

12 Days & Counting...

Until my first recital! I cannot believe that I have never been a part of one and I am really excited! When I arrived at my rehearsal place, K reminded the young Herman lass (who is the student ahead of me) of this. As I made my way over to the piano, I was asked if I was going to be sitting for my piece or if I was going to go all out. The song I have chosen lends itself to a wide range of choreographed bits; to sing it while sitting would be doing myself and most importantly the song a great disservice. So yes, I will be adding movement to the piece. After going through the selection once with some of the movements I have been brainstorming, my partner in crime arrived to much fanfare and relief, Last week, poor Ca got stuck driving to rehearsal. Need not have worried because she fit the bill tremendously.

Actually, I did better practicing the song with the movement then sitting anyway. Just need the freedom of the stage to enhance them. The limited practice space did not lend itself well to BIG, THEATRICAL movement!

Just need to ask how many friends and family I am allowed to invite. Hope it is not like the *Brady Bunch* episode in which poor Cindy has to decide whether to give her one and only ticket to Mommy or Daddy to her starring role as the Fairy Princess. I don't think I have to worry too much about that.

No Italian this week although I was handed a few pieces to look at in the coming weeks.

Only One Can Live

Here is... the official trailer for the most anticipated movie of the summer. While there will be other blockbuster films this summer (*Thor* and *Green Lantern* are also on my list so far) none of been as long awaited as the final chapter in the Harry Potter series. The closing of the first part of The Deathly Hallows only increased my excitement. The Blu-Ray disc features an opening scene of the finale. The trailer premiered last night on television and previewed some of my favorite scenes from the books and they look amazing.

Another inspiration from a friend

While traversing through the world of Facebook this morning I came across a status that got me thinking again. Thanks!!

How do you know when you've met the "one"?

Now I came back with my first rough answer, but the question got me thinking. Once this started I knew that i would have a blog post by some time this evening.

First let's start with the meaning of the "one". Most people would take that to be a life partner. Someone you could spend the rest of your days with. Usually people have the underlying thought that this should be a good relationship. And one would think that with a name such as "the one", it would be a fairly rare occurrence. It has to be hard to find "the one", doesn't it? I certainly hope not, and I don't think so.

So just what is required? From my experience, I think you have to be open to finding a relationship. You may or may not be actively looking, but you have to be actively open to one. I think this is the hardest thing to do, because to really be open, you have to give a little more of yourself if you ever expect to find a relationship. The people you are looking for the relationship with also have to be open to one. Finding out who those people are can also be a difficult task.

So, you've taken that first step. You decided to give it a go. You find someone you are interested in, and it seems like they are interested in you. Is that the one? Maybe. Yes, maybe! Right from the start? Yes, right from that very first meeting. BUT (notice that is a big but), you need to take the time to

learn about each other. How much time depends on a lot of things, but it could be days, months or years. Yes, it can and does vary that much.

How do you know, when is it apparent? I think that all happens when BOTH (see the highly important both here?) of you can answer the following questions with a big YES.

1) Can we talk about anything? No subject is taboo? Are you comfortable when conversing on all subjects?

This one is a big deal. If you can't open up in a conversation, can you open up in other areas?

2) Do similar interests? Do you have fun doing the same things?

Basically asking are you compatible in life.

3) Do you have different interests? Are you willing to share or accept the differences? Are you willing to let each other have the time for activities outside of what you do together? How bad are your green-eyed monsters. Jealousy destroys many relationships.

4) Are you willing to die for each other? Are you both willing to put the other first?

Just asking, how much are you willing to give. If you're not willing to give everything you have, I don't feel you found your "One". I don't mean you have to die for each other, but the willingness needs to be there.

Good, fulfilling relationships are about giving and receiving. Not give and take. Each person gives to the best of their ability and resources. Each person receives in kind. There should never be an expectation of getting something back when you do something for each other. In doing this you find that part of your giving, is making sure that neither gives too much. As with most things in life, balance is very important. When two people decide that they want this kind of relationship, then they have found their "ones".

Now What Do I Do?

The title of this blog post makes me think of the movie Forrest Gump – remember the part where Forrest runs and runs; pretty soon he has a pack of people following him, running with him, and then suddenly he stops and says, “I think I’ll go home now.” The pack of followers is suddenly lost and without purpose. “NOW what do we do!”

That’s kind of how I feel now that I’ve finished the masterpiece novel I was reading, Under the Dome by Stephen King. This book was a page-turner from start to finish, all 1000+ pages of it, and it’s one of those books that’s so good it sends the reader into withdrawal once they’ve finished the story. Not helping is the fact that I’m sick, and the only good part of being sick (if there is a good part of being sick) is curling up with a good book. But now I’ve finished my good book. I’m reading two others, but they’re not the same type of book.

