

The Wait Is Over... A Day Early

Tonight at 7, I will be in an area multiplex watching the first summer blockbuster of the season (did not get to *Wolverine*). I have watched interviews with cast members on a few of the gab fests. Surprisingly, little has been divulged concerning the plot of *Star Trek* which is a VERY good thing. The only cast member (aside from Mr. Nimoy of course) I really recognize (by name) is Eric Bana. Bana will be playing the villain Nero. The only cinematic of his I have had the pleasure(?) of spending too much for a two hour + movie was the original dud of the big screen *Hulk*. At least if *Trek* fails, it will be hard to blame him because he is one of the lucky individuals who got to sit in the chair and endure hours of prosthetic application. I think it would be neat to play a character at least once (probably no more) in which I had to sit through three hours of having my face totally transformed. So... Live Long and Prosper, Beam Me Up, Scotty (never said by Shatner's Kirk), Warp Factor 9.99. I don't know if I am more excited to see this movie or if I was more excited to see *Indiana Jones*' return last year. Not nearly as long to wait for the return of the *Enterprise*.

Any Landing You Can Walk Away From...

is a good landing. At least that is what I've heard. Recently, a pilot flying his Cessna 182 had to make an emergency landing when his engine suddenly failed. After the pilot's attempt to turn the plane around to return to the airport failed, he set down too quickly, hit a fence, and

flipped over. Miraculously, the inverted aircraft landed in a field of [Port-a-Potties](#). Reportedly, the plane got three hundred feet in the air, the engine sputtered, and sent the pilot and his passenger on a fast descent. If the pilot did not have to go before he left, I am confident he had to go when he landed. Fortunately, the pilot and his passenger only received a few bumps and bruises and walked away from the accident.

Back On The Mound

On Sunday, the Seattle Mariners defeated the Oakland Athletics 8-7 in 15 innings. While neither team is high on my radar to follow, the Mariners possess one player with very close ties. [Denny Stark](#) pitched to four batters in the game. This came after an absence of 1747 days (last appearing on the mound in 2004) and two Tommy John replacement surgeries on his right elbow.

How well I remember back in the day (he was a year behind me in school) when Denny was on the mound or on the hardwood either scoring 1000 points in basketball or pitching on the mound at EHS. Totally amazing and he was definitely one who started out as soon as he was big enough to throw a ball to his father. I know for a fact that his parents encouraged his talent and gift. His father, "Connie" (and mother, Roz), coaching, developing him, but never being the stereotypically domineering parent.

Sometimes, coming from a small town and knowing everyone and what they are doing is a good thing. In little league, I remember having Connie as a coach who never demanded anything less than what you were capable of giving. So often we hear

of coaches or parents who push as hard as they can in order to realize their own dreams through their players or children, but it was absolutely untrue in this case: THIS IS DENNY'S DREAM and it has been realized once again... if only for four batters. Hopefully, this is only the beginning. Perseverance does have its rewards. I remember going to a Ft. Wayne Wizards game one summer when Denny was scheduled to pitch for the opposing team. However, we were unable to see him pitch as he was called up to the next level.

UPDATE: According to a more local [newspaper](#), Denny will be used in a middle relief capacity.

Crashing Through E-Town

This morning when I arrived at work at 9, I was greeted by shards of glass all over the sidewalk in front of the building. There was an orange barrel in the corner where a street light STOOD just last night. I asked the boss what SHE had been doing last night... one too many, perhaps? When she got to work about 7.30, the mess was still being cleaned up. I was given a push broom too clean up the remaining evidence. Because of the large amount of glass on the walk, she thought the large bay window had been broken by the fallen lamp post.

I heard two differing time frames involved in the mishap. One was around 2AM and the other was 6.30AM which would explain the time it had taken to clean the mess up. The driver of a pick-up truck was travelling through town on his way home from the races. That made me question the 6.30 time... do races last THAT long? Reportedly, the driver fell asleep, veered into the wrong lane, struck the light pole which fell across the sidewalk. If the pole had moved just inches more to the east,

the store window would have been no more. It did strike the pop machines in front of the store, but little damage was done to them. The driver must have awakened before the pole crossed the intersection where it could have crashed into the window on the side of the furniture store.

When the authorities came to the store, it was reported that the driver got out of his truck and ran up the street to the shop of a local race driver where he thought he might be able to get in and call for help. What a mess! At least there wasn't serious damage done and no one was injured, miraculously. Neighbors of the store reported that they thought a freight train had gone through.

Where You Can Eat And Get Gas Or Get Gas And Eat

Tonight, a group of self-anointed "cougars," Megan, and I (the only male) traveled to Findlay to see a production of [Pump Boys and Dinettes](#). Before our hour and a half trek began, piling into the minivan was almost worth a few dollars to see itself. I would have gladly given up my front seat but to see the ladies crawling over each other to get a seat was priceless. We drove through quite a bit of rain... so much for the "Slight chance of evening showers."

