harvest-time happenings known as state fairs harken back to simpler times when the US was an agricultural nation and most Americans lived in the countryside.

Here's how the summertime staple went from a vital get-together for farmers to a showcase for deep-fried butter.

Farmers' festivals

The state fair tradition started in 1841, when an agricultural industry group organized the country's first state fair in Syracuse, New York.

This inaugural iteration of the New York State Fair, which still takes place in the city, featured animal exhibits and a plowing contest.

Soon after, agricultural powerhouses like Minnesota and Iowa launched their state fairs, which became outlets for what today is called infotainment.

The regional gatherings brought rural Americans together for socializing and giddy contests. But the second part of their dual mandate was to educate the public about agricultural advancements and promote farming, the dominant industry at the time. In 1900, agriculture constituted over 15% of US GDP, a share that shrunk to less than 1% by 2017, according to the Kansas City Fed.

As America industrialized, state fairs became a showcase of the latest technological innovation, akin to the Consumer Electronics Show today. While you're now unlikely to see tech more sophisticated than a vibrating back scratcher at a state fair, it was the place where many people saw an airplane or heard the crackle of a radio for the first time.

So, why do we still have them?

Now, with most farms run by corporate giants and the majority of Americans seeing the fruits of agriculture only in supermarkets, state fairs offer a rare opportunity to celebrate rural American heritage and farming traditions.

In addition to being the only place where one can watch a sheep riding contest while munching on a blooming onion, a state fair is also an occasion to connect with civic organizations, survey the wares of local craftspeople, and support the regional economy in an era of globalized consumption.

The state-run carnivals often recoup their operating costs by charging admission and vendor fees, while crowds of visitors deliver an economic boon for surrounding communities. Over 1 million fairgoers at the Iowa State Fair brought a \$110 million

windfall to the local hospitality industry in 2019, according to the Des Moines tourism bureau.

They're also a stage for political theater...as state fairs' nostalgic quaintness has long made them an obligatory campaign stop for politicians looking to display their folksy appeal. Prepare to see candidates from both presidential tickets brandishing meat on a stick and donning countrycore attire.

By Morning Brew

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I came, I saw, I
forgot what I was
doing, retraced my
steps, got distracted
on my way back,
have no idea what's
going on and now I
have to pee.

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Poetry Corner

William Blake (1757- 1827



An English engraver, artist, poet, and visionary, Blake was the author of exquisite lyrics in Songs of Innocence (1789) and Songs of Experience (1794) and profound and difficult "prophecies," such as Visions of the Daughters of Albion (1793), The First Book of Urizen (1794), Milton (1804), and Jerusalem (1804).

Among his best known lyrics today are "The Lamb," "The Tyger," "London," and the "Jerusalem" lyric from Milton, which has become a kind of second national anthem in Britain. In the early 21st century, Blake was regarded as the earliest and most original

of the Romantic poets, but in his lifetime he was generally neglected or (unjustly) dismissed as mad.

The Lamb

Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice!
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee

Little Lamb I'll tell thee!

He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

The Tyger

Tyger Tyger, burning bright, In the forests of the night; What immortal hand or eye, Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies. Burnt the fire of thine eyes? On what wings dare he aspire? What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art, Could twist the sinews of thy heart? And when thy heart began to beat. What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain, In what furnace was thy brain? What the anvil? what dread grasp. Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears And water'd heaven with their tears: Did he smile his work to see? Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The Angel

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean? And that I was a maiden Queen Guarded by an Angel mild: Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day, And he wiped my tears away; And I wept both day and night, And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings, and fled; Then the morn blushed rosy red. I dried my tears, and armed my fears With ten thousand shields and spears. Soon my Angel came again; I was armed, he came in vain; For the time of youth was fled, And grey hairs were on my head. ***

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears
Night and morning with my tears,
And I sunned it with smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night, Till it bore an apple bright, And my foe beheld it shine, And he knew that it was mine,--

And into my garden stole When the night had veiled the pole; In the morning, glad, I see My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

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Bye, Google: These 3 AI Search Engines Help You Find Stuff Faster



The Information superhighway just got a bunch of smart new on-ramps. Meet Perplexity, You.com, and Andi.

