

Back In Room 911

So after a few hours of sleep (WHO SLEEPS ON A VACATION?), the troops went to breakfast in the hotel. Interesting experience... not because of something we did. After breakfast, we went to the pool before Big C had to go to work. The water was wonderful... the moment I stepped into the three feet section, it was heavenly warm. Usually, there is a need to get used to the temperature. C encouraged me to do a gold medal dive into an at most five foot pool...ok, sure. While I was doing a good job of keeping the three girls occupied, C&L took Beeber to meet the clients. It was quite fun... chasing Sammers as she made a lap of the entire pool while holding onto the edge. She still amazes me with her adventurous (if a bit mischievous) nature and very inquisitive mind.

After Sammie finally decided to come back to the dull shallow end, we played a game of Shark Attack (and guess who was the shark). We also became acquainted with a few young boys and their Canadian grandmother who have ties to our corner of the world. It seems that she had accompanied her son's family on a business trip to help take care of the children. Her son lives and works at a factory in the village of Hicksville where I just completed a run in *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Small world, indeed.

About this time, Dis noticed that Mom and Dad were nowhere to be found. So, it was time to make a dash back to the room to avoid a major melt down. By good fortune, Lis was in the room with Beeber so we went down to the riverfront to walk around and feed the seagulls and enjoy the Manhattan skyline. Being my first time to NYC since 9/11, it was a chilling experience to personally take in the empty space where once stood the World Trade Center towers. Yes, my room number was 911.

Kids In America

Upon accepting the invitation of again accepting the position of Manny, I was warned of problems that might present themselves on the 9-10 hour trip in the minivan. I am so happy that very few of these problems reared their ugly heads. Thank goodness for planned parental necessities. The three girls were equipped with their own bags of goodies for the long trip both to the East and back home again. We also had a large bag of DVD's to watch on the player in the car. I also brought a few kid-friendly Disney movies and Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (one of my favorite movies growing up; sad to say the transition to the stage did not go as well).

Basically, I only remember the occasional statements of "are we there yet" and the like. The extremely long voyage across Pennsylvania had to be broken up to prevent melt-downs and I'm sure the adults enjoyed our happening upon [Bellefonte](#). In the dark, it seemed to be deserted but as we approached downtown there were cars, and several restaurants, many of which were some variation of a pizza shop. Funny that it was close to State College, home of Penn State University. We decided to stop at Mama Lucretia's... pizza, pasta, cheesesteak all of which were very tasty (unless that was the hunger talking).

I must comment on the eating habits of one of the kids. "Goose" frequently made the comment that "Beeber" would have an order of paper with a side of plastic. The eight-month old will find anything to put in his mouth to indulge in: napkins, plastic bibs, straw wrappers, anything: typical. Just watch your plate; if he spies anything within reach, he will get it! After eating, most of the time a great majority of it ends up on the floor around him.

Back in the car for the remainder of the long jaunt, the kids all took naps. Taylhis also rested for a bit. I did my best to stay awake to ensure that C was still alert and going. Thank goodness we had some music going and comedy. Listening to some Miss Saigon and Assassins seemed to make the time go a bit faster. I also learned that one of the songs from Jekyll and Hyde was cut from the final show. I saw the musical in Toledo a few years ago and saw that Bring on the Men was missing. I thought perhaps touring companies might have cut the song, but it was taken out prior to the Broadway run.

Finally, after the less than an hour announcement turned into a bit longer, we arrived at our hotel around 1.30 AM. Constuction, police cars everywhere, drawbridge, lots of obstacles... AH travelling!! I LOVE IT! Especially when I am not driving ☐

If I Could Talk To The Animals

I just returned from a marvelous trip with my wonderful friends to the NJ/NYC area. We also made a couple trips on the way and on the way back. Who would have thought I would be able to take two trips in less than a year's time? My role of "[Manny](#)" was once again very fun (even if there were a few slight moments in which I threatened to go into the back of the minivan, sit on any malefactors, and tickle them).

Day one for me started about 6:30 AM. I had to be at C&Ls in time to leave by 8 and wanted to stop at Wal-Mart on my way. I stood on the front porch and knocked for about 5 minutes and decided to ring the doorbell butr apparently did not push it

right since no one heard it. I did not want to get the dogs going, anyway. So... shortly after 8, we were on our way. First major stop... The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Not much there to comment upon. Not one of the best I have seen; however, the next stop was one of the best.