One additional note about Under the Dome: I learned before I had read too far into the novel that they were making it into a tv mini-series, and as the novel progressed, I kept wondering how that would work given the book’s adult themes and graphic violence. Now that I’ve finished the book, I felt comfortable doing a google search on it since I didn’t have to worry about the ending being spoiled (don’t worry, I’m not going to do that to you – not when I recommend it so highly for you to read for yourself; it’s really very good!). Here I learned that it is indeed being turned into a tv mini-series – for **cable** tv. That makes more sense, and I will have to find a way to get my hands on it when it comes out; maybe that will help cure my withdrawal!



Florida 2011 – Trip Diary – Part 3

Tuesday January 18 – We began the day at Sizzler's breakfast buffet, again. If you are noticing a pattern, you won't be surprised to see this in the diary for pretty much every day of the week. The prices there were great (\$3.99 per adult and kids were free!), the food wasn't bad, and it left our group full enough to sustain us until mid-afternoon, which saved us a lot of money. Today was Epcot day, and it was a great day – the sun finally came out, and the temp was in the low 70s. We rode the usual favorites, and we got to take our daughter Disney on my favorite Epcot ride Soarin' for the first time because she was finally tall enough – and she liked it! Epcot has a World Showcase which is an area set up like different countries, so we took the ferry to Germany and walked to Japan for their delicious snow cones. We walked around the lake through Morocco and Italy, and stopped in Norway and Mexico for their boat rides which are very cool. Someday I would like to visit the countries in Epcot, sampling the ethnic foods as I go – but that's more of a retirement plan since the kids would never go for that now! Oh, and we ran into Stitch in America!



After the day at Epcot, we sent the little ones home with Grandma, and Hubby, Jamy and I attempted to find a good place to eat dinner, but to our surprise, there weren't many good dinner choices left at 10pm, even in Orlando. We ended up at Perkins – famished – and they were out of most everything I asked for. I stomachached the sandwich I got, which wasn't very good, and Hubby was not too happy with his salad. We did end up with a box of Eclairs to go, and those were pretty good – well, what little of them we had anyway once the kids got a hold of them. Our friend Derek arrived that night while we were sleeping, so our next day would see one more joining our group...

Wednesday January 19 – Breakfast at Sizzler (did you think I was exaggerating about eating there every day?), then on to the Magic Kingdom where we spent a fun-filled day. We learned that there is an expansion planned and under construction to double the size of Fantasyland, so we are looking forward to seeing that on a future visit. Splashwater Falls was undergoing maintenance (usually does in January when we go, but this is a small price to pay for ideal weather and low crowds – BEST time to visit Orlando!!), but we enjoyed the classics like Big Thunder Mountain Railroad (and little Disney liked this one, even though it is a roller coaster!), Jungle Cruise, Haunted Mansion, Pirates of the Caribbean, and Hubby's and my personal favorite that many others find to be lame, The Carousel of Progress. We skipped out on Space Mountain this time, mainly because the kids wouldn't have liked it, and we don't find that its long wait is worth it for a herky-jerky

outdated roller coaster. If you are into indoor roller coasters in the dark, I've always liked the Aerosmith one at Disney's MGM, er, Hollywood Studios, although we never find that park worth the time for a visit since there isn't much there. And [King's Island](#) in Mason Ohio outside of Cincinnati has a SUPER dark coaster called Flight of Fear. But back in Orlando, the People Mover ride in the Magic Kingdom, an elevated train-type ride that goes all around Tomorrowland, treated us to a one-of-a-kind glimpse inside Space Mountain – *with the lights on!!* The People Mover travels into the Space Mountain building, but usually you can only see the glowing streaks of the ride trains as they zip past. Because of a ride malfunction, the lights in the building were on, so we got an insider's view of all the tracks and trains which was pretty cool!! After the Magic Kingdom, Derek, Chris and I took the two oldest kids to Fun Spot to try the extreme go-karts, but it didn't go over so well. The oldest hated them, and she made me go putt-putt-putt all the way up the spiral and around the track – that was not fun; I'm more pedal-to-the-metal! But we all took a spin on the bumper cars, and that was some great old-fashioned family fun that everyone was able to enjoy.

