

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

[poll id = 3]

Theater award night...

An annual event for our [little community theater](#) is our award banquet. Fun time with good food, fun skits, and of course, awards for the actors and shows.

It is always fun to be involved in a show. At the time it is a lot of work and it takes up quite a bit of time. But when the show is over, there is always a let down of sorts. For me, this award show brings back all the good memories of the shows, but the time and work involved is a lot less (unless you are setting up the show).

I won't go into all the awards won. My memory of who won what

and what show it was for, and how to spell the names is lacking at this hour of the evening. Even with that, I would ask them first before putting their names in my blog.

Me, I wasn't in any shows this year. I didn't design any sets. I wasn't a director on any show. I wasn't expecting to win any award. I did!! Shock of shocks. It was an award that is decided on by the president of the playhouse trustees. Big honor I will have to say.

Winning this award got me thinking. I have strange thoughts all the time, so this was no exception. After the show was over, everyone was congratulating everyone with an award. The common phrase heard was: "You deserved it." Of course most if not all were well meant. But in common, polite society would we ever say anything else? Would you say: 'Why the heck did they give that award to you? So and so did much better, they should have won.' (of course behind the scenes, they are saying those words to so and so.) No, polite society will generally refrain from those remarks, until enough booze is swallowed. □ Polite society will refrain from making comments other than the 'congratulations' if they feel the award was not deserved, or they won't say anything.

Why did I think of this, well I got a large number of those "You deserved it." comments. Being the humble person I am (no that isn't meant to be a joke), I was caught off guard again. Then again, thanks to the training my wife gave me, I can read body language very well (my secret is out now, oops). The language of the bodies, and the words said were matching up. The people saying the words, meant the words. Wow again, I was humbled.

Over the years people have done more for the theater than I've ever done. This year there were people that did more than me. But the big thing for me is this one little fact. The theater has done more for me than I've ever done for the theater. Little things here and there, now and then, have kept this old

soul in good health. The people in the theater were there at my darkest moments. Outside of my daughters and others in my family, the theater was an anchor to sanity. For me, that was better than any award they can give. I cannot say thank you enough for that.

All this from one little theater group. Wonderful therapy for a grieving widower, and good shows too. Is it any wonder I keep going back?

Day of family, friends, fun

Went to a show today. The [WCCT](#) put on their version of "Don't Hug Me". I can't remember the last time I laughed so much and so hard. Our little theater knows how to put on a good comedy, and this show just hit the right cord for me. I don't think there was a time during the show I was without a smile, and most of the time I was laughing.

Now most of my family and a lot of extended family was there. Three of 4 daughters, 1 son-in-law, 1 fiance, 2 grandparents, and my sister-in-law enjoyed the show. I was able to see friends before the show and during intermission. Fun time and a good show, good friends and family, can you ask for more?

After the show the family went to the local Pizza Hut and enjoyed more good times and food. We spent over an hour sharing Pizza, and family stories.

We then went to a Christmas Cantata that was being performed at my daughter's church. I'm not the most religious person in the world, but I do enjoy watch my daughters sing. The youngest two daughters have a wonderful presence when they sing, and it all starts with a smile.

So my day was full of family, friends, fun and music. Not a bad way to end the weekend.

An interesting weekend.

Saturday started out with a quick trip to [Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Fremont, IN](#). My youngest and I didn't take the truck trip into the preserve, but we were able to visit the 1850's Rendezvous and talk with a few of the 'trappers'. The main goal of the trip was to pick up some bison burgers for a gaming night at my oldest's house. Good food, good fun and a wonderful afternoon and late-late evening. More Dungeons and Dragons was played.

Today, I made a recipe that I submitted to our Theater's cookbook to serve at the final production of "Kitchen Witches". Fun little show and the audience/guests seemed to like my samples. The recipe is on page 6 of our cook book. (Just wondering if we could sell that on line? – E-Book???).

I'm going to try a recipe or more from the book, they all look pretty good to me. My oldest daughter got to be the on stage "guest judge" for the show today. She seemed to really enjoy the small bit of stage work. Another day of good fun.

And finally I see that some dear friends are all back from their Florida vacations. Someday, when I can get more than a day or two off, I will need to do something like that.

That's all folks...

Children of the night...

What music they make...

In keeping with the Halloween season, I thought that line was appropriate. Bela Lugosi's role as [Dracula](#) still is one for the ages. Today, that movie seems quaint and common, but in 1931 it terrified the audience. I've been told and read that the 1922 silent movie [Nosferatu](#) was even more chilling. Someday I must see that film.

Other versions of Dracula were horrific, bad, funny and just plain campy. There was Dracula vs Frankenstein, Dracula vs Batman. There was a Son of Dracula (Young Dracula) and an Old Dracula. Dracula was even [Dead and Loving It](#). He even discoed in [Love at First Bite](#). Today there are many more vampire stories out there, they all started with Dracula.

Why this fascination? Hard to say. Terror lurks in dark places. We as a society gather in light areas. We bring light into the dark. We try to chase away all shadows. Vampires, werewolves and their ilk are creatures of the shadows and dark. They strike a nerve with us. They chill our bones. They the moral of a story. Live a good life and evil will not happen to you. Stay with the group, do not go off alone after dark. There is evil out there and it has a name.

Today, we try to scare ourselves and we call it fun. We have horror movies, haunted mazes and houses, horror books. Things designed to get a bit of thrill in our lives. Things designed to get our blood flowing.

I do love the Halloween season. I wish that our haunted theater had been a reality, now I have no plans for Halloween. I'm too old to go "Trick or Treating" and I know of costume parties yet. Last year, even without the party, I put on my Dracula cape and went around the local area. Maybe this year, I'll shop at Wal*Mart.