We stopped at the Akron Zoo. Much better than Cleveland's offering. The exhibits were great. Outside the restaurant where we had lunch, there was a very friendly tamarin who was very active and liked to show off. There was also a very loud Sumatran Tiger. Not sure, but I think it was feeding time. Right next to the tiger was the animal that was the basis for the creation of Winnie the Pooh: the Malayan Sun Bear. We went into the animal hospital where a very informative and interesting volunteer informed us that a baboon was going to be brought in for a check up and we would be able to watch the procedure IF they could get the animal in the examining room. Unfortunately, he did not get there before our group decided that it was time to continue and see as much of the zoo as possible. Interestingly, there was a group of high school students who reminded me of my senior physics class trip to Cedar Point for Physics Day. Very fun zoo. Added to the enjoyment was [taylhis'](#) commentary which was very fun. I'm sure she will have even more to say and pictures to share.

Then it was back in the bus (OH... wait... that is ANOTHER post or two later on) for the L000000NG trek across Pennsylvania.

000PS! Apparently, my memory failed me. The problematic baboon was at Cleveland and not Akron. Thanks, Taylhis.

Two On You Tube

There are two channels on you tube that I regularly frequent. One is operated by a new friend who has just joined our community theatre and is very talented. He has already filmed video clips as previews for the first two shows of the season and hopefully more of those to come. I however, have become a big fan of his own creation: the piratical Captain Smith. After moving north he has been working on a way to bring the exploits of the character with him. At last report, he has been working on a big fully-developed storyline. Hopefully, this will be full of swashbuckling adventure, bloodthirsty villains, and everything else that a good pirate film contains. Be sure to check out [Moonlight Productions](#). I'm sure the good Captain would appreciate the traffic to the videos.

The other site is full of zany fun. [Stupid Game Show Answers](#) is full of clips from various game shows over the years featuring all kinds of not only ST000PID ANSWERS but also other not so graceful moments. I can't remember if the unfortunate female contestant from a bygone episode of The Price is Right who "came on down and fell right out" is in one of the clips or not but there are lots of other hilarious moments.

Be sure to check out both channels and comment.

A New Drive-Thru Pickup

There are several things one can do right from the convenience of their car. Fast food can be ordered and picked up. Convenience stores and pharmacies typically have a pick up

window. In Las Vegas, a marriage ceremony can be performed while the couple sits in their car. On Monday, a bank robber was able to successfully obtain a large sum of money from a drive-thru bank teller. The perpetrator drove up to the window of the Lone Star National Bank in Pharr, Texas. He slipped a note into the box listing his demands. The female teller filled the order and the crook drove away.

I was torn on my reaction to this story. From what I understand, there was no apparent weapon involved and the teller was behind a bullet-proof window. However, there was no information regarding bank policy when confronted with that situation. Yet at the same time, I could not help thinking that this would make a phenomenal genius post, but decided to give the teller the benefit of the doubt.

PHARR, Texas – A bank robber in South Texas held up the place from the comfort of his car.

Police in Pharr say a man used the drive-thru lane Monday morning to rob Lone Star National Bank. Police say the driver slipped a note to a female teller, who provided an undetermined amount of cash, then he drove away. Lt. Guadalupe Salinas says the man was alone in the car and did not appear to display a weapon. Salinas told The Associated Press there's no indication that the robbery was an inside job. Law officers declined to release the contents of the note. Police are reviewing bank surveillance video. The FBI declined comment.

Showing Signs Of Life

I just received an email from a former castmate who is in her high school production of *Grease* in the next few weeks. She informed me that this is the first musical their school has done in **20 YEARS!!!** I was shocked and amazed by this admission. If there is one thing I frown upon it is the decrease in the amount of arts related activities in schools (large or small). However, it sounds as if this school is at least making an attempt to reestablish an artistic presence. As our biggest rivals in what seems everything (at least in my day), I well remember the fun competitiveness between the schools. I knew the music director from the school reasonably well who has since retired from the position. Not sure who inherited the reins, but hopefully they can reinvigorate the program.

I remember assisting Emily direct several musicals after I graduated from EHS. I remember *The Wizard of Oz* (basically the 1939 movie with a few added sequences), *The Sound of Music* (which I helped from BGSU and on weekends I was able to make the trip home), *Bye, Bye Birdie*, and *South Pacific*. There was talk of doing *Annie* again. I emphatically offered my two cents on this. Not only had it been done (at that point) only 3 years previously, but at the time, it seemed that every high school were taking turns performing it. I remember watching a larger school's production a year after ours. I was not trying to be biased but their Rooster did not even crow. He simply said "Cock-a-Doodle-Do." However, musicals at my alma mater have also not seen the light of day for some time.

