

Sam Is Not Spam!

While going through my myriad assortment of pending comments I do every once and again come across some interesting peekers to my blog. The newest is a 6 year old gymnast from Great Britain named [Sam Ramos](#), who along with his parents and older brother, are an amazing team known as the Daredevils which has appeared on such programs as Britain's Got Talent! The little guy might not have the site the others do but just follow the link to his site and watch his amazing acrobatics on the trampoline and read the article from The Sun. Pretty amazing stuff!

Let's show the amazing kid some tangents love!

The Little Boy With The Black Eye

We took the kids to the county fair on Saturday, and we had lots of fun. It may have rained most of the day, but we stayed comfortable using an umbrella and our stroller awnings for the little ones. There was only one or two major downpours, and we spent those in the animal barns, looking over the fair kids' 4-H projects.

It's always amazing to us how much our 6-year-old loves going on all the most extreme carnival rides, and my husband and I took turns with her on this:

and this:

To her disappointment, she is not yet tall enough for this, but maybe next year:



My little guy took his nap at the fair, and when he woke up, we stopped for a snack. He began to cry; at first we thought he was just crabby from his nap and that his sister had taken his cookies. But then his cheek up near his eye began to swell up and turn black and blue. When he said, "Bug hurt me", we knew that he must have gotten stung. We made a precautionary visit to the fair's EMS squad, and they were excellent with him, even though he wanted no part of it. He soon got over his ow-ie with the help of some fair rides, but if you look at his right eye, you can see that he was sporting a minor shiner:



I know, the clowns are scary enough, but our son loved this ride despite how upset he looks – it was just his swollen eye. When the ride stopped, he got off the clown and immediately climbed into another one. Hey, you can't expect a 2-year-old to understand the concept of fair tickets being \$.75 each!!

I'm happy to say today that the swelling on his face is down a little bit, and good thing too – I got tired of the scrutinizing looks from people who were wondering, "How did that cute little boy get that black eye!?"

The Singing Disciple?

Still working on a title. I want something that somewhat describes me, but not something a lot of people use. In this example, there is a gospel group called the Singing Disciples, so maybe that one is not so good. The singing photographer? Erm, no. I would stress my born-again life over my car job. The Singing Teacher is likely popular too, and teaching is such a small part of my life now, reduced to just once a month. Can you tell I have a fixation with singing? I can't say "acting _____" though because it sounds more like "temporary _____" rather than focusing on the actor me. I'll come up with something eventually...

The updated life of Mr. D

I have now closed comments on the one post that was getting a bunch of spam. I'm not sure what I would do if one of those spambots latched onto a more recent post. I'll cross that bridge when I get to it I suppose. Moving on now...

Musical: Going well. I went from using two canes as per script to just one. A couple weeks ago I brought up the point of cane usage to the choreographer and almost got taken out of Facade for it as it would change how I move. The only dance number I'm in. As for the other big one at the start of act II, let's just say there is a good reason I am not in it except for a short scene. Tonight is a full run-through of act I, and given the rehearsal is four hours we will probably run through it more than once. We're supposed to be off book, but I think it will be reasonable to use my music for any off-stage singing, such as the background vocals in Alive. I'll

soon find out if they feel the same.

Work: The one I have been training is now out of training, so time to move on to other things. What? Another trainee? *Two* trainees?? Sigh. Just throw my quality control manager title out the window as it has been weeks since I have done any of that and seemingly weeks more before I can. Well, as long as the company doesn't mind then neither do I. At least some pressure has been removed with the one former trainee taking over three stores I was training him at- no more trips to Naperville or St. Charles! Well, after tomorrow at any rate when I just have to watch over him at one of the stores in case of problems. I still have the huge Elgin store for the time being and I can finally give it better attention, but then there are the new trainees. Well, I'll see how it goes.

Church: Still working away serving two services for 4th and 5th grades. A couple that started this year have sort of unofficially taken over one of the services with their ideas they are implementing. While they don't see themselves as the volunteer heads of the 4th/5th grade ministry, I am trying to take it in stride by thinking of them as such as the one we last had went and got himself married and so he has, shall we say, a new focus. Interestingly enough, the one before him went and did the same thing, but it wasn't his reason for moving on- he was graduating from Moody and got a (paid) position elsewhere if I recall correctly.

