

# Just thinking about things...again

Today was the first day I've been to a play tryout where I didn't read for a role. I was just there as a producer. It was kind of fun just sitting there watching others try out. No worries, no trying to figure out a role/persona. I really enjoyed myself. We had some new people trying out for roles, and it is good to get new blood in the theater. We just can't have the same people in shows over and over again. I'm all for the new people getting parts.

I'm currently listening to the Tigers and Indians baseball game. The big difference is I'm listening to it on the Indian's Radio network, instead of the Tiger's Radio Network. I find it strange that the announcers don't seem to know the Tigers. Maybe it is because I don't know the other teams as well, but I don't think the Tiger's announcers are nearly as bad when it comes to the Cleveland games. I have caught them in other games, not knowing players, but you should know your division rivals. Cleveland/Detroit has been a big rivalry for as long as I can remember. I would think the Indians announcers would do better. The only reason I listen the the Indian station, is that I get it on all of the radios in the house. The Tiger station, I need to be in the car, or get my daughters battery powered portable to hear it. Even then, it is very touchy as to location, and direction of the antenna. Tiger's just won!

Need to get some time off work soon. I enjoyed the 3 day weekend, but I would like to get time off to see my family all over the country. I guess I need to talk with the peoples in charge at work.

I'm looking forward to a movie or two with my girls this weekend. I'm going to have some time with both daughters at

home so it is possible.

Suffering from a sore back for the past few days (it seems like weeks). Not much I can do about it other than resting it. Slow walking, moderate stretching, and making sure my back is supported while sitting are all helping. Not sure what I did to pull the muscles, but it was nagging for a while.

I haven't watched much network or cable TV (other than part of a ball game) all summer. Can't say I miss it. I went a few years, while working 2nd shift, without TV, I am guessing I could continue for a long time. Being in the middle of the woods, I don't have cable (to far in the country) or satellite (too many trees). I don't see myself getting those anytime soon. I really think I could live without TV. Owned or rented movies, well that is a different story.

I really guess that is about it. I am thinking of upcoming days that will be happening in July so I will have more to write about at a later date...

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## **Windy City Classic**

Back in the days when it didn't count, there was only one yearly face-off between the Chicago cross-town rivals, the Cubs and the White Sox. It was called a number of things, but when I was younger, I remember it being referred to as the Windy City Classic. No matter which side you cheer for, these games are important to every sports fan in Chicago. I even remember cutting school one year to attend...

But now that there is something known as inter-league play, there are 6 of these games a year, and they do count. Today was the opening game of one such series, and I am suffering

through it. One of the rare Cubs games I've actually gotten to watch on tv this year, it has to be broadcast by Sox announcers, even though the game is being played at Wrigley Field and the Cubs are the home team. I cannot stand the Sox announcers. Not only do they stink as announcers (I would be rich if I got paid for every time they've said "south-paw" – some diversity in your subject matter, guys, please?), but they are on *their* side. So every time the White Sox make a play, even though the crowd is booing, the announcers get excited. And I won't even waste much time complaining about the shouts of "Put it on the Board!" I'm subjected to every time the Sox score runs.

There's a lot at stake for this series – both teams are in first place in their respective divisions, even though it must be noted that the Cubs have a much better record – but I'm not really minding the errands I have to run that will take me away from today's game. Watching the Cubs lose to the Sox is one thing if that happens, but hearing these horrible announcers rub in every homerun or lucky play the Sox make is a new brand of torture of which I'm glad to be relieved!

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## **Vacation!**

In case you've been wondering where I've been lately (or even if you haven't) – Grandma has helped us get one last little vacation before baby arrives. We were going to head to New York, but decided not to do that, thank goodness. Admittedly, the gas prices were the original deterrent, so then we explored taking a Greyhound bus there, but in my huge condition, I didn't see any opportunity for good rest on a long bus trip. I am really glad we declined the big trip, though, because my feet have been killing me, just from

everyday tasks, like cleaning or shopping. I would have had to cut short all of our sight-seeing in New York or rent a wheelchair for the week. And staying home had afforded us time to do much needed catch-up work around the house. We've been making landscaping plans, and I will be very excited to see how that turns out in a few weeks when it's finished. We cleaned out the famous closet o' games, and we didn't even need to knock down the wall to expand the closet as I was talking about in another post. We found enough room for all of our games by sending all the kids' games upstairs to their room. Our house has lots of built-in shelving and drawers, and the kids had a huge cabinet in their closet that wasn't even being used. So, up went all the kids' games. I am a little concerned that they will tear apart their game collection and scatter pieces and whatnot, but they will have to be taught somehow that this is not going to be tolerated. Most importantly on our vacation without the kids, we achieved the cleaning of their room. It is a huge bedroom, and we have all 3 of our girls sharing it, but until we cleaned it, they could barely fit in there because they had so many toys. Whenever we'd make them clean it, we noticed that they would play in there for such a long time afterward because they actually liked having all the open space. So we donated about 90% of their toys to charity while they were visiting with Grandma. It might sound mean, but we kept the important stuff, and like I said, they actually enjoy their room and the things in it much more when everything is picked up and they have fewer things to appreciate. I will keep you posted on how well (or not) this is received when they get home. They will probably forget exactly what toys they once had, and by donating everything, more kids can enjoy them.

