

Back To Baskerville

Ok... let's go back to the show I have been cast in. Just to remind everyone where I am. I have probably 95% of my lines memorized for *The Hound of the Baskervilles* **BUT (as most who know me well know)** line memorization is no where near enough for me. Acting is much more reaction to what is happening around you. As the caretaker of Baskerville Hall, it is Barrymore's responsibility to ensure that the riff-raff does not overtake the home which he has so lovingly overlooked for generations.

Tonight, we ran Act I two times. I was given a line which may or may not become mine. Poor Eliza has only one line the entire act, so I was asked to read it since it could very well be Barrymore's line as well. We'll see if Mrs. Barrymore would like to retain her line.

After my first moments onstage, [Stapleton](#) complimented me on my facial and physical characterization. "You have the butler role down very well."

I also have a very important bit prior to the finale of Act I. I seriously doubt that the bit I have done since the beginning will be the finished product. (Bloopers reel of the DVD?) It leaves the [director](#) shaking her head every rehearsal. "You are such a DORK!" I like to think of myself as eccentric. "Dork" is such a demeaning term.

A Birdie In The Clinic In The

Moonlight

Today, I took a huge step (IMHO) in my quest for professional theatrical experience. I had my first full-fledged, prepare a monologue audition for a paying gig. [Moonlight Productions](#) is a production company in my neck of the woods owned and operated by a friend of mine whom I met a few years ago through the WCCT. The film he is casting for is a cinematic version of a one act play that was written by a remarkably talented pal of mine in which yours truly had a rather significant part. This fact in no way guarantees me a role in the movie as I have no idea the experience and calibre of the other auditioners. BUT I AM REALLLLY EXCITED!

Quite a process. This is the first time in 8 years that I have needed to prepare a monologue. In my years in community theatre, most of the auditions have been cold readings from the script or singing a song from the musical (if that is the case). I chose to perform a monologue given by Mr. Harry Macafee from *Bye Bye Birdie*. Hey, it worked 8 years ago when I was cast as Motel in *Fiddler on the Roof*! Note to self: time to search out monologue books!

Over the last few weeks while memorizing lines for the staged production of [The Hound of the Baskervilles](#) in which I am playing Barrymore, I have been polishing the dust off the old monologue I first encountered while assisting the director of a high school production of *Birdie*. Happily enough, it came back rather smoothly.

The last few days, I have been trying to figure out what to wear. I could have gone with the costume I wore in the stage version of *The Clinic*. It might have worked since the monologue takes place at the breakfast table after Harry has had a rather sleepless night after (among other things) outside his window three harpies shrieked "We Love You Conrad" 4,732 times. However, I decided on a nice dress shirt,

slacks, and my Looney Tunes necktie.

I arrived at the audition site my normal 15-20 minutes early and signed in at 9:11 AM. At about 9:25, the producer came into the lounge and told me (I was the first to arrive) that they would soon be ready. The space was really small. After having my mug shot taken, I announced to the video camera my name and monologue I had chosen. For my first time auditioning for a camera, I thought it went exceptionally well. I did notice one teeny-weeney mistake but I plowed right along as if nothing had gone amiss.

When I got home before I had to report to my day job, I had a message on my Facebook page:

First audition was very good, waiting on other actors to arrive! Good luck today everyone!

Thanks Jay! I hope this film makes your company grow and move forward!

And not to worry, [Mare](#)... my involvement (when it is made known) will in no way impede upon my performance in October ☐

Missing Out!

I have signed up as a fan on Zahi Hawass' website. For anyone who doesn't know, Zahi Hawass is currently the Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities over in Egypt and is still active at dig sites in so many places around Egypt. I have been watching his show on the History Channel, Chasing Mummies. It is great show and I watch it every week.

To get back to where I started. I signed up as a fan on his site. He keeps blogs, what he has found, events, what he's writing (books) and press releases. Well, since signing up for all of that, I have received many emails about all this new stuff that he is doing. Well, yesterday, I received an email and it said that on September 25, Zahi Hawass was going to be in Los Angeles and one of the Chasing Mummies episodes was going to be shown on the big screen. Not only that, but afterwards, there is going to be a question and answer session with Zahi Hawass! Ugh, and I can't go!

Hmm, Slow down the roller coaster..

Consider last Thursday. It started out as a completely uneventful day. Work went well and all was right with my little world. Then the evening came and it was rush to the Fort, rush to practice, rush around for pictures. Night fell and that was the first day.

Second day was more rushing around for me. Saturday slowed down a little, and I was able to relax. More rushing on Sunday, More rushing on Monday.