For dinner, we decided on a place called The Gathering that was right beside The Tavern in the Inn (I almost thought I was back in NYC at Tavern on the Green). I decided on the restaurant's signature ribs. Thank goodness, I decided on the Piglet order instead of the full-rack Oinker platter. I barely finished the half-rack. Guess I was not as hungry as I

was when I tackled the full-pound sirloin burger.

This show itself was billed as "a country music review." However, while most of the music had a country feel, I did notice a few pieces that had a rock sound from the 50s-60s. The music was ALL ORIGINAL. Since the show was a review, the plot was totally secondary and seemed to be spliced together from old bits of Hee Haw corn. The small cast included sisters Rhetta and Prudie Cupp who run and operate the Double Cupp Diner and the three main attendants at the garage/filling station next door. The leader of the Pump Boys, Jim, seemed to be the MC of the evening and introduced the ladies man, Jackson and the more suspicious, L.M. The pit was included on stage and the two guitar players, pianist, and drummer each seemed to have personalities of their own without saying a word. I would say my favorite selection was L.M.'s recollection of a week he spent while attending the concert of a certain buxom blonde country legend.

The set really made you think you were in a small backwater town in Carolina where the men far outnumber the ladies (inbreeding). Where beer is home brewed as well as the 'shine and a cow eats the field of marijuana (be sure to have that milk tested).

After the show, Megan and I were encouraged to check out the green room in the basement. Although the ceiling was a bit low (thank you Megan for pointing that out as I hit my head more than once), I must say that I found myself thinking of making a switch. There was furniture galore (comfortable furniture), a large television which served as a monitor showing the action on stage (very nice to have), as well as cast pictures from previous shows. As the Fort Findlay Playhouse is also constructed inside a hollowed out church, it made me wonder how many theatres have been converted from places of worship.

On another note, it seemed that the [Fort Findlay Players](#) stole

our theme idea for a season (or more members of their board were more receptive to the suggestions). Next year, the theatre is doing a Salute to Hollywood by presenting a series of plays that were also movies. Shows like *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *House of Frankenstein*, *Singin' in the Rain*, and *The Wizard of Oz* (the version based on the 1939 classic film), and *The Odd Couple* are on the season. See... it is possible.

Pump Boys and Dinettes was just a fun bit of escapist fun that just flew by. The vocal talent was extraordinary and the choreography was simple yet energetic. I could see myself doing it. That again is saying A LOT.

Sometimes I Amaze Even Myself

Once again my reputation has followed me. I walked uptown this afternoon to deposit three checks (ok... deposit two and cash my State Refund). At the bank, I had the pleasure of meeting the new, quite personable manager. I was immediately impressed. First, he identified me as the "guy from the grocery store." So, I formally introduced myself. He then began his spiel to see if I knew how to get the store to switch banks. I told him it was not me... he would probably have to go to the big guy himself (Good luck with that). I know the manager would be of no help. That put me off a bit as I am not that high on the feeding chain, but after I was totally amazed.

He then mentioned that he has seen me in the paper (been a while) and on stage many times and asked what was coming up. Well... next weekend I have an audition for the 10th Anniversary of an area theatre's production of *Joseph*... His daughter is also planning to try out. I asked if she had been to the

theatre's website where she could download an audition sheet as well as follow a link to some MIDI files of the songs from the show. I have been going over "Benjamin Calypso" and other songs since discovering the link.

This summer also marks the 10 year anniversary of my foray into community theatre. I auditioned for [FCF](#)'s first summer show but did not get a part. Happily, I did not let this deter my efforts (a LOT of HELP from a certain teacher who is now helping from above did not hurt either). The following summer, I tried out for a [neighboring production](#) of *Joseph* and got my first role in a non-school show... and a monster was born. The first few years, I tried out for summer shows only. The manager of my FPOE was not too keen on even that much rearranging of my schedule. But the fabulous person in charge of the front end pleaded my case. And the rest I will elaborate on later. Always keep them wanting more (where have I heard that before).

But I will once again be auditioning for one of my favorite ALW shows. Now if only the rights had not been taken away for the other (a toss up between *Cats* and *Aspects of Love* ... WOW... so not).

[poll id="18"]

Summer Fun At The Movies

While I hopefully will have a jam-packed summer to look forward to, I do plan to see at least a few of the big-budget, popcorn munching, no chance of winning any major awards movies coming soon to a theatre near me.

- [X-Men Origins: Wolverine](#) (the backstory to arguably, the

most popular member of the gang of mutant superheros... opening Friday. If you haven't seen the much publicized copy that surely found its way onto the internet)

- [Star Trek](#) (the much-hyped reboot of the 43 year old franchise. The trailers look phenomenal... hopefully, as is so often the case, the previews are not the best thing... I'm hoping the delay from Christmas Day to May 8th will be worth the wait))
- *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (the much delayed sixth movie of the seven book franchise. The final book will be divided into 2 movies. It has been two years since the last cinematic adventure of the students of Hogwarts)
- *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (didn't I tell you that it was a summer of popcorn, senseless movies)
- *Land of the Lost* (Will Farrell in an update of the classic 70s Saturday morning series about dinosaurs)
- *Up* (Pixar's Latest about an old man who hitches his house to a bunch of balloons and up, up, and awaaaaaaaaay he goes. Pixar movies are a must)
- *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* (the sequel looks as fun as the original...LOTS)

I probably will not have time to see all of them but will do what I can. I plan to be in one show, help with the realizing of another show, and squeeze in some work this summer. May the summer bring fireworks in the cinemas as well as the sky.

