

Smurfingly Insider Info

It's no secret that there is a big screen version in the works of the popular little blue 80's tv characters known as The Smurfs. I haven't heard much buzz about this, just enough to know that it's in development. I don't know if it's going to be live action, CGI-enhanced, or 3D (though I would guess that with the growing popularity of 3D that this might not be a bad idea). I do know that the main roles are rumored to have been cast, and this is the news that shocked me and prompted this post – [Quentin Tarantino as Brainy Smurf?!?](#) If this movie is going to be live action, this is going to be interesting... my money is going on Tarantino doing the voice-over for the character, not actually being made up as Brainy Smurf and doing the acting. Although perhaps the actors will film the movie and then be “drawn” over, ala Avatar. But however they do it, I will surely be checking it out as I was a huge fan of The Smurf's cartoon in the 80's – I even had a Smurf's record! Who can forget the toothbrush song?!? I listened to this over and over as a kid and was pleased to find it on youtube. (I would like to apologize to my friend Carol in advance – DO NOT click the video, Carol!) Oh, and by the way, they've slated Katy Perry as Smurfette, and Jonathan Winters as Papa Smurf. No word on Gargamel yet, although Neil Patrick Harris apparently has a role as a “live” character who helps the smurfs (Johan or Peewit?). And Alan Cumming is Gutsy Smurf – who the heck is Gutsy Smurf? Is this going to be a parody movie of the Smurfs, much like the Brady Bunch movies (which actually did a great job of hilariously spoofing the 70's tv show)? Staying tuned!

Newseum – Haven For News Junkies!!

If you are a news junkie like me, then you will love this website – there are maps of the whole world, broken down into sections. You click on dots on the map, and you can see the front page of the newspaper for that region. In many cases, you can get the pdf file of the entire newspaper! The site is updated every day, so you can see current headlines. I really like to read news from all over the country, especially places where I use to live, like Chicagoland, Lincoln Nebraska, and Rockford Illinois. And it's really interesting to see headlines from the entire world! (even though I can only read the ones in English!)

[Here is a link to the United States headlines map – enjoy!](#)
Follow links on the site to access news taking place on the entire planet!

Tending To Our Flowers

As I've mentioned before, I belong to a Christian moms' group called MOPs (Mothers Of Preschoolers), and I enjoy our monthly meetings immensely. Every month, we receive a handout with a little essay that contains advice or words of wisdom from one mom to the rest of us. I found this month's article beautiful and thought-provoking, and things like this help motivate me and give me strength to get through some of those really tough days of being a mom. Hope you like it!

Tending to Our Flowers

by Katherine Craddock

So it is with all of our children – their glory is like the flowers of the field. For each generation, God has prepared an entire garden of flowers. Some, like tiny crocuses, tulips, and hyacinths, bloom early in their lives. Their soft beauty, strong resilience, and beautiful fragrance give us a reminder of hope and resurrection – then sweetly melt away.



Other children burst forth with wild, exuberant colors in their elementary and teen years. Some will blossom and bear fruit later, in the middle of their lives. Other cut flowers will fill our homes with color and fragrance and life until they are suddenly gone.

There are loud, attractive summer sun flowers like echinacea, Russian sage, daisies, and black-eyed Susans. There are thorny briars that burst into rose blooms, and quieter shade plants like hosta and hydrangea who bring beauty and peace to the darkness.



And last of all, there are the plants that have been patiently and steadily growing all along, looking like nothing much. Entire seasons of life can pass before these flowers find their voice. But when they do, the asters and sedums, chrysanthemums and lilies remind us of the beauty that was and

is to come.



Who can say which has more beauty or value, the crocus or the rose? Each, when lovingly tended, is unique in its own strength and has no need to be compared.

So whether your daughter walks at 9 months or 19 months; whether your wild son behaves as early as Preschool or not until after college, be encouraged that every child – “gifted”, “disabled”, or “normal”, will bloom with great beauty in the Gardeners’ time.