The View From Here

As I read in the newspaper today, I was shocked but not totally surprised that one of my childhood mainstays is being retired. The [View-Master](#) is a small plastic toy in which was place a white white wheel full of 3-d pictures. The wheels initially contained scenes of actual places (The Grand Canyon, Disney Parks, I had a set from Cedar Point that probably would be worth something if only I had been a child who thought about such things). There was a [camera](#) made during the 50s with which you could create your own View-Master reels. Later, reels of movies, television shows, and other forms of popular culture were introduced. I had reels full of Mickey Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, superheroes (I had a series of Caped Crusader reels taken from the 60s television series featuring Catwoman), the Flintstones, and others.

In an effort to appeal to increasingly uninterested kids, new versions of the toy were introduced. I had the projector that enabled the images to be shown on a wall, or set up in a dark room on a "screen" consisting of a white sheet placed over a few boxes stacked on top of each other. Friends would come into my theatre and watch as the scenes unfolded to improvised narration. I believe there was a "talking" version as well.

Over the years, sales of the View-Master have decreased exponentially. The majority of children are much more interested in video games, DVDs and the like. But for at least one 8-10 year old growing up in the late 70s-early 80s, it provided hours of imagination and fun.

I'll Have A Sample Of Birdie To Go Please

Do you remember the days gone by when jingles in television ads contained familiar samples of famous songs? Some of these included women "[Washing the Grey Right Outta Their Hair](#)" or using window cleaner to "Put On A Windex Shine." Last night while watching *Cars* while sitting four terrific kids (although two of their overnight sleeping habits...), there was a State Farm insurance add that included lines from "Sixteen Going on Seventeen" to promote their partnership with the Disney Channel to increase teenage driving safety. My concern with that is I could not recognize the TUNE at all. I realize that decades have passed since *South Pacific*, *Bye, Bye Birdie*, and *The Sound of Music* were considered cool. And, unless radically changed to fit today's teenage tastes, the music from these shows even less cool. A few years ago, Gwen Stefani sampled "If I Were A Rich Man" in her aptly titled "Rich Girl." At least with the old ads, the tunes were familiar instead of dressed up to make them SOUND like something they are not. But I suppose companies and artists(?) have to advertise to their target demographics. Sorry I did not try harder to come up with clips of all the ads.

The Story Behind The Mask

Have I yet posted on the coincidence involved in the Halloween movie franchise (at least the original 1978 movie)? Well... if so, I apologize. It seems that during the 3 year run of the original Star Trek series, William Shatner was fitted for a death mask. Perhaps if the series had continued on the

Enterprise's five year mission ("to seek out new life and new civilizations"... yada, yada, yada...), the good Captain Kirk would have met his demise (guess we will never know). As it turns out, the mask made its way into the hands of the creators of the horror film. You can follow the [link](#) to a more in depth detail with the Shat himself being interviewed by his daughter, Melanie.. I think he might have been confusing the actor Mike Myers with the fictional villain Michael Myers.

Going Home Again

Thursday night, I returned to my "home" theatre after being away for a few months to play in another community group's yard. I don't think ANY actor ever fully grows up. That is another beautiful thing about theatre. The more I do this the more I grow in determination to spread my wings and go even further. But there is something to be said about becoming attached to one core group. You become family as I have done with so many of the WCCT regulars. Upon arriving at the theatre, I was immediately asked by everyone how my new experience went. I must say that everything about it was magnificent: the cast, the director, the backstage people, EVERYONE involved was very welcoming. But there is something intrinsically special about being around friends you have come to appreciate. I hope I am able to return to the Huber stage as well to work with some and make more new experiences there.

As [j](#) pointed out, I believe every actor has a group that he just likes to act with. I do not think there is one tangible reason for this. Call it chemistry, past experience, whatever. When you find one and hopefully more fellow thespians that you feel a bond with, it makes the on stage

experience even more magical. You feed off each others energy. I have a list as well and my experience in St. Louis only increased that list. There was one young man whom I did not even have a scene with (well I did in a sense) that I would be honored to share the stage with again... and it was his first time on stage! Although I KNOW I have an abundant amount of energy, his was even more infectious.