

Highway Tuneage

Our two day Chicagoland adventure began yesterday around 1PM when Mare and I hopped onto the 'pike and headed west. It was amazing to me how fast we flew there. We arrived at our hotel around 3PM (according to my chauffeur's cell phone time... she did not realize that her device automatically accounted for the change in time zones).

Our journey was seemingly made even more quickly with our listening variety. I brought along my *Carousel* Score. Mary I believe said that she played the part of Cousin Nettie Flower in a production of one of my favorite musicals back in the early part of the decade. REALLY! WHERE WAS I when they staged it?! Then, we popped in some Josh Groban and by that time we were very close. So... we let "Vera" guide us the rest of the way. Little to no traffic. Surprisingly, very little construction on our side of the highway. A very fun, easy trip.

Coming back, Megan joined us on the return trip. We made a slight detour to South Bend and took a drive-by tour of the perimeter of Notre Dame. Since it was rather rainy and a home football game, a more close up tour was out of the question. We did get a glimpse of the golden dome and Touchdown Jesus. Very fun!

One of the most interesting music selections in Mare's catalog was a CD of [Beatles](#) hits recorded by some interesting actors. Imagine Robin Williams and Jim Carey giving voice to "Come Together" and "I am the Walrus". There were lots of very interesting Beatles classics including a strangely bluesy rendition of "Hard Day's Night" by an even more interesting actress choice who none of us could figure out was Goldie Hawn. But no recording of the classic William Shatner take on "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." A very fun if at times a bit strange tribute.

All in all, a very fun trip on the road. Stay tuned for my take on the big fun in the city.

The final selection on the Beatles tribute was by the best Bond that seemed a bit odd because he stated his dislike of the Fab Four in *Goldfinger*.

Westward, H0!

OK... Mare and I will soon be on our way to the state of ILL in America Country. I have Vera loaded up with directions along with mapquest printed directions, hotel check in sheet, and printed tickets (Justin Case), and cell phone. Mare had to work last night and just called and told me she would be here soon! WHHO HHH0000!

Last night's audition went well. I listed all the male roles I could think of (the adult ones, anyway). I still think I could pass as one of the Bailey children. I did forget another role, that of Mr. Martini who is an Italian immigrant who has a traveled to America with his a wife. That a could a be fun!

Lots of people came out. LOTS of kids. Squirmy and his daughter came up and he read well. But Jade... OMG... if ever there was a heartwarming, scene stealer... I think it would be very hard to find a more adorable Zuzu. Results Sunday night. Read-through hopefully next Thursday.

If You Are A Happy Green Grape And You Know It

This morning, after she got out of preschool, my four-year old niece brought home a song to sing called "I Wish I Were A Juicy Green Grape." Sydney ran to me and asked me to sing it.

It is set to the tune of "If You're Happy And You Know It." Really, the exercise in song parody was not an easy one. My dad kept trying and sounded like he was singing The Oscar Meyer weiner song. See if you can make the melody fit the words"

OH, I wish I were a juicy green grape.

OH, I wish I were a juicy green grape.

When squeeze me

I will squirty

Onto everyone's shirty

Oh, I wish I were a juicy green grape.

Of course, this presupposes that you know the tune and words of "If You're Happy and You Know It." In elementary school, I remember having such an exercise in which I came up with a parody of "White Christmas" entitled "(I'm Dreaming of a) Cheese Pizza." How adorable.

Often Imitated But Never

Duplicated

Tonight, following an extra long day at work, I will be heading over to the Huber to audition for a role in the holiday classic *It's a Wonderful Life*. There are so many great roles in the show starting with George Bailey, himself. I'm tempted but 300+ lines sounds a bit daunting to me. I thing Clearance would be fun to play. I love playing an evil villain so Mr. Potter is definitely on my radar. Of course, there is the duo of Bert and Ernie whom I have been looking into and the people behind *Sesame Street* state uncatagorically that it is mere coincidence that the muppet friends are named as such. Of course, I will be pleased to accept any role offered to me. So many great roles in the beloved tale that ironically was a flop when it was released in 1946. So many variations on the theme but has it ever been duplicated?

