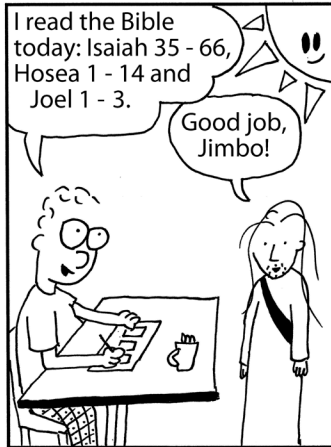In this issue, I introduce a new character, based on a friend of mine. I feel confident I can write him into the script as I know him very well. He is the nicest guy: very even keel, gives people the benefit of the doubt, very loving, and very intelligent. We can use that in this comic strip. I hope you enjoy this issue of Etoonin'. It only took me three days to write. I'm getting more and more excited to draw and publish Etoonin'! I invite you to turn on, read up and toon in'...
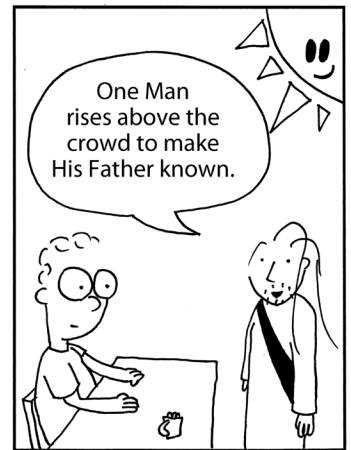
toon in'... Re-reading it   Jan. 28th, 2018

Panel 1: I read the Bible today: Isaiah 35 - 66, Hosea 1 - 14 and Joel 1 - 3. / Good job, Jimbo!

Panel 2: If this keeps up, I'll definitely be able to read the Bible in one year!

Panel 3: I don't think I've ever read through the whole Bible and I've been a Christian for 21 years...

Panel 4: I read the whole Bible once when I proof read it.

toon in'... The Bible as Literature...   Jan. 28¹ᐟ², 2018

Panel 1: There were three passages of Isaiah that had been made into songs... / Scripture songs.

Panel 2: Lincoln Brewster, Everlasting God Isaiah 40:28-31 / Sherri Youngward, Man of Sorrows Isaiah 53:1-6 / Kede-r, I've got a friend Isaiah 54:14-15

Panel 3: Very inspirational book, that Bible... / It's a unified story about God.

Panel 4: One Man rises above the crowd to make His Father known.

toon in'... How can we know so much?   Jan. 29th, 2018
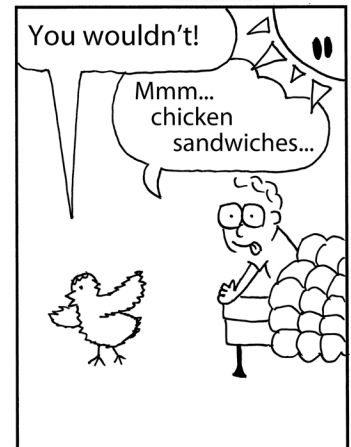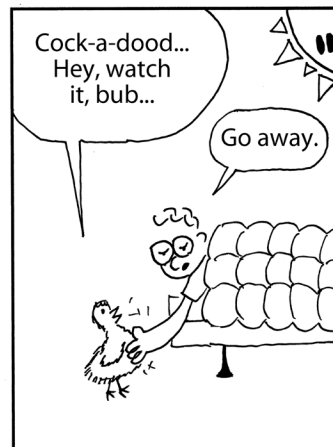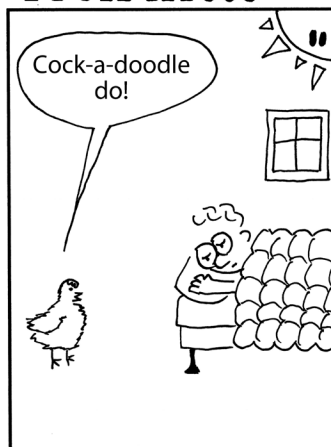
Panel 1: Cock-a-doodle do!

Panel 2: Cock-a-dood... Hey, watch it, bub... / Go away.

Panel 3: I have every right to be here! It's time to get up! / Go away or I will sell you to Chick-fil-A.

Panel 4: You wouldn't! / Mmm... chicken sandwiches...

Panel 1: Okay, so we have a few training videos for you to watch...

Panel 2: Welcome to Hazus We are an equal opportunity employer, for all fall short...

Panel 3: We were formed with the express purpose of freeing people from the fires of humanity.