Even though it took an entire day of cleaning to reach the bottom of the toy pile in their room, we have managed to fit in lots of fun for just hubby and me. We've gone shopping several times, and yesterday we were in Toledo all day getting good food, seeing a movie, and taking in a [Toledo MudHens](#)

game. If you're not familiar, the MudHens are minor league baseball. I've been wanting to get to a [Chicago Cubs](#) game last year or this year, but with the baby coming, I've ruled it out until at least next year. So, minor league baseball it was, and we had a blast – I got my live baseball game fix for awhile... there's just something about hearing the crack of the bat, the slap of the ball in the glove and the other sounds of a baseball game in the beautiful summer night air. And it was a great game. Seems a player from the [Detroit Tigers](#) was rehabbing with the MudHens, so we got to see a major-leaguer pitch for a few innings. The Hens were up 3-0 early in the game, then they let Indianapolis tie it up, only to hit a walk-off homer in the 9th with 2 outs to win the game – awesome! And if you're not from the area and want to experience food that is uniquely Toledo, I recommend a restaurant called [Tony Packo's](#) to you. Their menu is somewhat limited; there aren't very many choices, so pass on it if you're a picky eater. But if you're like me and you like to try all different kinds of ethnic food, give it a whirl. They serve Hungarian food, namely sausage, cabbage rolls, and chili mac over dumplings. It's really good and a unique dining experience. It's also really interesting how we heard of the restaurant in the first place. We were in a thrift store and I saw this stuffed baby in a diaper with a tomato head. I thought it was really cute, even though it creeped my husband out, but it was only 5¢ so I bought it. Turns out, it's a character from Tony Packo's as labeled on the rear end of the baby tomato. I googled Tony Packo's, found out it was a restaurant an hour away from us in Toledo, looked at the menu, and we decided to give it a try. The guy who works their marketing in the gift shop really liked that story. What's weird though, is that while gutting my kids' room this week, the baby tomato never surfaced. Hmmm, I wonder what happened to it?

Sometimes you get more of what you want from a vacation by staying home. In this age of the horribly high gas prices,

the media has even coined a new word for the 'vacation taken at home', but I can't recall what it is. If you know, post it in my comments – it's bugging me that I can't think of it. Anyway, by staying home, we saved a ton of money on gas alone, and we got some things done around the house that we will appreciate for months or even years to come, all while having a great time with just each other, no kids! Thank you, Grandma!

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## What a day...

This day actually started some time yesterday evening. During a thunderstorm in the area and a tornado close to us, 4 outlets in our house went out. I'm thinking something in the storm caused it, because to was only part of a complete circuit. Looked like I would have to replace at least on outlet. I couldn't tell from a exterior glance as to which outlet shorted out. So I put a trip to the hardware store on my Saturday to-do list. The first thing on the list was getting my daughter to her SAT testing.

Now on to Saturday Morning... Storm damage from the previous night's storms caused some rough driving. A normal 40 minute drive took closer to 1 hour. We just made it just in time to the SAT testing site. Hmm, day not starting off well...

I had to wait around for at least an hour for the hardware store to open, so I stopped for coffee. Those who have known me for a while, know that my favorite coffee shop closed for good a little over 2 years ago. This was the place my dear wife and I spent many happy times, just getting away from the kids, planning for future things, getting to know one another again after 4 children. Good memories in that little place. I

have yet to find any coffee shop that comes close to the atmosphere, quality of the coffee, food ect. and the people who frequent the shop itself. The place I stopped in today had a very nice atmosphere (except for the big screen TV, but I went around the corner from that). The coffee was very good. The food I had ok, but nothing special.. Not many people there, so I couldn't say anything about that. Too bad it was a 40 minute drive... Too far for a once a week type of thing.

After the coffee, I could get the things I needed to replace at least 1 outlet. I got 4 new outlets just in case. I still had at least 2 hours to wait for the SAT to finish. Stopped at another store and was able to find some water filters for our office at work. I installed an older water filter on the tap at work, but the filters have been hard to find. I try to pick up extra whenever I see them on the shelf. Filtered water makes better coffee ya know... Now only 1 1/2 hours for the test to let out...

