



Comments 15



Comments 15



©2002 S Hughes | 701 Rainbow Mt Dr | Ellijay, GA 30540 | steve@shughes.com | For SFPA #228 7/23/2002

LIGHTNING!

Not a good thing when it hits near your house! We came back from a recent shopping trip to find our house had crashed. No I don't mean it had fallen off the mountain but that the server that runs it had gone down. Hard down as in it wouldn't power up. Then Suzanne noticed that it was getting pretty hot and we discovered that the air conditioner was no longer responding to thermostat requests.

To cut to the chase we lost two PCs, the air conditioner zone controller, a zone damper, a 10/100 switch, an RS485 hub, a video capture card, a PC-to-TV card and a USB hub. It's quite a mess. Why you might add didn't you have surge protectors? Well we do.

The house has a meter mounted surge suppressor supplied by the power company. The breaker panel has a whole house surge suppressor installed by me and each of the PCs were on a UPS with full surge suppression. As far as I can figure it out the lightning surge came in over the phone line hopped into our house controller, went out thru the serial port and the lan card. Via the serial port it got the RS485 hub and the air conditioning stuff it was hooked up to. The network switch provided a path to the other PC that died and some assorted other stuff.

We have the PCs back in operation after replacing a power supply and a NIC in one and all, yes I said all, the PCI cards in the other one. Some day the new RS485 hub will arrive and we can get the house back to normal.

All in all we were lucky. So far the damage is under \$500, which is nothing compared to what it could be. We have thousands of dollars in computer automation equipment in the house.

How did it happen? Who knows? Lightning is funny stuff and it's very hard to control hits. I did have the power people come out to check the house ground and it's OK. Now I'm going to go on a grounding spree. I'm installing 5 new ground rods outside the house to improve the house ground then I'm going to ground every single bit of metal in the computer room. We can't stop lightning hits but we can try to limit the damage.

DSC 40

We had a good time at the convention. It was well run and the hotel was nice. Unfortunately it was probably the last one we will be at for a while. Next year is now scheduled opposite the National Stereoscopic Association convention and we have to attend it. Then the year after is scheduled for the same weekend as our anniversary.

After the convention we went on down to New Orleans. Suzanne had never been there and it's one of my favorite cities. We stayed right in the middle of the French Quarter at the Royal Sonesta on Bourbon Street. It was fun walking around the city and we got together with Guy and some past SFPA folks for dinner one night. We even went for an airboat tour of the swamps.

NO TIME.

Not many comments this time but considering how busy we've been just getting a zine out at all is a bit of an accomplishment. See you all next time.

Mailing Comments

The Southerner #227

Not a bad mailing. If we didn't gain any members at least we didn't lose any.

Tyndallite Vol 3 Number 101

Norm Metcalf

Science fiction movies. So *Forbidden Planet*, a movie based around faster than light travel, advanced alien civilizations and taking place on an alien world, is not science fiction? What then is?

By the way, *Forbidden Planet* was based on a treatment called "Fatal Planet" by Allen Adler and Irving Block. They admitted in an interview that the idea was based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

I would have thought that a movie based on advanced technology, technology we don't even have today, would be the essence of science fiction. I mean of course the battery powered *Nautilus*. Modern diesel battery subs can't even come close to its performance and we have no technology on the horizon that even hints at ever allowing them to do so. By the way I read the book in French so I think I do know what Verne said.

The New Port News 203

Ned Brooks

DSC. Just wanted to let you know that you were missed. Several people asked, "Where's Ned?" It's funny to think that you were the first fan I met at a convention.

Justice Holmes. I'm sure you are aware that the case that prompted Justice Holmes famous ruling was not about people "falsely shouting fire..." but about people who were protesting America's entry into World War I. Protests that, in the light of history, were all too accurate.

WTC design. The problems with the World Trade Center's design were almost exclusively with those two buildings. I know of no other tall building with the same design. It was a very controversial design from the start and subsequent events have shown there was good reason for concern. I'm working on an article for SFPA on the subject right now.

Nice covers!

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #76

Richard Dengrove

Bush appointee's. I seem to remember a line from a long time British civil servant to the effect of "I am happiest when the Minister does not know I exist since nothing good can come of his attention." I've always wondered just how much that is true today.

A Beautiful Mind. Actually in the movie Nash makes it clear that it's reason that drags him back to reality when he says, "She doesn't age!" He's talking about the little girl who is one of his persistent

hallucinations. It's at that point that he starts fighting his illness. I think the movie, and I think the book, makes the point that it was his wife's devotion to him that gave him the strength to fight his way back.