[Images: StockVector/Adobe Stock; KR Studio/Adobe Stock]

It's been ages since Googling wasn't the go-to method for finding information. But a new generation of contenders is hoping to put the ubiquitous search giant in our collective rear-view mirrors.

These AI-powered platforms leverage advanced language models and machine learning to understand context, generate humanlike responses, and get you what you're looking for more quickly than ever before. Just be a little cautious about the accuracy of factual statements, since AI remains prone to hallucinations.

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Event Horizon Telescope Images

Our images of black holes are about to get even sharper, thanks to a new pilot experiment by the Event Horizon Telescope that demonstrated new capabilities.



A recent experiment conducted by radio telescopes affiliated with the Event Horizon Telescope obtained the sharpest astronomical images ever taken from the ground.

Credit: ESO/M. Kornmesser

The Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) was designed to capture images of some of the most gargantuan structures in the universe — and a new observation just pushed it to its limits.

In a study published in <u>The Astrophysical Journal</u>, scientists working on the EHT — a consortium of 11 radio telescopes spread out across nine locations around the globe that act like one giant telescope — used all of its might to detect light from four galaxies several billion light-years away. The result is the highest resolution telescope image ever taken from the surface of Earth. (There are a few higher resolution images that paired ground-based and space-based observatories.)

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Sunflowers 'Dance' Together to Share Sunlight



Dancing in the sunlight: Yasmine Meroz inspects a sunflower plant. (Courtesy: Tel Aviv University)

Unlike animals, plant motion is usually related to growth – which is an irreversible process that defines a plant's morphology. One movement frequently observed in plants is called circumnutation, which describes repeating, circular motions at the tips of growing plant stem

Sunflowers in a field can co-ordinate the circular motions of their growing stems to minimize the amount of shade each plant experiences – a study done in the US and Israel has revealed. By doing a combination of experiments and simulations, a team led by Yasmine Meroz at Tel Aviv University discovered that seemingly random movements within groups of plants can lead to self-organizing patterns that optimize growing conditions.

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Slate of New Species Found by Ocean Expedition



ROV SuBastian / Schmidt Ocean Institute

During a recent expedition led by the Schmidt Ocean Institute on the vessel Falkor (too), scientists mapped a newly discovered seamount along the Nazca Ridge off the coast of Chile. And what they found was an ecosystem teeming with rare and previously unknown marine species.

"The discovery of a new seamount almost 2 miles tall — almost four times as tall as the Burj Khalifa — with a vibrant ecosystem was very exciting," co-chief scientist Jyotika Virmani said in a statement. "Only 26% of the seafloor has been mapped to this high resolution and each expedition on Falkor (too) brings into focus a little more of the unknown seabed and life on our home planet."

The team found at least 20 new species and documented a Casper octopus (pictured here) for the first time in the Southern Pacific. They also captured the first camera footage of a live Promachoteuthis squid, a genus so rare that only three species have been described before.

Beyond the scientific importance of the mission, though, one of the takeaways from the announcement is that the sea creatures the researchers came upon were certainly camera ready. See more <u>photos</u>.

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/#inbox/WhctKLbFcGPsVhxNHVJMHxvVRmgpgcjqvBKV XGzGqXBkzwqLZcsBSrKxfKXvzQDBqqJkDTL

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Will These Be the End of Privacy?



Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses Josh Edelson/Getty Images

In a shocking turn of events, someone was able to use a new high-powered tech product for evil. Two Harvard students paired the Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses with facial recognition software to rapidly identify strangers and compile their personal information from the internet to highlight the privacy concerns that are getting unboxed with easily accessible consumer tech.

