

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.

Time for Sleep?

Two days in a row with minimal sleep, and I'm now exhausted. I'm surprised I have kept going this long. Not much going on except that my youngest is in another play. She just finished one, and starts another 2 days after closing..

Being the person that I am, I will probably help out in some shape and or manner on this show too. Lighting, rounding up kids backstage (it is Childrens' theater). I'm sure the

director will find plenty of ways I can help out. Even if I complain, I'm happy to do it.

Night all...

Books as Movies – 2

I remembered a book I enjoy yearly that was made into a movie. It was an animated movie, but it was a movie.

Long before Peter Jackson made the “Lord of the Rings” series, Rankin-Bass made “The Hobbit”. This was actually a decent handling of the book. This movie was designed as a family friendly TV movie. That is exactly what it was. There were a number of things that were different from the book, but what can you do in a 70 minute movie.

This little animated movie actually set the stage for the animated movie I wanted to talk about. Rumors were rampant about the quality of the animation for the “Lord of the Rings” in 1978. I think that is the only thing that made the movie interesting. A 132 minute movie trying to fit a trilogy the size of “The Lord of the Rings”. There was a lot of stuff left out in the 10+ hours of the Peter Jackson movies, how did they think they could do any of this justice.

Well, they didn't. For me, the animation had some problems, mainly with the big battles. They didn't look like they fit with the rest of the movie. Other than that, I don't remember much about this. My problems were with the story adaptation. There were many things missing in the story (of course) and the way the characters were drawn and written, made me wonder if anyone read the book. There was no depth to any of the characters. No drive in the Hobbits. Gandalf just seemed like

an angry aging wizard (standard issue). And other characters seemed flat.

Before Peter Jackson made his films I thought of getting this movie just for a collection. I'm glad I waited.

4.5 hours

In 4.5 hours I need to be up and getting ready for work. For some reason I just couldn't sleep. Not much new in this, but it is new that I was asleep and then woke up after an hour or so, and I was wide awake. No strange noises in the house, just the usual late night sounds. Dog is softly snoring. No sounds from the girls' room. Frogs, crickets, and other night time animals are making their voices heard. But I'm used to all this.

I got on the web, hoping that reading the news and such of the day would be boring enough to put me to sleep. No such luck. It was boring, just not enough to make me tired. So maybe I have something in my head that needs to be written. But since I'm writing about not sleeping, could that really be it?

So I'm just going to re-hash some of the news I read this evening. I'm not even going to supply links, you'll have to look it up yourself...

Experts predicting gas at \$7.00 by the end of the summer, this after an announcement that Saudi Arabia found a new oil site. IMHO, panic is driving the current price of gas through the roof. Some of these so called experts should think before they open their mouths.

The Detroit Tigers won today putting them over .500 for the

first time this year. The White Sox beat the Cubs, so Detroit didn't advance any... I had such high hopes at the beginning of the season. Oh well, I survived 2003 as a Tiger fan, I can survive this year too

Spain wins the European Football (Soccer) Championship. I find soccer very boring, why didn't this put me to sleep?

Wildfires are still burning in California, flooding still happening along the Mississippi. (I can still spell Mississippi without adding too many "S's" or "P's" or "I's". Not bad from a non-speller, just don't ask me to spell bananananana ☐

Buffalo are roaming again in Minnesota. And we have some not so far from here in Fremont IN.

The Pixar movie WALL-E made 62.5 million over the weekend. It is a cute little movie.

On a somewhat sad note, Southwick Mall in Toledo Oh closed its doors. Once a wonderful shopping area in South Toledo, this 36 year old mall has been going down hill for years. I remember taking dates to what was called "Old-Towne" where there were a lot of small frontier style shops and novelty stores. This later became a movie theater, that added to the theaters already there. It was a very open mall that at one time held a wide variety of stores. One by one the Anchor stores left, and this area became an eyesore. Not sure what will become of it, but I really wonder what they did or will do with the wonderful Carousel they had in the mall.