Books: After reading a the [Wheel of Time](#) series for about five months straight, I am now on break from it for a short time. I was all set to check out the next book which showed as one copy available last night only to be on the hold shelf this afternoon. It's just as well since rehearsal really picks up for the next few weeks so I won't have enough time to read it anyway- I can hardly finish one of these 700-page tomes in a month as it is. I am not even a third of the way through the series, and not yet where I left off way back when. Mr. Jordan, you certainly wrote a good series. I

certainly hope you accepted Christ in your life so I can meet you one day on the other side. Hopefully Brandon Sanderson completes the epic in a way that would please Robert Jordan.

Gaming: Nothing really to say at this time. For a future post.

In Remembrance

9/11/2001

September 11, 2001 was day we won't forget, a defining time in our nation's history, and the first of its kind for the generations who hadn't been exposed to such feelings of terror nor national vulnerability before that day. This blog post is a day late, but I spent some time yesterday reflecting on the sacrifices made and the lives forever changed on that September day in 2001. Alan Jackson wrote a poignant song about September 11, 2001 that asks, "Where were you when the world stopped turning that September day?", and I think that everyone remembers where they were and what they were doing when they learned that the United States was attacked nine years ago. I remember receiving emails from my friend who was serving in the Air Force at the time:

To All My Friends and Family:

I just wanted everyone to know that I'm okay. We are not going anywhere. Our jets are on standby, but that's it. Also, Jerry made it home okay, for those of you that were worried. I love you all, and I miss you.

Love,

Kel

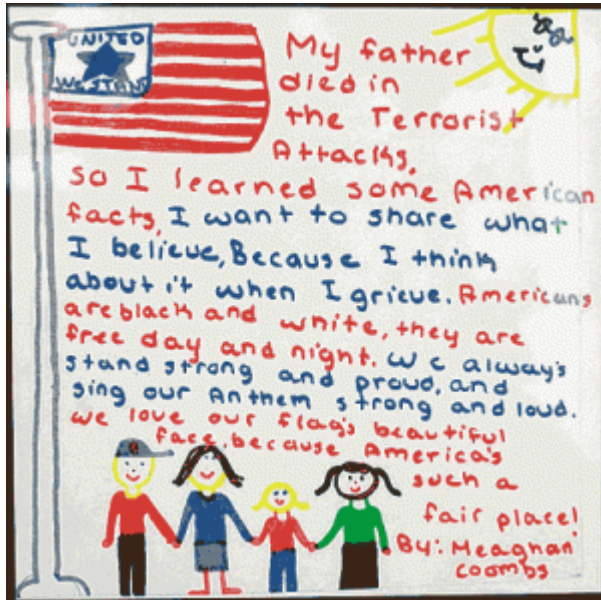
Hi Everyone,

Things are still going as well as can be expected. We are currently working 12 hour shifts, 7 days a week. Please, I'm asking everyone, do not call me during the day, because most of you know that's when I sleep. I'm working 7:00pm to 7:00am. If you absolutely need to get in touch with me, you can call me at home between 5:30pm and 6:00pm, or in an emergency I can be reached at work. (Mom and Dad you can call me anytime, even at work if you want) Also I check my e-mail a few times a night, so I will respond to everyone as quickly as possible. If you have any questions, feel free to ask, but I only have limited info at this time. For everyone wondering, we currently have 1/3 of our jets standing by with a full load of fuel and equiped with armed missles. If anything else happens, the jets will take off and patrol from South Carolina to the Southern tip of Florida (the Keys) They will shoot down anything that comes within that area. They will give the planes one warning and if they don't turn back, our jets will shoot them down without hesitation. We are very tired and will be even more worn down by the time this is all over. Working 12 hours a day, 7 days a week will do that to you. Again, if anyone has any questions, please e-mail me. I love you and miss you all.

