

Just a quick update.

I know I haven't written in over a week and I am sorry about that. This one is going to be short as well. I need to get back to packing. My husband and I are moving to Maumee to live with my oldest sister and her husband until we can afford our own place. I have a job at either the DeVeaux Goodwill or where my sister works: Midwest Tape. I need everything packed and ready to move by Friday night. Wish me luck.

And yes, my anniversary was awesome!

Fun At The Jubilee

For the life of me, I could not think of a creative title for this blog post, so I just went with a logical one. Our town has an annual Jubilee – a little carnival on the town square that comes once a year. For all but 1 of the 7 years that we've lived here (we were out of town during that missed year), we've enjoyed the Jubilee, especially now that we live within walking distance and don't have to worry about parking – we can come and go as we please, and it's especially nice to spend a night at the Jubilee and run home for potty breaks rather than using the disgusting Port-O-Potties. It's fun to walk around the square and soak up the bustling atmosphere while chatting with familiar faces among the crowd. Although carnival rides are quite costly these days, we are lucky that my husband's birthday always falls during the week of the Jubilee and that we have some generous relatives who send him much-appreciated birthday money (which my husband is always more than happy to spend on the kids at the Jubilee). The kids had a night of fun on the carnival rides, and there was

an extra treat at the Jubilee this year – an animal show!!!

I, like many of my friends it turns out, was thinking that the animal show would not be anything spectacular – a few snakes, a parrot, and maybe a jumping dog or two. But this was more like a traveling zoo – *in my backyard!!!* First, a disclaimer – I love animals. But I'm not one of those PETA activists – I find most people like that over-the-top; you know, those people who spend their time protesting the “horrible” conditions of zoos, blah, blah... that's not me. I won't go into too much detail, but basically I believe in taking good care of animals. I believe that most zoos accomplish that, and overall, I believe that zoos are a great way to educate the public about animals and get people to care enough to want to take actions that will stop the destruction of wild animal habitats and the killing of species throughout the world. That's it in a nutshell, and I'll stop there since that isn't really what this post is about. My point in bringing this up is to say that when I first heard there was going to be an animal show at the Jubilee, I wasn't going to go, much like when I refuse to attend circuses (I'm not an extremist, but circuses ARE bad for animals!! But that's a whole 'nother post...). So we were at the Jubilee, and there was a huge crowd over by the animal stage, and my curiosity got the better of me – so we checked it out.

Like I kept saying all weekend, it was like a zoo in my backyard! They had a tortoise, a turtle, a huge python, an albino cobra, a monitor lizard (komodo dragon's cousin), an eagle owl (largest species of owl in the world with striking orange eyes), a blue and gold macaw parrot, a binturong (rare mammal who is always sleeping every time I see it at the zoo – this is the first time I've actually seen one awake and in action. They have an odd buttery popcorn smell. I put a picture of one below if you're curious.), a kangaroo, a monkey, a full-sized leopard, AND... a 4-week-old white tiger! The animals seemed well-cared for and their keepers were

caring and knowledgeable, so I was quick to become a big fan – in fact, I attended 3 of the 8 shows they put on while they were in town! I would have gone to more, but it was tough enough to get my little guy to sit through the two we brought him to (especially when there were very rude kids standing in front of him – I was so mad!).



Saturday was one of my favorite days ever with me getting to take my kids to TWO animal shows and another one of my favorite things – a PARADE!! I just love small town parades, and this one was especially great – the weather was perfect (in the 80's, but with big puffy clouds and a nice breeze, humidity not too high for once), and two of my kids were marching in it! PLUS, there was a vehicle handing out free stuffed dogs at the end, so we got one for each kid! Best. Jubilee. Ever. □ Even if I didn't make my annual trek to the Dippin' Dots stand this year – that should tell you how much I enjoyed the animal show!



AHHHH... Togetherness

Today being Father's Day, the family took the three dads to dinner. Then... two of my siblings and I took a horde of crazies to see *Toy Story 3*! Definitely worth seeing although not sure the 3D was worth it... not much there that would not have been just as enjoyable on a decent 2D screen.

Getting to dinner was an adventure, the parents were not interested in seeing the movie, so my sis and I followed them. We quickly got left in the dust! Thank goodness for cell phones. If someone had told me where we were headed, I could have easily gotten us there, but always interesting!