“All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field.” – Isaiah 40:6

Ah, The 80’s...

Fellow Tangenteers posted youtube.com videos recently sharing some of their favorite music – that made me think about a country artist from the 80’s I used to enjoy named [Sylvia](#). She’s come out with recent material, but my favorites of hers were from the early 80’s. I was able to find a few of her songs and still enjoy her beautiful voice as an adult (however cheesily 80’s some of the lyrics might be), but I’m still looking for the following songs by Sylvia:

So Complete, The Mill Song (Everybody’s Got a Dream), Who’s Kidding Who, Tonight I’m Gettin’ Friendly With The Blues, Gone But Not Forgotten, and Jason.

I was able to find two Sylvia videos on youtube.com – dig the “super-cool” video and sound effects in Snapshot and the totally 80’s bopping in “Nobody”. Does anyone else remember Sylvia? I was thinking Mary might even have a cassette tape I can borrow ☐

Snapshot – 1983:

Nobody – 1982:

THAT Time Of Year!!

The list of Academy Country Music Award nominees was announced today! And while I'm not entirely in agreement with some of them, that still does not dampen my excitement for the actual awards show – now held in April, which is even earlier than its past May ceremonies. I'm going to wait to give my picks for winners until we get closer to the show – I need some more time to listen to the artists, their songs, and the buzz surrounding them on country radio. But I can say that I'm not a big fan of Lady Antebellum, a group who leads the pack in number of nominations. Uh, oh... perhaps country music is leaving me behind since I strongly prefer classic country and those modern artists who are seemingly fading into the background such as Alan Jackson, Garth Brooks, Martina McBride, Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, George Strait, Reba McEntire, Brooks and Dunn, and Rascal Flatts... I do like Carrie Underwood, but I'm not so crazy for Taylor Swift (cute name though!). All that being said, I still enjoy the annual extravaganza immensely; especially the live performances. I am especially excited that unlike the ACM awards autumn counterpart, the CMA awards which are held on Wednesday nights, the spring ACM awards show is held on Sunday evenings – which means that I don't have to ditch my youth group students, haha! Here's the list of nominees; we will find out who wins on April 18, 2010!

Entertainer of the Year:

• Kenny Chesney • Toby Keith • Brad Paisley • George Strait • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Keith Urban • Zac Brown Band

Top Male Vocalist:

• Kenny Chesney • Brad Paisley • Darius Rucker • George Strait • Keith Urban

Top Female Vocalist:

• Miranda Lambert • Reba McEntire • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Lee Ann Womack

Top Vocal Group:

• Lady Antebellum • Little Big Town • Randy Rogers Band • Rascal Flatts • Zac Brown Band

Top Vocal Duo:

• Brooks & Dunn • Joey + Rory • Montgomery Gentry • Steel Magnolia • Sugarland

Top New Solo Vocalist:

• Luke Bryan • Jamey Johnson • Chris Young

Top New Vocal Duo:

• Bomshel • Joey + Rory • Steel Magnolia

Top new Vocal Group:

• Eli Young Band • Gloriana • The Lost Trailers

Album of the Year:

• "American Saturday Night" – Brad Paisley • "Lady Antebellum" – Lady Antebellum • "Play On" – Carrie Underwood • "Revolution" – Miranda Lambert • "The Foundation" – Zac Brown Band

Single Record:

• "Need You Now" – Lady Antebellum • "People Are Crazy" – Billy Currington • "Red Light" – David Nail • "Toes" – Zac Brown Band • "White Liar" – Miranda Lambert

Song:

• "Cowboy Casanova" – Carrie Underwood • "Need You Now" – Lady Antebellum • "People Are Crazy" – Billy Currington • "White Liar" – Miranda Lambert • "You Belong With Me" – Taylor Swift

Video:

• "Boots On" – Randy Houser • "Need You Now" – Lady Antebellum • "Welcome To The Future" – Brad Paisley • "White Liar" –

Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

Vocal Event:

