

The Beginning of Another Super Weekend

This weekend is turning out to be another super fun one that started Saturday. I watched the double episodes of The Office from Thursday night (don't remember what I was doing when they were on at their scheduled time, but no spoilers since I'm not sure if my faithful readers caught them both). The, I went across the street to watch the nieces and nephew in the Easter Egg hunt. I attempted to convince my sister to take them to the theatre's hunt, but apparently, she wanted to partake in the adult hunt. I have yet to participate with the big kids because I really do not relish the chance to get trampled.. or like my older brother fall down and lose the eggs that he had picked up. I thought about it this year, but before the time came, I was invited to go to the zoo.

I had not been to the [Toledo Zoo](#) for sometime. The last time I remember, I was on a field trip with an acting class from BGSU. We went to observe and study the animals and then use some of their mannerisms in order to develop a character. Yesterday, I really enjoyed the hippos who were in their pens awaiting feeding time. Quite humorous to see the hungry beasts open their gaping mouths, roll around in their pools of water, and finally leave their calling card after they had finished.

I also really loved the sloth bear. There were two... one was much more animated than his companion. He was very social and came up to the transparent barrier, sniffing at people, car keys, ballcaps, and just about anything e could find. The other bear just reclined in the hammock, seemingly to say... "HAHA! I know how to live! I don't have to make a spectacle of myself!"

After the zoo, we went to a small diner where I indulged in a

Nickburger: a full-pound of ground sirloin with lettuce, onion, tomato, and pickle (YUCK! pickle). I was really hungry... so I was not surprised that I ate the whole thing. The fries were a different story.

This morning at mass, I again sang with the choir. The opening song was well-known to me but apparently, someone (without informing me) had the idea to transpose the hymn down at least two flats. Nothing I could not handle and I discovered that a low A is starting to come along. After mass, the Easter Bunny had stopped by the church as each member of the choir received a REESE'S PEANUT BUTTER EGG (ahhhhhh!!!!!! HEAVEN).

Then, the family (all fourteen of us) went to Ritzy's (or is it Rita's... sorry Derek) for a buffet. My friend's generally comment on the behavior of their four little ones at restaurants. I guess I should point out that most of the 7 nieces and nephews are beyond the age of running around and dropping food on the floor; however, nothing compares to a three-year old who announces to the whole banquet room that "I HAVE TO GO POTTY!" Not embarrassing at all, I found the announcement rather humorous. Later, the same little angel wanted a kiss from grandma. Yet, if you saw the little girls face covered with butter, some mashed potato, and I think some strawberry pie glaze, I'm sure you would have second thoughts. I believe that I must have still been recovering from my battle with the Nickburger, because I did not eat too much. Or maybe, I knew that we will be having a birthday celebration later this evening.

Did you know that certain fans of [marshmallow peeps](#) put the concoction on everything including pizza. They also microwave them. Of course, peeps aren't just for Easter anymore.

One Or Two Who May Be Getting Nuttin' For Christmas

Tonight, the family and I went to the Junior high and high school chorus Christmas concert. The band concert was last Monday night... was not informed of that until 6 o'clock that night. My 13 year-old niece is in the 7th grade and is in the chorus. I was pretty impressed with the younger group. Some of those pieces were tough. Not only did they have pieces in which there was at least two part harmonies going on, there was one song entitled "Dueling Christmas Trees" that had two entirely different melodies going on AT THE SAME TIME. One section sang of the virtues of having a real, pine tree while the other half sang of the artificial variety. Quite a difficult task for a young group to undertake, but it was a fun time.

The high school choir was also quite good. I heard some fine voices in the group; particularly in the male section. There were only four male voices in the 17 member group (there were not any in the first group). □ One voice in particular came from a young man whom I shared the stage with in *Love Rides the Rails*, a melodrama which our [community theatre](#) presented 2 summers ago. He played the hero's sidekick while I played the villain's right hand man.