In a video posted to X, AnhPhu Nguyen and Caine Ardayfio explained how they built I-XRAY. The program uses the glasses to capture images of random people on campus and at a train station, identify them through a publicly accessible facial recognition search site like PimEyes, and then use a large language model (LLM) to trawl the web and compile the person's information. Nguyen and Ardayfio could access people's addresses, the names of their parents, and photos in mere minutes, and even approached unsuspecting people using the info they collected to make them think they had met before.

The creators said they would not release the code for this program but created it to highlight how it's possible to build invasive tech with recent advancements like smart glasses and LLMs.

- When 404 Media approached Meta for comment about the project, it said that similar information gathering could be used with any camera.
- Meta's smart glasses have a small light that comes on when the wearer is recording, but many people report it being hard to see in crowded spaces and bright lighting outside.
- Nguyen and Ardayfio said they chose the glasses specifically for their inconspicuousness.

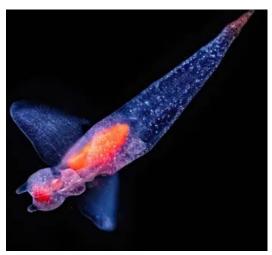
Big picture: Searching through someone's info online has been around since Facebook introduced poking, but with the right tools, like artificial intelligence, it's easier, faster, and potentially more invasive.

I'm gonna quit my job and travel the world until I run out of money! I estimate I'll be home again around 10 PM this evening...

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The Weird Ways Creatures Feed in the Open Ocean

"In an environment where food is scarce, where there is nowhere to hide, and where the predators are probably faster than you are, most animals must find new ways to protect themselves."



Sea angels — a type of swimming slug — that live in the open ocean are carnivorous little creatures that have evolved to feed on sea snails.

(Image credit: Yiming Chen /Getty Images)

Given the empty nature of much of the oceanic water column, it's perhaps not surprising that certain animals have evolved to eat ever-smaller things, since smaller things tend to be more abundant.

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Chords & Riffs

Martha Argerich Going Strong at 83



Martha Argerich (born June 5, 1941, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is an Argentine pianist known for her recordings and performances of chamber music, particularly of works by Olivier Messiaen, Sergey Prokofiev, and Sergey Rachmaninoff.

Argerich was the recipient of many honors and prizes, including three Grammy Awards (1999 and 2005 [best instrumental soloist performance (with orchestra)] and 2004 [best chamber music performance]). In 2005 she received the Japan Art Association's Praemium Imperiale prize for music and the Order of the Rising Sun from the

Japanese government. Beginning in 1999 a piano competition in her name was held annually in Buenos Aires, and from 2001 she directed a music festival in her name, also in Buenos Aires. In 2016 she received a Kennedy Center Honor, an American award that celebrates the arts.

Martha Argerich: 80 Year Old SUPER VIRTUOSO! https://youtu.be/AYkQleTcck8

Ravel Concerto for Piano and Orchestra https://youtu.be/cJOW5mlhH_Y

John Sebastian Bach Piano Partita No. 2 In C Minor https://youtu.be/VNG8Jmz5zqI

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No.3 https://voutu.be/BS0SwRoYAW0?t=9

Schumann/Liszt: Widmung (2019) https://youtu.be/rCP27rIVJBw

If you do nothing else, listen to the introduction piece.

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Video Shows Butterfly Wings Like You've Never Seen Them

Short film Nanoscapes shows us the beauty and detail of butterfly wings at a scale we've not seen before.



Moss&Fogg

Kristina Dutton's work using an electron microscopes can show us views at up to 50,000 times magnification. the result is a level of detail that feels incredible, showing nature's intricacy at the smallest form.

Shot with light and electron microscopes at magnifications up to 50,000x, Nanoscapes reveals the elaborate topography of butterfly wings, which have produced a wealth of data on the surprisingly little known story of structural coloration."

