

Not the movie review...

I was going to make a quick post on the new Batman movie, but that can wait. Watching the movie made me think of other things.

Earlier post is in Bold print, newer thoughts are in the regular type.

Things like if doing good makes things go bad, are you still doing good, are you in the right?

Heroes in movies are always trying to do good and the right thing. It doesn't always work out for them. We see that in everyday life too. We try to do what is right, or good, and sometimes the way things work out, a different path should have been chosen. We can tend to dwell on this, constantly asking "What if?". Dwelling the "should ofs" and "could ofs" will inhibit our chances of make the correct choices on later issues. We can't always be assured that doing the right thing, means things will turn out good for us. Sometimes being right is worth the effort, no matter what the outcome.

What would it take to go from good to bad, or bad to good? Is it that big of a difference?

This is something I have some experience with. I know exactly how far I can be pushed. It isn't so much of going from good to bad, but it is going from easy going to violent or fairly relaxed to a nervous wreck. Major events in ones life can do a number on how you behave. You think beforehand that you know how you will react, but once in the situation, you did something you never would have believed possible. For me those experiences revolve around protecting the weak and innocent, and protecting and loving my family and friends. Since I have been in these situations more than once, I know I would put my own health/welfare on the line if anyone I care about is in trouble. This is something deeply ingrained in who I am. I

also know that if pushed too far, I could fall apart. I've been close to that too.

At what point do you have too much power?

My feelings is that you can have too much power, when power is your goal. I've always found that the people who handle power the best, are the ones that really don't want it in the first place.

What sort of circumstance would break your will? What would drive you forward? What would stop you dead in your tracks?

I had a daughter in a very serious car accident. I did things I never thought I could do. At the time it was the most difficult life experience I ever had. Just the possibility of losing a child brought me to the brink of stopping my dead in my tracks, but I pushed through and drove forward. Not much more than a year after that, my wife was told she had cancer. 1 1/2 months later it would take her life. This loss was almost too great for me. Even with my children needing me, I almost fell apart. They pulled me back from the abyss. This was something that broke my will. If my girls had not been there, or I had people pushing me in a different direction, the person I am today would not be around. Frightening thought is that I don't know who or even if I would be today. There are things that happen, that will change the person you are today. Sometimes for the good, sometimes not. I never take abrupt changes in behavior for granted any more.

Family time... sort of

Today I took a trip back in time, sort of. For just a little while, I was back 20+ years ago having a donut with my little girl. She's no longer the 2 or 3 year old I would carry on

my shoulders for 4 blocks to the donut shop, and she definitely eats more than 1/2 a donut now. But just for an instant I saw that very young father, and his daughter in the reflection of the door entering the donut shop.

The shop changed in the past 20 years. There is no longer a bar with stools to sit and watch the frenzy behind the counter. The library and store that was across the street no longer exist in that location. The apartments still looked the same.

They say you can't go back, and of course that is true. I would never want to try to live in that little apartment again. I've grown to comfortable living in the country away from the noise, the lights and the people. I like the silence and the darkness. Most of the time this suits who I am.

I've changed over the past few years, but I haven't changed to the point where I can't enjoy a quick trip to the donut shop with one of my girls. I hope all my girls have some special memory of things they did with their parents. I know I have some for each of them...

A simple cuppa

As a society we are surrounded by coffee. In larger cities there have been Starbucks on every corner. Stretching the point a little, but they did just close a number of "extra" shops. There are also a number of other coffee places that are national/international brands. Even the likes of McDonalds are starting to sell their own premium coffees. Where does it end?

Now I admit being a bit of a coffee nerd/snob. I have

tasted good coffee and desire it above all others. I like the pure 100% coffees from specific regions (Kona and Kenya AA are at the top of my list). I like various blended coffees (Mocha Java and Kona Blends). I like good dark roasts, medium roasts and light roasts. I even go for a good shot of espresso every now and then. When it comes to flavored coffees, there are those I like and those I don't. Adding flavor to coffee is outside the realm of a simple cuppa... So are most of the fancy blends and even the espresso.

I'm talking about a simple no nonsense cup of joe. That fresh jolt of black goodness in the morning. And the thoughts of that cup bring back memories of days long past.

