

Different Directions

It is strange how life takes many twists and turns. Just a few short years ago, was it really over 8, I was very happy. I had everything I ever thought I needed. Events changed that happiness. After that time, I had happy moments, but not really a happy life. Everything was tinged in a bit of grey. It seemed the color in my life was gone. I wasn't sure how long that situation would last, and I really didn't care.

Things did change over time. The happy moments became more frequent and the grey periods less dark. I was open to new things. This blog was a very instrumental part of my coming back to the world, so to speak. In it I opened my own mind to living again.

It is interesting to me to see the changes in me. I actually started looking for a way to get out and see the world again. I was surprised that during the searching, I actually found a world out there.

Through the various blog posts I opened my heart and soul to electronic world. I am glad I did, but that part of this blog has come to an end. I found that in sharing here, I was able to share in the real world. Fascinating that it turned out this way.

With less to vent about, I think I need a different direction. I have a story or two developing in my head, they may need a place to go. This blog may or may not be the spot for them. I have many other interests that I only touched on here, I may go back and visit them. There are other parts of my life vying for my attention, they do come first.

In the few years I've been blogging, I had 3 of 4 daughters leave high school and graduate from college (the oldest was already out on her own when I started blogging) 3 of 4 daughters were married (youngest is still single). And 3 out

of 4 daughters blessed me with grandchildren. I have a busy life indeed. I met someone very special and I guess you could say I'm building a new life too. That adds to my time away from blogging.

I will be back. I guess you can look forward to more recipes, thoughts on astronomy, computers, and other things of science. I may even post a political piece or two when I really get tired of the election year.

Here is to starting on a different path...

Just remember this is from someone who really likes hot sauces...

My little girl in Florida (along with her husband of course) got me the most wonderful present. It could have been for Father's Day or maybe my birthday. They hadn't shipped it, and I was last there at Christmas and I didn't get it then. But anyway, this present was a wonderful collection of hot sauces. All well up on the scale of things hot and spicy. My son-in-law had to sign a waiver to buy them, good stuff that. I think I will try them out in different foods to determine which one I like best...

Hot Sauce Death Pack

First one in the package was Dave's Insanity Sauce. My little family knows about this sauce, I've had it before and it is quite potent. I add a drop or so to my bowl of chili, just to liven things up a bit. I will write more on that one later.

Today I tried "Smack my ass and call me Sally" hot sauce. The bottle comes with a warning label on it.

***WARNING**This sauce is extremely hot. Keep away from children. Do not use if you have heart or respiratory problems. Wash hands after use.*

I tried this in Florida on a cracker or something like that. Just one drop and it is VERY hot. I added some to my quick dinner tonight and found it extremely pleasant (for something that could very well light my lips on fire ☹) One or two drops does not seem to affect the flavor of the dish all that much, but it does increase the fire power. I imagine I could use this sauce on anything I wanted a bit of a kick with. 3 drops in a cup of chicken soup is about my limit of enjoyable heat. I think I could take more, but even for me there comes a point when the heat just doesn't add anything to the dish. I will admit that there is even a point when I go. DANG that is just too spicy. I haven't hit that one often, but I think I could with this sauce.

When all is said and done...

it was a good day.

I was able to talk to a very special lady today, even though we were not able to see each other. For me, just saying I was talking to someone special is a good thing. I guess that is the special part. ☹

Then I had a long talk with my little sister. We haven't had a chance to talk for a while, so it was nice to reconnect. Idle chitchat about things happening in our lives, a search for a

wandering grumpy dog, talk of flip top noses, getting old, and new things in our lives. A nice time.

Then I did a chore I despise more than any other. I did laundry. Not having a working machine at home means a trip to the laundry mat. Usually a boring time, but as luck would have it I ran into another friend and we had wonderful conversation.

After that I talked to my youngest for just a bit, but it was nice to hear her voice on the phone.

Throw in a couple of quick updates on Facebook, and a Detroit tiger win tonight, yes it was a good day

Trips to Florida and vehicle problems

I just returned from a wonderful visit to Florida. I enjoyed my time with my family, and got to meet the newest member of said family. Even though I've only been gone a few days, I miss them all.

I would like to know why I always seem to have problems with my truck on the way home. It seems like every time I've travelled that road something bad happens to my truck. Stones hitting the windshield, battery going bad, problems with the driver's side window and finally some engine problems. This coincidence just about doubles the cost of each trip.

This trip it was a problem with acceleration. I had hoped that it was only bad gasoline, but that was not the cause. Final cost on this has yet to be realized, since they still have my

truck in the shop. It seems like I'm waiting for parts again.

I guess I really shouldn't complain too much. That truck and I have been through a lot together. After almost 7 years and 196000 miles, I still like that truck. As far as vehicles go, it has been one of my better investments. I should be able to get at least another 50,000 or so on it. I sure hope so.

Anyway, back to the thoughts on my trip. I was able to spend some time with my family both in Florida and in South Carolina. I am fortunate that my sister lives halfway between Florida and Ohio. This gives me an opportunity to visit my big sister a little more often than I usually would. Family is very important to me and any time I can spend with sisters, children and grandchildren is a big plus in my book.

Bittersweet

Bittersweet: Producing or expressing a mixture of pain and pleasure.

That is one of the definitions of this word and the topic of this post.

In June, my life started heading in a new direction. A lot has happened in the past few weeks. Most of the events were extremely pleasant, but there is a touch of sadness involved.

I am now in the middle of a growing relationship. The wonderful time learning how two people can fit their lives together has been occupying a good portion of my days. I must admit that the start of the journey is most enjoyable. I am looking forward the continuation of the time we have had. But other things took me away from the experience.

