

The MYSTERIOUS FAX

Note: the reference to "fax" probably dates this a bit (although I notice doctors and banks still use them). They were great technology until email (and worse) came along. I think this was posted in 2008 (God be with the days).

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I received a fax the other day (marvelous in itself, since I don't have a fax machine any more) and it said at the bottom:

If you have received this transmission in error, please delete it and destroy all copies and notify Marshall, O'Toole, Gerstein, Murray & Borun by telephone (312) 474-6300. Thank you.

Well, the fax had something to do with Nebraska tax litigation and was obviously sent to me erroneously, so I followed the directions and called the senders to let them know. I need not have bothered:

- Ed Marshall was over in Thailand doing some kind of pro-bono work involving a tribe of pre-hominid dwarves. Won't be back for at least another month.

- Skippy O'Toole was "in a meeting" but I could hear a lot of grunting and moaning and tearing clothes in the background. I like speaker-phones too but you can't be too careful. 'Nuff said.

- Bernie Gerstein was polite but said he was busy with a CIA client who had an urgent need to find out if the utilization of Islamic terrorist suspects for parachute testing was legal. Bernie said he'd get back to me but he never did.

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- Alf Murray was preparing the papers to sue the bejayzus out of a group of bereaved Christian widows/widowers for violating his client's copyright of "Amazing Grace". When I mentioned that I thought "A.G." was public domain, he snickered and said "Yeah - so does everybody else!" and hung the phone up.

- Clyde Borun's secretary said he was attending a conference on the medical effects of constant exposure to piano accordions (being sponsored, as I later found out, by one of the leading hearing-aid companies). I asked if Borun was a musician and she said no, just interested in the possibility of big fat juicy lawsuits.

- the "of counsel" involved with Nebraska tax litigation was on a business trip to - where else? - Nebraska and couldn't be reached. When I told the secretary that all the mountains in Nebraska must be interfering with cellphone reception, she said "That's entirely possible" and switched me to somebody's voice mail. Is this the current penalty for excessive irony?

Well, I had tried, heaven knows, but I have to confess that I neither tore, spindled, or mutilated the erroneous fax. Instead I made a lovely paper airplane from it and for all I know it's still headed in the general direction of Thailand - or Nebraska - right now.

When you have completed reading the above drivel, banish it from your consciousness, shred any print-outs, and proceed with your personal pursuit of happiness. Call your own lawyer and report a sense of intense relief. He won't know what you're talking about but he'll charge you by the hour for you to explain it to him.

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