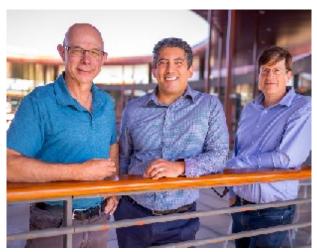
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Bio-X Seed Grant Leads to New Clinical Imaging Platform



A clinical imaging system recently designated by the FDA as a "breakthrough device" uses optical and AI technologies pioneered at Stanford to help diagnose skin cancers in real time.

Device creators Scott L. Delp, Gabriel Sanchez, and Mark Schnitzer at the James H. Clark Center. Aaron Kehoe

The device is intended to aid in the

diagnosis of basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, which comprise most skin cancer cases in the United States. Skin cancer, however, is only the first application for this technology. Delp and Schnitzer believe it can be further developed to address many other clinical needs.

The platform is not a single technology, but the unification of two approaches – one novel, the other mature. The newer approach, multiphoton optical imaging, allows the imaging of living cells without damage within the living body.

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Beyond the Dark Ages: How Medieval Europe Shaped the World

Imagine the time when Europe was rising from the ashes of the fallen Roman Empire



timetoast.com

https://youtu.be/kuS_6B-IWDg

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A "Game-Changing" New Drug for Schizophrenia?



BU researchers discuss whether Cobenfy, which reportedly lacks the side effects of other antipsychotic medications, is the real deal for patients

treatmentforschizophrenia.blogspot.com

It's being hailed as a breakthrough for the 2.8 million American adults (among 24 million people worldwide) who battle schizophrenia. The US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has greenlit Bristol Myers Squibb's Cobenfy, reportedly making it the first major new

treatment for the disorder in 70 years.

Unlike other antipsychotic drugs, Cobenfy appears to alleviate schizophrenic delusions without the side effects—drowsiness, weight gain, muscle jerking—that drive some patients to discontinue them. Although Cobenfy does have its own adverse effects, including nausea, vomiting, and constipation, Bristol Myers Squibb doesn't seem worried that those will discourage use: the company not only paid \$14 billion earlier this year to buy the firm that invented the drug, it's also testing its efficacy against psychosis from Alzheimer's, for which there is no FDA-approved treatment.

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The Best Wine Regions in the U.S.

Wherever you are, and wherever you'd like to be, someone is probably growing wine nearby.



Southwest Photo by Ben Mesirow for Thrillist

Vacations in wine country are more versatile than you think: you can have a pampered weekend of luxury and solitude or a rustic, agricultural expedition for a big group with kids in tow.

You also aren't limited to the obvious destinations—you really don't have to go to Bordeaux or the Rioja or Napa to get an incredible wine country experience. There are wine-growing regions spread across the United States, in the dusty deserts of the Southwest and among the historic colonial mansions of the mid-Atlantic.

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A Closer Look At Starship's Upper Stage Landing Stage



Flop Maneuver SpaceX

It's now been a few days since Starship Integrated Flight Test 5 and SpaceX just released ground footage of the ship's landing. While not very long, for the first time since some of the original Starship upper-stage flight tests, we got a view of the bellyflop, flip, and splashdown in the ocean.

https://youtu.be/NWY4WGR3wLg

Medicare-Covered Ozempic and Long-Term Care Very Pricey

Healthcare promises always come with high costs.



(Illustration: Lex Villena; Aniloracru | Dreamstime.com)

It's no surprise that campaigning for office is largely a matter of buying votes with unrealistic promises of largesse to be funded—if the promise is ever fulfilled—on the backs of those to be named later. As befits a particularly awful election season, 2024 features some true doozies when it comes to pie-in-the-sky promises. But among them are new schemes to relieve people of covering their own healthcare costs by having Medicare pick up the tab for weight loss drugs and in-home, long-term care.

