

OK... Have We Been Had?

Ok... I'm not sure, but when I attempted to access my tangents site the normal way, I came across a message that stated that the domain name tangents.org is for sale. After some trial and error, I was able to make my way here to post on the weirdness of the day.

It started this morning when I watched the April Fools Day episode of [The Price is Right](#) featuring a very special surprise guest and gags galore.

While walking to work at 11:55AM, I noticed that the clock at the bank read 12:55PM... funny.

While at work, the manager called and asked me if I would come in an hour early tomorrow as the truck was going to be early. Why would I come in an hour early on Wednesday I said.? She actually took me seriously and thought that it really was Tuesday instead of Wednesday. HAHA!

Later, an apparent wrong number called and asked to speak with Monica. I replied that I am Monica and we carried on a two minute conversation until I could not come up with any more believable conversation. Thank goodness the caller was good hearted and played along.

That was all until I got home and found out that our domain was for sale. I guess we will see what happens tomorrow. I can post, but can my readers find my posts?

Who Advises The Advisor?

Recently, I received an email from a high school friend asking for advice on auditioning for a movie role. She has never acted before but knew of my passion for theatre and decided to come to me for whatever reason. I have never tested for film, but gathered that my stage experiences would help. Here was my reply:

That sounds cool. I have never auditioned for film before, but I can't imagine it being any different from stage. Being a first timer, there will be anxiety which is good to have... it gives you energy. I still get it... anyone who says they never get nervous at an audition because they have done it so often is lying through their teeth but the more experience you get in auditioning the easier it becomes to use the nerves to your advantage. Not sure what to expect... do you have a script or is it a cold reading? Do you have to have anything prepared ahead (monologue?) . The best advice I can give is to go in, do what the director asks and have fun (the most important thing). The minute you walk into the site you ARE at the audition. Most of the auditions I go to start out by introducing yourself. This is as important as reading from the script or anything else they ask you to do. The first impression is the most important... be yourself (Sounds cliché and corny, but is very true). And don't let your inexperience get you down... everyone has to start somewhere. With your personality, I am really surprised that you did not try out for anything in school, but... never too late. Break a leg! Let me know if there is anything else you need and let me know how you do.

Apparently, she felt really good about the audition, because she sent me an email Saturday after the audition and told me that she used my advice. She was nervous but went in and presented herself as best she could and even talked to one of

the writers and the casting director. Her husband, another EHS alumnus was in the store tonight and related how excited she was and how grateful she was for the advice. Unfortunately, she has to wait until April 6th to hear about call backs, etc. I would be driven insane waiting that long. She is even anticipating minoring in theatre at the University of Toledo where she started taking classes last fall. "Theatre is fun" she said. I even told her that she needs to take advantage of the theatre around her.

This is not the first time I have shared advice and my love of my favorite thing. It seems that I am quick to pick out members of any cast who are inexperienced and offer words of encouragement and take them "under my wing" as it were.

My problem is this: If I find it so easy to encourage others (friends, new acquaintances who more often than not turn into friends), why can't **I** find the encouragement to go further? I have conquered (or at least been on) 6 stages in my little corner of the world. I love everyone of them. I have made the best friends I have EVER had in two of these venues because the bond many of us share is so strong. I get encouraged by many of them and yet... here I sit. Have I become so "comfortable" here that I will never try (again) to go above and beyond? I know I am just rambling and many of you may not understand how strong this thing is (I'm not even sure I do at times) but to me if someone finds himself trying out for every show in his community theatre (even when he is not cast... just picks himself up and tries again and again) and even ventures to other groups from time to time, well... **AND I know** that **I** solely am the one who has to come to terms with it. Maybe one day soon I can decide to take another friends advice to heart and believe that:

"There are no limitations in what you can do except the limitations in your own mind as to what you can not do."

Ever Had A Big Mac Attack?

