

Look To God's Rainbow

Early Sunday morning a very young lifelong family friend passed away peacefully in his sleep. No one really understood what happened only that Marjoe is now at peace. Today, Chad and I went to the visitation and consoled our lifelong family friends. Mary was our baby sitter for years, a fact she reminds us of quite frequently. Christie is a year younger than I so we were quite close growing up and worked together at Shaffer Value... now she lives in Buffalo, NY with her husband. I do not know the two boys as well as I would have liked but know that they were raised by a strong, God-loving mother. After marrying Victor, she inherited two additional adult girls to mentor.

Tuesday night, Megan and I went to see *Date Night*. Even I thought I was not totally myself. As always, I had a great time but Megan kept asking why I was so quiet. Only after I got home did I realize how much Marjoe's passing had affected me. Never before have I realized how fleeting life is. Death knows no season; knows no age. We may question God's choice in taking someone "too soon" but in reality he is in a much better place. Thirty one years... WOW!

Mary has always been and still is one of my favorite people.

Not only was she able to raise 3 kids by herself, working in a factory to provide for them but she has always been there for everyone! And she herself was adopted at the age of five months by Ginny and Hinie... everyone's grandma and grandpa. I still remember his Highness coming into the store looking for his Homemade brand cigars. My cousin, Christie, and I would always keep an eye out for him and hide them before he got in the door!

In 2005, Mary fulfilled a lifelong dream by having a book published of many of the poems she has written over the course of her life. [*God's Rainbow and My Dream*](#) is not only a

collection of her works but also autobiographical in nature illustrating her strong, tremendous faith. She also publishes an editorial in the town newspaper weekly.

So... although his life was too short... may Marjoe find peace in his new home.

A new day

In my life, while I remember the big events, it always seems like little things make a big impact. Yesterday it was an unexpected email that sent bits of my little world into a spin. Today it was being able to see pictures of my far away kids, and phone calls to the 3 other siblings.

The sun was out, there were new and interesting events today. So it was a good day.

Of course I realize that it wasn't just that one bit of email that I received. My mood has been missing a bit of jocularity. And it wasn't just the few things I mentioned today that brought a bit of sun back into my mood. It just seems that the little things pile up and pile up until they become one big thing. And that last little thing upsets the whole thing. The final straw on the camel's back. The final pebble or snowflake that starts an avalanche. You just never know.

And of course I wonder, what little thing will start me moving again? And which direction will it push?

In a smile, I saw all the things I would ever need or want. Now, all I want is to see is that smile again.

Looked Big to Me

Oh come on, don't you like quizzes? I know all of you loved quizzes in school [dodges tomato]. Seriously though, only one taker? Come on lurkers, you don't have to comment, just check out the videos two posts below and take the easy quiz. No grades here, nothing to go on permanent records if you answer wrong. Just step right up and give it a try! Answers in one of the next couple posts. ☐

This week someone from Florida flew down to train with me on the use of the handheld computer, something that the office there was apparently never trained on for some reason. He was placed in a hotel near me, right across from my church in fact, and is riding with me all week wherever I go. I have to tell you, this guy is on fire for Jesus. Like me, he serves in children's ministry at his church which is apparently set up slightly different from mine (and many others) so he has kids from ages 6-11. Perhaps he was sent not just to learn from me, but the other way around too. I invited him to my small group last night and when there, he didn't just sit back and listen, but was actively engaged in the discussion. It was interesting to learn that like another in my group, he is an Annihilationist, one who believes that there is no active eternal torment for those who don't accept God's offer of salvation through Jesus, but instead they are simply destroyed. His children, of course, still have eternal life in Heaven. Myself, I would love for this to be true but I know I must be careful to not try to read this into the scripture if and when I study this topic in detail. One of the things I have thought is that **if** God has chosen ahead of time those He is going to save (part of the Calvinist

doctrine, I'm not sure about this interpretation of Scripture), that is we can only come to Christ if God calls us, and if He calls us we cannot fail to come, if this is true then it would seem to be wholly unfair, and seemingly against the nature of God to not just deny us eternal life in heaven (more than fair for our rejection of Him) but to purposefully send us to be actively tortured by the one who was given the boot from Heaven for his rejection of God's authority. Of course, if we do have any say in the matter as Scripture *also* seems to say, then this argument falls flat- we deserve what we chose.

