

Another Thespian In The Family?

On Tuesday nights, my niece Elizabeth and nephew Noah come to the house while their older brother is taken to Boy Scouts. Last night after returning from rehearsal, I asked Elizabeth when her school play is going to be. I never got the dates but I remember last year's was sometime in November. I was able to drag out that she has the title role in *Mulan, Junior*. I was excited for her and even had to ask again to make sure I heard correctly. How awesome is that?! I asked if Joshua got a part... forgetting that he is too old to be in the 4th and 5th grade show.

I must admit... and I don't know why... but I have never seen the movie. It must have been because I lost track of Disney movies in the years following *The Lion King* up until Pixar joined the studio with *Toy Story*. I do remember that Lea Salonga was the title voice with Donny Osmond and Eddie Murphy also voicing roles.

Another aspect of Elizabeth that amazes me is her voracious reading. For her birthday, I gave her two books: a mid-level edition of *Marley and Me* and a Peter Pan prequel (it had Disney's stamp of approval for whatever that's worth). I thought the first book looked a bit simple for her (she has read all 7 Harry Potter books) but, eh. I was right because I asked how far she had gotten in them and she finished the first and started Peter Pan earlier that day and was already beyond the first 100 of 500 pages.

Apparently, school children are rewarded for outside reading far more than I was. When I was in elementary school, we received a coupon for a free personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut after reading so many books. Today, children can read a book go onto a website, take a quiz, and earn points which they can

build up to obtain all kinds of fabulous gifts. I had no idea there was such a thing until my cousin asked if I made sure the books were on the [AR](#) list? I think it is a neat idea but for one thing: The points do not carry over from year to year. I really don't have a problem with rewarding those who enjoy reading and I don't believe that the incentive is connected with the classroom.

Not trying to take anything away from the fabulous news of Elizabeth's first lead role, so CONGRATS! Break a leg! OH... my brother came in the store tonight and he had no idea of the news when I asked him about the show dates. And I was informed as I walked into the house last night? Priorities.

Off The Book & It Feels Soooo Fine

YAHOO!!! I took the plunge and ditched the script for the entire rehearsal. As a wise scientist once stated: "Once you set your mind to it, you can accomplish anything." I will not say that I was perfect but I felt good after the evening was complete. So fun and ultimately rewarding... now I can begin the tweaking of my character. We also attempted to run the show using the lights: extensive blackouts, many light tricks and sound effects that will definitely need to be worked out during the next three weeks. Hopefully, our tech crew will arrive soon to get all of their cues. The entire cast was fumbling around in the dark on numerous occasions tonight but no one was seriously injured... yet. I even got to provide a word following the run through. As I have stated previously, this show is much more than an audience-participatory murder-mystery, I think it closely rivals some of the best melodramas

out there. I mentioned that most of the characters have lines that can be delivered as asides to the audience. That was one of my few complaints with the last melodrama I saw staged... there were asides but the director chose not to have them blatantly directed to the audience which limited the amount of booing and cat-calling.

This new internet is crazy cool. So much faster than the old Verizon. Just sitting here makes me feel like a kid in a candy store. Three weeks to go and our rehearsal schedule has changed so that we now have practices every night except Saturday. Well... if they are needed (and I think they are, there is just so much to work out technically as well as theatrically).

17 Days 5 1/2 Hours And Counting...

and still actors still have their scripts on stage! Ok... so I'm one of them but it is more of a crutch than anything else. Besides, as I said there are still 17 days until the curtain goes up and the "NO BOOK" deadline is set for Friday. I think tonight I will go completely off book. I don't need it! There are just a few of those incidental phrases that throw me off every time during the rehearsal process.

This is kind of a different role for me. One reason being, I have the opening line of the show. Nothing can start until I say so! I can hold the audience, my fellow thespians, the directors, everyone in the palm of my hand! MWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! I may have had the opening line for *School House Rock* but that was recorded.

Oh, yes... I received some fliers at last night's rehearsal which I took around town to display along with some Oktoberfest announcements. So come one come all to the [Huber theatre](#) October 9-11 and solve the mystery of whodunwhat to whom.