Love, Kel

Her emails illustrate the widespread uncertainty coursing throughout the nation at that time as well as the need to keep close contact with friends and family.

One of the most moving experiences I've had was visiting the 9/11 museum in New York city a few years ago. It was a somber experience, and there was scarcely a dry eye left amongst those who came to learn, reflect, and pay tribute to the victims of 9/11. The victims, their families, and those who were affected in other ways by the infamous September 11, 2001 were in my thoughts and prayers yesterday, as well as they are today, and I've included the following video if you'd like to reflect as well. God bless America.



Why do I live in the woods?

Back in June I started to post about some wildlife adventure. I never got back to it, but the story was strange enough, so I will keep it in this post.

As I sit here listening to the rain hit the ground outside, I am reminded of all the good things about living in the middle of nowhere. I really like the time I have by myself, and being away from the hubbub of the world is a welcome relief. I'm just sitting here enjoying a peaceful day.

There were turkeys and deer in behind the house this morning. Even the dog's barking did not hurry them on. They kept their pace, eating, smelling and doing whatever those animals do. Like I said, a peaceful day.

The place here is full of memories. Memories of my girls growing up. Memories of family. This is a place of laughter and tears, it lives.

I've had some problems living in the woods over the years that most people won't see, but they were worth it to me. It is my little place of refuge from the world outside. Yes, I think I could be a hermit, if there was just some way to make a living at it. I don't feel like the hunter/gatherer type. I like a few creature comforts. Heat, food, internet... But the isolation... I could live with that...

The sound of the rain, what a calming affect that has.

I had a little adventure with the local wildlife today. A chipmunk decided that the airfilter on my truck would make a good place to rest. It may have been, but wasn't after I started the engine. Poor little thing. The truck didn't care for it either. Sad for the chipmunk and sad for my wallet. It was quite a bill to get the truck running again. Something I could have done myself, if I had just realized what it was. The sad part about this. It happened before. The last time it was only a nest, no little animals. Same symptoms, same hurt to the wallet. All I can say is I should have known.

Proud Of Your Boy

This marking the day before the 2nd anniversary of Ma2's passing, I have made a promise to myself to annually honor her memory around this time. To paraphrase one of my favorite quotes: She's really not gone as long as we remember her. May sound sappy to some but Emily really was like a second mother to me. A strong, courageous woman... in fact the strongest and most courageous I have ever known. I can still remember our last conversation over the phone. We were to meet the next day to discuss my new found friends and my then anticipation

of going to the big city. Unfortunately, she had just found out that she was going to be returning to Columbus for another extended stay at the James. Little did I know that this would be the last conversation we would have. She was so determined to beat the leukemia. I believe her words were: "I'm going to kick this thing in the ()" I knew that if anyone could, it was her. She also told me how proud she was in how far I had come in my theatrical ventures and pleaded with me to not give up. That I had finally allowed myself to let my candle be uncovered by that bushel basket. "He knows what he is talking about."

Proud of Your Boy. I believe that I have posted about the "lost song" from Disney's *Aladdin* that was shall I say a prayer sung by the title character to his mother. I believe that the mother was written out in order to better portray the hero as being a "worthless street rat" with only his companion Abu by his side. I think it is much more than a simple prayer. I believe that deep down inside us all there is that little bit of ourselves that feels a need to prove to someone (be it a parent, other relative, close friend, mentor, whatever... perhaps even ourselves) that we are more than the sum of our parts. That we will get over these "lousin up, messin up, screwin up times."

I am so glad that with the release of the Platinum Edition DVD, the song was pulled from the archives. It really is a gem as sung by Clay Aiken. That tells you how long it has been since its release... he hasn't really been in the spotlight for a few years. I was lucky enough to be able to work on the piece while Emily was still (physically) guiding me.

I LOVE the orchestral accompaniment and the screen playing scenes in the background. HMMM...

Love you, Ma

Not THAT MGM Lion...