Thursday January 20 – Breakfast at Sizzler (every day – told ya!), then on to our second day at Universal, this time with Derek, although we lost one because by now, Jamy's back pain was so bad that he had to stay in the rental house and relax all day. Thankfully it did not rain this time, and we had a wonderful day. It was a bit chilly, but we couldn't resist the urge to ride Bluto's Barges 3 (or was it 4? I can't remember) times in a row – we were drenched! Smarter ones in our group (Derek and Grandma) opted to stay out and stay dry, but those of us who got off soaked (and shivered) had a blast. It's a large round boat that's propelled down a raging river of rapids; every time it dips, the riders on that side get drenched by a wave that cascades over the wall of the boat. Then there are waterfalls and waterspouts – it's so

much fun to bond with the strangers in your boat as you take turns laughing over who gets soaked and who dodges the torrents of water – whether everyone speaks English or not, there is bonding in the boat! Next it was on to the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, and I think I talked about this earlier in this diary – it's amazing; that's all I need to repeat. We went on the Forbidden Journey ride again, this time with Derek, and he really liked it. Unfortunately, they decided that Sammie had shrunk an inch or two since Monday, and she no longer met the height requirement, so she had to wait in the child swap room – which is actually quite entertaining because they have the old Harry Potter movies playing, and I had forgotten how young Harry Potter (actor Daniel Radcliffe) was when the movies began.

After Universal, we went to the McDonald's largest Playplace where the kids had a blast. Grandma stayed with them while Hubby, Derek and I went to the Titanic attraction I've always wanted to see. Unfortunately, our adventure was a bit marred when Hubby was pulled over and ticketed for U-turn in a No U-turn intersection. In our opinion, it should have been a warning – clearly we were tourists, it was an honest mistake, he didn't do it when there was oncoming traffic present so no one was in direct danger, and of the 3 people in the car, not one of us saw the (supposed) no U-turn sign. Personally, I think Orlando should treat their tourists a little more like the guests that they are, especially considering how much money the average tourist brings into their local economy. Also, they seemed to milk us for every penny – the ticket itself was very expensive, and because we were from out of town, we couldn't even show up to traffic court and contest the ticket, not to mention that when we returned home, we were bombarded with offers of traffic school via mail, which showed that they were looking for even more money by selling our info to these traffic schools so they could bombard us with ads. A frustrating episode in our otherwise super vacation, but that's enough – traffic ticket tangent over!

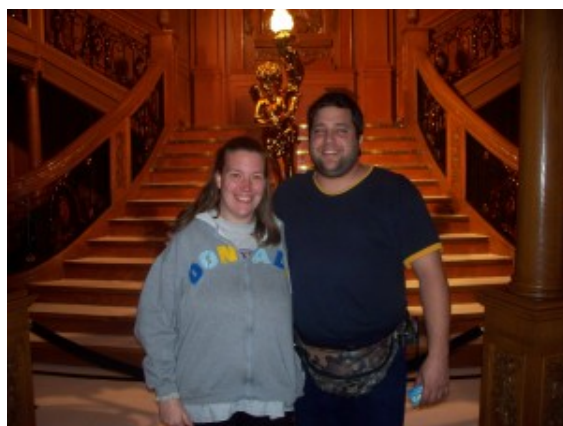
So back to the Titanic exhibit... I've always wanted to see it,

but it's quite pricey, and we were always nervous about spending so much on trying something new that we didn't even know would be worth the cost or not. So enter Groupon – before we left, there was a Groupon for Titanic, and we got it. It kind of obligated us to fitting this in since we already had tickets, but with the money we saved on Groupon, it was worth it. And, we even made it on time, getting pulled over and all! Upon entry, each visitor gets a little card with the name and info of a Titanic passenger, and one of the rooms at the end of the tour has a wall with all the names of the passengers on it. The lights go down, and the names of the passengers who survived stay bold while the names of those who perished are hollow, so you can see if “your” passenger made it. Mine survived, which I had guessed correctly because she had been a first class passenger. Our tour guide (portraying the famous Titanic personality “Unsinkable” Molly Brown) was very knowledgeable about all things Titanic, but our friend Derek's passenger card stumped her – the name on his card was half-solid, half-hollowed, so we don't know if he made it through the ill-fated voyage or not. But overall, it was a lot of fun, and a well spent hour or two. I've always been a Titanic buff (excluding the movie which I feel really commercialized, cheapened, and capitalized on the tragedy and the great loss of life involved – enough about that), so this museum was right up my alley. There were re-creations to see and explore (a first class cabin, the deck, which they had even chilled to provide an example of the actual temperature that night, and the grand staircase, see picture below), as well as actual artifacts recovered from the bottom of the ocean, like dishes. There was room after room of signs to read and pictures to look at, and as much as I don't like the movie, they even had a few costumes and props from it which were interesting to see. Among my favorite parts of the exhibit: the hall of newspapers, which had newspaper editions reporting the disaster in 1912 from all over the country, complete with early 20th century advertisements and other news articles.

I also found this quite remarkable: it was an ordinary cooler, and the exploration staff autographed it and put it down at the bottom of the ocean where the Titanic now lies. I forgot how long it was there, but it's not nearly as long as the remains of the ship have been there, and this is what the ocean pressure did to it:



Interesting as it may be, it is a sad representation of what will happen to the remains of the luxury liner itself. Scientists estimate that it won't last more than 50 additional years if people don't find a way to salvage it and bring it up for study.