- “Hillbilly Bone” – Blake Shelton featuring Trace Adkins •
- “Honky Tonk Stomp” – Brooks & Dunn featuring Billy Gibbons •
- “I Told You So” – Carrie Underwood featuring Randy Travis •
- “I’m Alive” – Kenny Chesney with Dave Matthews •
- “Seeing Stars” – Jack Ingram featuring Patty Griffin

When Stars Collide Over Warrenville

As I’ve mentioned, I read the suburban Chicago newspaper online. Today a headline about the town where I grew up caught my eye – a kid filmed a short little youtube.com movie in Warrenville, Illinois. I couldn’t care less about the battle between fans of Star Wars and Star Trek, but I know there are some tangents.org readers who are fans of one or both of the franchises – thought they might enjoy this little video. It’s a creative idea, really – what would happen if the introductory words at the beginning of the Star Wars movies fell to Earth? For its small budget (around \$100) and the small amount of time invested, the special effects aren’t bad either...

If you'd like more info about the kid or the video, [here is a link to the original article](#).

A BIG Scare, But Thankfully, Just a Scare

Last week for date night, we saw Shutter Island – not much to say about that; it was disappointing. We then went out to eat, and my husband mentioned that his fingers were tingling. At the same time, I noticed that he was slurring his words – uh,oh. Although he is only in his mid-30's, I was sure that he had had a stroke; I know those are two of the warning signs. He did not want to go to the hospital, so I agreed that we would drive home, pick up the kids, and I would look up these symptoms on the internet to see if he should indeed get to the hospital. When I looked it up, the info was scarier than I originally thought. It said yes, these are indeed symptoms of a stroke, and a person needs only to exhibit ONE of them, not all. It also said that people who have strokes often refuse to get medical treatment, and their loved ones must INSIST that they seek medical treatment – so I made Hubby go to the ER while I put the kids to bed. Well, before you panic, let me say that the stroke tests all came back negative. Turns out that his arm had gone numb during the movie because it was a long movie and he was giving me backrubs (AWW!), and his “lazy tongue” was a result of his visit to the dentist in the morning – he doesn't like novacaine, so when the dentist re-did one of his fillings, he sprayed some kind of numbing spray which got into my husband's bloodstream and caused him to feel it 9 hours later. PHEW!!! It was a wasted night at the ER, but I'm so glad that he went because otherwise I would STILL be wondering and panicking

that he had had a stroke. And besides, it made for a really funny story to tell later... people really seem to like the irony of the directions on the internet: "Expect the person to protest – denial is common. Don't take "no" for an answer. Insist on taking prompt action." Well, insist I did, and as a result, poor Hubby spent the end of date night in the ER!

I've Always Been Crazy, But It's Kept Me From Going Insane

I had to borrow the title of this blog post from one of my favorite Waylon Jennings tunes because I talk to animals, and some people would say that makes me crazy. Crazier yet is when the animals talk back to me...

As it is always tremendous fun for me, yesterday's visit to the zoo did not disappoint. And while we made our way to the exit near closing time, I was turning over in my head the questions I ask myself and my co-visitors after every zoo trip: what was your favorite animal that you saw today and why? I was having a hard time deciding; everything was great, but nothing stood out as being extraordinary... until my chat with the cheetah. He was looking directly at me, and I said, "Hi Cheetah!" and he said, "Mew." I couldn't believe it, so I said it again, to which he gave me another, "Mew." Now I didn't realize that cheetahs meow and sound just like your average housecat, but upon much research when I got home, this is one thing I learned about an animal that never fascinated me as much as others until it talked to me. From now on, I will always stop by the cheetahs to say "hi" because

I think we are now buddies. I also found a cute little video of cheetahs meowing, much like my new friend at the Toledo Zoo!

The Great Zoo Debate

This is a sad post for me to write – a veteran trainer, Dawn Brancheau, was killed yesterday by an Orca whale at Sea World in Orlando, Florida. Reports of the incident have been conflicting, but it seems that the trainer was pulled into the tank when the giant sea mammal grabbed her ponytail. She subsequently drowned. Unmistakably, this is a tragedy – pure and simple.