Formally approving Medicare coverage of these drugs for controlling weight will open the floodgates of expense. Working from its own lower estimates of Medicare spending on what it calls anti-obesity medications (AOMs), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) sees costs quadrupling. "Total direct federal costs of covering AOMs would increase from \$1.6 billion in 2026 to \$7.1 billion in 2034."

https://bit.ly/48fCabi

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'Smart' Insulin Prevents Diabetic Highs — And Deadly Lows

In animals, the molecule automatically reduced blood-sugar levels without causing them to dip too much.



Crystals of insulin. A new kind of insulin can modify its activity in response to glucose levels in the blood.

Credit: Antonio Romero/Science Photo Library

The latest study, published in Nature, gets around this issue by modifying insulin itself using glucose-sensitive components. Rita Slaaby, a principal scientist at pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk in Bagsværd, Denmark, and her colleagues engineered an insulin molecule with a switch that turns its activity on and off in response to glucose levels in the blood. This switch consists of two parts: a ring-shaped structure known as a macrocycle and a glucoside, a molecule derived from glucose. When blood-glucose concentrations are low, the glucoside binds to the ring, keeping the insulin in a closed, inactive state. But when glucose levels in the blood rise, the sugar displaces the glucoside and changes the shape of the insulin so that it is turned on.

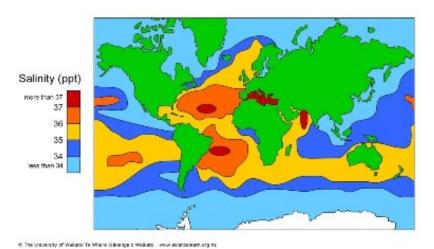
A spokesperson for Novo Nordisk says that although this study is a proof of principle of NNC2215's glucose-sensitive insulin properties, further research to optimize the molecule is ongoing.

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Why Earth's Oceans Aren't All Equally Salty

The salinity of the oceans is not just a matter of taste. Saltier water behaves differently, too.



Evaporation makes oceans and seas saltier, adding fresh water has the reverse effect. (Credit: Science Learning Hub – Pokapū Akoranga Pūtaiao, www.sciencelearn.org.nz)

The Mediterranean Sea is one of the world's saltiest. One of the least salty is the Baltic Sea.

The global average salt level in surface seawater is about 35 grams (seven teaspoons, give or take) per 1,000 grams of water (about a quart). For short, that's 35 ppt (parts per thousand).

https://bit.ly/4eN7sZB

Canceling Your Unwanted Subscriptions Just Got Easier



J Studios/Digital Vision via Getty Imag

It's a common marketing ploy we've likely all fallen victim to: You sign up for a paid subscription, maybe a gym membership or a delivery service, use it for a while, and then decide you no longer want it. But when you go to end your subscription, the cancel button is nowhere to be found.

Thanks to a <u>new rule from the Federal Trade Commission</u> called "click to cancel," that frustrating scavenger hunt will be no more. Companies will be required to make it just as easy for consumers to cancel a service as it was to sign up for it. Online subscriptions must be able to be canceled online, and in-person sign-ups must have an online or over the phone cancellation option.

The final rule announced Tuesday, which also includes <u>other provisions</u> aimed at making subscription sign-ups more transparent for consumers, comes as the number of complaints regarding cancellations has been steadily increasing. So far in 2024, the FTC has received an average of nearly 70 consumer complaints per day, compared to 42 per day in 2021.

"Too often, businesses make people jump through endless hoops just to cancel a subscription," said Commission Chair Lina M. Khan. "The FTC's rule will end these tricks and traps, saving Americans time and money."

I'll believe it when I see it.

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Bear Hair and Fish Weirs

The Heiltsuk of British Columbia are using a mix of traditional principles and modern implementation to protect salmon and bears in their territory.



Members of the Heiltsuk First Nation assembling a fish weir on the Koeye River in June 2024. (Image credit: Olivia Leigh Nowak, courtesy of Wild Salmon Center)

Welcoming the salmon is just one example of the way the Heiltsuk's ancestral laws, or "Ğvilás — a set of principles centered on respect, responsibility, reciprocity and stewardship for all sentient beings — have shaped their interaction with their environment.