Anyway, I have gotten far beyond the point of this post. So today, we joined my coworker Rene again, and we practiced with the cars Rene and our other trainee were working on. He is slowly learning, but is enthusiastic about it. In fact, he is enthusiastic about everything- a very positive outlook. Well, on our way home, when about to turn on route 14, we noticed a thick plume of black smoke rising. I didn't think too much about it, but as we drove, an ambulance and a fire truck headed in that direction. About 15 minutes later we passed it just outside (I think) Barrington- I didn't think it would be that far away and the area the smoke, now worse, was coming from looked really big. However, we still couldn't see what was actually happening. We drove through the thin layer of smoke that reached the road, but that was it. I figured it would be in the news, but so far I couldn't find anything. Well, it looked big enough for news to me. I just pray for all involved.

I also pray that my car does not need an expensive repair. The "service engine soon" light just went on today and it is in the shop now to be looked at tomorrow.

Sometimes things happen

I'm in a bit of a funk today. Actually, I should say this afternoon and evening. The morning and early afternoon were just fine. Then I got a bit of sad news. That sent the rest of the day into a tailspin. I'm not sure why this happened, but it did. Anyway, I was hoping that by typing this up, my mood would improve a bit.

Life gives us constant reminders that it is a fleeting, temporary thing. How we deal with that those reminders help make us who we are. I just wish I wasn't reminded so often, and that those reminders didn't bring back all of the other reminders I have had.

Life lived to its fullest gives joy to all who share it and sadness to those left behind after the life is over.

A smile shared can lead to friendship. A tear shared can lead to trust. A friend you can trust is worth all the wealth in the world.

There are many people missing from my life and I miss them all.

Discovery And Other Developments

I think the best way to delve into the character of Tom Hudson is through repeated read-throughs. In fact, that is what the past few weeks have been rehearsal wise. There is so much still to discover about his character: where he came from and where he will be by the journey's end. How will he get there and why will he be where ends up? Next week, we begin the actual blocking. Since most of it will be derived from the actual stage directions, I now need to start looking at them a bit more. Although I have yet to be in a show in which blocking is totally dependent upon what is written in the script. Each of the three characters say a lot but even without the italicized movements, we all can tell that it is going to be a physical and (even more daunting) emotional workout.

Tomorrow nights rehearsal has been pushed back to Thursday so it gives me a few days to look and think about both the spoken as well as the non-verbal attributes of the character.

Actually, I am pretty impressed with my start in line memorization and that is before I have felt the need to type out or record them. Just reading alone or at rehearsal has given me a good grasp on it for the time being.

And now that it is after 12:30AM, I believe it is time to stop with the emptying of my brain and give it a rest. I really think this show is going to be another special one.

Hopefully, we can get a large number of people to come and see our little three-person show. I really think that the story is very profound and needs to be told! So different from ANY play or character I have ever before been part of because the events are certainly plausible and heartfelt.

There comes a time for light theatrical fare and then there is a time for more serious drama. So glad that I knew I

wanted to be part of it since January. Never hesitated just hoped I would be cast in it!

Mark Your Calendars NOW!... May 21-23... Huber Opera House

Something New

We were looking for a family-friendly activity to do with our kids on Saturday. The zoo was out since we're chaperoning a Girl Scout field trip there next Saturday. Our original plan was to take our very furry and smelly dog to get groomed, but when we called around for prices, the quotes were much more than we wanted to spend on something that will just have to be done again in a few months.

So my husband searched around and found [this: Roller Derby](#). Do you remember Roller Derby? It was popular in the 70's and 80's, and there was a recent movie about it called [Whip It](#), which was also Drew Barrymore's directorial debut. We saw the movie not too long ago, and it was enjoyable, but now I'm going to have to watch it again after seeing the sport played live.

Roller Derby is a sport played on roller skates by women. I asked my husband why men don't play, and he said they'd get carried away with the aggressiveness and kill each other. I think there are some men's leagues, but they aren't professional like the women's league. So anyway, a basic game of Roller Derby has two periods separated by a halftime. Each period has several "jams". Basic game play consists of a pack of skaters skating around a circular track. There is one "jammer" on each team, and she is supposed to break through the other teams' pack of players, scoring a point for each opposing team member she passes. There's more to it, but

those are the basics. The action is fast, the sport can be brutal, and fights occasionally break out. It's a lot of fun to watch!! Especially if you're brave enough to sit in the "suicide seats" where you sit on the floor next to the track. Our friends were brave enough to try, and they came out in one piece! If you are interested in watching a bout or maybe even trying out to be a Derby Girl, check out the website of the [WFTDA – Women's Flat Track Derby Association](#) – they have a list of teams so you can find one near you. Here is a video from their website explaining the very basics of Roller Derby:

