

Calendar Quirk

Through the quirky way our calendar is set up, the leap day pushed every day following it up one day in the week. Now most people won't notice this too much, but since we had two leap years since 2003, the dates of this year (after the 29th of February) fall on exactly the same day of the week as 2003.

I've noticed those days. Dates and days etched forever in my mind from 2003, are now falling back on the days they occurred. The warm days of this early November remind me again of the fall days in 2003.

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years will all be on the same day as 2003. And Dec 30th will again fall on a Tuesday.

The logical person I am, knew that this year would happen. The emotions tied to those dates and days is something I didn't prepare for.

Forever loved, forever in my mind SJO 7/19/1962 – 12/30/2003.
A life too short...

Another take on Haunted Houses...

I've always been a big fan of Halloween and Haunted Houses, so when our little theater started to look into doing something like this, I jumped at the chance. The very first "Haunted House" I went to was actually someone's house. Just for Halloween they would bring in a real casket, and the owner of the house was dressed as Dracula. The candy dish was place on

his chest. Every so often he would move to grab a kid. Sent you right through the roof. Of course you wanted to be that kid he moved on because his wife (a witch) would give you an extra candy bar.

Now on to other haunted houses and Halloween. Believe it or not, there are people who don't like haunted houses. For some it has everything to do with their religion. Now, as long as they aren't out there preventing my fun, my hat is off to these folks. To take a stand, because of their moral views, counter to the societal views is laudable. Others are simply frightened too much by them, and they don't enjoy it. Nothing wrong with that either.

There is a third group. They may or may not belong to either of the two other groups. People who have experienced a loss of someone close (spouse, sibling, parent) may not like the idea of having fun with death. While I've lost a brother and both parents, the loss of my wife made me see this more. The other deaths could be explained away (didn't help the grief, but the logic was there). My wife's death was something out of the blue. Never saw it coming. Generally her family had very long life spans. I could then see how people would be upset and troubled with the fundamental ideas behind Halloween and Haunted Houses. The gravestones, skeletons, zombies, ghouls and ghost can all bring up some troubling memories. I can see where that would really change a person's view on the whole Halloween event. And that doesn't even go into the sight of seeing something in a Halloween display that reminds you of your loved one's death. That is very troubling.

So I guess because of this, I do draw a few lines. I don't like, and won't go to a haunted house based on a hospital. I don't like haunted houses with a lot of suicide themes. There are other things that can be just as scary that don't touch these areas. It just takes a bit of insight.

Of course, even after my wife's death, I couldn't completely

give up on Halloween, it was one of her favorite holidays. I can have fond memories of past Halloweens by carrying on the celebration of the day in the future.

Happy Haunting...

Suffering a loss

Today touched on many memories for me. Today I went to a funeral to support someone I've known for a few years. I knew him through the theater and her through church. Our interests, outside of the community theater are different. Even our views in the theater are different, but today that makes little difference to me. Today we share a common bond. Today we are both widowers. Will that make us close friends, not likely, but I guess it could happen. Things like that happen everyday, but it isn't what I mean.

He is at the very start of his journey of widow/erhood. I've been on the journey for 4 years and almost 8 months. We became brothers in the same journey. It is very much a journey. The trouble is that, as in life, we all journey this path in our own way. Today, I offered any support I could give. I made this offer from my heart. I know as well as any man could some of the things that will occur for him in the next few days, weeks and months. But I don't know how he will approach or handle the events that will happen. I can only be around to listen. It is a lonely journey that he faces. A journey where you take help when you find it, but all the choice you make must be the right choices for yourself.

The funeral was in the church my wife and I attended for over 10 years before she died. She had many wonderful talents, and the church was her place to share them. I see her touch in

many areas of this church. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

The funeral was for a lady that also touched the church in many ways. She had been there for close to 30 years. For years to come her legacy will remain with the church. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

Today I saw again a sister in the same journey. She lost her husband a year before I lost my wife. We still have that bond. It unites and separates us. Grieving is different for all.

People dying at much too early an age. But then again, I see where I've been and I have a sense of where I am heading. Not the life I would have chosen, but the one I was given. Mine to do what I can. Things have changed, but they remain the same.