I had only two questions about the concert. Why in the world would you have a group sing 8 songs?! I attended a past concert in which it seemed that every member of the choir came forth and sang an entire song by him/herself. Now that goes a bit toooo far... and I love to sing and hear others sing. PLUS... where were the decorations?! OH, MY... Emily must surely be rolling in her grave. But aside from those two details, it

was an enjoyable concert... EXCEPT for two young ladies (not mentioning who they belonged to or what their names are) who became rather loud and unruly as the concert went along. As the chorus sang their last song, I told them both that they better listen to those words closely or they would get "Nuttin' For Christmas," too. ☐

I Can Play On My Bagpipes?!

This afternoon at the high school, the entire student body and members of the community (too few in my opinion) were treated to a concert by America's Finest Singing Machine, The Bowling Green State University Men's Chorus. Although its size has dwindled and it is now under a new master from when I was a member, I am pleased to say that the tradition is alive and well. Starting off with the ever traditional "Sing Dem Herrn," I got goosebumps as the men marched double file to the risers filling the air with music. The repertoire has not changed a bit: some classical (even a Gregorian chant), contemporary, gospel, and novelty bits. There were also appearances by the chamber choir (something new to me) as well as the two varsity quartets. I am sure that the long standing lists of quartets who have traveled on to contests is still alive and well. The chamber ensemble performed a Halloween themed medley ("The Addams Family, and "Ghostbusters"... I wonder how many of the men actually remember the movie). I actually was seated beside a woman whose son is a member.

At the halfway point the director, Dr. Skoog Got on his soap box (a well needed one) to speak on Arts in the school (or lack thereof). Today in over 60% of our local schools there is no arts program. No music, no band, no choir, no drama. That is a shame. As Dr. Skoog pointed out, in the next 20

years if the trend continues there will be no need for ipods or mp3 players because our children will not be taught in the arts. Grant it, literacy is important but there are students who have a natural inborn talent that if the decline in arts education continues that talent will not be cultivated. Ok... on to the highlight.

The second half of a BGSU Men's Chorus concert is devoted to the more light-hearted, crowd-pleasing, traditional fare. This afternoon was no exception. As Dr. Skoog invited any chorus alums to come to the stage, the lady beside me immediately stood up so I could make my way to the gymnasium floor. After I shook the director's hands and pulled out my white gloves, I THOUGHT I knew what was coming. But no, the announcement was made that we would be performing the traditional initiation piece (true that the new members learn it the night before the first time they perform and it is one of the hardest songs you will ever learn). EVEN BETTER!!! I cannot go into detail in case anyone who reads this blog may one day wish to become a member of the chorus. But if asked, performer that I am, I could be pressed into doing it.

So... a fantastic blast down memory lane... and as a friend and teacher pointed out to me after the concert... "You never missed a beat. You never forget do you." Nope... just like I never forgot "Oops pardon me, blondie" or "Baloons for sale; Baloons for sale; RED, YELLLOW and GRREEEEN BALOONS!" I just wish Emily had been there. She never got to see me perform with the chorus.

The Little Critters Are Coming

Coming to EHS on October 31 is America's Finest Singing Machine, [The Bowling Green State University Men's Chorus](#). I was a four-year member of the group and some of the best times were spent on a Lakefront tour bus traveling to one nighters during our Fall mini tour and our week long Spring recruitment tour. We would load up the 3 buses (with risers, luggage, garment bags which held our tuxes) at 5am. Our director, the legendary R.D. Mathey, corralled his "Little Critters" by feeding them Crispy Critters (or as they are more commonly called Krispy Kreme cinnamon buns... I've mentioned those in a post previously). It was on these excursions that we were treated to "Host Family Horror Stories" every morning on the 8" television/VCR that each bus was equipped with. Also, I made the acquaintance of one "Richard Hurts" during roll call. It was also on the Spring tours that I had my first experiences of Broadway... not just any Broadway but the theatre district in the heart of Manhattan.

So, anyway, one of the little stops the chorus will make will be at my high school alma mater. Halloween afternoon at 12:30. In the past, alumni have been called down to perform the traditional barbershop number "Please, Mr. Columbus" to close the concerts. Although the group is under the direction of a new leader, I would not be surprised if the tradition did not stand.