Variations on a Theme #13

Rich Lynch

The Red Cross. Let's be fair and admit that they took such a beating for ignoring the danger of AIDS contaminated blood that they almost had to be very conservative about Mad Cow disease. Especially since we know so little about it and how it's actually transmitted. The reports I've seen are pretty scary in that they indicate a very long dormant time after infection occurs. That means you could have a lot of people sick before we even know there's a problem.

Trivial Pursuits #101

Janice Gelb

Trivial Pursuits 101. Sounds just like an intro course for the incompetent idle.

Loses. Funny how we never really know just how much we care about someone until they are gone. I've only lost one person I really cared about, a cousin I grew up with, and I still sometimes feel a pang when I realize I'll never see him again. You have my sympathies.

Offline Reader Volume 1 Issue 28

Irv Koch

Sorry to hear about your health problems. I'm all too aware how fast we can go from good health to serious problems. It's something that stays in the back of my mind all the time. Hope things improve!

Oblio No 140

Gary Brown

Ethics and photographs. I, of course, weigh in on the publish reality side of the question. Why are we so up tight about human anatomy while we don't see anything wrong with publishing pictures full of blood and gore? I will never understand people.

Bush knew! So did Clinton, Bush Sr., Carter and Reagan. They all knew that there were people who would like to do America harm and would given half a chance. They even knew that some of those people where from the Middle East. Knowing that there might be a problem is a long way from being able to do anything about it. Just look at Israel.

I used to work with someone who was an insider in the Carter Whitehouse. That person, notice I'm being vague about identity, told me a lot about how the place was run so I know that the list of potential threats the President sees is long. Most of them he can take no action on.

Take 9/11 for example. What if Bush had been told that terrorists would attack US airlines in the month of September and the information was from a good source? What could he have done? Shut down the airlines? I don't think so. Put fighter jets in the air with orders to shoot down any plane that looks suspicious? Asked the very same agencies that issued one of the highjackers a student visa months after the attack to watch out for illegal aliens? Put armed guards on all flights? Even in hind

site I'm not sure how we could have stopped the attacks short of actually knowing who the terrorists were.

I'm not sure the same attack plan wouldn't work today even with all our new "security."

Yellow alert. If we want to use the type of information we had about 9/11 as a guide, we should be on "yellow alert" all the time. Should have been for the last 20 years. There are always threats. We can't complain that we weren't told about one and then bitch because we're told about too many just like it.

All the Stars in the Sky

Jeffrey Copeland

Digital video recorders. The networks problem with DVRs is simple: its change. The entire media industry in this country hates change. If they had had their way there would be no VCRs of any sort. Remember the Sony case went all the way to the Supreme Court. The funny part is they tend to make tons of money from the very technologies they fight the most. Videos make the same companies that tried to prevent their existence a fortune today.

DVRs offer the opportunity for content providers to tailor content to viewer's tastes. Something that could create an even bigger market for their products.

By the way a good case of media blindness is Napster. Remember how it was costing media companies millions in lost CD sales? So they shut it down and sure enough **CD sales dropped!** Turns out people were downloading stuff, discovering they liked it and then buying the CD. Something that Napster pointed out all along. Yes, there were people downloading music who never bought it. But they are the same people who don't buy it anyway.

Enron. I think you may have misunderstood the point of my article about how Enron worked. I was not trying to justify their behavior but to explain that what they were doing was a misuse of common business practice. There will probably be a part two to that article talking about how companies report income since that seems to be the most recent problem and it's a really tough subject to understand.

Microsoft. At the stereo photography convention we just attended I sat next to a guy who was a developer on *Windows XP*. He admitted it a little guardedly clearly expecting to be attacked. He was safe since most of the people there barely know what an operating system is. I talked with him for a while and finally got around to asking him why he was so paranoid. At first he denied it then admitted that he was tired of people asking him why various programs don't work after they upgraded to XP. I said he was being too paranoid. Then he told me he was one of the people responsible for solving compatibility problems with the OS and I told him, "You're not paranoid enough."

"Yngvi Is A Louse" and Other Graffitos #76

T.K.F. Weisskopf Reinhardt

The Lord of the Rings. I used to have an article, I tried but can no longer find it, that made the point that Tolkien was writing about the sacrifices so many British made in the war when he wrote that passage you quoted. Tolkien apparently was not happy with the government and it's conduct after the war. I wish I could find that article because it had part of an interview with Tolkien where he talked about this very subject.

Very good zine!