Have you ever had a late night craving that only the “two all beef patties special sauce lettuce cheese pickles onion on a sesame seed bun” could cure? Apparently, that was the motive behind a woman’s irate shooting at a McDonald’s drive thru window Sunday morning. The woman, driving a white Dodge Intrepid, entered the drive-thru of a Salt Lake City restaurant and wanted to order lunch, dinner, anything else besides what was being offered. Apparently, 24-hour McDonald’s change from lunch/dinner to breakfast only around 2AM. I never understood the need for fast-food establishments to have different hours for different meals. Is there something that prohibits them from serving quarter pounders at the same time as egg McMuffins? In any case you can follow [the link](#) to the full details and a possible connection to other shots heard a few hours earlier

Shocking Lamp In A Shout Out

Before turning in for the night, I like to periodically check the guide to see who is going to be on the late night gab fests. Sometimes, they pique my interest (Jack Hanna on Letterman in which case I have to pass the word to tangent’s own animal lover, Taylorhis). Last night, Jay Leno had the curiosity named Lisa Lampanelli. I was introduced to this overtly shocking comedienne while on our trek to NYC and all I can say is WOW! She stepped out and fondled band leader, Kevin Eubanks and was quick to make a heated quip about first

guest, Vin Diesel (“tall hairless man, don’t know whether to nurse you or spank you”). However, she kept to her goal of making it through her set without being bleeped, but came awfully close.

Before the guest came out, Jay’s “Headline” segment always is worth a view on Monday night. One of the pieces was a playbill from a high school production of *Kiss Me Kate*. One of the things I like about some playbills is the shoutout/pat on the back spaces friends and relatives buy to give encouragement to the performers on stage (something that has been mentioned in our community theatre but...). In any case, the playbill presented last night included the rather encouraging line:

Don’t bother coming home because you suck.

Love, Mom and Dad

OUCH... even if it was meant as a joke what a message to send a young person. No wonder the country’s youth has self-esteem issues.

The World’s Most Popular Musical

And for very good reason. Who would have thought that a high school in small, rural Northwest Ohio could stage a production of *Les Miserables* and for a lot of it make you forget that you were indeed watching a high school production in small, rural Northwest Ohio. I have previously seen two professional productions of the show and I can say with certainty that the

young men and women involved in this did not miss the mark by much. I cannot even begin to state who was the best performer on stage.

At the end of Val Jean's signature piece ("Bring Him Home"), the actor was positively shaking from the emotion of the song. Megan and I were in the back of the balcony and I could see his hands trembling as he knelt beside Marius in prayer.
GOOD STUFF!

Poor Eponine playing the part of the best friend who longs to be with the handsome Marius. I always thought that she got a raw deal. Her duet with Marius ("A Little Fall of Rain") always sends chills down my spine. Cosette (the character) is not all that much... kind of plain Jane and boring if you ask me.

I always find it difficult who to root for in this show. I can see and understand the frustration Inspector Javert goes through as he tries again and again over 27 years to capture Jean Val Jean and bring him to justice. Another amazing performance.

Fantine's on stage time may be brief but her role within the show as a whole is vital. One could see the anguish she felt as she struck out at her would-be "customer" and sold her locket and hair to make money for her daughter.

BUT... the real stars of the show... the reason I told Megan that I would sit through another performance... THE THENARDIER'S...WHOOO HOOOO. Forget Val Jean. Javert take a hike. Cosette, Marius, and Eponine...eh. The owners of the inn are comedic villains at their finest and the high school students who gave life to them were remarkable. "Master of the House" is bar none the best all-out, give it everything you got number in any musical I can think of. *Les Miserables* with all its high drama, teary eye moments would fall flat if these characters were not performed well. The accent of M.

Thenardier was sleaze from the first line. His sneaky, weasly, movements across the stage were stupendous. The couple's waltz at the end of the show also was a highlight.

As I said, I could not put a finger on any one performance in the show. There were different levels of brilliance displayed by all of the young stars on the stage tonight. It really took the concept of a "high school musical" to a whole new dimension.

Sour Grapes

Yesterday was quite an interesting day. I worked from 2pm-9pm (my Friday to close up shop. Around 8, my oldest brother and a surprise visitor (Mr. John Truitt) came in. They informed me that my 3 year-old niece had been choking on a grape. 9-1-1 was called and I was assured that all was well. I had no second thoughts about going to a loooong overdue game night. Unfortunately, it seemed that I knew how to clear a room as everyone except some of my best friends departed ☹ Later, Megan and Carol arrived. Megan and I were the last two remaining. Does this seem to happen a lot?

This morning, I learned that Sydney's grape mishap was more serious than Jeff led me to believe. Mom was totally shaken even then. Apparently, the little dear was sitting on grandma's lap. All of a sudden she started choking and gasping for air and eventually had her air supply totally cut off. Grasping at her throat. Somehow, Mom was able to calm down enough to get the grape out before the ambulance arrived. My cousin's husband was on call and it seems that he had to look after Mom more than little Sydney.

