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COMMENT

Time travel ain't all it's cracked up to be

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

We've all seen sci-fi movies over the years where someone travels ahead or back in time.

Whether it's Marty McFly of Back to the Future fame, or H. G. Wells' novel, The Time Machine, I think at some point, everyone has fantasized about moving ahead or back in time.

Well, for the record, I've done it.

A couple weeks ago The Sidekick's office gang went out for a summer party and we found ourselves in Toronto at one of the Escape Rooms that are dotted all over the city.

Escape rooms are a new sort of role-playing entertainment, where a group of people, (after paying a fee) are locked in a room, and they have to find the way out. It's a fun thing and the rooms all have various themes with clues.

Our room scenario centered around escaping from the laboratory of some mad scientist where there was a time machine.

The object of the game was to figure out how to acquire the key to the locked laboratory door within one hour, and escape to freedom or subsequently be lost in time travel space for eternity, which could be, well, a pretty long time.

I will admit, that certainly is an incentive. You can get hungry after an hour in there.

As soon as the door slammed shut behind us, team members started scouring the lab for clues to find that key.

The ten of us split up the tasks of decoding the various clues to activate the time machine to go back 24 hours to see where things were left, all to track down that elusive key.

Some clues were word puzzles, others were locked in cases or boxes, and one had to find a way to open them.

After 20 minutes we cracked the codes and piled into the time machine to check out yesterday to see where the staff left some items.

There was a laptop in the yesterday room so we could order items we needed and they'd be delivered in the present with a simple trip

through the time machine.

Wow, Amazon orders have never been so fast!

We ordered a reference book, to look up a clue, and we ordered tools and were able to disassemble a box containing important pieces to the puzzle.

We were entertained to see the effect of making one small change in the past in relation to the present. (For example, one of our team members injected some super fertilizer into a small plant in 24 hours it was huge, and it also carried a clue!)

In the final minutes, we were flipping back and forth from then to now so much, at times I wasn't sure where in hell we were at.

The exercise is obviously for entertainment purposes, but the organisers also sell it as a team building exercise which isn't that far from the truth.

Our group did gravitate to various areas in the laboratory where they quickly exhibited their strengths in solving the clues to returning to the present.

At times, we even realized that old saying. Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. We made sure we didn't leave things in the wrong place, or it might be gone in the future, or was that in the past?

Well, in the end, much as I hate to admit it, we missed our final clue within minutes. I guess we didn't learn enough from our previous actions, to solve our quest in the present.

Consequently, we are now all lost in time travel space for eternity, which makes it a bit challenging here.

As a result, this column is coming to you from tomorrow, and will be written two weeks ago.

But that's okay. At least I know what I'm going to be writing about last week.

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