Simply Awesome

Thankfully, the game really did not get started until I got off work at 9. Up until then, the Yanks and Angels were scoreless through three, but that was soo to change. Game 4 in the ALCS featured a remarkable one-two punch for the Bombers. C.C. pitched eight incredible innings allowing one run on five hits on a short three days rest and giving the much used bullpen a rest of its own.

Alex Rodriguez with all the turmoil he has been in this year off the field has never had a better post season. I cannot forget his arrival in the pin-stripes. He was terrible in the post season. This year... 5 home runs, 11 RBIs. Tonight he was a triple away from hitting a cycle including a two run smash.

Last night's questionable use of the bullpen and tonight's even more questionable calls made by the crew chief along the third base line are now a distant memory as the Yankees are one victory away from THE WORLD SERIES. Now... I just have to concentrate on other things until Thursday night (of course that will not be a problem for me... sorry guys, you will have to take a back seat until 9). Hopefully, they can wrap it up Thursday night so I can go a-haunting this weekend safe in the knowledge that they will be back in the Big Apple waiting for next Wednesday. But... it is not over yet.

For anyone not in the know... Yankees 10, Angels 1.

And today is the 99th birthday for the longtime former voice of the Yanks, Bob Sheppard. In homage, Captain Jeter has Mr. Sheppard's recorded voice announcing him every time he steps up to the plate (at home, anyway). Can we get a "Yankees win!

THAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA Yankees WIN!" Mr. Sheppard began announcing in the '51 season with none other than greats like Mickey Mantle and Yogi Berra leading the Bombers to another World Championship.

Ok... So It Won't Be Another Sweeping

Yep... once again... an extra inning pitching duel. Captain J started off the afternoon just after 4PM with a single homer. A-Rod, Johnny D, and Posada added their own throughout the game. However, single HRs often do not win games, correct? I do think the Yanks went a bit too deep in the bullpen... but that is just a bit of armchair coaching. Final: Yankees 4...Angels 5 in 12. At least it was a late afternoon game

unlike Saturday night into the wee hours of Sunday. Game 4 Tomorrow Night 7:30... C.C. back on the hill!!!!!!!

Buck, You Schmuck

I could have used another more colorful metaphor to describe the announcing prowess of one of my oh, soooooo favorite commentators, Joe Buck for FOX Sports is so one-sided, anti-Yankees that it is downright disgusting. No where was this more true than in the bottom of the 10th inning of the still going on Game 2 of the ALCS. What was a seemingly easy double play turned into an advanced runner to second and an out at first. Funny that as the Angels had back-to-back picture perfect double plays. And we go to inning 12 at 12:17AM after A-Rod ties the game at 3 all..

Ok... back to the failed double play. The defensive player at second NEVER HAD HIS FOOT ON THE BASE. What was worse is that he straddled to so blatantly... nowhere close. but yet he was shocked and Mike Scioscia, himself came out to argue the call. So Mr. Buck argued that it was a gimme, neighborhood ball. After the inning was complete and the game progressed, ol' Joe made what for me was the closest he has ever come to a retraction. Apparently, in the two other perfect double plays, the player indeed had his foot on the bag.

I have at times pushed the mute to silence the golden tones of the fine and talented broadcaster. Really need to look into other means to listen to the games.

Now, we have the fifth pitcher for the Yanks coming up. Apart from the announcing, it has been a dandy of a game. The rain is starting to pick up so they better wrap it up soon.

4-3 in 13 innings. The Yankees win!!!!!! ThAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
Yankees WIN!!!! Off to the West! Good night!

Post Victory Horror

tonight after watching the Bombers take game one in the ALCS thanks in no small part to C.C. Sabathia's excellent pitching plus some errors in the field by the Angels, I watched my latest DVD rental. I have never seen a Sam Raimi directed effort apart from the blockbuster *Spider-Man* films. Apparently, he was well regarded as a low-budget horror maker and made his return to the genre last year in the aptly titled, [*Drag Me to Hell*](#). This decidedly B-movie was equal parts fright, gore, and humor (mainly from some of the ridiculous situations, but I think this was the intent... not taking itself too seriously).