After hearing the entire story this morning, I began to

consider whether I should have not gone to game night. But I was assured that everything was fine and there was nothing else to be done. Praise God, Sydney was back to her normal 3 year-old self earlier this morning... even if grandma and the rest of us were a bit shaken.

There And Back Again

After leaving the NJ/NYC area, we decided to break the drive home in half and spend another few hours of fun at the Pittsburgh Zoo. After arriving at our hotel at 2.30AM (or was it 3.30? "Jill" the obviously feminine GPS was an hour slow), I got a few hours of sleep. The trek to the zoo AGAIN was met with detours and misdirection. We stopped at a police station and parked in a towing spot. Thank goodness Chris & Lisa returned to the van before we were given notice. Once again, Chris seemed to ignore Jill's directions to get us to the zoo. We stopped at a road side dairy treat where they had the largest and HOTTEST fish sandwich ever. It was so hot that I had to let it cool a few minutes, but it was good.

The Pittsburgh Zoo was in my opinion the best of the three. The exhibits were all extraordinary and entertaining. The African elephants were a special treat especially seeing the babies. A keeper was in the area with the 4 or five elephants and looked right at home.

The aquarium featured more jellyfish (I think Akron's jelly exhibit was better), HUGE (relative) pot-bellied seahorses, and penguins. My favorite exhibit was the sea lions on display. The trainers made them perform for their food and it was amazing to see the animals wave, leap out of the water, bark, and perform other eye-catching feats.

There was also a mole-rat tunnel area for the little ones to play in. Taylor and Sammie made a new friend inside the maze of tunnels. Little Disney was more apprehensive about starting off but once she did, it took some time to get her out. The park was closed by the time we got her out. But we had to stop by the sea lions one last time.

Then, it was back on the road for the final leg of the journey. We stopped in Elyria for dinner and stopped at Wal-Mart (**there is no escaping it!!!!**). Funny thing, this Wal-Mart was still a regular store. I had thought that all the old stores were becoming Super Centers... bigger and better, right? Well...

We returned from our trip around 12:00 Tuesday morning. Once again, I had an absolutely fabulous time in my role of Manny. Thank you Chris and Lisa for having me. Thank you Taylor, Sammie, Disney, and little Beeber. I was so proud of the four of you. There were a few moments when most kids would have been pulling their hair out, but you were all wonderful. The end of this fantastic voyage. Much too quick but memories to last a lifetime. Be sure to check out [taylhis](#)' blog for her own journal of the trip. I found that I had to make one adjustment to my own. HEHE

A Day In New York

Glad I could two events of the past month together. Our final hours in the Big Apple were some of the most thought provoking and emotional. It began after we decided to have breakfast delivered instead of doing the hotel restaurant again. We made our way back across the river for another bus tour. This time on a jump on and off trek. Our hostess was a barrel of

laughs and energy. At one stop, a vendor jumped on offering refreshments. The guide quipped that "this is not a movie theatre" in a decidedly Oriental accent. After 9 stops, we arrived at our destination.

Ground zero itself created a very heavy feeling within me. Seeing the empty skyline was nothing compared to actually being up close to the site surrounded by a fence behind which the memorial is being constructed complete with the 1776 foot tall Freedom Tower. The 9/11 exhibit was also an emotional journey. Artifacts on display recovered from the wreckage of the hi-jacked planes, the buildings, even a stuffed lamb that was buried and somehow survived intact (symbolism, anyone?). Video tributes of the tragedies and heroes. Downstairs, letters written by children of different cultures were on display. Many of these were so heartfelt that it was hard to keep a dry eye.

Following the tour of the exhibit, we had to once again make our way to the pier to get back to the hotel. We thought we were in luck when we were directed to the front of the Commerce Building where there was to be a dock where a ferry came and went. Not so luckily, the dock is closed on Sunday. SOOOO WE HAD TO FIND YET ANOTHER WATERWAY BUS to take us to the pier we were accustomed to. That is a story best left for another time... I may just let taylhis relate that adventure.

Finally, we got back to the Jersey shore and went to dinner before departing. On our way out of Jersey, we stopped for gas. Chris got out, started pumping gas, and was immediately confronted by an attendant who began shouting at him. Apparently, we had inadvertantly come across one of the few remaining full service pumps in existence. But outbursts like "Papi" were heard. I thought he was a fan of David Ortiz (wrong area to be one of those... YUCK). By the time the gas was pumped, Chris was promoted (?) to "Boss." On the way out, it was discovered that we were unsure if the rattled attendant attached the fuel cap... sure enough after travelling a few

blocks, we found out that it was not.