I found the latest installment in the adventures of Woody, Buzz, and the gang to be as enjoyable as the original and better than the sequel. This time, Andy is packing for college. He still sleeps in the same room but his toy box has been long forgotten until a week before he is ready to head out. His mother gives him a cardboard box in which to put everything he is taking with him and a garbage bag in which to put everything he wants to be put in the attic. Fortunately, the bag headed for the attic gets mistaken for garbage and the adventure begins.

Several themes run rampant through the movie: the power of friendship and sticking together; growing up; saying goodbye. All of the favorite toys are here along with a gaggle of new toys many of whom have interesting backstories of their own. And as always, the end credits are worth a look as the story doesn't end as they start to roll. Highly recommended! You are never too old for a Disney/Pixar movie!

I am off

And with no time left for a decent post. Well, see you on the other side- of the week that is!

Total loss

Quite a storm today- I don't know if it reached OH, but it did move fast. The sky went dark around 4PM and pouring rain followed. However, as I mentioned the storm moved fast, so within an hour it was pretty much over. I was actually in Waukegan at the time. We started to walk the lot when Rene took one look at the sky and decided we were done. Good thing, because two minutes later the rain came down. I headed home, no incidents praise God, and stopped at a local electronics store to wait out west-bound rush-hour traffic which was much worse than usual. I actually had to turn **left** off of the expressway because the right-turn lanes were backed up beyond the exit toll! One main street further south, the traffic was no better, so I turned south on 21 and went to Abt Electronics where I bought a needed new dehumidifier and played a couple games of Ms. Pac-man and Galaga which were set on free play.

Once home, I learned that a local resale shop was struck by lightning and burned to the ground- yikes. The lightning strike was actually witnessed by one of the pastors at my church across the street, the one who oversees all of youth

and children's ministries. There was no mention of injuries or deaths in the article I read, praise God, though at the time of the ABC news segment they didn't know. The article mentioned insurance, but only for the building as the goods inside were all donated. I know the Lord will use this as a ministry opportunity, especially with the church being right by the store, but it will obviously be awhile before the store is up and running again. Just take a look at the news segment at ABC News Chicago:

ABC News: Fire destroys Palatine retail store

A New Coach

I have been pondering the possibility of finding a new vocal coach for the past year or so. However, I have been very apprehensive about doing so. While going to BGSU, I had a great mentor who was on the fast track to an operatic career. He left as I was going into my second year at the school. One of the people I should have remained in contact with over the years, but...

Then after leaving the fine institution (I use that term sparingly), Emily helped me more than any one ever has. You can go home again. The reason I have found it so difficult to even consider the possibility of finding a new vocal coach is kind of unexplainable. I was so hurt by the events surrounding my leaving school and the fact that she took me

under her wing training my voice and helping me go BEYOND the pain I felt is unequivocal. That above all is why I have a hard time trusting anyone with my voice.

After *Miracles*, my newest mentor and amazing friend seriously suggested that I search out a vocal coach. In no way did I see this as a put down to my abilities but as a way to further develop my performance ability. I even told him that I had been thinking about the possibility. Tom Hudson was my first meaty, dramatic, non-musical lead role. How about tackling a meaty, dramatic, musical role? Not that the dream of continuing my phenomenal success as a character actor has not diminished. I'm on a roll of one meaty, dramatic role.

Tuesday morning after a t-ball game, a candidate passed right by us. C told me to go introduce myself. I told him that I don't know her, so HE ran over and introduced us. I remembered seeing her in *Working* a few months ago so she definitely can sing and she gives lessons and she came very highly recommended. Plus, it was nice to put a name to a face. After 3 days of playing phone and email tag, we finally found a moment when I was around to discuss a schedule.

She asked what sort of music I would prefer beyond the obvious. You have no idea the bag full of Broadway books I have! Contemporary Christian (although not much contemporary is sung in a Catholic church ☐), some duets, some standards. Just a bunch of stuff to increase my repertoire.

So... my choices were wither 8.30 AM on Fridays at her office (which I could have done but...) or 4:15 at her home with the kids being sitted which is nothing new to me. In fact, my 6 and 5 year old nieces were hanging around while I was on the phone. So Thursday at 4.15 it is! I can't wait! ☐

Fearless At the Jubilee

AHHHH, my moment had arrived! What a great rush! It was almost like being on a roller coaster. Thank you Terry for the opportunity by donating the gig to the WCCT. Back in January while waiting for my pal to come over the radio during the Blizzard Auction, I heard the item up for bid. I thought it would be an extraordinary and priceless experience. A female bidder and I went at it and I finally got it for \$72,341.56. LOL ☐ If I had that much money, I am sorry to say that I would not be here.

