

# Do you wonder?

A day like today was made for wondering. Warm (for January) and very sunny. A day made for quiet reflection. To sit and see the sun shining through the trees with a fire in the fireplace was most enjoyable. With the warm temperature of the day, the fire has now been allowed to fade. The sun is doing an wonderful job providing extra heat to the house. It is comfortable.

So in these times of quiet reflection, I often wonder about the past and future. More of the future now, than the past, but the past does have a place in my heart.

So today I'm wondering what my future holds. What the futures of my daughters' holds. It is enough to wonder. I don't need any answers yet, the wondering and pondering of this is enough.

My hope is that my daughters are happy in life. I had a very happy life for twenty years. I would hope for at least the same for my daughters.

I don't need to wonder about the past anymore. The past is just that, the past. It is over, the wondering is over. The past is a place to store memories of the hopes of days gone by. A place to keep memories, both good and bad.

Do you wonder about your future? The future of those you love? Today, tomorrow, next month? Do you make plans, or just live day by day? What happens when the plans fail? Do you wonder?

My plans in life are simple. I want to be content. I was happy and sad. Happy is very good. Sad is not so good. Content is restful. Today I am content.

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# Almost that time of year

And it came early for me. Every year in late January or early February I re-read the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings series. Every year I find something new in the stories that I didn't see in the last reading.

I started early this year because I will need more time to finish. I have gotten a part in a play, and I will not have the hours to spend reading these books. I have many lines to learn, so I have to use my time wisely. That may cut back on my blogging time too. Oh well, such is the life of a theater junkie.

Anyway, back to the books. I am an avid reader and I like a lot of books. I am always looking for something new to read.

So I am open to any suggestions

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# New Year, comfortable habit

New Year's eve and I toasted in the new Year. I've made that toast with the same beverage for the Since New Years Eve 1983/1984. My future brother-in-law brought some Piesporter with him. My future wife did not care for wines at all really liked this wine. From that date on, we shared a bottle of some type of Piesporter. It has been a holiday tradition for a long time.

After her death, I kept buying that type of wine for both New

Year's Eve and our Anniversary. I have not shared the bottle with anyone until last night. In the past few years, if I was out for the evening, I would save my toast until I got home. I didn't feel like sharing this wine. This year I spent the evening with some good friends. I did share my bottle with those who wanted it.

If they enjoyed the wine, that was wonderful. If they didn't care for it, it doesn't matter. I also shared a bottle of the same wine with family and friends on the anniversary of her death. This is the first year, I've shared the wine. It may not mean a lot to those who shared with me, but in mind it had a lot of meaning.

To those who shared, thank you for accepting a gift from my heart, and helping me remember the good times I did have for many years.

Happy New Year.

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## **Funniest Movies of the past 25 years??**

The year 2009 would have been my 25 wedding anniversary, so these are movies of my married and widowed life.

Well, [Entertainment Weekly](#) published their [25 favorite Comedies of the past 25 years](#). I was sure that some of my favorite comedies would make the list. Strange thing is, most of the comedies they mentioned, I never saw. Some of the ones I saw, I didn't really like. Some that I didn't like are liked by some friends of mine... I must have a weird sense of comedy. Of Their selection, the number 1 and number 3 were on my list

of top comedies. Mel Brooks produced three comedies in the past 25 years, and none of them are on this list. I guess I'm just out of it.

Given time, I will come up with my own best comedies of the past 25 years. I'll have to dig out the dates of the comedies I enjoy. Just so you know, I imagine both [Space Balls](#) and [Robin Hood: Men in Tights](#) will be on my list. Also included would be [Beverly Hills Cop](#) and [Ghostbusters](#), the two movies I like that made Entertainment Weekly's list.

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## All this and something more

Did you every have a day you thought would have turned out differently? Did you ever expect one thing, and have something else happen? To answer those questions, yes, I did. Yesterday was one of those days.