Yes, the past few days seemed like one of those big roller coasters. Up the big hill at a nice slow pace, and then rush down the next hill, quickly around the corner charge up the next hill and repeat. On some large coasters there is that place in the middle where the car gets pulled up again, a slight rest, only to continue one its rush through the hills and curves. Maybe there is a tunnel or two with an unexpected turn or drop. Finally, the train comes to rest in the station.

Now back to my days. It looks as if I might be pulling into the station soon. The train seems to be slowing down a bit. And yet I wonder, is the train going to stop, or will it just continue on, one more time...

Now don't get me wrong. I like roller coasters. Those at the various theme parks, and most of the ones I have in real life. But there comes a time, when you need to get off the coaster. Sit down, relax a bit. Get some refreshment and enjoy the things that are going on. That way the thrill of the coaster is anticipated and enjoyed. Rushing from here to there can be fun, if there is time to spend just watching the clouds roll by. I think I saw some clouds this evening.

It's My First Day

Today marked an important day at church for our family – transition day, when the kids move up to their next classroom! My son, who is also our youngest, moved from the Toddler Room to the 2-year-old room. He seemed to really like the new toys: the wide array of trucks, the bubble window, and the slide. His next sister moved from the 3-year-old room to the 4-year-old room, and she really liked her new digs also. Our 6-year-old moved buildings all together, and she is now with the big kids on the north campus for a more school-like vs. a nursery / playroom setting. She really seemed to enjoy herself in the new building.

Today also marked a first for my husband and I – it was our first day trying our new positions at church. I am the first grade teacher during our 2nd service, and my husband is the large group storyteller. For me, things went quite well. I had 5 little girls and 4 little boys in my group today, and unlike when I substitute taught over the summer, there was no

clinging to the parents' legs or fights to referee in this age group – at least not yet. My daughter was in my class, and she was one of the best behaved kids, for which I was thankful because when I substitute- taught her 5-6 year old class over the summer (before she transferred to the first grade class), she was one of my trouble makers as she had trouble listening to mom. But today things went smoothly, and one of the activities went so well that we actually ran out of time to do it again! The activity was for each kid to take a word from Luke 6:31 (Do to others as you want them to do to you) and say it on their turn so that the verse is completed. I altered the game a little bit, giving each kid a slip of paper with the word on it as a reminder and also walking around the room and touching their heads when it was their turn. This way, there was less freezing on the kids' part, and more control on my part since anyone who has worked with kids will tell you that any sort of down time will lead to chaos in a matter of seconds.

Shortly after the kids arrived, we made our way to the Warehouse, a fun gathering room for the kids. This is where we got to hear the storyteller (my husband, who did a great job even if he had to adlib when the "boss" forgot the charades cards) and where we got to "get our wiggles out" by dancing to some fun Christian music.

My favorite part of the class was the snack prayer – I kept it short and sweet because the kids were really hyper, and I didn't want them to be disrespectful during the prayer. After we prayed, a little boy said, "Are you an angel?" I chuckled and asked him what he meant. "The prayer was really short," he said, smiling. I guess he was hungry ☐

All in all, it was a great first day, and I'm looking forward to not only the rest of this year, but also to moving from grade to grade with these wonderful children and watching them grow!

And by the way, saying "it's my first day" reminds me of an hilarious scene from a Simpsons episode. I tried to find the

clip so that I could embed it on my blog, but I could not find it without having to post the entire episode, so you can read the transcript and visualize it if you're a fan – I guarantee at least a chuckle! If you want to try to find the clip yourself, it's from the episode called "Simpson Tide", which is the 19th episode of the 9th season.

Mr. Burns: You did this? How could you be so irresponsible?

Homer: Eh... it's my first day!

Mr. Burns: Since I've never seen you before, maybe it is your first day. Very well, carry on!

[Mr. Burns begins to walk off, when Smithers catches up with him.]

Smithers: Sir, that's Homer Simpson. He's been working here for ten years!

Mr. Burns: Ohh, really? Why did you think you could lie to me?

Homer: It's my first day!

Mr. Burns: Well, why didn't you say that be...[realizes] Yawoo! You're fired!

Family Ties

People seem to be very interested in Tut. Not that I mind answering those questions, but questions don't have to just be about Tut. My sister has asked to know more about Tut's family, and apparently she wants to know everything! ☐ Of course, I won't write about everything, but I will try to put the important things in and if there are any specific questions about his family, I will try to answer those as well.