The film follows a bank loan employee who is a possible candidate for a promotion to assistant manager. Christine is approached by an elderly gypsy woman (complete with a creepy glass eye) who is in need of an extension on her delinquent mortgage payment. When the request is denied, the old beggar woman takes it quite personally and places an evil spirit upon our heroine and (you guessed it) strange, horrific things begin to happen that only Christine is witness to.

Christine's boyfriend, Clay, is skeptical to say the least. However, he does accompany her to a psychic who knows how to rid the woman of her problem before she is literally... well... you know dragged to hell. Goofy, yes but is there a b-grade horror film that isn't? Plus, you get to see the wide acting ability of Justin Long who you may remember from the live-action *Alvin and the Chipmunks*.... so maybe not so much since he

was the voice of Alvin.

DON'T READ THE POST...

unless you have seen WCCT's extremely fun-filled production of *Little Shop... Little Shop of Horrors*. Megan and I checked it out tonight since I figured a Thursday night showing would need more help filling the seats than a Friday night. I must say that it was very well done. The set took you to Skid Row, U.S.A. full of bums and trash laden streets. Someone mentioned that the first weekend shows were a bit loud in the musicians area, but I did not notice it. The man with the fingers and the gal with the sticks must have toned down a bit?

The entire cast was great, but I will pick on a few remarkable standout performances. I have to say that Travis **is** Seymour. He had the bumbling, nerdy, inept orphan turned flower shop attendant down to an art. So many great scenes that it would take an entire post to detail it all. **SUPERB PERFORMANCE**, my friend! I can't wait to work with you again. If it were in my power, you would be the Willie Award winner!

I must say that I was extremely taken aback by Shelley's performance of Audrey. She usually has this great, big, powerful voice that truly commands the stage. This time, she backed off the power to give a touching, sincere persona to the meek, "semi-sadist" dating character.

Finally, the trio of Mary, Amber, and **PEGGY!** They very nearly stole the show and for good reason... they were incredible. I'm running a bit long here, so I will comment on the young lady whom I have known since the 5th grade on her stage debut. I couldn't be prouder! Where were you !& years ago in high

school?! For her first time on stage, Peggy had to deal with some truly powerhouse stage veterans but she held her own brilliantly. I was asked to tell her if I could hear her. Going against my trained experience, I tried to hone in on her voice during the trio numbers and yes, I could hear you. More importantly, the mixing of the three voices was great! The attitude was dead on. During the scene changes, the three divas kept things lively by ad libbing which brought some chuckles from the audience.

So.. if you are in the area this weekend, take a few hours down on Skid Row. You will be in for a treat!

The Dark Night & Man Of Steel Public Enemies

Bats and Supes doing battle against other superheroes... President Lex Luthor... a kryptonite meteor on its way to Earth. These are just three of the major plots in the new animated PG-13 rated movie from the D.C. Universe: [Batman/Superman: Public Enemies](#). And as far as I am concerned, the best so far.

Following a country-wide economic collapse, the megalomaniac, billionaire is elected leader of the United States, apparently he was in the right place at the right time and promised prosperity for all (HEHE). The movie, nor the comic stated such, but I have a feeling ol' Lexy was more of the problem surrounding the collapse than the recovery. After taking over the Oval Office, some of the Justice Leaguers for some reason came to join Luthor to make the country "safe."

In a scheme to lure Superman into a trap, the president asks

to meet to discuss working together to destroy the approaching meteor. Instead, he has the cybernetic, kryptonite-hearted Metallo lying in wait. During the battle with assistance from Batman, Metallo is "murdered" and a billion dollar bounty is placed on the Man of Steel. This draws out almost every greedy minor villain conceivable. Not only the supervillains, but also those heroes who are somehow blinded by Luthor's machinations.

There is non-stop action throughout the movie which was really cool... definitely more suited for an animated feature. My one complaint: where are all the major villains besides Luthor (no Joker, Catwoman, Bizarro)? Instead, we get cameos by Gorilla Grodd, Solomon Grundy, and a bunch of others I barely recognized. But that is only a minor quibble. I also liked the return of Luthor's battle suit.

So... I highly recommend this movie to anyone who enjoys the animated world of D.C. Comics. I read the graphic novel a few years ago and still greatly enjoyed the movie! Plus, Allison Mack joined the list of *Smallville* cast members to voice another animated D.C. character.