

Sitting in a Coffee shop

Going into coffee shops always makes me think of the good times I had with my late wife. This is not the same shop we went to for years, but they do have good coffee. I just wish I could get some of the quiche and cheesecake that was in the old shop.

Anyway, I'm sitting here waiting for my daughter to get out of a special audition. It is a closed audition, so there is no way I can watch. She is singing in an ensemble group for a local talent show. I was able to see this group perform earlier and they do have talent. If they have enough talent to compete against others, we just have to wait and see.

I'm supposed to be heading out on the road today to get some stuff done for the Holiday season and a birthday coming up. Looking out the window, it looks like there is a lot of snow coming down. It may put a damper on my travels for today. I guess I may wait it out for a bit. Snow hasn't let up since I got up this morning. First good snow of the season. I'm sure one of my daughters is happy about this.

Until the dirty slush starts forming around town, I will say the white snow does look nice. If there were only a way to keep it off streets and sidewalks.

Well the my coffee is gone and I guess it is getting to be the time to move on.

A different type of game

One of my friends and blogging buddy posted some [notes on a game we played \(click to read\)](#). These were written by they guy running the game, so they were an overall view, as if someone was watching the action. I was thinking of writing something like that from a player's (character's) point of view. Just not with that game. I'm thinking of a game I'm a bit more familiar with....

Dungeons and Dragons... My Son-in-Law's campaign. But first a background of the character whose story will be told.

A short history of Calinth Knight of Deinir

Calinth of some temple in some town was orphaned at an early age and raised on the temple grounds. The Clerics there were good to him, and taught him their ways. All there thought he would grow to become a priest in that temple.

When Calinth reached the age of 11, the town and temple were attacked by a large band of orcs. Calinth was weeding and hoeing the small herb patch behind the living area when he was attacked. He drove his hoe blade deep into the head of the first orc, and then picked up the orc's sword and shield. He was able to make it to the Temple stairs by fighting his way there. Cut and bloody, he fought side by side with the holy warriors of the temple. Both clerics and knights were side by side to prevent the orcs from the worship area.

A great knight was knocked down by what could only have been an Ogre. (as seen by the eyes of an 11 year old. Actually just a very large orc.) Calinth jumped into the path of the Orc's sword, blocking the killing blow with his shield. This blow broke his arm and threw him over the downed knight. The Orc was furious that his blow was stopped. He raised his battle ax high over his head to kill both of the temple defenders. Calinth saw his chance to save both himself and the knight

under him. He pushed his sword up just under the Orc's breast plate with all his might. After that blow he passed out.

The next day he found himself in the infirmary, with the knight standing over him.

"I am Bahoson, and would like you to be my squire. I am a Paladin of this temple and I think you are also called to serve."

A warm feeling went over Calinth at that time. His arm was no longer sore. He felt a peace he had not known before. Yes, he would do that. He would be whatever a squire was.

Years passed, and Calinth learned the ways of the sword. He learned the ways of all that is right and good. In his 18th year, he became a knight in his own right. In his 22nd year, he saw the injustice of his own service. His master, mentor and friend, Bahoson, was driven out of town by a corrupt and power hungry official. Rumor has it, that Bahoson was assassinated on the outskirts of town. The law of the land and his calling prevented Calinth from interfering. A priest in the temple told him of "another way", and he was given directions to look for Kandomere in some other town. This started him on the path of the Grey Guard. There were all kinds of evil, corruption and chaos in the world, and now Calinth had a path to follow that could fight these problems at the closest source.

Calinth traveled far and wide fighting evil at its most foul. On the way back home from a successful campaign, he stopped at a strange Inn for a light noon meal. In the middle of town far from any sea, a large ship stood. The ship itself looked as though it could sail at any minute, except for the doors cut into its hull. Here is where Calinth's next adventure begins...

5 years ago (part 3)

There are times I remember going up to Ann Arbor for radiation treatments. I didn't get to many of them, because I was trying to make sure the girls had as normal of life at home as possible. Her parents, my oldest sister and I all took her up for the treatments.

My memory is of one day. We were in the waiting room until the staff was ready for her. My dear wife started talking to another patient, laughing, joking and smiling about what they were both going to face. The other patient came in feeling quite down, and left with a very big thank you and smile. I've often wondered what happened to the other patients we met.