Uga VI, the University of Georgia Bulldog mascot, died of heart failure. He was only 9 years old... He started as the mascot at the age of 1.

There was a lot of other news that I don't think needs repeating. Politics as usual, and other nasty headlines were prevalent.

Down to 4 hours until I need to get ready for work... I'm still not tired, but I guess I should try to relax a bit.

Life lessons at the theater...

I'm not going to write about how good the show was (again). I'm just going to write a little bit about some life lessons I've learned over the years at our little theater.

Many hands make light work. After the shows we usually need to tear down the set to make room and clean up for the next production coming in. This is much easier with a large cast. Many people working on various parts of the set will bring it down quickly. Smaller shows, we beg and plead for people to come and help.

Help others when needed. At times people will forget their lines, or forget to enter when needed. It is up to the rest of the cast to keep the show going. Ad-lib lines here and there, line prompting during a hug, someone else saying the line (if this works), or just smoothly skipping by the flub, are ways we help each other on stage.

Not everyone is a Star. You can't always have top billing. Sometimes you need to support the front people. It is part of theater, it is part of life.

Even the Star needs support. Even in shows with only one actor on stage, usually has many people behind the scenes. From lighting to props there is always somebody looking out for you.

All jobs are important. That backstage manager that never shows up on stage is sometimes seen as unneeded, until the day

they can't make the show. Then the props aren't on stage where they should be, and the flow of the show just goes down.

Satisfy the customer. If you don't do a good job, and leave the customer satisfied, they won't be back. Repeat business is essential.

Relax, have fun! One of the most important things I've learned. If you are relaxed and having fun on stage everything flows more smoothly. It works in the real world as well. You can't always have fun in theater or real life (some jobs are just the pits), but you can try relax and make the best of the situation.

Be ready for the unexpected. In live performances almost anything can happen. Be prepared for it. You may never need to know what to do when something on stage breaks, but you have to go with the flow. In life, this makes very good sense too.

Do your best. No matter what job/part you have do your best, it makes it easier for you and for those around you.

Do your job. If your job is telling people what to do, do that. If that isn't in your job/part description, refrain from doing it. Sometimes it is nice for new actors to get a helpful hint from other actors, sometimes not. Make sure that your helpful hints are just that. They should not sound like directives, those should come from the director.

But then again, Share your knowledge. An additional note about the above. Telling someone what you do to help remember lines, or stage directions is a good thing. Helping someone get over a bit of stage fright, also good. Knowledge of any field (except secret stuff) is best shared.

Goodbyes can be hard. We all need to say goodbye to someone every so often. Sometimes you know you may never see the person again. Make the best of the time you have with people,

it will show benefits in your life.

Life is a stage, where we are the actors and the audience...

A little bit older

I went to dinner before going to the theater for another night in the light booth. It was a special dinner with Grandparents, Sisters and an Aunt and Cousin. It was in celebration of my youngest 17th birthday. This is her last year as a child. By law next year she will be an adult in society. My youngest is almost an adult. When did she grow up?

A very dear friend was saying something about her birthday coming up, and found it a bit overwhelming. Me, I've never had any problems with any of my birthdays, after all it is just a number. I do find I'm having a bit of trouble with other days. Daughters' weddings, graduations, and their birthdays. Funny, I don't feel old when I have my birthdays, I do on the other days mentioned. Today I saw the 17 year old that is my daughter. Talk about feeling old.

I guess that comes with being a parent. There are children who now call me Grandpa. Hmmm when did all this happen? Yesterday, I wasn't even sure what I wanted to do when I grew up!

I'll have to go find my cane, glasses and hearing aid and hobble over to the rocker... Today I feel old...

Running down...

One of those, I shouldn't have gotten out of bed days. I'm hoping I'm not coming down with whatever my light booth double had last week. She needed at least a few days to get over it. I don't have that kind of time.

Things I wanted to get done during the off days between shows, I didn't get done. So I'm falling farther behind in things I need to do around the house. I'll have to make some time this Saturday morning to get things going.