It was a great time – fun for the whole family, and I highly recommend it as something different to do. Tickets are pretty cheap – we paid \$12 for each adult and \$7 for my oldest daughter – the rest of the kids (5 and younger) were free. For that, we got about 5 hours of entertainment. The atmosphere is family friendly (despite some of the dirty innuendos some of the players' names imply that would go right over most kids' heads), and there are clowns running around providing additional entertainment. At halftime, my kids got to go out in the arena and play a racing game with the clowns, and they also do skits and make free balloon animals. Each kid gets a little noise maker when they walk in the door, and they also have a Hokey Pokey time and do the bit where they throw beach balls around the audience. While it was family friendly, my little ones were bored at times (they didn't understand the sport) and our little guy, who is not even 2, kept us from watching much of the action with his shenanigans. The lady who was waiting for me to finish with the changing table in the bathroom said, "I'm never bringing her to something like this again!" as she pointed to her little girl who looked about my son's age. So you might want to prepare yourself with lots of snacks, activities, and candy if you bring your kids. The kids ended up having a lot of fun, mostly because of all the yummy concessions Dad bought them and the little toys they got to take home. Hubby and I are going to check out a bout sometime for date night without the kids though so we can actually get into it and watch the game. And hopefully, there will be closer scores with a little more excitement – we witnessed two blowouts. In the first game, the Fort Wayne SWAT team got creamed by a team from Rockford, IL (where we used to live, what a coincidence!), and we left the second game early since it was getting late and the score was Fort Wayne – 154, Dayton – 13. OUCH!!

Working On A Baptism Rehearsal For One

I am so glad that Mondays are one of my days off each week. I don't know if I could have made it this morning. A long weekend full of fun. I worked Saturday afternoon before mass after which Chloe was going to be baptized. Getting her big sister into a dress was a chore. Kyli was not impressed that she had to put on a pretty dress. Uncle Jamiahsh to the rescue! I volunteered to put the dress on! I almost got it up to my head... Thank goodness the 2 year old stopped me before I did.

During mass... more "controlled chaos" which made me question yet again the absence of a crying room at church. Not sure if a Saturday night school would be a good thing. But I do seem to remember a Sunday School for children up to 1st or 2nd grade that must have been done away with. But the ceremony was nice, quick, and I got the chance to go to the theatre and see *Working*. A very different show light on plot but the songs and the performers made it a surprisingly well delivered show. Glad I got the chance to see it!

Sunday after work. I had rehearsal. What was supposed to be "Eve" and I, turned into the director and I. Beth had a late game night/early morning on Saturday but we read through the play which helped me so not a bad rehearsal at all. And the short practice allowed me to go out to dinner with the 16! by 9PM when it was over, I was ready for a break! Let's just hope my "daughter" shows up tonight ☐

Here's the only picture not featuring red eye from the baptism:



Controlled Chaos

The past two weeks have been filled with visitors from the north... 4 additional family members and the three of us makes SEVEN plus more relatives and assorted friends and you get what can only be described as somewhat controlled chaos. (and that might be pushing it). Charnel, Rich, Kyli (age 2 going on 22), and Chloe (9 months) arrived the day after Easter from Alaska where Rich is stationed and is on leave from his deployment in Afghanistan. I was asked if the noise kept me up at night... What noise? I admit that I haven't needed a traditional alarm clock for the past 14 days but I haven't been awoken at all hours, either. Here are a few of the highlights:

- Dinner made by Rich's bother. Charnel and others wanted some fettucini alfredo with chicken and bacon. I said that I would try it. I took a little sample and as politely as I could decided to make a frozen pizza. I'm usually open to new things but something about it just did not appeal to me. I was amazed that my oldest brother (one of the pickiest eaters... second only to his oldest) tried some; not so amazingly, Jeff didn't care for it, either.
- Cosmic bowling while I watched kids. Honestly, I did not think that the alley allowed children after a certain hour or I wonder if two of the four kids would have gone. I decided to sit that one out to help watch the little ones so the parents could go to bed early.
- Dinner at Texas Roadhouse. Apparently, they do not have them in Alaska. Might they have an Alaska Roadside

Igloo where the serve moose steak? But 17 people with 7 little ones. I felt sorry for our poor waitress... I gave a larger tip than I should have. Ok... so there might have been a bit more involved than pity. Peanut tossing by a BIG KID not me caused a bit of chaos before we were called to our table.