I'm not sure, but I imagine that this happened more than just on my trips to Ann Arbor. It was her way of dealing with the stress. Sometimes she seemed just so tired, but she found time to laugh when she could. After her death, I receive multiple cards from the doctors and nurses that knew her during her hospital stay and treatment. I had multiple comments on how infectious her laugh and smile were.

Today, I miss that laugh and the smile. There are many things I wanted to do that year. One was to get a video camera to record some family history. I did not get the camera at that time. It took me until after she died to finally get that stupid camera. And what do I do? My first taping, I misplace the tapes. My daughters were in their first play at the playhouse. I put those tapes someplace safe. So far, I've only found 1 of 2. I haven't even played it through yet. Not even sure which act I have.

It was my hope to get some of our history recorded before we

lose it. I don't have a recording of her laugh. I do have pictures of the smile. As my memory fades, I lose the sounds of her voice. After 5 years I guess that is the hardest thing. Forgetting more each day. The memories are still there, but they have lost the warm vibrant colors of years gone by. Each day they fade just a little more.

I miss that laugh.

Five Years ago Today (part 2 – The blur)

Those days between Thanksgiving and Christmas were a blur. Seemed like non-stop travel from home to hospital, or home to in-laws. When my wife was released and scheduled for cancer treatments, she had to stay within an hour of the Ann Arbor Hospital. Our house did not meet that restriction, so she stayed with her parents. So between work (we still weren't accepting the forgone conclusion), taking care of the girls we would drive to see her often. Ann Arbor is about 2 hours away, her parents 1 hour. That meant a lot of time in the car. Often in very poor weather. It became a blur. Very few days stick out in my mind. I remember the blur.

The stretch of 23 between Toledo and Ann Arbor has been in my nightmares. I saw that road too many times during that month. I've had dreams of car crashes, getting lost or stranded on that section of road. It was not a road I traveled often before that November/December, but it became one to avoid if at all possible. It brings up memories of the Blur.

Five Years ago today (part 1)

Day 1 is almost finished. 5 years ago today, I found out that my wife had terminal cancer. We knew it was cancer before that day, but we didn't know anything about the kind of cancer. At the University of Michigan Medical Center we found out it was a very rare aggressive cancer, most likely terminal.

This day five years ago put a gray shadow on the Thanksgivings that were to follow.

I don't care what people say, time does not heal all wounds. Time makes some wounds bearable.

Well I did make it through the day. Actually had a relaxing time. Spending time with people/family who knew my wife and were not afraid to bring her into the conversation of the day helped.

We didn't have a traditional Thanksgiving meal. There was no turkey or dressing. The mashed potatoes were part of a Shepard's Pie. Breads of all kinds filled the table. There was plenty of food and even more conversation.

I had a long talk with my dear wife's parents. They do treat me well. Saw two of my four daughters. One is still many states away, the other spent the day with her future husband's family. That is the way life goes. Families grow and the young leave the nest. This really isn't a sad time for me, I'm proud to see my children grow and become adults.

So there are things to be thankful for after all

Good night folks.

Thanksgiving...

Many things to be thankful for. Good Friends, family, wonderful daughters, decent health, and a decent steady job. The job of course means food on the table ect.

But there are times I don't feel like giving thanks. I just want to hide out for a few months until this winter holiday season is over. Feeling kind of like Scrooge and "People that go about with Merry Christmas on their lips should be boiled in their Christmas pudding and buried with stake of holly through their hearts." I'm not sure if that is an exact quote from the book, but it was very close to what I heard in at least one movie.

"A Christmas Carol" is not about the day of Thanksgiving, but it takes place on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing day (set in London, so they have that). There are a few holiday shows that deal with Thanksgiving. There is a Peanuts (Charlie Brown/Snoopy) Thanksgiving show, of course. I think they covered every major holiday.

But the one I am thinking of, most people would agree that it is a Christmas Story, but it starts on Thanksgiving day. That favorite holiday classic "Miracle on 34th Street". I'm partial to the 1947 version, but the 1994 version isn't too bad. There were a few made for TV versions that were not quite up to either theater version. Drunk Santa on Parade float replaced by the real article for the annual Thanksgiving parade. The start of the Christmas Shopping season.

Hmm, now I know with both the Christmas Carol and Miracle on 34th street, the commercialization of Christmas has been going on a long time. Scrooge complained about people spending more

than they could afford just to make merry on one day. Of course the whole Santa being against the commercialization in 34th street was again showing it for what it was.

