

FRIDAY: THE END OF THE WORLD

*I wake up in the morning and I wonder
Why ev'rything is the same as it was
I can't understand, no, I can't
understand
How life goes on the way it does*

– excerpt, The End of the World, written
by Arthur Kent and Sylvia Dee

Jazz version of this song first released by Skeeter Davis in 1962 performed here by Postmodern Jukebox's Scott Bradley and band with Niia's vocals.

A few people in my timeline have asked over the last several months, "Is this the end of the world, or does it just feel like like it?"

It's the end of *something*, that's for sure.

Z is for Zika

- New York City: First baby born with brain defect attributed to Zika (The Hill) – Infant delivered with microcephaly to a mother who contracted Zika outside NYC.
- Two cases of Zika in Florida may have been non-travel, non-sexual transmission (NBC News) – With one case identified in Miami-Dade and another in Broward county, Florida is checking for the possibility local mosquitoes may have been the vector of

infection. They are also confirming sexual transmission is not a vector. So far there have been 15 recorded cases of infection by sexual transmission in the U.S. and one by lab accident.

- Brazilian researchers found signs of Zika in non-Aedes mosquitoes (ScientificAmerican) – Researchers at the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Brazil first reported in 1Q2016 that the common *Culex quinquefasciatus* ‘house mosquito’ species may have been responsible for some Zika infections. In general, *Culex* genus are hardier and bite at night. Members of that same mosquito genus are also found widely across the U.S., unlike the *Aedes* species.
- ‘This is no way to fight an epidemic,’ says CDC’s Director (NatGeo) – What he said. The epidemic is coming, it’s just a matter of time. It’s going to happen like West Nile virus, only the results will be worse than the +47,000 cases and +1,800 deaths from WNV over 16 years.

I can't make this clear enough to Congress: you're playing with lives here, and it's going to be ugly. It will affect your families if anyone is of childbearing age. I haven't seen anything in the material I've read to date that says definitively studies are underway to verify transmission from Brazil's *Culex quinquefasciatus* to humans. There's a study on the most common U.S.' *Culex pipiens* species which showed weak transmission capabilities, but once it's proven *quinquefasciatus* can transmit, it's just a matter of time before more effective *pipiens* pick up and transmit the virus, and they may already have done so based on the two cases in Florida. GET OFF YOUR BUTTS AND FUND ADEQUATE RESEARCH PRONTO – or risk paying for it in increased health care and other post-birth aid for decades.

Still Brexin' it

- Johnson: “mistake-prone former journalist twice exposed for committing adultery” (IBTimes) – Wow, I missed this last week about the diplomatic cables Wikileaks leaked. Amazing how much these descriptions of Boris sound like Donald Trump. And yet PM Theresa May appointed him Foreign Secretary.
- SNP's Angus Robertson: Scotland “on the brink of independence” (The Telegraph) – Robertson, Leader of the Scottish National Party in the House of Commons, is bucking for deputy slot to First

Minister Nicola Sturgeon – consider the motive. Sturgeon has been laying groundwork for another independence referendum if there is no other way to keep Scotland in the EU.

- Mild recession forecast for UK post-Brexit (Bloomberg) – No surprise whatsoever. Especially since data showing retraction in manufacturing and services spurred another drop in the pound; a potential rate decrease by Bank of England now possible to prevent further slide in growth.

Clean-up duty

- Looking for MH370 in all the wrong places – for two years (IBTimes) – Bad suppositions? Or misled? Who knows, but the debris found so far now suggests the plane may have glided across the ocean in its final moments rather than plummeting nose first.
- Enbridge settles \$177 million for 2010 oil pipeline rupture (ICTMN) – Seems light for the largest ever oil spill inside the continental U.S., and their subsequent half-assed

attempts to clean up the mess. Check the photo in the story and imagine that happening under the Straits of Mackinac between Lakes Huron and Michigan. How did it take them so long not to know what had happened and where?

- Broadband companies now have a real competitive threat in Google Fiber (USAToday) – It's beginning to make a dent in some large markets where Google Fiber's 1Gb service has already been installed. But it is slow going, don't expect it in your neighborhood soon. You're stuck with your existing slowpoke carriers for a while longer.
- Cable lobby counters FCC pressure on set-top boxes (Ars Technica) – Sure, they'll yield to the FCC on set-top boxes, but they won't offer DVR service and each cable provider with 1 million subscribers or more will be responsible for their own apps. Cable lobby claims copyright issues are a concern with the DVR service; is that a faint whiff of MPAA I smell?

Beach-bound longread

Check out this piece in WIRED: David Chang's Unified Theory of Deliciousness. I'm hungry after reading just a portion of it.

Hasta luego, mi amigas. Catch you Monday if the creek don't rise.