

I don't know your pain.

Sometimes I get inspiration from my little posts on facebook. Sometimes I get inspiration for little posts on facebook from my blog. This is a bit of both.

A blog post with the above title was started on the 20th of May. Five days later, I think the original thoughts are finally gelling. All from a facebook post I made yesterday.

I don't know your pain. I only know my own. I can, however, listen when you need it, advise when you want it, and care for you always, because I call you friend.

There it is. The original idea behind this was that I have a number of friends going through some difficult times right now. I was able to listen to their description of pain and sorrow. I offered a bit of advice when asked. And through it all I think I became a better person.

It takes a lot to try to ignore or temper your own sorrows when dealing with the problems of others. Your problems, sorrows, worries are of the utmost importance to you. Nothing can be bigger or more intense than the situation you are in . These are your feelings and are rightfully justified.

That being said, if a person shares their situation with you, their problems are going to be bigger than yours, at least in their eyes. To be a truly caring individual, you need to look past your problems and listen to what your friend needs to share. There are times when this cannot be done. In those times, you should beg the others indulgence and say you are at best willing to listen, but advice would not be the best from you right now. Good friends will be able to understand this. There is never a good time to be in a war of who has the worse problems.

And through all of this, maybe you will be able to see that other peoples problems can be bigger and even more intense than your own. Then we come to true understanding of the people we share our lives with.

And that leads me to one of my favorite movie quotes. From the movie "Harvey":

Elwood P. Dowd: Harvey and I sit in the bars... have a drink or two... play the juke box. And soon the faces of all the other people they turn toward mine and they smile. And they're saying, "We don't know your name, mister, but you're a very nice fella." Harvey and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments. We've entered as strangers – soon we have friends. And they come over... and they sit with us... and they drink with us... and they talk to us. They tell about the big terrible things they've done and the big wonderful things they'll do. Their hopes, and their regrets, and their loves, and their hates. All very large, because nobody ever brings anything small into a bar. And then I introduce them to Harvey... and he's bigger and grander than anything they offer me. And when they leave, they leave impressed. The same people seldom come back; but that's envy, my dear. There's a little bit of envy in the best of us.

Expanding on a theme

There are times we recall those we have lost. These times can cause tears or laughter. Don't fight the tears, don't live in the laughter. Doing either will cause us to forget the past and ignore the present and then we will miss the future.

A facebook post for today. These thoughts and the thoughts of

my children this weekend push me to expand on the above. (Somebody push Froggy to read this!!) ☐

I'm almost certain it was a tough weekend for all of my daughters. I was with the youngest all day yesterday, so she did have a bit of comfort on mothers' day itself. The other 3, well I still have a hard time being in multiple places at once. I did make the effort to see the 3 I could, but not enough effort to talk to number 4. Sorry K.

With all of the heartache from the past year. All of the Joy felt. And the new situations we found ourselves in, I am offering some of my thoughts and words.

On mother's day, my daughters found themselves 6 years without their mother. They were all too young to lose someone so important in their lives. I am not, and will never be a suitable replacement. I just try, with all my human failings, to be the best Dad I can be. Remember her in your hearts. Share your stories with each other. You share that common loss. If there is anyone that you should talk to, it should be your sisters. You know each other, and could comfort each other if you wish.

Don't fight the tears, the anger, or even the joy you feel when thinking of those you lost. Yes, you should curb your responses to some feelings. Good social contact almost demands it. But try to recognize those feelings. If you need to yell and scream, be open about it. Tell people why you are mad. Try not to take these feelings out on others, but share them. Let the tears fall, if someone asks why, share the reason. It is much easier for us as people to share the good times. WE MUST make the effort to share the hard times with people. Good friends will support us in that. Of course you may not want to share those hard times with the wrong people (social graces, covering your back, ect.).

Don't be totally consumed by the past. This is a very hard one

(I know from experience). At some point the past has to become the past. For each of us that is a different time. In fact, from day to day it may be different. Let it go when you are able. Again, look for help.

I don't pretend to know all you are going through. You are all different. You are all in different situations. I know what it is like to lose my parents, but that came after I had many years to share with them, and I was on my own. I don't know what it was like to have a depressed widowed father responsible for me. I don't know what it was like for you not to have your mother there for you on the important days of your life. I only know what it was like not to have 1/2 of me available at those same times.

Know that I will listen and offer advice (unless you tell me to just listen) and I love you all. I'm only a phone call or two away. And one more thing, ask your sisters if they have read this.

The 5th of May...

And I didn't go to a Mexican Restaurant. Other plans (thanks C and L) prevented my normal trek to a Mexican Restaurant today. I had Greek Food. No flaming Goat Cheese, but it was very good. Not that I would have wanted to go to a Mexican place without at least one of my daughters, but in a way I missed the trek.

When plans were made, I didn't even think that the 5th of May was in the near future. I'm not sure that would have changed anything. I really want to try the flaming Goat Cheese.

Oh the memories of dining out on Cinco de Mayo. I don't think

we missed many. If we could not afford to go out, most of the time we celebrated at home. Why such a big deal about a Mexican-American Holiday? ([not really celebrated much in Mexico](#)) The only reason we had was it was another excuse for eating Mexican food. Not that this family ever needed an excuse. My dear wife's favorite kind of food was Mexican (*other than chocolate), and we went to Mexican restaurants often. And it did help that the girls never really would mind another meal of Tacos.

So today I had Greek food. I was able to share the company of two very good friends. Nice evening, even without the Flaming Goat Cheese. Other than dinner with my daughters, I could not think of a better way to spend the early evening.