This Friday is known as Black Friday. A day when retail stores finally see a profit (I'm skeptical on that, but I just spend the money).

Well for me, I don't do that much. A few nice gifts and that's about it. I try not to break the bank (do that too much during the rest of the year).

So I guess for me and from me, I wish you the best this Holiday season. From Thanksgiving day to New Years Day, there are Holidays a plenty for those of all faiths, or no faiths. The very best to you and yours. To those reading this blog who have lost a special someone, may you find some peace and hope amid the additional stress this season puts on you.

Because my daughters are precious to me

I went to search for a bunch of sites about the current plight of frogs, after seeing one daughter write about [Frogs](#).

So here they are for your attention:

[Save The Frogs](#)

[Year of the Frog](#)

[Care to Make a Difference](#)

[Nerdy Science](#)

[NZ Frogs](#)

☐ [Coffee and Frogs](#)

[Amphibian Conservation](#)

[A thousand Friends of Frogs](#)

Just Frog related:

[Wiki Frogs](#)

[Frog Land](#)

[Expolratorium Frogs](#)

[Frog Sounds](#)

Commercial store:

[Frog Store](#)

And a local radio station:

[I Love Froggy 106.7](#)

Waiting up

Ok, I'm the father of a teenager. She is out tonight watching a movie, leaving Dad home alone to blog away the evening.

My youngest as a rather big heart. She took her sister to the latest teen vampire movie (there has been more than 1 right?) for her birthday. Not anything I was interested in, so I came home and ate cheeseburgers....

Now, I am waiting for them to come home. The movie should be over soon, and I will still be awake when they come in. All the worries of a father when his children are out late. Deer running on the country roads, other cars, and a bit of snow coming down. I hope they like the movie. It looked like a yawner to me, but then it was marketed toward teenagers/young adults.

So, my second youngest will be 21 in a few short weeks. My youngest is a senior in High School. Me, I'm feeling old

tonight. Visited my old college this week. So many new buildings, so many old ones. They were taking the seats out of the theater when we were there. Those seats were over 30 years old!!! I thought they were old when I graduated. I guess they had a bit of life in them. I imagine that they could have replaced the seats more than once in the past 30 years, but how many times would you want to buy that sick green color?

Just thinking about what I want to be when I grow up. I think my dream job would be a voice for an animated show/movie. That really sounds like a lot of fun. And I have more than enough voices, I could almost voice a whole show.

Love running on battery power. I can take this laptop anywhere in the house. I will be looking for the best reception on my cell modem card. I should be getting my router next week, so I want to know where to set it up.

They're home!! good night...

A little early Christmas

I don't usually care for Christmas music before Thanksgiving. A little quirk of mine, true, but a quirk all the same. Tonight it was a little different. Family and friends (and a whole bunch of other people) got together for a dinner and show. It was a fund raiser for the High School Show choir, so the meal was exactly what I expected. The show itself, while way too short, was wonderful for me.

Can a father be more proud? Watching my youngest perform in the show choir was an experience I will not forget. The rest of the show choir was good too. My view was a bit biased. I had eyes for one lovely young lady. I would love to describe

the show but words about that escape me.

What I do remember is a show from 5 years ago. Two other daughters performed in another dinner/music show. While not the show choir, it was another wonderful show. It was also the last show my wife saw any of her daughters in. Early the next week she was in the hospital. Two weeks later, we were told things were very bleak.

This is where my thoughts tend to go this time year. It can be very difficult to go to these events when my thoughts turn in this direction. I really wasn't thinking of it when it started, it just kind of flowed with the evening. Sometimes I wonder how long this will happen to me. At least I don't break down and cry now. That doesn't happen much anymore, just kind of a sad feeling. I guess that is better. It could be worse.

I have four beautiful, talented daughters and it is wonderful to see them in whatever they do. Tonight was no exception, even with my melancholy.

Sweet music

It was a beautiful evening in Bryan Ohio. There were some wonderful singers and musicians performing for a musical recital. My youngest did her best to bring music to many people. It is her senior year and last recital. So many talented young people, and so few times to see them.

I guess I should take more time to find some of these recitals. I'm sure that there are many people I know whose children perform, or will perform in the future. As with all recitals they weren't perfect, but the all tried their very best. It was wonderful.

If I can talk my youngest into allowing it, I will post a youtube link to her performance.