Got a call from my daughter in FL, we talked until my Cell battery almost died. Then I got a notice that I had 3 messages... Two were from the day before!!! They weren't there when I got up in the morning, I checked... Storm must have hit a local tower or something?? Anyway a friend wanted to get together to (in his words) "just get out of the house". Great!! How does one decide what to do when I was already invited to oldest daughter's place for fun and games... Hmm. Well, I was expecting a call from the oldest earlier in the week to finalize the plans. It never happened. I let my youngest test goer decide... Friend won the toss.

So after a good lunch youngest, and I head out for some fun. We played games (all sorts), and just had a lot of fun. We played a miniature bowling game. The balls were slightly larger than a softball, no holes, and the pins were on strings/wires. If you ever see one, try it out. They are very fun. We also played indoor mini-golf (black lit area with dark black 'greens', and glowing colored bumpers and obstructions).

This was fun to, but it did make it hard to 'read the greens'. I ended up with a hole in one on the last hole. We also played a number of arcade games for 'tickets'. It was a fun afternoon/evening... Good idea C...

Now I'm tired and ready for bed... What a Day...

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## **I'm Not Rubbing It In, Honest, But...**

With ***NINE STRAIGHT WINS***, the Chicago Cubs are the HOTTEST team in baseball right now! I am ecstatic about this and just had to make a remark or two. So I'm sorry to my friends who follow MLB, choosing instead to support franchises other than the Cubs – I don't know how your teams are doing, and I don't mean to rub it in about how incredibly awesome the Cubs are this year, but these days, "How about those Cubs?" is not just a conversation starter, it's a question being asked by baseball fanatics, Cubs fans, Chicagoans, and probably anyone who has ever heard of the Cubs, their 'loveable losers' nickname, and their awesome 2008 baseball skills. Gone are the days it seems when the Cubs were the laughing stock of baseball; the "maybe next year" mantra and when an 8-0 deficit in a game meant certain disaster for my favorite team. The other day, they were able to turn an 8-0 losing game into a 10-9 **WIN** over the Rockies! Honestly, the Cubs have never been known for great comebacks in a game, and this was no fluke – that game was followed by 2 more games where the Cubs came from behind to save the game and declare wins for themselves. Then again, rallies are nothing new to Cubs' manager, Lou Piniella – no manager in history has managed more eight-run comebacks.

So could 2008 be the year for the Cubs? Could 100, a whole century, be the magic number of years us Cubs fans have had to wait for another World Series win? That remains to be seen, of course, it is only June, but keep this in mind: according to the Elias Sports Bureau, the last time the Cubs had the best record in baseball entering June was 1908, the year they last won the World Series. Coincidence or fate? We will find out come October – I know I will be glued to the Cubs website until then!

*How about those Cubs?!?*

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## **Are You Ready For Some Football Or Was It Softball?**

Tonight, I watched my nine-year old niece at her softball game. The weather made me recall many mid-October Friday nights in the stands of a high school football game; it was that cold. This was one of the few I will be able to make this summer with musical rehearsals soon to be taking most of my evenings. Apart from the 50 degree weather, it was actually fun watching the game. Elizabeth went 3 for 3 at the plate. Her first hit went between the third baseman and short stop... a line shot. Her second time at bat, she hit another line drive that unfortunately went foul. Then, she eventually hit the ball that landed in front of the plate, leaving Elizabeth stunned for a second until everyone told her to go.

She also did well in the field at short stop. "Well" is a relative term as these were a group of 8-10 year old girls who are still pitched to by their respective coaches. I don't remember being pitched to by a coach. I remember going from

hitting off a tee to having my peers pitch before I was 8. Elizabeth made a few nice stops in the field and tagged a runner attempting to advance to third base.

Also nice to see at this developmental stage of the young ones play is the parents in the stands. Shouting words of encouragement instead of shouts of disgust at bad calls, bad plays, etc. Those will start in a short time. But for now, there were no runs kept track of and maybe a few more strikes per batter as they are still learning the basics, so **EVERYONE WINS!!!** Although when the 90 minute limit was up, more than one mother was happy that the game was over and able to get out of the cold.

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## Where Have You Gone Joe Dimaggio?

Tonight was my first real rehearsal for *Little Women*. It seems like it has been forever since we had our read through almost 2 weeks ago. The director even commented that it seems like forever since I have been there. The last week has been for the March sisters to meet and discuss. Before rehearsal began, some of us were discussing the current musical [Spring Awakening](#). I know very little about it aside from the fact that it probably would be much too controversial to present in our small community theatre. We then played a game of sorts by connecting the dots between various musicals. For instance, what do *My Fair Lady* and [The Music Man](#) have in common. Or perhaps, *Gypsy* and *The Sound of Music*. Call it a mini quiz for you hearty souls brave enough to try.