But it also re-awakens the great zoo debate – should humans be able to keep wild animals in zoos? As they say, you can take an animal out of the wild, but you can't take the wild out of the animal, and tragedies such as yesterday's incident at Sea World prove this. It is also apparent that no matter how many precautions are taken to avoid tragedy, an accident can always occur. However, I love zoos, and I strongly and truly believe that the conservation education and money raised by zoos has been and will continue to be detrimental in helping certain species survive and bounce back from the brink of extinction. Many other people disagree, and tragedies such as this and the fatal Siberian tiger mauling at the San Francisco Zoo in 2007 always add fervor to the great zoo debate, which is depicted in this video from Good Morning America and features zoo advocate Jack Hanna debating with the Vice President of an anti-zoo organization, Born Free:

In my opinion, they did not let Mr. Hanna have an equal part in the debate. He has some good points, and it's very difficult to say where the status of certain endangered species would be right now if it were not for the conservation efforts of zoos and wildlife parks – no one knows what **could** or **would** have been either way, so how can that be a part of the debate? As Mr. Roberts points out, the number of tigers has greatly dwindled over the past century. But one can also point out that no one knows for sure if it would have been worse had zoos not been educating the public about tigers or if they had not been learning how to breed them in captivity to continue the species.

The bottom line is, in my opinion, (and this is MY blog, so I get the bottom line) zoos and aquariums have taken great strides forward for the preservation of many animal species. I believe their work and conservation efforts are **invaluable** to conservation (not to mention how many thousands of jobs zoos, aquariums, wildlife parks, and conservation programs bring to societies in hundreds of countries); in fact, AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums have funded more than 3,700 conservation projects in more than 100 countries and spend nearly \$70 million on conservation initiatives annually. Remember my post about the [Kihansi Spray Toad](#)? This is just **one** example of a creature that would be completely extinct (it is believed to be extinct in the wild but still exists in just two zoos in the world) if it weren't for the efforts of zoos trying to save it.

Obviously what happened in Orlando is a tragedy of great proportion. And I'm not trying to undermine it, but Dawn's friends, family, and colleagues are all stating that she was aware of the inherent risks of her job and that she would want nothing but for her work to go on despite what happened. Perhaps changes need to be made; maybe certain species of animal require bigger and better habitats and different types of interaction and stimulation – the modern zoo world is

relatively new, and experts are still learning. But I think their hard work is invaluable to the world, and I hope that someday, all of this is just as obvious to the nay-sayers as it is to us zoo-lovers.



Kind of puts this into perspective now... I wonder if Marineland in Niagara Falls Canada still allows this after recent tragedies involving the killer whale?

The Return Of Captain E0

This one is for fellow Disney fanatics – I just read an article about the return to Disneyland of the 17-minute Michael Jackson 3D video, [Captain E0](#). I never got to see Captain E0; my first time to Disney World was in 1992, and the attraction was either broken down during that visit or we just weren't interested in seeing it; I don't remember. By the time I grew up, started my family and began our traditional Disney World vacations, Captain E0 was long gone and replaced by the 3D interactive attraction Honey, I Shrunk the Audience.

Captain E0 replaced Honey, I Shrunk the Audience at Disneyland

in Anaheim, California and opened today. The futuristic short film stars Michael Jackson and Anjelica Huston; it cost about \$30 million to make and also boasts the creative team of director Francis Ford Copolla and executive producer George Lucas. When it was shown at the Disney theme parks in the 80's and 90's, it was the most expensive film ever made (costing \$1.76 million **per minute!**). As of its opening today at 10am, there were many fans lined up to see it. No word on whether Captain EO will return to Epcot in Disney World, Orlando Florida, but if it does, I might like to check it out, despite how much I will miss the always fun Honey, I Shrunk the Audience.

[poll id="16"]