A Bus, A Bus, My Kingdom For A Bus

After our adventures on our own tour of Times Square, the time was near to get on the bus for our twilight tour. I had never gone on a guided tour of the area so I thought it would be kind of neat to sit back, ride around, and learn about the area. We got on top of the two-level bus in the back. There was a canopy that covered half of the bus that some of us had to be wary of or we could end up with a lump on the head. The vehicle took us from So-Ho to No-Ho (hehe), across the Brooklyn Bridge, to Greenwich Village, and pretty much all over. Some of the landmarks we were able to see included the Empire State Building, the Chrysler Building, the Washington Arch (which was constructed to commemorate the centennial of President Washington's inauguration). the Flatiron Building (which served as the facade for the Daily Bugle in the Spider-Man movies). The tour itself was awesome by starlight with the lights and atmosphere... even if it was below 40 degrees. I bundled up the little guy as best I could.

While the tour was enjoyable, the guide was not so enjoyable at times. Quite frequently, he would get carried away with his commentary and we would be at a new location when he was still lecturing about the previous one. He even quipped that the info would be beneficial if any of the passengers were ever going to be on Jeopardy!

Following the tour, we departed the bus. Then the real fun began! We had to find a Waterway bus to get us back to the

Ferry to take us back across the Hudson to our Jersey hotel.

This turned into a comedy of errors. To quote Admiral Kirk, "We looked like a cadet review." Apparently, finding one of the buses required a bit of timely luck. We first had to find a location where we thought one would eventually arrive. So we asked police officers, hotel personnel, and other people who looked like they would know. The most we got was some pointing and mumbling neither of which were extremely helpful. I thought about asking the Dark Knight himself who we saw earlier. Now if Spidey had been patrolling the area, I'm sure that he would have been more than happy to help us. He is from Queens after all.

We eventually got to the location for a bus arrival (I won't say that we were at one time a corner away from it). And we waited, and we waited, and we waited. Chris approached a horse-drawn carriage driver to see if he would take us to the pier (for not less than \$75). A taxi would have been just as bad. Finally, C decided that he would jump out in front of the first Waterway bus that came along. Finally, our hero came along. I think it was two hours after we began looking for one. So, another late night for all. Still no major meltdowns. I was really proud of the kids. However, this would not be the last encounter we would have with Waterway buses.

A Kangaroo And His Joey On The Sidewalks Of New York

I don't know if anyone has a picture of this or not, but it would be one for the ages. A grown man putting a baby carrier around another grown man (check you tube). I wish I could

describe it but it was funny to just be part of. Holding my hands up in the air as we eventually got Beeber into the pouch. Sounds like the makings for a good B sci-fi movie. I was expecting to be weighed down considerably and be tired by night's end, but I barely noticed the extra baggage as we walked the sidewalks of Manhattan.

We signed up to take a night tour of part of the isle of Manhattan. Before the tour began, we took a tour of Times Square and the vicinity near the starting point of the tour. While walking, we ran into a real life celebrity. Morgan Freeman was standing in front of [Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum](#). Chris decided to get up close and personal for a photo op. After the picture, he admitted that the actor had a somewhat stiff personality. One would almost say... candle-like?

Close by was [Ripley's](#) house where a man swallowed a long air-filled balloon whole. He then began to attempt the old nail in the forehead trick. However, before he completed it, the performer informed us that the authorities were clearing the sidewalk so the show had to move inside but discount tickets would be waiting... moving on.

Anyone who knows anything about the sidewalks of New York knows about the street vendors, pan handlers, artists, musicians, and such out there trying to make a quick buck. We stopped at a caricature artist who drew a likeness of Goose. Next door, was a gentleman selling banners on which he would decoratively print names. Chris decided to get a Disney banner with (irony of ironies) Disney's name printed on it. The artist printed the name and said for a few dollars more, he would put it in a frame. Chris said "No frame." I think the man must have been a relative of the Soup Nazi but something was definitely lost in the translation because by the time he was finished, the banner was indeed inside a paper frame. The swindler's accent made me think of the Nazi also. "You said a no frame?" "Yes, I said no frame." Congratulations my friend! Wooly Sheep! He a sound like a long lost cousin of

Morat. Sit Morat, sit! Good Morat.