3-0! And No Vultures Circling

I don't know of anyone else who can claim that ranking in our annual WCCT Family Fun Day softball game but since neither of my other compatriots here at tangents can, I will gloat just a bit... not that it was entirely my doing... never underestimate the underdog and I'm not speaking of the canine do-gooder I just really enjoy another excuse to get together on any day with some of the best friends one could have... even if some were missing.

I will try not to report on too much that has been mentioned before. I did arrive a bit earlier than everyone else which gave me the chance to listen to most of the remaining first stanza of the Ohio State/Toledo football game. By the end of the first quarter, the Buckeyes were up 14-0 at the home of the Browns in Cleveland. Just a bit of interstate competition at a neutral site... or maybe a chance to get an Ohio team there who would win a game... this seemed likely since both teams are from Ohio. I remember going to Cleveland my senior year in high school to watch the Bucks play. The day after the sousaphone incident. I must say that Mr. Tressel loosened his vest a bit instead of playing it conservative which has led to many a big game letdown... the USC game a weekend or two ago comes to mind as well as a few past bowl games.

Back to the Fun Day. As usual, it was a very enjoyable event

although there were only 8 of us (plus an all-time pitcher) who took part in the actual game. Prior to the main event, we tossed a football and then I really showed by prowess on the basketball court. Thank goodness for the granny shot or I would have reached "h-o-r-s-e" long before I did. As I have said before, I know where my talent lies.

Prior to the big game, Megan and I warmed up a bit tossing the softball back and forth. WHAT... no batting practice?! I played shag in the outfield and was kept bust chasing flies until the final inning when it seemed one side got a bit more winded than the other. I am pleased to say that I hit the ball every time I was up... ok, so maybe one at bat took about seven pitches for me to do so... we will blame the pitcher. But what a ball! One of the events I hope to look forward to for years to come.

The game ended long enough for us to return to the pavilion to chat a bit before I had to leave and song lead at mass. But once again a great afternoon with friends.

A Weight Lifted

The last game night I shared with my dear friends was a very special one especially as the night turned into the wee hours of the morning. 09-12-08. How fitting that Emily's passing would occur 7 years after the country picked itself up a day after what will undoubtedly be seen as one of the worst (if not the worst) tragedies to befall this country. 09-12-01, Emily spearheaded a campaign to send supplies overseas to our men and women. A campaign which is still going on today. Shortly after midnight on 09-12-09, I mentioned that this was the anniversary of my mentor's passing. I felt a heavy weight

upon my shoulders. [Lisa](#) told Megan, [Chris](#), and I to form a circle around the kitchen island and join hands. Chris then said a short word of prayer that lifted the weight right off my shoulders. My three best friends.

Strangely on Tuesday, word had spread that Patrick Swayze had lost his battle with cancer. This fell on the anniversary of Emily's burial. Oddly enough, I was never a huge fan of Mr. Swayze's work. Having a younger sister who enjoyed nothing more than to watch *Dirty Dancing* ad nauseum kind of turned me off of his acting ability. The first time I watched the movie, I actually kind of enjoyed it, but it got old really fast. I did, however, enjoy *Ghost* (Yes, I admit it... I'm a softie). However, anyone who can bravely battle a terminal disease under the limelight and battle constant tabloid bombardment is worthy of some praise.

Thanks again ☐

Meet Me AAAAAAT The Fair

The Monday following Labor Day is the annual Fair Day for kids in Williams County, Ohio. This day all the little ones get another day away from the classroom. This year, kids in most of the districts had a four day weekend as Friday was canceled due to fog. Monday morning, I had the honor of sitting for a five and three-year-old. By 11AM, they were getting rambunctious so I decided to take them to the fair. Grandma gave me \$20 to use between the two of them for snacks and to bring their mother back a bag of delicious roasted peanuts (one of the stands I frequent yearly). As we arrived, Sydney (the three-year old) saw a ride that seemed to peak her attention... or maybe it was the flag on top. It was a ride

that took passengers slowly straight up in the air; then, it suddenly dropped and returned to earth. Up close, my young niece thought against the ride.