Don't wait. Guarantee your seat before you go and avoid a sold out show. Skip the box office lines and buy movie tickets at Fandango.com.

Yet Another Theatrical Tragedy

It seems that recently there have been a number of tragedies happening in the theatrical world most of them involved in small companies. Last weekend a full-scale murder occurred at a reunion picnic for the Town and Gown Players of Athens Georgia. This theatre has performed everything from classic Shakespeare to Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals to the screwball comedies of Woody Allen. As a proud member of the [community theatre](#) of my own corner of the world, my heartfelt condolences go out to not only the families of the victims but to the entire theatre, as well. Three of the members of the 55 year old company were shot. As with the feelings I hold for many in my own community theatre, these three were seen as members of a second family.

Two of them were the technical wizards behind many productions who built elaborate sets. The third was the small theatre's president, herself a veteran of numerous on and off stage roles. That is what is so special about community theatre: Everyone has the opportunity to be involved in every aspect of a show. An actor has as much to do backstage as on whether it be helping to construct the set, paint a wall, sell tickets, or clean the restroom the Saturday before a performance opens. Sometimes it really does seem like a second family that has its share of disagreements and squabbling, but the final results are usually (if not always) well worth the effort. Members also become life-long friends.

Although I have never had the opportunity to meet these three people, my heart goes out to them and their families both immediate and theatrical. Please keep the [Town & Gown Players](#) in your thoughts and prayers. By following the link you can read about the three victims as well as view and sign a condolence book.

A Day With Rosie

Now that the kids have been transported to school (an adventure in and of itself... nope still haven't perfected the actual molecule beaming device... had to do it the old-fashioned way... by car). I can come back and straighten the house so big brother doesn't come home to a disaster. Thank goodness, I have Rosie (*la petite* French maid... HUHN, HUHN! Ooo, la, la!) to help me, I can kick back and watch as she goes through her paces. From where I sit, she doesn't seem to be doing too badly. Very small, very fast, just my type. I did do the dishes and picked up large items on the floor to make her job just a little bit easier. She does seem to be having a bit of difficulty... looks like she is stuck on a furnace grating... excuse me while I go help her. And away she goes Boy, can she suck!! OK...OK... Rosie is nothing more than the robotic vacuum. Does take a little time but I have the day off, so I can get the house clean and do what I like as the sweeper does her thing

Well... while I let Rosie do her job, I think I will find a good show to pop in the Blu-Ray...

A Wonderful Weekend... Until...

Beautiful weather, fun times with the best of friends, and a bit of work (just a bit) all added up to a fun weekend AND THEN...UGH! Older brothers can be so trying sometimes (I'm sure the same can be said for younger siblings as well). Fantastic news to start off with: We managed to finish filming *The*

Clinic. Hopefully, it can be put together well enough to submit for consideration by the deadline. We have lots of fun things being planned after the final product comes to fruition. The process seemed to be much smoother than last week. I must say that I am glad we finished when we did. I think "Donnie" was just about out of energy. And that, my friend says A LOT.

Saturday night, I once again had the extreme thrill and privilege to assist my friend in setting up for his totally mind-blowing demonstration of mentalism in Mind Games. Taylor and I helped by watching him practice some of his routine. Thankfully, very little of it was done fully so as not to ruin the performance. I was asked to provide a dollar bill for a bit and at the end I had no idea what was supposed to have happened, but that is as it was supposed to be until the show.

I was encouraged to ask some of my family to attend the performance which I did and told them that "Upon pain of death" they would attend. Four of them did... the rest better watch themselves. Little Sydney really seemed to enjoy herself. She was on the edge of her seat the whole time, totally mesmerized by the show with her mouth and eyes wide open. Quite a change from the fright she got from Chris dressed as The Nerd. Today, I asked if she was still scared of him. She just laughed and shook her head, no. Thank goodness.

Later this afternoon, while at my big brother's house entertaining the kids with my sister and cousin, I noticed that Jeff was nowhere to be found. Moments later, Kim told me in confidence (the kids were right there) that he went to the ER WITH CHEST PAINS... BY HIMSELF!!! Given his history, I figured that it would be a long night, so I volunteered to stay with the three kids until their mother could be reached. When he finally called, it was decided that he would be admitted for the night... just to be safe. Because their mother

could not be reached, I said that I would stay at the house and get the kids ready for school tomorrow. Still did nothing to calm my nerves that he once again failed to say anything...
AHHHHHHHH!

Well... guess I will get cozy and see if the Yanks can't take one from the Red Stockings.