Tut was born into royalty and one of the children of Pharaoh Akhenaten and most likely his wife, Kiya. Kiya may have been Tut's mother, but she was not Akhenaten's chief wife. Tut's

stepmother, Nefertiti, was Akhenaten's chief wife. Not is known about Kiya or Nefertiti. After the reign of Ay (He ruled after Tut and might have been Nefertiti's father), Horemheb (one of Akhenaten's generals) took the throne and decided to erase Akhenaten and his family from history. Thankfully, he didn't erase everything, but he tried. Some historians think that Horemheb married Nefertiti's sister, Mutnojmet, which if that is true, Horemheb would be Tut's step-Uncle. Talk about a little weird! □ After Horemheb, if he was indeed Tut's step-uncle, Tut's family's reign was over.

Tut married his half-sister, Ankhesanamun. They had two still born children and they were later buried with their father. After Tut died, Ankhesanamun was married off to Ay. I do not think it was her choice, since she and Tut loved each other. But it certainly made Ay's claim to the throne much more concrete. Besides being Tut's grandfather, he would have married a queen as well! Royal blood always helps when trying to claim the throne.

Tut had at least six half-sisters and maybe a half-brother. People are sure if the Pharaoh who ruled for about a year after Akhenaten and before Tut was either Nefertiti or Tut's older brother. Tut was about eight when he became Pharaoh. I think I answered most of the questions. If I missed any, I'm sorry. Just ask again and I will answer them.

Echos From The Earth And Beyond

Another feature of my small town scandal sheet (a steal at \$1.00 for eight pages) is the "Echos from the Earth" column

which gives flashbacks from articles from 5 to 20 to 50 years ago. Two of the topics really took me back. Five years ago in the paper dated 8-25-2005, Ma2 was named Ohio American Legion Educator of the Year. An honor I know she cherished very fondly.

The second item that really caught my eye was dated 8-29-1980... **30 years ago, folks!**. It even was from the days when school opened in September. I was going into the first grade. My oldest brother was going into the 6th grade and the other one would be starting the 5th grade. We won't say how old my baby sister was!

Thirty years ago this year, my school system welcomed a new P.E. instructor/basketball coach (whom I remember very well from my elementary days), another teacher I cannot place because he was a high school instructor and was gone before I got there. Also welcomed was a certain teacher who "will assist music department head Bill Quackenbush whose primary responsibility would be to the junior high bands." (That is how the sentence read so the grammar is not my fault). I have been told that Emily was a student teacher at the high school where another [tangenteer](#) was enrolled.

(A tangent from one of my memorable moments with Mr. Q. Not only was he the high school band director back in the day but was also the tennis (?) coach. He was the instructor of the summer tennis program. We were volleying the ball back and forth. All of a sudden, I felt a ball SMACK into my eye! We rush into the school, get an ice pack, and a Mt. Dew. The next day, I woke up with a shiner. ☐)

Emily was also the music instructor at the local Catholic school for a number of years. So she was the teacher of 5 Sh kids and two Sh grandkids. God must have helped there!

Emily also is having a hand in my song list for the evening of fun and music I am planning with some of my best friends and

my new coach. We had been working on one of the selections for a great while and is now at the performance stage after a bit of polishing and tweaking.

A week or so ago, I was requested to find a good worship song to begin with. I cannot believe that it took me nearly four hours to come up with one. One of the last pieces Emily and I looked at was one of the most inspirational songs I have ever heard. Definitely will need a prayer to get through but she will be watching and I will be able to lean on her shoulder.

Not really gone as long as we remember.

Life's stories

I was taught, many years ago, that when writing, you should always have a well defined beginning, middle and end. This is especially true when writing stories. Without a good introduction to the characters and plot in the beginning, the story flounders. Without a good buildup in the middle, the reader will quickly lose interest. And if the end has no depth, and little conclusion the writer may fade into a reader's forgotten pile.

Life itself has at least one beginning, middle and end. The whole story includes everything from our birth to our death. That is the entirety of our story. But in our lives we live multiple stories. Our stories are intertwined with the stories of others. There are many beginnings, just as many middles and a multitude of endings.

How does my life affect others? What part of their story am I? Where do they fit in my stories? Where am I in my story right now? Is there enough there to keep the participants in my life

active, and engaged? Do I have a good story? When the final chapter is written, will my story be revisited?

This is where I am. I hope to make my story a good one...

Kidstuf!!

Four times per year, our church puts on a family program called Kidstuf. This time around, my two oldest daughters were chosen to be Kidstuf dancers, and they did a GREAT job!