Ah, how things change.

I'm still wondering why we never went to Oriental Restaurants to celebrate Chinese New Years. Could it be that somewhere near the time of that date, we were almost sure to go to a Chinese restaurant? Yep, my birthday is near that day every year, and my favorite food is Chinese food (even better than Chocolate!!)

And why do I keep using the extended title of "Flaming Goat Cheese" for the dish Saganaki? Just because it is more fun to type and say. ☐

Time in a bottle

I'm listening to some old CD's and relaxing after a day driving in the rain. In the truck, out of the truck, into that building and then out. With all of the rain, my clothing was soaked as I drove back from Fort Wayne. As much as I complain

to my children, I really don't mind walking in the rain at times. I prefer a warm summer rain to these cold spring rains, but they can be refreshing at times.

With the short walk back to the truck this evening, after dropping off my youngest, I really got soaked. The rain just decided to drop in buckets as I turned the corner heading away from my daughter's apartment. Anyway a warm fire, a change of clothes and some relaxation was called for when I got home.

The music is still playing, the fire is slowly dieing. And for now, I am relaxed. The weekend is at an end, and I enjoyed it. Now to look forward to the coming week. If I could save time in a bottle, the hours of this weekend would be ones to save.

Every Easter

We color the eggs, hide the eggs, find the eggs and then eat dinner. The children in our family are growing up now, and the next generation of egg finders are in a place too far. How long will we be able to keep the tradition. We will see.

The dinner was far from traditional. There was ham, but that was in a soup. The meal was wonderful and the company of family was greatly desired.

Another time to cherish and remember everything we hold dear in our lives. Something that is needed at all times of the year.

No matter what your faith, this time of year hold the promise of new beginnings. A time to remember what was and what can be. A time to look in your own heart and think of everything life can be, not just what it was.

Happy Easter.

Ahhh the end of a long day

I got up early this morning when I didn't have to. The dog decide to bark at something, he usually sleeps in late. But I got up and around, checked my email, the news and my blog. Not much happened since last evening on the blog, so I went to get some other things done. I come back in 1/2 hour and the site is blocked. Good April Fools prank, but I couldn't find the back door. Oh well, I had things to do.

Laundry check, dishes check. Pick up daughter, oops she was still in Fort Wayne. Check

Movie with friends Check. All told a very good evening.

Tomorrow I'll may write about my new toy. But I may be busy with it instead.

More Maple Goodness

Another year gone, and the Williams County Maple Syrup day is over. We ate more pancakes, sausage and real fresh from the tree maple syrup. I'm still not sure when we started doing this, but as ia family we've been doing it for years. Another ride out to the sugar shack, where they make the syrup and tap the trees. The family seemed to enjoy themselves.

This year additional family friends showed up. My children went off on there own to be with their friends. I had many

pancakes, sausages and cups of coffee. Yum. Of course I purchased some syrup to have the rest of the year and some maple sugar candy to have a bit later.

This day of course reminds me of days gone by. We spent many days like this with family and friends. It was a time to celebrate good food, good friends and good family. These days, from maple syrup days to days at the fair, were days to bask in our lives together. The family we had, the friends we made were the good things in life.

And who says there is nothing going on in the boondocks. ☐

Things that turn back the clock

Many years ago, my wife worked at a pet shop in our little town. A friend of ours owned it and needed help keeping the animals fed and cages clean. It was a little shop and tended to have fish, mice, rats and some more exotic pets. My wife found a cute little grey furball. It was a chinchilla. That first chinchilla was brought home and given the name Jimmy. He would sit on her shoulder, under her hair with just his nose poking out most of the time. A very clean and personable pet. Over the years many other chinchillas made it into our house. Some were welcomed because of their specific colors, some because they were 'rescue' chinchillas. Homes that could or would not take care of the animals, those animals were cared for here.

Fast forward to 2003. My lovely wife died, and my daughters and I are left with over a dozen chinchillas. Some most were older, but there were still a few youngsters. Over the last

few years, I gave a couple away to friends. Others made it through their lives and died. The last few are all over eight years old and they are coming to the end of their lives too. Chinchillas can live to be over 20, I'm almost sure one of ours was close to that, but we never really knew how old she was. Most die after 10-12 years of life. Today, another little chinchilla passed on. Another connection to my wife is gone.

My wife and my youngest daughters could tell you the names of almost every chin. I'm taking nothing away from my oldest, but she had been on her own during the last few chinchilla arrivals. Me, I remembered just a few of the names. Those chinchillas have been gone for some time now. I didn't remember the names of the remaining 4. I just know the color and location.

So a little beige chinchilla is not with me anymore. And memories of other chinchillas and how my wife loved the little animals flood my mind. Funny how things turn the clock backwards.

Just Lucky I guess?

Today was a day to realize that I have a wonderful family, very good friends and life, while not perfect, isn't too bad.

Over the years, I've had quite a few rough times. Some worse than others, but most of them were "the worst that could happen" when they occurred. During all of those times, I've been lucky to have a wonderful safety net. That net included the above mentioned people.

So on this St Patty's Day, I leave those in my safety net this thought.

May you have warm words on a cold evening, A full moon on a dark night, And the road downhill all the way to your door.

Wonderful Thoughts

As of yesterday, all 4 of my daughters and 1 sister have visited and even made a comment or two on my internet musings. It took some time to get all 4 daughters to respond, but it did happen.

So a big welcome to my daughters, Betsy, Froggy, Kittles and Draclet. You are my best girls, and I am proud of all of you.

And little sis, apparently my one 'relative' who is blog savvy, I love having you around.