Facebook's Favorites pages as at March 2013

Facebook's Favorites page is still in the same location indicated in the book, ie http://www.facebook.com/" + name + "?ref=pb". So we can still start with that page.

The way that page is structured in March 2013 . . .

- the section with the favorites in it is headed `<!-- <div class="fbTimelineSection mtm timelineFavorites fbTimelineCompactSection">`

- the first set of favorites are grouped under subsection headings, each of which looks something like `<div class="labelContainer">Music</div>`

- in this set, the individual favorites take the form `<div class="mediaPageName">Armonia Celeste</div>`

- these are followed by ungrouped favorites, in a subsection that has several instances of `uiCollapsedList` at its start and instances of `"uiCollapsedList` at its end

- each of the ungrouped favorites follows an `<a href...>` tag, and is followed by another html tag. Caution required here: the page includes many other `<a href...>` tags that are not favorites!

There is no longer an apparent favorite with "footer" in it, so we don't need to allow for that.

The markers for the grouped items don't appear anywhere else in the page, so:

- if we find `timelineFavorites` we know we're at the start of the favorites section

- if we find `<div class="labelContainer">` we know that the subsection immediately follows the > and ends immediately before the next <

- if we find `<div class="mediaPageName">` we know that the favorite itself immediately follows the > and ends immediately before the next <

To simply list these favorites, as is done in the book, all we have to do is list the items immediately after the mediaPageName entries. In the demo program, fbFavorites() does that.

To list the ungrouped favorites we need to find every `<a href...>` tag between `uiCollapsedList` and `"uiCollapsedList`, and find the text between that tag and the next.

However, when we have finally found all the favorites we notice that apostrophes display as ' (the code for a smart, tilted, apostrophe) and ampersands (the & symbol) display as &. If we replace those codes with actual apostrophes and ampersands, the output will look better. fbFavorites() also takes care of all this.

But if Facebook is prepared to group some of the favorites, so could we. The labelContainer string can be used to find each section heading (which is tricky, because it means we have to check which comes next, a labelContainer or a mediaPageName); then we could include the section headings, each starting on a new line, with the favorites in that section on the same line. This feature is not provided in the demo program, because it would be too intricate for most beginning students to follow. Advanced students might like to consider it as a challenge task.

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