Have you seen that MGM lion video? When I asked a friend about this the other day, he apparently thought I was referring to the lion that roars at you from the screen in the beginning of some movies – not THAT MGM lion! I'm talking about the shocking video of the lion turning on his trainer at the lion exhibit in the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas. Notice I didn't use the word "attack". Animal experts (including Jack Hanna, my favorite animal expert) who have reviewed the footage have agreed that it wasn't an attack, but rather retribution or perhaps rough play from one grumpy lion. The fact is, had the lion been attacking, it would have been over in a matter of seconds with a tragic outcome for the trainer. The trainer escaped uninjured, and watch how the lion follows him out of the enclosure, giving him "yeah, you'd BETTER run" looks all the way out:

Personally, I do think the lion was playing rough. He might have gotten a bit irritated at the trainer, but if he had truly wanted to hurt him, he could have killed him in seconds flat, which is why extreme caution should always be used when handling exotic animals. I wish the video showed what was occurring between the lion and his trainer just before the incident. Seconds before, the lion seems relaxed, but then the camera pans away until the lion lunges for the trainer's leg. What I find truly amazing about the video is the female lion's reaction. She follows the male lion around the enclosure throughout the incident, seemingly trying to get him to stop stalking the trainer. Just after the male lion's first lunge, the female even jumps on his back and gives him a little nip. A penny for... scratch that – I think I'd pay a lot of money for the thoughts of these lions!

Scary as these incidents are, I'm happy to report that this one had a positive outcome – the trainers are fine. I wonder if that trainer will be working with that male lion again?

A day at the fair

Last Monday, I spend a good portion of the day at the Fulton County Fair. I will have to say that this is a very large county fair. It is also a real county fair, with all of the farm implements, crops and of course animals. There are food merchants galore, but I want to talk about just one of them.

[Let's talk about Bayou Billy](#). A wonderful little establishment that was set up on the grounds of the Fulton County Fair. Unfortunately, I did not see that little fair listed on the website's event list. Did they just miss it. Will that particular food wagon show up at other sites that may not be

on the event list? I really need to know. I may become a food wagon groupie.

Yes, the food was that good. I know one other semi-tangenteer that would like this food too. C – it had some real spicy kick too it. Especially the habanero pepper that was placed on top of my sandwich (by request). I'm going to be looking for more places that they will show up and may make a road trip or two. Yep, it was that good.

I found out from the website that you can order some of their sauces on line. I may have to do that for a game night.

Oh the rest of the fair? I had fun as usual. Played a game or two, but didn't win anything. Shot a bow for the first time in many years. I think I need practice. A great day with family and friends.

Quite A Beard You Have There, Young Man

This facial hair is now starting to get to me. Maybe if it was not the first time I have grown a beard in 8 years, I would be more accustomed to it. Perhaps it is because I seem to need to grow it in the summer. (I always knew I was a bit odd, but...) But it has been the source of many comments... both complimentary and otherwise. Those who like it never cease to amaze me. "It makes you look very distinguished and dignified." (Not too distinguished, I hope. I would not want to spoil my sterling reputation ;)) "It really becomes you."

(Ok) "Keep it. Dye it white and you would be an instant Santa." (There's a thought! At least it would be in season and would really be a conversation piece.)

The flip side has also been interesting. "You look like an old drunk!" (I'll remember that the next time someone is casting a bearded drunk). "I can't wait until you shave that thing!" (Which makes me only consider keeping it after October 18th). "Hey, Grizzly Adams!" All in good fun. Good for laughs.

However, last night, I got the ultimate compliment. Who remembers the tv series [Family Affair](#)? A lady I have known for ages told me that I resemble Sebastian Cabot who played the domestic Mr. French (was not aware that there were two) to Uncle Bill, Cissy, Buffy (who was played by one of the earliest child actor tragedies I remember... could be earlier ones), Jodie, and (of course) Mrs. Beasley. Mr. Cabot also played St. Nick in one of the remakes of *Miracle on 34th Street*. Never short on flattering me, my customer also gushed about having found my "niche in community theatre." Who am I to argue?

Perhaps I shall take a snapshot of the before and after shaving and post them. Provided of course the naysayers do not continue voicing their disgust.