When I can I offer support to those on this journey. The best support I can offer is that I have been on the journey. There are many lights to guide you on the path. Many come before, and many follow. Drop a light every now and again to guide those who follow. Follow the lights of those that went before...

Ya know I've been thinking...

A dangerous pastime. I know...

My daughters would be able to tell you the whos, whats, whys and whens of the beginning words of this blog. Something we do quite often is quote movies that fit the situation we are in. It is amazing the number of really good movie quotes you can fit into a daily conversation.

Anyway, I've been thinking. It could be a good way to get me

in trouble, or just a good way to keep me up all night. Actually I fell asleep much earlier this evening while reading a book. I guess the house was just too quiet. I had to get up to make sure my alarm was set for the morning, so here I am wide awake.

I've been thinking about this coming year. My youngest will be graduating High School. Sometimes it seems like yesterday I was meeting her when she got off the Kindergarten bus. So very many things have happened since then. Graduations, marriages, deaths, births, have happened. I guess life has happened. Not always what we like, but it is what we get.

Both daughters have been out of the house this week. The youngest left Sunday afternoon, and the older left early Monday morning. So I have had time to think. Many things have entered this head of mine and I am ruminating on them even as I write this. Maybe more thoughts will form, while others fade away. I'm never sure on this.

Good night..

Another Morbid Topic

Yes, death is an interest of mine. Years ago, when I got married, there were many deaths among family and friends. There were so many deaths, my wife and I joked about our marriage ending the same way. Unfortunately, we were correct. Many deaths in a few short years, with hers as the final death in the line. So yes, I have a morbid interest in death.

My interest this evening is [Cryonics](#) or the freezing of human or animal bodies with the "possibility" of bringing them back to life.

Why? Currently there is no known reversal method, so why do it now. It costs a lot of money to keep a body/head in a 'suspended' state, and there is no and may never be a reversal method. Sound like someone is playing with the emotions of people near death, or their families.

Even if there ever is a reversal process in the next 50 to 100 years, why would anyone want to revive the "dead" people? There are complaints of over population now, do we really want to have an alternative way to put more bodies on the planet. We do well enough now with the usual approach (having babies – explanation for those who weren't sure what method is used). I can't see that happening, unless they want something.

How will you fit in? The future will be different than life now, how will you cope? 25 years ago, personal computers were in their infancy. Now just about everyone has one. What changes will occur in the next 25 years? Next 50? Next 100? 200? If you are having trouble with text messaging on a cell phone, or wonder about all these people with **things** hanging out of their ears, will you be able to cope with things going on around you in the future?

And the real thing I wonder about is what is the ego of a person who wants to be frozen and thawed later. I'm not saying anything about family decisions (later...), but about a persons desire to put off death to be *cured* at a later date. Is anyone really that important?

And about a family that decides to keep one of their relatives, do they love/need the person so much to try to keep them around, or is it a comfort that just maybe? I could never see doing this for myself or for someone I care about. I think there would be too much anguish on both sides if and/or when the body can be thawed.

And I haven't even touched on any religious aspects of this. I think that may be the start of a different post. Many things I

would have to wrap my mind around for that...

A single cup of coffee..

Yep, more on coffee. Well sort of. This is really a birthday post. Yesterday, it ended around two hours ago, would have been my wife's 45th birthday, if she had lived that long. It was the 5th I've celebrated without her. The first, I put a personal ad in the paper, I invited friends and family to show up at 'our' little coffee shop. Very few did. The second year, I don't remember what I did, our little shop closed its doors before I could celebrate that day. The 3rd year, I went to a coffee shop and sat with some friends who were their, they knew nothing of the day. The fourth year, I went to a winery with some friends. This year, I went to another coffee shop. I ordered one cup of coffee and a blueberry scone. I even had something different as my refill. They had Chocolate-Raspberry for the Decaf flavor. I'm not a big decaf fan, but I had that anyway. It was her favorite coffee flavor. It was a good morning.

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.

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 about of fuel need to completely consume a

human body when it is cremated. What was 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.

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.

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...