Hubby and I in front of the actual sized re-creation of the Titanic's Grand Staircase

After Titanic, we stopped at Dippin' Dots, but it was our only taste of the delicious ice creamish treat for this trip, and I was SO disappointed to find out they discontinued my favorite

flavor of Dippin' Dots: Root Beer Float. ☐

Cheaters Prosper

I came across this classic Price is Right moment the other day via you tube and I have shared it with family. I just can't stop laughing at the audacity of the contestant or Bob's reaction. Quality not the best but good enough.

Climbing The Mountain To The Loft

I hope that everyone who frequents my blog had a blessed Easter weekend... however they choose to celebrate it! On Good Friday for the first time since Christmas, I climbed the narrow steps to the choir loft for rehearsal for Sunday morning services (unfortunately, I could not join the group for services on the remembrance of the Lord's crucifixion).

Although it seemed to take forever to reach the top of the climb, it was very rewarding and another step forward.

Saturday saw the little ones taking advantage of two of the multitude of Easter Egg hunts in the area. Any more and two of the nieces would have been bouncing off the walls.

Happily, they both won at least one prize along with their trove of goodies.

This morning, as I was putting on my suit (also not worn since December), I noticed something strangely exciting. It seemed as if I was swimming in the suit. I cannot believe that I have lost ANY weight over the last three months rather long feeling as if my pants were about to drop (even with a belt on). Don't get me wrong, I am really pleased that I have lost instead of gained... just surprised!

After celebrating the resurrection, the family (lost count of how many children my siblings have total) went to dinner at a buffet the ladies in the beauty shop have been raving.

Actually a catering service which opens up on the weekend, Grant's (no brother, not the 18th President) Catering in Antwerp. Good, filling fare... good Oreo pie... and since we all can indulge (a little) now that the 40 days are past, I did not

feel guilty.

I did finally locate a DVD that I bought a few months ago but somehow got buried. I am on the fifth and final installment of the [Percy Jackson and the Olympians](#) novels. The first, *The Lightning Thief*, was made into a movie a year or so ago. I like to think that Disney publishing was attempting to steal some of the thunder generated by the Harry Potter phenomenon.

The series centers around Perceus Jackson...(the demigod son of Poseidon) and his two friends: Annabeth (demigod daughter of Athena) and Grover (a satyr... half goat-half man). This time, reading the novels ahead did help my enjoyment of the movie.

Not sure how much I would have been able to follow it otherwise. A passing knowledge on the legend of Greek gods and goddesses wouldn't hurt either. I don't think anything will surpass the Potter juggernaut (at least for a while) but I found the books and movie to be fun.

So, a blessed and fun holiday was enjoyed with the family.

Wednesday, the house will once again be transformed into Walton's Mountain ☐ as we welcome back our little family from Alaska who will be staying with us until they get settled back into the area.

Happy Easter

and Resurrection Day

An Opportunity

I don't know but I really do think that retail is burning me out. I think primarily it is the fact that I have been in it off and on since high school and just need to break away. I try to have as much fun while I am working but at times it just seems I dunno what... I just can't put my finger on it.

Which is why I have been looking to the want ads and TODAY I found an opening for an opportunity that seems almost tailor made for me. Anyone who knows me well knows how much fun I have and try to make for little ones. Having 7 nieces and nephews and a family who has dubbed me their "manny" surely illustrates that. I even put this under the "Special Skills" heading of my resume.

Healed leg or no, I feel that I would be good in the position.

Attitude is everything. I am learning to deal with my leg as best I can. I'm not a total invalid and I am on my feet a lot more than I was. So everyone wish me luck and come what may.

Until then, I will enjoy my current employment and have and make as much fun at it as I can. I do have a job unlike so many other unfortunate people out there and have no intention of giving up that job until another window opens.

Horizons

Today was a special off-day voice lesson. K and her family are leaving Thursday afternoon for a long road trip over the Easter holiday. My recital piece had one little glitch while hardly noticeable will be remedied by NEXT Thursday. Now, all

I need to do is figure out if I want to prance around with choreography... depends on where the ol' leg is but I have a lot going in my head that would benefit the very active piece.

After running the song a few times, we decided to do a bit of sight-singing. I flipped through the first book given to me (I did not bring anything else with me) we looked at "I Don't Know How to Love Him" from *Jesus Christ Superstar*. After finishing, we both agreed that the range was perfect for my voice but I commented that the context was a bit off for me . Mary Magdalene singing about having "so many men before. In very many ways. He's just one more." I did remember that Judas has a short reprise later in the show. Reading too much into the reading .

Then, K suggested that we try something completely new next week: Italian aria. I looked through her book and came across one that I had done while at BGSU and came across two others that were familiar by their title. Something different but not completely foreign (wink, wink) to me. Not scared at all, more excited than anything. Yet another chance to expand my horizons.