Now, the Heiltsuk are using traditional knowledge in concert with modern scientific approaches to monitor wildlife, count salmon, and maintain the health of waterways in their traditional territory. From the outset, the HIRMD stewards decided that Ğvilás would guide how they managed their resources, as well as influence how they would work with other government offices, industry or other outside parties.

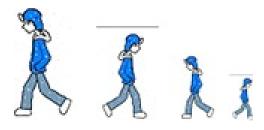
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My Walking Thoughts



For Sunday October 27 2024

New Orleans November 1960: My First \$100.00 Night.

My orders transferring me from Pensacola to the Advanced Naval Air Training Command headquartered at Corpus Christi gave me four days to cover that distance by private conveyance. This was more than enough to grant me a night on the town in New Orleans. Though I had never been there other to land, refuel, and take off on a night out-and-in hop a month before, my dreams held it a city of intrigue and... well, perhaps a bit of naughty excitement.

Bear in mind (better I should have paid more attention to the situation myself at the time) I was pulling down shy of \$300.00 per month, but at least by then I owned my uniforms free and clear, leaving me with a larger margin for playtime than before.



At 0815 on Wednesday, November 16th, with orders and \$150.00 in hand, I waved goodbye to the 'Birthplace of Naval Aviation, and turned my Fiat Abarth Monza Coupe West for *The Big Easy...* why the appellation I'm still not quite sure. Anyway, the trip took around four hours with a stop for coffee in Gulfport, putting me at the doorstep of the French Quarter at midday.

From there I began my investigative foray into the famous and infamous joints that lured simpletons like me to spend prodigious sums of money for reasons that reside my simple brain to this day. By the time evening gave way to the witching hours, I suspect I had made it about halfway through the ginmills on Bourbon Street at which point my situational awareness quotient entered into what I presume in 20:20 hindsight to have been a rapidly cascading failure mode. This unplanned trip into and beyond the twilight zone resolved itself by the next morning when I found myself in a dingy hotel room, my clothes strewn hither and yon.

While trying unsuccessfully to reconstruct the events that led me to this rather woebegone boudoir, I spied my wallet amid a plethora of sordid tourist treasures atop the dresser, raising my fear of lacking the wherewithal to make it from New Orleans to Corpus Christi.

"Maybe I should find a plank overlooking the Mississippi and be done with it," I thought, terrified at what dismal secrets awaited me in the bowels of my billfold. Pondering my fate for at least a half-hour, I was finally able to muster the courage to learn my fate.

Surprise of all surprises, lying next to my faux elephant-skin wallet—yeah, the one I had had since high school bearing the outline of an unused--well guys of my era know what that round emblem represented-- was a wad of ones and tens amounting to forty-nine bucks. Later, I found seventy-three cents in change in my trousers pocket. My short term fate assured.

Showered but unshorn, I was on the street by mid-morning trying to remember where my car was, a mystery I was able to solve by noon. Gaining an hour in the transit from Eastern to Central Standard time, I arrived at the base at NAS Corpus Christi a few minutes before midnight, still unable to account for what had happened the night before. No matter, I made up my mind that my first \$100 night had been a rip-roaring success.

Was New Orleans the city of intrigue I had envisioned? You bet. Was it the scene of naughty excitement? Uhh... maybe, but truth be told, I honestly don't remember.

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Things I'm Super Good At

- Forgetting someone's name 10 seconds after they tell me.
- Buying produce...and throwing it away two weeks later.
- Digging through the trash for the food box I just tossed, because I already forgot the directions.
- Making plans. And then immediately regretting making plans.
- Leaving laundry in the dryer until it wrinkles. Then turning on the dryer to dewrinkle. Then forgetting it again.
- Calculating how much sleep I'll get if I can just "fall asleep right now".

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