Prior to the 8 o'clock start time, the director had a few words of encouragement and asked me for a bio. I actually thought about giving him one last night, but his intro was just fine. I had some family (biological and chosen) in the audience and apparently a sizable fan club as I heard a loud cheer come over the crowd as I was called to the podium.

After another helpful assist in starting the tempo, I was really ready to roll... no false start tonight. I was maybe the tiniest bit nervous until I gave the down beat and the opening strain of *The Stars and Stripes Forever* began. I was in control and I relished every moment of it.

After my conducting was done, Terry reclaimed the baton and told me that it was "Very Well Done!" I knew it was. It felt that good! After the concert was over, I greeted my family, friends, band mates, well wishers and walked with Megan, Carol, and Brock to the Little Theatre. I still had one mission to complete but I did not see him at the concert. I walked to C&Ls house after phoning them to see if it was all right to stop over for a few minutes. After I got no response, I KNEW they had to be there somewhere. After making a lap around the square, I decided to hang around with a few

of the remaining band members. Within moments, here comes Tay and Sam. PERFECT! Strangely enough, they were really close to the bandstand and had a great view of my moment in the spotlight!

Then I saw C, pushing Beebs and Dis in the stroller. I was not leaving until I gave my mentor and friend his birthday present (an hour or three early but who knows what tomorrow will bring). He admitted that he knew nothing about directing but said I looked good. Any compliment is a good one! Then we walked the grounds watching the little ones ride. I went on the Rock and Roll Wheel with the fearless one. Think a ferris wheel on which you are in a cage which flips around as the ferris wheel turns. It was fun!

Then at 11, a cart driven by Jubilee workers came around and told a group of teenagers to disperse as it was closing time. The adults with the four little ones were ignored.

Tired but not tired. It was so much fun. I wish my work schedule allowed me to be off Tuesday and Wednesday nights throughout the summer. Thanks Terry, Polly, and the Bryan City Band for an unforgettable experience. Another addition to me resume, too!

The Sun WILL Come OUT!

I have it on good authority that tomorrow will be a beautiful day. I just don't listen to the weatherman! It wouldn't rain on my parade! I got to sit in with the Bryan City Band at rehearsal (the director found me a suitable tuba, thank you!) and conduct my piece. He asked me before rehearsal began how I was going to start. Holding the tuba, I held one hand up and started going one, two... down, up (down beat is one, up

beat is two). But how was I going to set the tempo for the band to follow? Get it in your head, give a little suggestive beat to the ensemble and BRING IT!

A few of the selections were familiar. Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* is a piece I remember ALL TOO WELL from high school and it was no easier tonight than 18 years ago. There was medley of music from the 60s. A lesser known (to me, anyway) J.P. Sousa march called *Fairest of the Fair*. And a variety of others.

My moment had finally arrived. As I made my way from the back of the band to the podium, I was given an impromptu introduction. I took my place behind the conductor's stand with the baton. I gave the tempo, gave the down beat, and... nothing. I forgot to BRING IT! Try again. It worked! It was such a thrill. WHAT A RUSH! You darn well bet ya that I will not fail to bring it tomorrow night. Just keep the beat alive.

Well... let's hope I get some friends, [WCCT](#) fans, [BCB](#) fans, AND FAMILY! there tomorrow night. But, once again, it is Jubilee week on the square so come early and bring your chair/blanket to sit on!

Happy Birthday Dad!

Not that my Father would have every seen this, even while alive he did not access the internet. If my math is correct, he would have been 86 today. He died in 2001 at the tender age of 77.

Dad's birthday was very close to Fathers Day, and being at the start of Summer it was always a time to celebrate. Of course

Dad liked his desserts so there would have been at least 1 maybe two if Fathers Day and his birthday were celebrated on the same day.

So with Fathers Day coming up this Sunday and my Dad's birthday today, I'm going to celebrate and remember by having his helping of dessert. Sunday, I will even eat the dessert first...

It's Gone...

If you've traveled down I-75 in Southern Ohio since 2004, you've no doubt seen this; it was hard to miss:



The King of
Kings statue
no longer
graces I-75

We've passed by this King of Kings statue outside Solid Rock Church on our way to Florida many times, and it was always awe-inspiring. Quite unfortunately (and ironically), an act of God destroyed the infamous 62-foot statue – it was struck by lightning and subsequently burned to the ground. No word yet if the church plans to rebuild the huge sculpture, and until they do, if they do, I-75 won't be the same.