I've told the story many times, of my wife and I finding a coffee shop of all places to spend a little time alone. At that time, I was the only one to even drink coffee. It grew on her. But I felt myself being drawn further back in time. To a small apartment, our first, in Toledo, OH. This little two bedroom unit was about 3 or 4 blocks from a Dunkin' Donuts shop. I remember walking down on some Saturdays to get some donuts and for me a coffee. That coffee was some of the best I've ever tasted. To this day it is still one of my favorites. In those early days, we didn't even have a coffee maker in the house (I would consumed the whole pot), so this was a treat. I even had a Dunkin' Donuts thermos so I could get cheaper re-fills.

If I have my count of Toledo area donut shops correct, that one Dunkin' Donuts is the last in the Toledo area. When we lived there, there were a least 4 in the area. Who knows why they left this part of the country for a while. But I've heard that they are opening up new shops in the Ft. Wayne IN area. I now live halfway between Toledo and Ft. Wayne, so maybe I'll be able to get coffee and a donut from Dunkin' Donuts when I'm on the road. I'd love to see them expand in the area again. But maybe 65 miles isn't too far to go to relive a memory...

A little before midnight

I thought today was going to be a real downer. Work seemed endless today with barely a break for lunch. If things could go wrong, they all waited for today. But with some luck, I had a much better late afternoon/early evening.

As told earlier, I went to a movie. I went with not 1 but 2 of my daughters. We all had a good time, it was just a fun little show to watch. Then we went to dinner. Dinner was Pizza Hut, so I didn't find it very good, but the girls seemed to enjoy it. Then off to the Putt-Putt. With two free game one at an earlier time, we were able to putt with no money down. One of my daughters doesn't like putt-putt, but is willing to keep score. Except for 2 miss-played holes (really badly mis-played, I had a good game. I was able to break par by 1 stroke. I think I figured out my problem with putting. I get too sure of myself at times, and don't concentrate on what I am doing. Makes be flub up sometimes. I guess I should be more careful.

Then we had Ice cream at the Creamery again. Still good stuff, a bit expensive, but it is good to splurge every now and again.

Time to run.. or sleep as the case may be, it is now a bit after midnight.

Morbid topic, consider yourself warned

Yes, this will be a post about death, so if you don't want to read about it, stop right here. The next paragraph will be about some silly stuff just in case you failed to be driven away. I don't want anyone to say they saw the morbid stuff too quick.

Heavy rains this past week or so caused a small short in one of my trucks turn signal lights. I could tell because when I turned a corner the blinker would start going really fast, and then it would slow down after I started going straight again. The increased blinker speed is to let me know there is a turn signal light out. Just found that interesting. This summer is just flying by, I noticed our local Wally World already had school supplies out. So we jump past summer picnic season to school after the 4th of July. Makes me wonder what date they use in other parts of the world.

Morbid stuff starts now....

My eldest daughter, her husband and I were talking about what to do with our bodies after we die. I was thinking about having my ashes turned to [diamonds](#) for each of my daughters. (If I can ever afford to do that, it is an expensive way to take care of a dead body.) Then I thought it would be nice to donate my body to science after removing any organs that can be used in transplants. We did get a little creative on this too. Like donating my skeleton to my old high school. I imagine that would be something. Or maybe encasing the said skeleton in Acrylic. Ashes mixed in with wood finishes was talked about, or even mixing the ashes with cement or tile mud. All very interesting things that could be done.

The one thing we talked about that I though was really

interesting was the idea of donating my body to a [Body Farm](#). I thought that was a very interesting concept. I had not heard of this before my son-in-law mentioned that it was what he was interested in. What made this more interesting is that I received an email from www.howstuffworks.com about the same subject. Then I did a [Google search](#) on the same topic.

Not only does donating your body to a body farm make a lot of sense financially (funerals and burial/cremation are very expensive), it also makes sense in a 'Green' way. An added bonus is that future CSIs can learn a lot from watching a body decompose. The "Green" way is that you skip the added fuel and machinery needed to put a body in an big concrete block. Also skipped is the amount of fuel need to completely consume a human body when it is cremated. What our bodies will never get recycled by the planet when surrounded by tons of concrete. In the body farm the bodies are left exposed to the elements with the normal cycle of nature, doing what it does so well, using what is left over to support and renew the environment. I like the idea, but then again, the old pine boxes we used to use allowed the remains to be recycled by nature.