Well... the visitors are here until Wednesday... let's see if more "controlled chaos" ensues.

Not just one book

There are times I will recommend an author to someone just to make sure they read the whole series. Of course, I would recommend the complete "Lord of the Rings" books by Tolkien and The 7 Harry Potter books by Rowling. There are other authors I have talked about too.

My recommendation this week is not for a series of books, even though this author did have a few books that had a continuing story line. No, I started to read some of his other works, and I found them to be just as gripping as any other stories I read by him.

Look up the works of [Sax Rohmer](#). He is chiefly remembered for his [Fu Manchu stories](#), but he wrote other mystery novels that were as compelling. Stories are generally set in the early 1900's through the 1930's. This week I finished the stories "[Bat Wing](#)" and "[Brood of the Witch Queen](#)". They are mystery/suspense stories with a little bit of the Occult or Voodoo thrown in. Both can be found at www.feedbooks.com.

I found that while I expected certain endings to both stories (I tend to do that reading mysteries), I was kept in the story

by the plot and characters. I will be reading more of his books/stories in the future. I'm glad I took the time to examine his stories that did not involve Fu Manchu.

2010 Academy Of Country Music Awards

Today is one of those days that come only twice a year – one of the two annual country music awards shows. I've been super excited all week, well, for months actually; even if a few of the nominees are anonymous to me. Country music is changing, and I just don't have the time to keep up with who the new artists are and what their sound is like. Consider that my disclaimer for doing badly on my picks, haha. Here is the list for the major nominees with my picks in green. I will change them to red as the show airs if I get them wrong, but I'm being optimistic by putting them in green – as winners are announced, I will change the category color to red for wrong and green for correct. Good luck to everyone, guessers and nominees alike! Whatever happens, I know I will have a great time watching as always!!

Entertainer of the Year:

• Kenny Chesney • Toby Keith • Brad Paisley • George Strait • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Keith Urban • Zac Brown Band
*(Now that hurt. I'm not a big fan of Taylor Swift, but she won Entertainer of the Year at last fall's CMA awards, plus she is favored to win by industry experts Reba McEntire and Blake Shelton. Unfortunately, this is not about who I **want** to win, but who I **think** will win.)*

Top Male Vocalist:

- Kenny Chesney • Brad Paisley • Darius Rucker • George Strait
- Keith Urban

Top Female Vocalist:

- Miranda Lambert • Reba McEntire • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Lee Ann Womack

Top Vocal Group:

- Lady Antebellum • Little Big Town • Randy Rogers Band • Rascal Flatts • Zac Brown Band

(Another ouch factor pick – I love Rascal Flatts and want to see them win – they deserve to win; they're awesome! But Lady Antebellum has so much buzz, so again, logic prevails for this pick. I actually hope I'm wrong here, but only if Rascal Flatts takes the prize.)

Top Vocal Duo:

- Brooks & Dunn • Joey + Rory • Montgomery Gentry • Steel Magnolia • Sugarland

Top New Solo Vocalist:

- Luke Bryan • Jamey Johnson • Chris Young

Top New Vocal Duo:

- Bomshel • Joey + Rory • Steel Magnolia

Top new Vocal Group:

- Eli Young Band • Gloriana • The Lost Trailers

Album of the Year:

- "American Saturday Night" – Brad Paisley • "Lady Antebellum" – Lady Antebellum • "Play On" – Carrie Underwood • "Revolution" – Miranda Lambert • "The Foundation" – Zac Brown Band

Single Record:

- "Need You Now" – Lady Antebellum • "People Are Crazy" – Billy Currington • "Red Light" – David Nail • "Toes" – Zac Brown Band • "White Liar" – Miranda Lambert

Song:

• “Cowboy Casanova” – Carrie Underwood • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “People Are Crazy” – Billy Currington • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

Video:

• “Boots On” – Randy Houser • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “Welcome To The Future” – Brad Paisley • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

Vocal Event:

• “Hillbilly Bone” – Blake Shelton featuring Trace Adkins • “Honky Tonk Stomp” – Brooks & Dunn featuring Billy Gibbons • “I Told You So” – Carrie Underwood featuring Randy Travis • “I’m Alive” – Kenny Chesney with Dave Matthews • “Seeing Stars” – Jack Ingram featuring Patty Griffin

TOTAL SCORE: 5/13 – Not my best, but slightly better than I thought I would do, I guess... FUN SHOW, and that’s all that matters! Don’t think I’ll be winning the \$1,000 from CBS.com though!