

It is official....

I have a friend... At least for now. As a way to keep up with some of my daughters, I finally opened a facebook account. I opened this because someone else invited me. My oldest does not have a facebook account, so this won't help with her, but I'm only going to open one social networking account. And since a number of people I know from work are on Facebook, it just makes more sense, if it makes any sense at all.

Really, I don't know that I will put much up on Facebook. It links to my blog, and that is where my words flow.

Do I need to add more Friends?

Good boots for bad feet

I'm not sure how many people know this, but my feet tend to give me problems. Nothing really serious, but at the end of most days, my feet are always sore and tired. It doesn't matter if I'm wearing dress shoes, casual shoes, running shoes, walking shoes, work boots or even no shoes, the end result is the same. Except for two days this week.

I have been looking for a pair of square toed harness boots. My brother had a pair that he wore until they completely wore out. He always said they were the most comfortable things he ever wore. I found a pair on Friday evening. They were a bit pricey for me, but I said what the heck. I needed some new shoes, and these could also be worn on stage. Two things for the price of one. Stage and shoes/boots for the winter months. Not the same brand my brother had, but they were a good pair of boots.

Anyway, I wore them all day Saturday (and into the early morning hours) and put them on again on Sunday. After 24+ hours of wear (and remember these are 'new' boots), my feet on both evenings felt fine. Good support all day without any binding. I don't think my feet would have felt any better if I had stayed in bed all day... That was totally unexpected.

And the strange thing about all this... My brother (even though he has been gone from this earth since 2003) was right again. At least this time he can't rub it in...

Just watched a little football

I took my two youngest daughters to lunch today, and then scampered back home to allow my youngest to get her stuff together to head back to school. On the way to Fort Wayne, we stopped in Hicksville to see a play Jamiahsh was in. About 10 minutes into the play, I mentioned to my daughter that I was guessing Jamiahsh's character would be the murder victim. Not just because he was annoying the 'director', but because, these shows are predictable. At least to some extent. I will admit that I didn't get the 'real' murderer. A very fun performance.

Then off to Fort Wayne with a stop at a Walmart to get pictures developed and some scrap booking supplies. That took some time this evening. A rather late dinner and I got my daughter back to school some time after 8:00pm. Then the hour drive back home.

When I got here, I decided to relax and watch the end of Sunday Night Football. By the time I started watching, the

game was just about over and it was only halfway through the 3rd period. At least during the game I did find out that most of the teams for the league championship series have been decided. Only the Phillies and Rockies need to complete their series. And they had a snow out... I think some cities should have domed stadiums (or more exactly retractable domes) if they start competing in October/November. Sometimes it is just too cold for baseball.

I also heard that the Bears won, so we should see another Whatever post... ☐

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...

There is one problem with being involved in the theater. When you plan a holiday show, the rehearsals start well before the actual holiday season. And since our Christmas show starts at the beginning of December, the rehearsal is also earlier. I don't like to do Christmas until after Thanksgiving.

Anyway, it will my job to bring Santa Clause to life in "Miracle on 34th Street". Ok, so I'm not playing Kris Kringle/Santa Clause, but I am playing 2 different Santa Clauses. And some other part I cannot remember right now.

For those of you who do know the show, the first Santa I play is the drunk Santa that loses his job because he was trying to stay warm on the float. One little drinks never hurt, does it?

To make the show even better for me, I get to act with one of my daughters again. This is always a thrill for me. Should be

fun.

I'll have a marmalade sandwich, please.

Thank you sir!

I wrote a little blog on Winnie-the-Pooh, and my oldest daughter reminded me of the bear she liked. While I don't remember reading Paddington Bear to my daughters, I do remember something about the little bear.

From the title, you can guess that maybe marmalade sandwiches had something to do with Paddington. You would be correct. I do believe that was his favorite thing to eat. He also liked to drink cocoa. Now, I'm not sure how well cocoa goes with marmalade, but he is a bear from darkest Peru.

Now as with all children's books, the title character did not always do the right thing or behave correctly. He was always very polite, but trouble would occur. He did always try to do his best. Can anyone ask for anything more? Is this the appeal to my oldest daughter, a little bear that has a tendency to get into trouble?

Now of course if you know Paddington, you picture a bear in a hat, duffle coat and wellingtons. He almost always had his hat, and received the coat shortly after he was found. The boots came later.

There are now books and movies (videos from tv shows) about Paddington, so it isn't too late to introduce yourself to this little bear from darkest Peru.

Other famous bears (just to be fair)
Winnie-the-Pooh
The original Teddy Bear
Balou the Bear (from the Jungle Book)
The Berenstain Bears
Corduroy Bear
The Three Bears
Smokey the Bear
Gladly the Cross-eyed Bear...

Oh yes, and the Chicago Bears ☐

Which bears did I miss?

I'm not sure, but I think it moved...

Yes, I've heard that reaction to sushi on occasion. I think it came from my children. For the most part when they were growing up, and for some even now, they never wanted to try new food. From the limited diet of their childhood (not that limited, I did experiment in the kitchen), I have a couple that will try new foods, and one that even enjoys some different tastes. As far as I know none of them are as varied in their food trying as their dad. (I've eaten bugs on purpose and some were tasty ...)

So anyway I took my eldest daughter and her husband out to dinner this evening. The reason is this was her first week back at work after some time off. I just thought it would help not to have to cook dinner for one evening. Yes, we did go to a Sushi Bar/Japanese Restaurant. We went to the [Koto Buki](#) restaurant in Toledo.