One more weekend of shows, and then on to Children's theater for my youngest. I guess I will be seeing a lot of that theater this summer. And I haven't been in a show yet. I know I will have to get going to make sure I help out with the show I'm a producer of. My life in theater is never done.

Good night folks, just a quick update.

Because it's Logical

Those who know me may have different views of me based on where they see me most often. In the theater, I tend to show my more creative (silly, strange??) side. At work, I tend to the serious, more logical side. Some others will see me as a possible combination of the two. Which is the real me? Well, both are me. If you meet me, I tend to show the real me. I don't believe in putting up fronts for anyone. But I do have many sides. The theater brings out some of the light hearted me. Computers will bring out my logical side. Friends can have get either, depending on the situation. Some may say I have a sinister side too. In a certain mood, I will talk in many

different voices (I do a pretty good Stitch and Bullwinkle). Other times I tend to imitate Mr. Spock from Star Trek, not the voice, but the purely logical side.

Today, I'm leaning toward the Spock side of me. Somethings I read made me think about recent events in a logical light. I have read in many places where people who lose a loved one (especially widow/ers) have or receive 'signs' from their loved one. I don't believe in that. I'm a logical skeptic in this. Not to hurt anyone's feelings, but most of the things I read about can be classified as coincidence or wishful thinking. After you lose someone you really care about, little things can bring a lot of comfort.

The one thing I heard about most often are pennies or dimes found. My first question was why these coins? Why not nickels, quarters, or Dollar coins? Why not some foreign coin I would never find around my house. I found coins of all sorts before any close loved one died, I found them afterwards too. People, including those who live in my house, drop small coins all the time without noticing them. I just happen to keep my nose to the floor looking for them. Coins really don't seem to be a good sign.

Any other sort of natural occurrence fall in the same category for me. I have seen butterflies all my life and even had them land on me, having this occur after a death is just the same thing that happened before. Seeing birds, clouds, rainbows ect, all have happened throughout my life, happening again is just that for me.

Then we have the electrical malfunctions. Radios going on without warning, clocks that haven't worked starting to work again. Well, I can't say this ever happened to me before or after a loved ones death. For the time being proof/disproof of this sign is not available. If it happens to you, take it anyway you like.

Feelings of a person being in the room is one I have the easiest time explaining. I've had that feeling about many people in my life, some of the time they had died, other times they were just gone for a period of time. People are creatures of habit, we tend to expect people and things to be in a certain place at a certain time. Seeing them there when they aren't there could just be replaying old memories. As I said, I've experienced this, but it never felt like a sign. Especially when I see my younger sister playing drums in my basement. This was my brother's house before mine, and my sister would play the drums quite often. There are times when playing Beatles' music, I will see her pounding away on the drums. In the same way I see other people (living and dead) where I expect them to be, even if they aren't there at the moment. I guess it is sort of a deja-vu thing your brain/eyes do together. But instead of feeling something happened to you before, you re-live things that have happened to you.

The last one I've heard about are orbs or glowing sections in photographs. I can't say I've seen things in pictures that I couldn't explain or in the digital age remove by taking a new shot. Lighting, dirty lenses, reflections off all sorts of objects can cause the effects I've seen people claim as signs. Some people pushing an agenda could make these things happen on purpose.

It was said that Houdini wanted to get a sign from his mother after she died. He spent a great deal of time going to mediums and other mystics in hope of the signs. Everyone he went to, he proved to be a fraud. It is said that he had a sign specifically for his wife, if he should die first. There was a log of controversy as to if this happened at all.

In any event, my lovely wife knew of my logical frame of mind, and that the above 'signs' would never pass my skeptical frame of mind. If she can give a sign, she hasn't given one that she knows will get through. I have a couple of small things in mind that would definitely prove to be a sign. My wife did

know of them. In the four 1/2 years since her death, these things have not occurred. And in my mind it's logical...

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 a 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 quiet 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.