We found a ticket stand at which I purchased two wristbands for the girls. And we went on our way. First stop, the carousel at which I was needed to ride with Sydney on the non-mobile bench and Alyssa also wanted no part of riding on a horse... BOY are these **MY** nieces? There was also a train that both of them enjoyed and a Strawberry ride that resembled the teacup ride at Disney Parks around the world. Sydney did not want to ride the school bus attraction until she watched her big sister brave it. There were a few rides that I would have gone on: the bumper cars which probably would not have been a good idea. I had the feeling that Alyssa would still be a bit short to drive a car herself and I don't think three in one is allowed. However, I did get tickets to ride the Tilt-A-Whirl which little Syd did not like at all.

As for the snacks, that was the highlight of the day. Another of my must stops is the Dairy Association's milkshake stand. Every year, I eagerly await the arrival of the fair if only to indulge in one of the tasty treats. Unfortunately, the girls were not too big on them. I made the mistake of getting them both one. Actually, one wanted chocolate while the other wanted vanilla (I don't know why but... a vanilla shake? I do know that some of my other relatives prefer vanilla over chocolate so I'm not that surprised). They each took one sip of their respective shake and immediately said YUCK! **WHAT?!** Ah, well... it wasn't my money being wasted.

Before we left, I asked them what they wanted for their snack. Sydney wanted a bag of salt water taffy... yum, yum. Alyssa adamantly stated that she wanted a CANDY apple. So we went to the stand operated by friends of our family. We got Syd's taffy then I asked Alyssa if she really wanted a CANDY apple. At least three times she said yes... a CANDY apple. She got her candy apple, began to lick the hard, CINNAMON candy

and said... "I don't like this." I knew it. Not only did I know that she does not like cinnamon candy, I had a feeling that she would not be able to bite into it. After 5 minutes of pouting, the apple ended up on the ground then in the garbage. Once again, not a big deal to me... not my money. Sydney was sweet enough to share a few pieces of taffy.

I found it strange that neither girl wanted to see the animals until we were across the race track headed back to the car. It was nearing 4 and I had to get back for rehearsal so we had to miss the big bike giveaway at 5... must be present to win of course. Ironically, the next day I learned that a grandson of one of my co-workers was the winner of one of the two bikes. I think they still give two away.

All in all not a bad time, except for a few moments, but what can ya do?

HE'S BAAAAAACK! Anyone Up for Some Parkour?!

YES... it has been a mere 8 days since I have been able to access the internet. Our connection via Verizon went down for the umpteenth time so my very Trekkie er... techie brother recommended that we make the switch to Time Warner high speed. So, for a week I have been getting phone calls from ardent fans asking if I have been abducted by aliens, fallen off the face of the earth, or just kidnapped by our friend from you-know-where. Actually, I have gotten a bit accomplished in the past few days: watching the Yankees slip a game or two, memorizing some lines, checking out the county fair, playing some softball (now 3-0, thank you very much),

reading a 600+ page book of which I have less than 200 to read, and song lead in church. I did manage however to go out one day last week to borrow my brother's computer to read my 81 emails and read a few posts from my [co-tangenteers](#). Minutes ago, I read another 81 emails (ironic) and am anxious to see how far I have fallen behind in the ranks of tangents. Wonder if I get to read a take on the EXCELLENT season premiere of [The Office](#).

Number 2 Meets Number 4

What an accomplishment to an already stellar career that shows no signs of ending anytime soon. Tonight, Derek Jeter joined Lou Gehrig (The Iron Horse, The Pride of the Yankees) as the all time Yankee hitter at 2721. A bunt, a blast, and a rip to right field brought the new and old icons even. Even if he is a graduate of Kalamazoo High School in that state up north where he spent a semester as one of those unmentionables, Derek has handled the spotlight that comes with the stripes with integrity, and maturity over the past 15 years. Even if I were not a fan, I would find it difficult to not cheer for the shortstop phenom. Jeter's work ethic makes it nearly impossible for him to place any solo accomplishment above those of the team... There is no "I" in team. While standing on first base following his third hit of the night, Mr. November rose his helmet not once but twice and acknowledged the ovation from the fans (including his parents), his teammates, the opposing team, the entire crowd at the home of the bombers. Play ceased however briefly for the star to have his moment. And at Captain Clutch's next at bat... he is walked and the crowd goes wild with boooooos as the pitcher is retired and the Yanks score 4 and lead the TB Rays 4-2. Unfortunately, it will take some doing for Derek to get to Pete Rose's MLB

All Time Record of 4256 hits. WOW! It took 70 years for someone to even the First Baseman's record. So... unless something terrible happens in this the top of the ninth the record will remain tied. And... THE YANKEES WIN! THEEEEEEE YANKEES WIN!!!!!!