Panel 4: Any questions? Well, what is the compensation package? Whatever you ask in My Name.
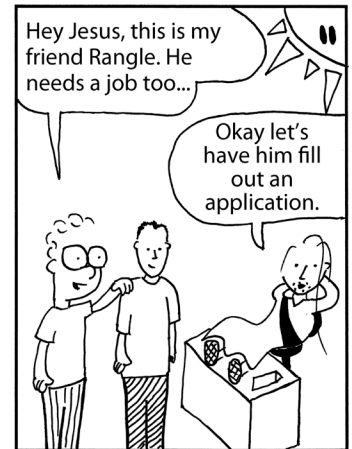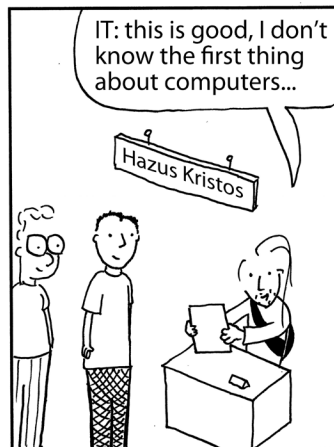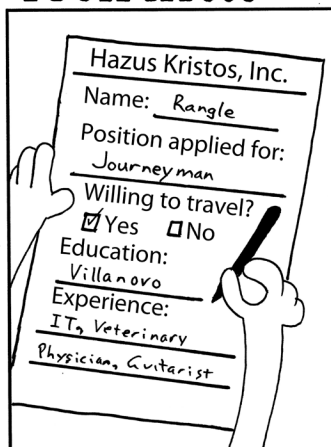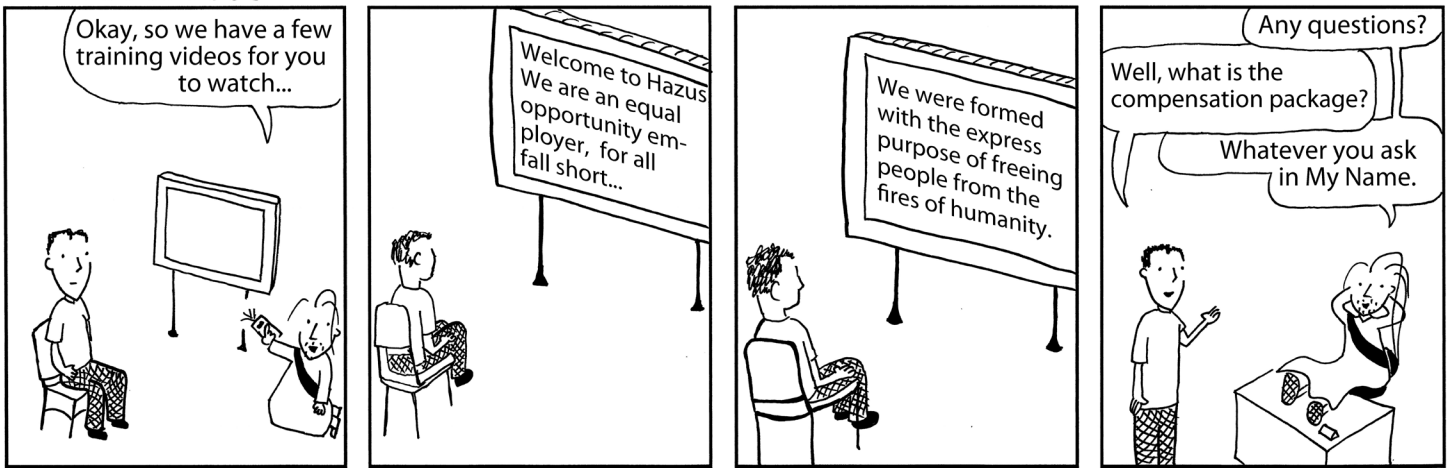
The Method behind the Madness of Toon in'... How I draw them

I was reading about how Scott Adams draws his Dilbert cartoons. It was a fun little read from a fellow cartoonist, so I thought I'd share the process I use to draw my cartoons.

It starts with an 11" x 17" high quality piece of paper with the frames and logo pre-printed on them (this comes from FedEx Kinkos). I draw cartoons with Sakura Pigma Archival Ink Pens. The Archival is important: that makes them waterproof. I use three pens: Micro 05, for most of the art with fine lines; a Micro 08 for thicker lines; and a Graphic 1, which has a large nib for filling in large black swaths of ink. Unfortunately, I am very near-sighted, so I don't draw straight lines for the word bubbles. Maybe I'll start using a ruler. It takes from 30 to 90 minutes to imagine and draw the cartoon. I pray to God for ideas and suggestions in real time. I find that writing quickly leads funnier cartoons. A cartoon is more about the writing than the quality of the art.

Then I head over to "Paperclips" (Staples) and start copying the cartoons. I copy them once to the same size using the darken -2 setting. This makes pen strokes copy black so you can't see variation in tone. Then I scan them onto a thumb drive at 600 ppi, in JPG format. I scan the toons using the "black and white" copier setting. This makes a nice, crisp image. At this resolution you can't see gray scale anyway. This whole process costs about $5.00 bucks. The rest is free.

After I get home, I tackle my least favorite part of cartooning: adding the word bubble text. I need to do it because my writing is very messy. The most important aspect of drawing is legiblity. If people can't read them, they can't laugh at them. I open the JPGs in Photoshop and duplicate the layer (Ctrl + J). I use the Select Menu and choose Color Range. A box pops up and I set fuzziness to 50. Then I click the eyedropper on a white section. This selects all the white on the page. I invert the selection (Ctrl + Shift + I) so that the black artwork is selected. Next I fill it with black. (Edit, Fill, and Black.) This goes over the art and creates crisp black lines. Next I use the polygonal selection tool and select all my handwriting using additive mode. Then I fill with white, and I'm ready for the bubble text. This can be a pain. Invariably I miss a typo and have to correct it later. I use Myriad Pro, a sans serif font. Sans serif is easier to read and looks better in cartoons. Once the balloons are filled in, I save the file twice: as a '.PSD', which can be edited, and '.GIF'. GIF is great because it only saves colors you've used. It has really small files sizes with no compromise in quality. I also downsample the cartoon so it can fit on the web. This part puts gray back into the file, but it looks dope.

After I create the large GIFs, I place them into InDesign, an amped up version of MS Word. Then I write up the Etoonin' however I want! This is my favorite part: I love the writing. It adds a personal touch. I challenge myself to be brief, so I don't bore my audience. I suspect people skip this sometimes, but it's my favorite part. The final step entails posting to social media: MailChimp (which emails out my newsletter) and Facebook. Follow me at "Jim Bures" on FB.

Thank you for reading! I love seeing friends from all parts of my life reading Etoonin'. Thanks for your emails, I love them. Please look to our Heavenly Father for whatever you may want or need. God is very good, and He is instrumental in giving His children good things in life. Keep the faith!

Up Stream Down Dream