I do understand the other environmental needs to make sure that disease isn't spread, but I think we tend to go way overboard with the complete enclosure in concrete.

Now my daughter, the genealogist, wants to make sure we put a plaque up somewhere for future generations. I don't know if I see the point in that, but for her I would be willing. I have a feeling future genealogists will have a better way of finding out about their ancestors. The internet will be crawling with information if it isn't already.

So, I will be looking into setting up my donation to a Body Farm, unless I win a big lottery. I kind of like the idea of my girls being able to say "Daddy is forever..." Morbid sense of humor, true, but it still tickles me.

This and that with other things in mind

A somewhat mindless post of things I'm thinking about.

Took my youngest to a movie and to play putt-putt. I always enjoyed the time I could spend with my daughters. I'm sure they're getting a skewed view on life without their mother in it, but that is what it is. They get this skewed view, because my view is somewhat skewed. Not doing as well as I would like on putt-putt. On the little course closest to us, I have made a hole-in-one on all 18 holes. I should be able to get 2 on each and everyone of them. I get a little down when I get 3's on some of the holes. Most of the time I don't keep the putter down.

Stopped at a Coldstone Creamery. Wonderful stuff. Ice Cream, Sorbet mixed with stuff right in front of your eyes. It is very good ice cream.

A fourth of July weekend is in front of me. It is nice to get an extra day off of work. I'm looking forward to spending time with family and friends this weekend. Happy Birthday wishes to my oldest sister on the 4th. Never did get to put the sparklers on her cake instead of candles.

Tigers are on the radio right now. I don't have cable, so I don't get to watch much ball on TV, but Gameday on the Computer, and a radio near me, works well. Tigers are winning in the 7th.

I need to take the time this weekend to do the things I wasn't doing during the time my daughter was in "Little Women". I wouldn't trade that time for anything, but I need to do more

around here.

I saw a movie trailer today. It looks like they are making a remake of a wonderful Science Fiction Classic. A new "The Day the Earth Stood Still" is coming to the big screen again. This was a classic, and from the trailer, I think they found a way to ruin it. I'm planning on going just so I can really rag on the film. You are warned. Normally I don't get preconceived ideas about movies, but this was a wonderful short story, a very good movie (classic in my mind), and it will now become a standard Hollywood space invasion movie... Grrr.

I'm waiting for the new Batman movie. One of the favorite comic characters, because he is a normal person. He was also a troubled hero. It makes the comic book a little more real when the hero has normal problems.

Should be a good 4th tomorrow. Getting together with friends for food and socializing, maybe some fireworks.

I need to try to schedule some additional time off work. It may be tough since we are in the middle of a major software change. Maybe I can get 1 day off a week for the rest of the summer.

That should be about it, for now

Tigers still ahead in the 8th.

Indiana Jones and me.

In June of 1981, just after I graduated from College, Raiders of the Lost Ark was released in theaters. At that time video rental and purchasing was in its infancy. Machines were expensive, and there were the "format wars". So the movies in

the theaters ran much longer than they do now, and they were often in cheap theaters for years after the initial release. I saw Raiders with friends during the summer of 1981 multiple times, and I eventually saw it with my future wife in 1983. It was a fun movie.

In 1984, The Temple of Doom was released. I was able to see that movie in theaters as a newlywed. While we liked the movie, the dark atmosphere of the second Indiana Jones left us wanting the first movie again. Finally the price of VCRs became more reasonable, and Raiders of the Lost Ark was the one we added to our collection. After it was released to Video, we also added the Last Crusade. It wasn't until 2004 that I added the Temple of Doom to my collection.

This spring the fourth installment of the Indiana Jones movies was released. It marked the first Indiana Jones movie I did not see with my wife. Being a widower made that impossible. Still, I went with the two daughters still living at home. I went in a partial Indiana Jones costume. At the movie I wore my hat, my brown pants and beige shirt. It was too warm for my leather jacket. And only a few noticed. But with the audience, I'm sure most weren't seeing movies at the time the last movie hit theaters.