It was decided earlier that my daughters and I would go to the Zoo to see the Christmas Light display before it closed for the season. As a family we've always enjoyed visiting the light display. As a family we were members since 1984. The Lights before Christmas started in 1986 and has been our family tradition since that date. We took our small children in strollers, pushed grandfathers (due to health or injury) on wheelchairs. We took relatives from warmer climates on very cold evenings. We even went on cold rainy nights. It was a winter escape. As a family we enjoyed the evenings together.

Since 2003, we have not been able to attend as a complete family. My wife was too ill to take the cold weather in her final month, and I stayed with her. She hasn't been there since that year of course. The years following one daughter or another has not been there as we toured the lights. This year

my daughter in Florida was not in Ohio to attend. I am very sorry she missed it again.

So three of my daughters, my son-in-law, some friends when to the lights, on the 5th anniversary of my dear wife's death. I thought a melancholy day was in order. I forgot how much I enjoy the company of my family and friends. I also forgot the magic of seeing hundreds of colorful lights. A day of memories and togetherness. Not really a sad memory last night at all.

After the evening of lights, we went to my eldest daughter's house and shared a glass of wine and bit of dinner. A toast to her memory and more conversation. A wonderful night. I needed that. It was another healing effect on my life. Family is wonderful.

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## **So what did you get for Christmas?**

Sometimes it isn't the gift, it is the thought behind it. Sometimes it is the gift. Sometimes it is both. Over the years I've had plenty of wonderful gifts. Sometimes they are things I specifically ask for. For the gift giver, it is very easy to get me exactly the gift I wanted. Sometimes the gift I want is very extravagant, and should be out of the range of anyone getting me gifts. Sometimes this is where having four daughters really pays some benefits to me. While I only get 1 gift from them, it is something I really want, and would never buy for myself.

Take two years ago, all four girls went in on an "official" Indiana Jones Fedora. I would have made do with any nice looking brown fedora, but they got me a very well made

replica. I realize I should have put in in a case just to look at but I wear it almost every day. Fedoras are not made for heavy winds. They will fly off heads. That is why some hats have strings on them. ☐

This year they did it again. Something I wanted, and probably would never have spent the money on. Years ago, first on Showtime and then on PBS, there was a wonderful show called [Shelley Duvall's Faerie Tale Theatre](#). It was a wonderful show, and as soon as I had a VCR, I started taping the shows. When I could no longer get them we had the girl's grandmother tape them. Fast forward to now, and the tapes we had of these shows wore out, were misplaced or just got re-used. I never did own the complete series. The girls knew I liked the shows, so they went together and bought the DVDs of this series. So now I have hours of faerie tale enjoyment ahead of me. If asked nicely, I would even be willing to share.

From the very first faerie tale "The Frog Prince" with Robin Williams and Terri Garr, to the very last show "The Dancing Princesses" with Leslie Ann Warren, these shows had big name stars from the 80's. The shows were made so that parents could watch them with their children. I'm not sure about any other family watching these, but after some of the shows, we would dig out the original faerie tale to read to our children. A wonderful family time and now memory.

So what did I get for Christmas this year? About the same as every year. I was given much love, wonderful memories all wrapped up with paper and bows. This was hidden in a gift given from the heart. Or in this case four very loving hearts.

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# Holiday Hubbub

The past few weeks have been busy, very busy. Here I was hoping for some time to relax and more stuff seems to happen. I had nothing planned for today or most of tomorrow. A time for catching up on all those things that get put to the side during busy times.

That isn't going to happen at all. I need to get my truck looked at by a body shop or two. I'm not sure how long that will take. Then I have to pick up a new head light and see if I can get it pointed in the right direction. Until the truck get fixed up, the headlight assembly is pointing to the sky. The high beam works, but never hits the road. The low beam exploded when the deer hit the truck. The assembly itself seems to have lost any mounting to the vehicle. Which may be a good thing. It is still in 1 piece. Those assemblies are expensive.

Then there will be more things to go to. One more trip to Toledo, for the family, tomorrow night. And any New Years Eve plans. Go here, and there and everywhere.

This holiday season has been busy. In most ways that was very good. In some ways very tiring.