Kidstuf is energetic and fun for adults and kids alike, so my husband and I were pleased to be offered the opportunity to direct the skit portion of the show. We accepted the position, and we enjoyed preparing and rehearsing over the past month or so. I can't say the actual show went off without a hitch since the tech crew missed a few cues and sound effects. But then again, we had only one rehearsal with the tech crew before the actual production. I'm not really sure if anyone noticed the technical gaffes, and I made sure to keep a big smile on my face for the nervous cast to see as a sign of encouragement throughout the show. And I should mention that this edition of Kidstuf was unprecedented in that families sat together in the audience. Normally we have kids up front, and parents with wee little ones sit in the back. But this time, there was a family activity to be done – each family was given poster board, colored note cards, and glue sticks. Throughout the skit, families were directed to write different words on their note cards pertaining to either God or their loved ones. At the end, they were to paste their note cards to the poster boards in the shape of a flower. Being the first time we've attempted a family craft during Kidstuf, we didn't know what to expect... But the jubilant

feeling I felt when I looked around and saw that the families had done the craft was indescribable. Not only did their flowers look great, but they had also together created something to take home that will remind them about how important familial and Godly relationships are in life. It was probably the most accomplished feeling a director can have, and that made the distraction of the tech problems disappear from my mind!

As I mentioned before, my kids were excellent Kidstuf dancers! They had rehearsed together every day before the production, had fun at their rehearsals, and then when performance time came, they were naturals on the stage! Here is a clip (my lovelies are the two on the left – my oldest is in green, and her little sis is in yellow behind her):

Kidstuf had something for everyone: a great Bible lesson (Philippians 4:8 complete with "not borin'" tips on how to memorize it), dancing, singing, a fun skit, comedy, and audience participation – Hubby was one of the adults that was called up to participate to be a "cow". From the show: "you know that cows are known to bounce around on the range..." We had six adults on the stage bouncing around on (child size) hippity-hops, 3 of whom got roped by the 'magic lasso' – it was classic! Here's a clip:

Actually never mind... while it was fun at the time, those adults might not appreciate being on the internet on their hippity hops, getting roped by the 'magic lasso', so I will just save that one for memory – hilarious, and the kids LOVED it!!

And I must add that our other audience participation scene went quite well also, but this one involved kids acting like a fire brigade. Things got crazy, and before the audience knew it, a real bucket of water was thrown upon a cast member. Before the production, much discussion was held on how not to mess up the stage (Kidstuf is performed in our Worship Center, so keeping things clean was of utmost importance), and thankfully we decided to remove one of the Worship Band's monitors from the stage before "Scottie's" dousing. Because we had never used actual water during rehearsal, the physics of the soaking was as much of a surprise to us directors and to the cast (especially poor "Scottie") as it was to the audience – "Tyler" got "Scottie" right down the front of her bib overalls, and the look on the actress' face was priceless!

All in all, we experienced an extremely fun and successful Kidstuf; we couldn't have asked for a better show! Afterward, there was a carnival with games, activities, and carnival food, and it was all free, which was great for many community families – hope we got a lot of new people to come check out our great church! I know many families had a fun-packed day, and I was very excited to be part of such a wonderful event.

I'm really glad that my Illinois family (most of them anyway) were able to join us, and I know it meant the world to my kids to have some fans in the audience, so thank you!!

For those who were not fortunate enough to be able to see the show, Philippians 4:8 reads:

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Courage Under Fire

While waking up early this morning, I tuned into GMA and watched the story of a courageous 16-year old boy who like most children across the country are on the verge of starting a brand new school year full of learning, friends, and new experiences. Michael Brewer started out at a brand new school in which he will have to adjust following a horrific event that nearly turned tragic.

A day after his fifteen birthday in October 2009, Michael was attacked at his home by a group of his "friends" after an argument over a \$40 video game. After being doused with rubbing alcohol and set ablaze, the teen climbed over a fence and jumped into a nearby swimming pool but not before suffering second and third degree burns over 60% of his body.

Following near death moments and multiple surgeries for skin grafts, Michael is now on the long road to physical and emotional recovery. The GMA interview showed the teenager riding his skateboard nine months following the ordeal.

Doctors have stated that the young man stood a great chance of death from complications incurred by the event. However,

Michael's amazing will and fortitude and the prayers and support of family, real friends, and complete strangers have carried him this far.

Like many traumatic events, perhaps the most difficult healing will be the psychological recovery. Michael suffers regular nightmares which he does not remember after they end. However, his mother hears his screams in the dead of night. Showers are agonizingly painful for him to take... in fact, they are the hardest part of his recovery.

Michael's 15 year old attackers are being charged as adults in the travesty in which they each face up to 30 years in prison. Really... is \$40.00 worth losing 30 years of your life?

Michael's story will be a focus of ABC's NightLine tonight.

[Click Here](#) for a more detailed account of the story and a somewhat graphic photo gallery.