Some time early in my marriage, my wife and I were shopping and we stopped in a small store in the local mall. There was a felt Fedora. My wife thought it looked good on me, so she bought it for me. She called it my Indiana Jones hat. It was just the thing to take on our vacations. I had that hat for years, until I left it in a coffee shop, one time too many. I hope whoever picked it up enjoyed it. After that I found a much cheaper version of the hat, since I was sure I would misplace it again. And I used that hat for a few years. 2 Christmases ago, my four daughters pitched in to buy me an official Indiana Jones fedora. I was very touched that they would do that. So if you check my 'About' page, you will see a picture of me in that hat.

At times I wish I could have been the adventurer that Indiana Jones was. Searching for lost artifacts, ancient civilizations sounds like great fun. The more conservative, stay-at-home, take care of the family person almost always won the battle of personalities. When we took trips to more wilderness areas, the adventurer showed his face (and hat). We hiked many a mile through the gorges of SE Ohio, the Black hills and Bad Lands in South Dakota, and even the wilds of amusement parks and zoos. I'll never be that adventuring soul, except in the inner reaches of the mind.

That's about it for Indiana Jones and me, until the last movie is release on video. It will be added to my collection. Maybe by that time, I'll be able to get the whip, and a more authentic leather jacket.

My life as a play

After watching "Little Women" from the light booth for a about a week now, I was wondering what kind of play my life would make. I know right now, if the author of the play knew me at all, it would not be a musical. Then again, some twisted mind would do that, just to get a reaction from me, or think of me rolling in my grave.

Anyway, would my life make an worthwhile play... That may take some thought. First off a good play needs many different features. A good plot is almost essential (there are a few exceptions to this). Engaging characters are required (my life has that). Some humor, maybe a bit of tragedy helps round everything out.

In my life, you can usually skip everything that happens at my place of employment. Yes, the characters there would be

wonderful, but the plot, or day to day happenings are not going to engage an audience. Who in there right mind would want to watch people sit at computers all day. While I've worked in a number of offices, they are not like the sit-coms. To watch would be boring.

Now, on to the rest of my life. For most of it I am a father of 4 daughters. I'm thinking the play could be written around the marriages of each. While only two are married, I think if the weddings progress in any way, there may be a story to tell.

So for this I've developed a cast of characters...

Father

Daughter 1

Daughter 2

Daughter 3

Daughter 4

Son-in-Law 1

Son-in-Law 2

Son-in-Law 3

Son-in-Law 4

GrandMother

GrandFather

Various other family members needed to round out the story (I'll let the writer worry about this, and any directors worry about the huge cast size ☐).

Act 1 – Wedding 1

Widowed father joins rest of males of the wedding party in wearing a Kilt. Is the groom late? Will the bride ever calm down? Will the music play? Will the wind blow and we find exactly what is worn under Kilts? It was an interesting day.

Act 2 – Wedding 2

Widowed father drives across many states to get to second daughter's Florida Wedding, in AUGUST!!! It is hot, and muggy,

and the wedding is outside. Will the alligator in the pond climb up on the dock! There is no electricity by the dock for the wedding. The batteries in the boombox are dead. Play the music from a Car? Who will pass out? Who will get a sunburn? Who gets bitten by the gator?

Act 3 – Wedding 3

Not sure on this it hasn't happened yet. Star Wars theme and the Wookie Best man trips on his own fur? Lord of Rings theme and the Orcs attack during service. Take your pick, or it may be something else.

Act 4 – Wedding 4

Let's leave this one in the future. Dream like. It hasn't happened either, but as the father, I can't think of my baby girl getting married just yet...

And then again maybe the play of my life would not be these weddings/future weddings.

Maybe a play about my married life? The fun and warmth of the early years. Kids growing up, the bond between two people growing stronger. Tragic death, grief, and finally growth continuation of life.

May be too much of a downer for some...

And lastly, my life as a member of a community theater. The follies of live performance. Things not working in the light booth, problems of set building. This may not have a wide audience, but any person who ever acted in, directed, helped put on a community theater play may get a kick out of it.

Well, it was fun thinking of this anyway. There may not be a play ever written about my life, but I know that everyone's life is a stage. We perform live everyday. We are the actors,

and the audience.

Give it your best, people are watching...