I had a trip partially planned for quite some time. A daughter and her husband were expecting their first child together. After the birth, my departure to the sunny south was a certainty. I made this trip alone. The preceding sentence is filled with sadness. I could not take any of my children, or another special someone with me.

I got to Florida and was able to hold my newest granddaughter for the first time. As with all of my grandchildren, it was love at first sight. The only difference is that with this little girl, I was able to see her weeks after her birth, not the years needed for my daughters to meet their husbands and the children that came with them. My thought as I held her was how sad it was that her maternal grandmother could not be here to see her. Another bittersweet moment.

I've been spending time with my family, and the older two grandchildren went to spend the weekend with their birth mother. Time for them to bond with another parent, sometimes life can be so complicated for our young. There will be a few days without their smiles in the morning. I am grateful for any time I spend with them.

In a few short days I will again be on the road. I will be leaving behind a family that I love dearly, and going back to the rest of my family that I love with equal passion. I am torn with leaving, but I am looking forward to seeing the others again.

I am also looking forward to spending more time getting to know someone new in my life. We have grown quite fond of each others company. It is a very good feeling. That is tinged with another bittersweet feeling. The history of our lives and why we were able to meet and start a relationship has some sadness and pain. There were difficult times in the past, and these experiences will influence our futures. It will be a journey of learning for both of us.

Bittersweet: Producing or expressing a mixture of pain and pleasure... A taste that is both bitter and sweet...

As long as the bitter and the sweet do not overwhelm the senses, this feeling or taste can be a fulfilling experience. Our lives are filled with these types of feelings. We must learn to take everything we can from these situations. They are part of life and they make it worth living.

Grumpy dog

Currently on my blog page, there is a picture of my little corgi. He is an old grumpy little dog. In the past, when I have to leave town for any length of time, I tried to take him with me, or in the care of family. If that was not an option, I would board him in a kennel, with some trepidation. I never liked the kennels, because the little guy always seemed to be a bit nervous there.

I'm in Florida now, and the grumpy pup is staying with friends. I've heard he is still being a bit grumpy, but I've also heard that he is getting some love and attention. This has allowed me to relax just a bit on this vacation. It is a welcome relief.

Mere words can never express the gratitude I feel. This is coming from the same person who threw a fit when the dog arrived in the house 12 years ago. He wasn't really my dog until recently. He always preferred the oldest female in the house. I let that oldest female take care of him. But with my youngest daughter being out of the house, he became my dog.

No, I really don't have the words right now. My heart felt thanks are fully given. He is, after all, a very special

grumpy old dog.

Packing for a trip...

I'm almost ready to go on a vacation. I've done as much laundry as possible. I have things ready to go. A few odds and ends to take care of, but I guess I'm ready.

Of course it won't be a good trip unless I forget something. For some reason I always forget an item or two, but that makes the trip right. It has happened for almost every trip as long as I can remember planning them. It adds to the excitement and adventure.

In just a few short days, I will be holding my newest granddaughter. I will be showering the other grandkids with hugs and love. I get to spend time with the family I see the least. That sounds like a good time doesn't it?

And yet, as with most of these trips, there is a little darkness in a corner. There are those I leave behind to be missed. There are those who will never experience this greeting of new life and missed family. I will admit that the feelings of joy and happiness out weigh those little gray clouds; the cloud still seem to linger.

I guess that is life. Ever moving forward, and onward. Only momentary glimpses into the past. Dwelling on past events and futures that might or could have been are left for other times. Looking forward to good times...

Life's lessons from children's books

I learned in my young adult life that there was a lot of good things to learn from Children's books. These books have good things to teach children and, if you let them, adults. As you read to a child, make sure you pay attention to all of the things these books have to say.

I enjoyed reading to my girls, but I really enjoyed sitting back and listening while my wife read to each daughter. From the works of various authors we learn that life can be fun, sad, scary and comforting.

Through stories, you learn that you shouldn't touch things that do not belong to you. While in real life the town does not fill up with pasta, things can break and that could hurt someone you care about.

You learn that being polite should be a good habit and not something you need written on your hands. You learn that good friends can have fights and still be friends.

Sometimes bunnies do the wrong things, but they find that their mother still loves them. Yes, I've learned a lot over the years just from reading children's books. More than I can remember, but maybe after some bread and jam, I will try something new.

Happy birthday Papa

Almost 10 years ago, my father left this world, almost exactly

one year after mom. Today would have been his birthday. Sometimes I couldn't remember the date, but I knew it was always near fathers' day.

Just a short little post to remember someone I loved and admired. They didn't make many like him.

"Papa I don't think I said 'I love you' near enough"
-- leader of the band – Dan Fogelberg

Nope, not nearly enough...

20,000 Leagues to Dearborn, MI

Give or take a few leagues.

Last weekend, Sunday to be exact, I was attending my first Steampunk convention. To explain what this is, I tried to come up with all sorts of analogies. The best I could come up with is to think of Disney's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. From the time they board the Nautilus, the movie turns to what is now known as steampunk. Other movies of this genre are League of Extraordinary Gentlemen and Frankenstein. All of the Victorian era clothing, marked by advanced inventions powered by steam or clockworks.

I was thrilled to spend the day with my oldest daughter, her husband and my lovely step-granddaughter. I was able to pick up some steampunk garb and blend into the convention a little more than my jeans and t-shirt allowed. I know I will wear the coat more when the weather is appropriate.

Now, I have been asked why I would want to do anything of this

sort. Easy answer, it was a lot of fun. Going to the events themselves is an eye opening experience, going in "garb" makes it a total immersion. I know I will never get to the point of digging local garage sales and flea markets for pieces of brass, but the theater nut in me will complete at least one set of clothing to wear next year.

It was a step out of my usual comfort zone. And I enjoyed myself that day. Maybe next year a comic book convention. I always wanted to be a super hero, or villain.