Two Laborious Days Or Surviving The Fumes

My Labor Day Weekend beginning Saturday afternoon was full of labor (at least the first two days of it). Overnight Saturday into the wee hours of Sunday, a group from our sister store across the state line came and stripped and polished our floors... not a job I would be first in line to accept. However, Saturday I found myself doing the menial task of clearing displays and whatever could be moved from the sales floor into the backroom. Small chest freezers were defrosted, pallets full of 24 packs of Pepsi product were pulled back, gumball and sticker machines, Rug Doctor rental machines... EVERYTHING! Some customers began to wonder if we were moving out. WOW! I hope not! I remember the last time I was part of this prep being July 4th Weekend of 2008 although I was assured that the process was completed since then. By the time 8 PM rolled around I was ready to call it a night. HOWEVER, I was asked to come in at 7.30AM Sunday morning to help move everything BACK to the floor. VERY begrudgingly, I agreed.

7.30 AM Sunday morning. I arrive at the store to find nothing even being attempted to be moved into place. I also notice the quite distinguishable aroma of waxed floor and more than a little slickness as I make my way inside. The manager informs

me that the floor is not nearly ready to have all of the displays put back. UGH!!!! I could have stayed at home for at least a half-hour longer. However, if she was willing to pay me for an hour of standing around in the office off the floor... who was I to argue? I did get a free donut out of the deal.

So, by the time 2PM came around, I was once again ready to call it a day. Diane must have been ready for me to call it a day because as soon as the hour began she said: "Go home." The fumes from the cleaner still lingering created a slight sense of weirdness. Once again, customers very strangely commented that it smelled good. By 7.45AM, I had had enough of the odor thank you very much. At 3.00PM, I could still smell the after effects of the cleaning. When I went to work at noon today (I did have Labor Day off), the scent still lingered. But I still am glad that I did not spend the night polishing. ☐

All You Need Is An Octopus To Hold Your Hand In A Submarine That Is Yellow

Today seems to be one of those moments when it appears that Beatlemania will about however briefly. Not only is The Beatles: Rock Band hitting gaming systems the world over but many of the greatest albums are being reissued as remastered CDs. Abbey Road, Revolver, Rubber Soul, and the quintessential White Album are just four of the titles dropping today.

While I was cleaning the shop today, I glanced at a *Parent and Child* magazine and one of the cover articles pondered...["Why](#)

[Kids Love the Beatles](#)". I don't know how many parents today introduce their children to the Fab Four but I know of at least one [father](#) whose youngest can rip off lyrics during a game with the best of them... even obscure songs that flew right over my head. I agree wholeheartedly with most of the article. I believe that the longevity is due in large part to the creative genius of Lennon and McCartney who penned some of the most memorable songs imaginable that still hold up 40+ years after the groups break up. Classic melodies and words from ballads like "Yesterday", "Hey Jude," and "Let It Be" to pop standards such as "I Saw Her Standing There," "Can't Buy Me Love," and "Penny Lane" to the wildly odd lyrics of "Octopus' Garden" and "I Am the Walrus (goo-goo-ga-joo)" are just a few of the hits produced from the Lads from Liverpool.

The article went on to give a small bio of the four gents. Who was the Cute Beatle, the Quiet Beatle, the Brainy Beatle, and the Sad Beatle? I did not list them in order they appear in the article so if you decide to cheat you better make sure you read the question carefully. Not only did John and Paul contribute to the songwriting but George and Ringo wrote some classics as well.

No matter what kind of personal lives the quartet lived outside the stage or studio, one thing remains undeniably clear. Even after 40 years, millions are still listening to, singing along with, and commemorating the world's greatest rock band. I'm not sure if The Beatles will hold up to classic composers like Bach and Beethoven 100 years from now and I don't think I will be around to find out. Plus, we had an Elvis themed game night... why not a Beatles? At least we can introduce one of our friends to the classics who shall remain anonymous... unless they care to comment.