Coffee nerdiness

Yes, I'm a coffee nerd. I like good strong full bodied coffee. I of course have my favorite roasts, beans, blends, and coffee shops. But I really want to talk about the coffee shop experience. Today, a lot of people consider Starbucks to be the coffee shop of all coffee shops. They are almost everywhere. I will admit that their marketing is wonderful. They've taken the country by storm. Their coffee is good, but by no means is it the peak of coffee perfection. Their shops are nice and clean, but they are missing a little bit of charm.

Now to go back a few years, about 11 or so, to when I knew nothing about coffee. If you called it coffee and it was hot, I would drink it. At that time, my youngest daughter was in Kindergarten, the oldest was 15. My wife and I needed someplace to go to start re-connecting with each other. The children were all growing up, and didn't need quite as much attention. We also had a built in babysitter. So we started to look around for something we could do together, but wouldn't break the bank. We found a little coffee shop. It was a charming little place where we could get a light lunch, or a desert, or just a cup of coffee or tea. We started going week after week, sometimes more than once a week. From that time on, we would even look for coffee shops on our vacations.

The local coffee shop (before Starbucks was a nationwide brand) was a place to find good coffee and good friends. It was a gathering place. In some places you would find little

reading corners. Some shops would have music, some poetry readings. Some places to play chess or backgammon. But in everyone there was a place to meet people and talk. They was always a quite corner you could go to even when the place was busy at the early morning rush. They were places designed to slow down, smell the baked goods, and of course the coffee.

Then we get the fast food of coffee shops, the national brands. A hurry-up kind of place where people seem to be full of caffeine before they have their first cup of coffee. The coffee may be good, but the atmosphere suffers.

One of my daughter worked in 'our' little coffee shop, and it closed shortly after she graduated from college. Just two short years after my wife died. I still miss that atmosphere. There are other places to get coffee in the area. For a time there was even a shop that had a bit of atmosphere. But in today's world those places seem to be few and far between. You can find them if you look, but you do have to look. It may not be a coffee shop, it may be a little restaurant, or donut shop, maybe even a candy shop, or an old soda fountain. There are places to find, where you can slow down to smell the coffee, or the roses, but always smell and experience the sweet breath of life itself.

The Play's the thing...

In 1997 I was in my first play for the (then) Williams County Playhouse. It was "Arsenic and Old Lace". I played one of the beat cops. That show was one of my favorite plays to watch, the movie wasn't bad either ;). Since then I've been involved in many different shows, from comedy to drama. I skip musicals, except to run lights or help backstage. I've even

been in a Magic Show. After 11 years with the theater (changed its name to The Williams County Community Theater), I can honestly say I've been bitten by the theater bug.

I've done almost everything in the theater except direct a show. I tried to assist on one, but due to actor shortages, the director and I both had roles in the show. It was a wonderful show that very few people saw. I'm in the light booth for what looks like another wonderful show. I hope it is a show that everyone sees.

I'm always amazed at the amount of talent our little community (our theater, other local theaters, and High Schools) find to be in the performances. From the 4 counties in extreme NW Ohio, I've been able to perform in and watch many wonderful shows. There as been Musicals (Godspell, Jesus Christ Superstar, Fiddler on the Roof, Chicago, Les Miserables, Beauty and the Beast), Dramas (Wait Until Dark, Death of Salesman, 12 Angry Men, Proof), Comedies (Harvey, The Foreigner, Escanaba in the Moonlight) and even Melodramas that have been put on by various schools and play companies in our area. Williams County OH has a population of around 39,000. Defiance County has close to 40,000. Henry and Fulton counties 42,000 and 29,000 respectively. In this area there are numerous High Schools, and around 4 or 5 community theaters. The High Schools put on at least 1 musical a year, the community theaters put on 3 or more shows (each) a year.

Now proudly for the Summer, the Williams County Community Theater, (Montpelier OH theater) is going to present the Musical "Little Women" starting Friday June 20th at 8:00. This is a show not to be missed. The cast has a group of wonderful singers (don't take my word, come and see them), and excellent directing, a great set, period costumes, and a good story to boot. This is a small, intimate 100 seat theater call for your tickets early, check out the [theater website](#) for information on how to get reservations.

Come and see this show, you don't want to miss it.