And what brought all this up...

The Children of the Night, what music they make... Owls in the trees, a dog or coyote howling in the distance on a chill dark night. Yes, the children of the night make music, and to my ears there is nothing better...

And yes, this is a [play](#) our theater should do... if we don't do a haunted house in October, we should at least do one themed play...

Hauntings down for the count...

It is official, the Haunted Theater is officially canceled. The hard work and planning that went into this fund raiser is all for naught. I can't see why people would want to throw away a fund raiser. Even if it only raised \$100, it would be \$100 that they didn't have prior to the event.

I won't say more other than this may affect my future involvement in the theater. I'm not sure at the present time. They want money, but I guess there are only one or two ways to get it. This wasn't one of them. Too bad, the other ways aren't working, as far as I can tell.

Selling Chili

My youngest is in the High School's Show Choir, and they had a Chili sale during the Homecoming game to raise money for the group. I 'volunteered' to help sell some of the chili. My first official chore was to help set up the tables needed to put the many crock pots of chili on. The next was to taste all of the different chili to make be able to tell all the customers/donation specialists if a specific chili was too spicy or something like that.

I can say that all of the chili was very good, but there wasn't a lot of spice in any of them. On my grading scale of chili they all would have been a zero. On the normal people scale, (those who don't tolerate the spice as well as I do) I guess there would have been a 1 in the group. There were not a 5 alarm chili in the group.

The number of different chili recipes is astounding. I was amazed that each chili had a specific flavor. It would appear that each cook had their own secret ingredient. I didn't have the time to be able to cook a chili for this event, so I just brought the shredded cheese and crackers. Not sure on the money raised, but the chili was gone before half-time. And there was a lot of chili.

Now for a quick and easy (and not bad tasting) chili recipe.

1 1/2 lbs ground beef browned with 2 cloves of garlic (drained)

4 – 16 oz cans of Brooks Chili Beans (I like the 16 oz cans for this so I can use different 'heats' if desired – I like the HOT)

1 can of Campbell's Tomato Soup (Progresso is good too)

2 tbls chili powder.

Hot sauce to taste at table.

Combine browned meat, soup and beans and chili powder. Heat

through. Done that's it. Told you it was quick and easy.

The best bean chili I've had starts with tomatoes and dried beans. I'm surprised the recipe didn't call for you to butcher your own cow. I think I supplied a version of a beanless chili to the WCCT cookbook. I can't remember...

Things I like...

Not quite a list, because my interests are varied, but some of the things I like to do, all G-rated of course. (I have a daughter or two who may read this. Yes, they are all over 16, but they are still my little girls.)

I like insignificant bits of trivial knowledge. The more trivial the better. Knowledge that Diners Club was the first independent credit card (1949) and that is when the middle man started handling our money is interesting. Knowing that it came about because one of the first partners forgot their wallet at dinner is the cake. Knowing that partner was a man named Frank X. McNamara is the icing. Finding out what his middle name was would be, as they say, priceless.

I like reading. Of all sorts, but I tend to read Science Fiction, Fantasy (Swords/Sorcery), Mysteries, and Trivia on the web. Will read almost any well written book. Great rainy day time filler.

Computers... Yep, I can't get enough of them. I work 8 hours a day on them and then I come home and spend free time on them... You would think I would get tired of the little buggers.

Cooking occasionally. There are times when I really want to

whip up a special meal, I just don't like doing it everyday. But, you have to eat...

Time spent with friends. I'm glad to say I have a few people in my life, that don't seem to mind having me around. My wife used to call this "Adult Time". Sometimes, I think we adults act a bit like children, but that is part of the fun.

Softball and Baseball. Baseball is the only sport I ever really followed (I played at one time too). No matter how old I get, if I can still swing a bat and toddle down to first base, I plan on playing softball as often as I can. If I would do it more often, I imagine I wouldn't be as sore the next day...

Theater. In my college years, I never would have thought I would want to get on stage in front of people. Wasn't me at all in my early years. I've had a lot of fun doing my ham-bit on stage.

Science and math. Things that make my logical little brain tick. You've got to keep the gears greased to keep everything running smooth, and that's what the Science and math does for me...

A bit of wood working. I really like destruction the best, but I like using power tools. The smell of cut wood is something too.

And last but certainly not least, I like my family. Every dang one of them. They helped form the person I am today (along with many others I've met along the way) and since I tend to like the person I became, I guess I could thank them once or twice... Nah, it would go to their heads wouldn't it.

painting with brown paint

I'm not exactly sure how I did it, but I volunteered to put up some new ceiling tiles for the theater. That isn't much of a problem, but I do remember telling someone I would put them up if someone else painted them. Well, earlier this evening I was using some brown paint to paint all the new tiles before they go on the ceiling.

It wasn't fun at all. The tiles were like sponges and just kept absorbing the paint. I couldn't put it on too thick, because the tiles would have fallen apart under the paint load. Then all the little crevices and crannies in these tiles didn't want to take any paint. So this took about twice as much paint as I guessed and twice as much time. I certainly hope they go up smoother than the paint job did.

Next week, ceiling tiles will be put in their place. Wish me luck.

Haunted items...

While surfing for stuff to put in our haunted house, I came across [this site](#) that has a lot of FX that we may be able to use. Fake hands, heads, zombies, and some other cool stuff.

I wasted a good bit of time just checking out the FX. Most can be done on our short budget too. We have the wood, but we would need some of the other items to make molds and finish off the projects.

So any of the people working on the haunted house, check this out. I will be adding different sites to this blog if I find

anything else we can use.