Oh well, off to see a man about a truck.

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## 5 years ago... Final chapter ??

I don't know that I will have much time to blog in the next few days and I wanted to get this down. 5 years ago this weekend, I spent as much of the weekend (Friday, Saturday and

Sunday) with my wife. The two youngest were spending time at Grandma's house (with Mom), so The oldest and I were back and forth taking care of the multitude of animals.

I really don't remember anymore what we did on Friday or Saturday. Those days were lost in the many days traveling back and forth from home to Toledo. But the final Sunday I remember very well indeed.

I took my oldest in to visit (Again, I don't know what day), and that Sunday my in-laws took my youngest 3 out for the day. I spent Sunday the 28th with my wife. We didn't do a lot. She sat and did some word search puzzles and a crossword or two. I was reading various magazines and books. A nice quite time. Around lunchtime I found out that the movie [The Incredible Mr. Limpet](#). Sarah and I both liked that movie, so we watched it while eating. We had Campbell's Vegetable soup and some crackers. I drank coffee, she had some hot tea. She dozed on and off while watching the movie. When it was over she said she was very tired and wanted to get some rest.

She leaned on me walking down the hall, so she wouldn't lose her balance. I tucked her in gave her a hug and kiss. She slept the rest of the afternoon and into the evening. The rest of the family came back. I took my 2nd daughter back home that evening. Late in the evening my wife went to the emergency room with breathing problems. Shortly after that she was transferred back up to the Ann Arbor Hospital.

That Monday I found out that the cancer had grown back to more than the original size. She had developed pneumonia. She had very little time. That night (early morning really) at 3:55 she passed away. That will be 5 years this Tuesday morning.

For the first few months, I would wake up every morning at 3:55. Then it was every Tuesday at 3:55. Then it was the 30th of each month at 3:55. Finally it was only on the 30th of December. I'm not sure what will happen this Tuesday, it



doesn't matter really. The memories are different this year. The anniversaries are more introspective than really sad and depressing.

Many things have helped over the years. Wonderful family, good friends, theater therapy and many other things. I've been lucky and blessed.

There is one other thing to mention. The night after Sarah's death my three youngest were at home. We tried to welcome in the new year. Not a joyful evening, but one of shock. The thing I remember of that night is seeing all the girls in their mother's Eeyore sweats. Bittersweet, yes, but again I remember feeling blessed with my daughters.

So this is the final entry of what happened 5 years ago. Starting the 31st it is the 6th year of being a widower, I have no idea where that journey will lead.

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## **Home and kind of in the dark...**

I was scheduled to go to my sister's for a family Christmas dinner/gift exchange. Unfortunately, I am unable to go. I had the unfortunate luck to hit a deer on my way to work. I'm very sorry for the deer I hit, and my poor truck. While it is still drivable, there are some problems.

The inspection by the Highway patrol went fine, the insurance was no problem at all. This was the good part of the day

The passenger side head lights are out. The driver side seems to come and go. So no driving at night. So now I am sitting at home, and not going out.

There was also a game night scheduled at some good friends.

After getting home, even with good lights, I found our back county roads very, very dangerous. I was slipping and sliding at 20 miles per hour and less. The rain that fell during the day made the road worse than they were this morning.

So here I am, sitting at home and blogging away...

Sigh....

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# **Traditional Christmas Dinner??**

We had none of the normal trappings of a Christmas dinner. No ham or turkey. No yams or potatoes. No green beans or corn. Not even a goose or pudding.

We did have family close and dear. Cousins and siblings, parents and grandparents. Good food, good conversation, good times. We met early and stayed all day. Presents were exchanged. More conversation, some more food, and a cup of coffee or two. More conversation, more laughs.

What did we have?

Homemade pita, Greek salad, homemade hummos, Kafta, Gyro meat, sliced vegetables, Grilled Kabob chicken. Yes, a Greek dinner. It was wonderful. And for our family it was completely normal. We've had everything from pizza to Chinese food for Christmas and other family gatherings. Eating new foods is a way to celebrate life and love.

Merry Christmas.