Rehearsal itself was quite interesting. We did manage to sing

through five of the seventeen songs in the show. Not bad when you have as many as 5 different parts singing at once. There were even times when two entirely different melodies were supposed to be sung at the same time. Let's just say that "The Weekly Volcano Press" is probably the most challenging piece in the show.

After the songs I was a part of were finished, I was told that I could go if I wanted to. Hmm... Mr. Director not know Morat too well do he? I stuck around, listened, and tried to help those around me when I could which at times was quite interesting. I found myself trying to help the young man playing Theodore Laurence III ("Laurie") by softly humming along as he sang his part in "Five Forever."

I even found myself learning more about my character, the evil stock character villain Braxton Prendergast, by listening to the other songs being sung. I cannot wait to block the scenes I am in. Quite melodramatic (perhaps more popcorn or skittles to be thrown, but I doubt that that would be allowed... maybe some cheers for the villain would be appropriate). But all in all, I thought it was a very rewarding rehearsal.

**THEN... I GOT HOME** and caught the lowlights of the Yankees and Orioles game. So much for A-Rod's return. Baltimore scored seven runs in the first inning. The final score was Baltimore 12... New York 2?! Which puts the Bronx Bombers record at 20-25. UGH!!!!

Want tickets to a sold out show? [Click here](#)

Need tickets to see your favorite sports team? [Click here](#)

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# Watching Paint Dry

There are two sports that I really cannot stand to watch. I realize that this may put me in the minority especially in this area where it seems that both sports seem to have legion of fans (particularly in my own family).

The first is NASCAR racing. How anyone can sit for 3-4 or sometimes 5 hours at a time watching cars go around and around a track is beyond me. My mother regales us with stories of her youth and spending weekends at the area race track watching local drivers compete. I can sit through maybe an hour of televised auto racing before I excuse myself and do something more constructive. I do enjoy cheering for my favorite drivers. These are not the more popular stars including Dale Earnhardt, Jr., Jeff Gordon, etc. I chose to chose the most colorful name I can think of, usually one who is nowhere near competing. Names like Dick Trickle (Tricky Dicky or Trick Dickle as I used to call him), Hideo Fukuyama ( I wonder if he is related to Chicago Cubs acquisition Kosuke Fukudome sorry if I insulted the new Cubs outfielder), or my new favorite... AJ Allmendinger.

My second favorite sport to fall asleep to is professional golf. Honestly, whenever I hear that someone hit a birdie I say... what kind? At a recent extended family gathering where everyone was gathered around the television quietly waiting for Tiger Woods or some other player to take a shot, I shouted **"THREE AND A HALF!!!!"** They were not amused. When I want to watch golf on television I stick with the classics: *Caddyshack* and *Happy Gilmore*. And if I want to play a good round, I much prefer going eighteen holes at the area miniature golf course.

Sometimes I really think I would prefer watching paint dry or worse yet.... The multi-colored bar code test pattern on the television screen HAHAHA.

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# EVERYONE WINS!!!!

Updating a previous entry, I learned what became of the David Ortiz jersey that was unearthed from the site of the new Yankee Stadium. It was auctioned off on ebay for the exorbitant sum of \$175, 000. I thought... way too much until I learned where the proceeds would be going. There is an organization in Boston that supports pediatric as well as adult cancer. All started with a 12-year-old boy named [Jimmy](#). Ironically, the Yankee organization donated the money to one of the Boston Red Sox favorite charities. And who says that there can't be chivalry between rival teams?

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## It's Not the Years, Honey... It's The Mileage

It seems that everyone is getting in the Indiana Jones spirit. While chatting with a friend I was directed to the [Chicago Cubs'](#) website and the [schedule](#) thereof. On the May 22nd space, there appears a picture of Harrison Ford as the reknowned archaeologist ready to embark on his latest adventure. We speculated that all of baseball may have decided to take the day off to celebrate Dr. Jones' return to the big screen. Somehow, I had my doubts. Sure enough on the [New York Yankees'](#) [site](#), there appeared the same picture but a game was listed. So, I thought all of baseball was celebrating but just not taking the entire day off. I checked out the [Detroit Tigers'](#) [schedule](#): there it was again, but yet

again the team has a scheduled game. Only makes me more anxious for the next 21 days to go quickly.

Check your favorite team's website to see if they are celebrating the release of *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. At least a Yankee fan had something to divert his attention to tonight ☐