If you like sushi, you should go. If you don't, but you like some oriental foods, you should go. In addition to the sushi and sashimi, they have other oriental dishes. It is rather pricey when you start ordering a lot of Sushi. If you want less expensive, I guess you could order from the sides and appetizers. ☐

Anyway we all ended up eating all we wanted (and more) and had a good relaxing evening. As they say in the commercials, it was priceless.

The blustery day

We had a bit of wind today and into the evening. A few of us at work braved the elements and tried to go for a bit of a walk at lunch. Didn't happen. It started to rain a bit, and it was driven hard into our faces. Not much rain, but it hurt. We went in and were lucky to find that there we were allowed to hit the buffet that was provided for a meeting. So today I got a free lunch. Can't say that every day.

Anyway the wind and rainy conditions made me think of book and a video "Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day". As a family we would watch the video, and I remember reading the Pooh books to my daughters many times. Now, the Disney movie "Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day" was taken from the book "The House at Pooh Corners". Other Disney Pooh movies were made from other chapters in this book and the first Pooh book "Winnie-the-Pooh". My daughters, wife and I read the original books and some of the Disney versions based on their movies. Always fun to read and watch. And I think I can still get my voice into Eeyore every now and then. I tried to add voices to all the characters in the book, but the girls had the video voices

to compare mine to. I think they liked my 'Eeyore'. Maybe one daughter will comment?

So on this cool and blustery evening, I just have to say "Oh bother".

And the rain comes down

As I sit here and type this blog, it seems that there is a bit of rain falling. I can hear it hit the windows, roof and echo on the metal chimney. To me, this is a comforting sound. As long as the wind isn't too strong, or the lightning too intense, I enjoy hearing it rain at night. I'm warm and dry in my house, and I know that we are receiving needed water.

It also brings back memories of walking in a warm summer rain with my wife. Not really worrying about getting wet or cold. Feeling relief from the summer's heat. And feeling the warmth of our relationship.

I also remember hurrying from building to building of our local zoo when the cold spring or fall rains hit during one of our many excursions. Maybe stopping for a warm drink at the cafe or spending extra time in the warm tropical exhibits. And finally getting back to the van and putting the heat on.

Or back at the zoo during the Christmas Lights exhibit during those bitter winter rains. We actually enjoyed those evenings more, since the crowds would be much thinner. We would be dressed and ready for the rain with waterproof or repellent outerwear and umbrellas. We would look at the lights and the raindrops falling would reflect a variety of color. Of course the evening would include hot chocolate, coffee or tea.

And of course there are always those first spring rains that bring the green back to the area after the long grey and white winters. Memories of fun, love, laughter and light remind me that even during the coldest times, the hope of spring and new life can be found in the same rains.....

A tale of two gatherings...

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times... (Sorry Mr. Dickens)

But then again it was. This weekend families gathered to mark similar yet different events.

On Saturday, my nephew celebrated his birthday. He has reached his teen years, and is more interested in the presents, food and television than the actual gathering. I do believe he 'suffered' through the gathering just to make sure he got his presents. Nothing really wrong with that, I'm sure most young people of his age do exactly the same thing. The gatherings, unless totally oriented toward the youth, are for the adults. We ate, talked, laughed and remembered many of these events during the day. This is what, through the ages, kept families together. We share common bonds and we celebrate those bonds. Be they birthdays, anniversaries, or holidays, times with family and friends keep our bonds alive.

On Sunday, another gathering was held. This was a memorial of the birth and death day of my grandson. He received no physical presents, and he won't be living into his teen years to complain about the attention he is or isn't getting. This was a day to support those who will miss his presence in the world. It was a time for family and friends to gather and support one another. We ate, talked, laughed and remember many

events, but we also shared a tear or two. Coming together in the hard times is another thing that keeps families together. Death, sickness and other troubles are also something we all share. Another common bond. Another way to show support and love.

While on the surface, I wish that all we ever had to do was share the happy occasions, I realize that it is the difficult situations that are the true measure of what we mean to each other. These hard times can show the best humanity has to offer.

So this weekend was the best of times and the worst of times, with the best of times far outshining the worst. Those closest to the sadness may not feel this for quite some time, but in looking back they will eventually remember "The Best of Times."

Those Beautiful Fall Days

If you were in NW Ohio, NE Indiana or Southern Michigan today, you probably had beautiful fall weather. Warm without being too hot, nice breeze and wispy clouds. And I noticed that some of the leaves have started to change color. We are still a few weeks off from most trees turning red, gold and brown, but it is starting. Some of the early changers have started to lose their leaves. Just a beautiful time...

Except, I still remember the good days from 6 years ago. The days before the intense shoulder pain slowed my wife's days to a crawl. The good days that soon turned ugly.

I remember that it was about now that I should be holding my new grandson. But the days turned ugly.

I remember the last few days of my Mom's life from many years ago now. She didn't know what was coming her way in the waning days of October 2000. And my father, one year later, going through things that I didn't understand then, but I really do understand them now. While his health wasn't very good when mom died, he could have lived many years with a bit of luck. My feeling is that his heart broke at the one year mark, and nothing would fix that. After my stress related illnesses of my first few years of being a widower, I can tell you that that takes a toll.

All this happened in those beautiful days of fall. For the past 5 years, I didn't see much of the beauty. I realized it was there, but other thoughts would push the beauty of the season out of my thoughts. The older thoughts don't weigh as heavily on my mind now, and for a moment I saw the beauty of the day. Then I noticed my arms were empty... My daughter and son-in-law have empty arms too. And I wonder when will I see fall again, without its ever present shadow?