

They grow up don't they.

My youngest is now ~~18~~ 19.

Funny, I started this blog post way back in December and I only got the first line typed. I have no idea what I was going to write about. But today I will actually write about my youngest turning 19. Today was her birthday. We had some burgers, brats and hotdogs. I did my turn at the grill. There was swimming before the storms came in. And there was conversations with family.

Today was a good day. Cake and presents (at least for the birthday girl) were enjoyed. The spirits were high.

But my youngest just turned 19. She has been a legal adult for the past year. I've allowed her to make her own choices. I would have allowed her to make her own mistakes, I'm not convinced that she made any. ☐ She is a lovely, wonderful young lady.

Today on her birthday, I wish her all the best. While times won't always be good (we know that don't we.), I hope she has the strength and maturity to handle the times she has. My main job as a parent has been 'finished' for the last year. I only need to advise and listen. She does have what she needs to succeed or fail in life. I hope for success.

Happy birthday little one.

Rocks and other things...

My oldest daughter almost stole my next blog post right out from underneath me. ☐

In the past, I've been told the story about rocks and other things many times. Most of the time it is almost exactly the same. The situation changes a bit, but the story and the message behind it stays roughly the same. One story really got me thinking and it had an extra twist.

I'll give a rough outline with my own little twist...

A master had three large piles of Stones, pebbles and sand behind him. He went to the pile of stones and filled his bucket with them. He asked is the bucket full? All of his students responded yes.

He then proceeded to add pebbles to the bucket, shaking them down until he could fit no more. Again he asked if the bucket was full. One brave student muttered probably not, or you would not have asked us the second time.

The master was pleased and then added sand to the bucket until it filled each crevice. He asked is the bucket full? All of his students said no.

"Very good!" the master replied, "You are learning." He then added water until it almost reached the top. A student saw this, and said "The bucket is not yet full master." At that point the master took his teapot and filled the bucket the rest of the way.

"What do you learn from this?" the master queried. One student responded, "No matter how full your life is, there is always room for more."

The master said to this, "Not quite, the message is that if you don't fill in the big rocks first, you will never get them in. So decide, what are your big rocks in life. Do those first. The little stuff will find its own path."

"But why did you not fill the bucket with the water master?" a student finally asked.

To this the master replied, "No matter how busy you get, always leave room for a cup of tea with one you love."

And that my friends is my story of the rocks, stones and sand...

Changing Tides

Unlike the precision of the tides, you will never know which way the wind will blow. The tides come in and go out on a very precise schedule. They have charts made for high and low tides in areas where that is important. The winds of the day can make the tide higher or lower, but it will not cause the tides to cease.

Life is very much like the tides, it flows in an almost predictable pattern. We are born, we live and then we die. The length and form of our lives depends on other influences. Inland the tides are never noticed, but they can be measured with the right equipment. On some ocean fronts you will see the tides marked on the beaches. In other places you see the marks of the tides on cliff walls. Much the same with our lives. We can sometimes see the tides and other times they are barely noticeable.

It is that way until something changes. Winds blow in, the coast line changes and the tides come in with quick fury. The winds change, and in our life things change.

We never know which way the wind will blow but we must prepare for the tides.

A cold wind blew tonight, and I was not prepared...

You knew my unspoken words. You knew the way my mind worked.

You knew things before I knew them myself. You knew my heart, and I miss yours.

Life lessons at the theater...

I'm not going to write about how good the show was (again). I'm just going to write a little bit about some life lessons I've learned over the years at our little theater.

Many hands make light work. After the shows we usually need to tear down the set to make room and clean up for the next production coming in. This is much easier with a large cast. Many people working on various parts of the set will bring it down quickly. Smaller shows, we beg and plead for people to come and help.

Help others when needed. At times people will forget their lines, or forget to enter when needed. It is up to the rest of the cast to keep the show going. Ad-lib lines here and there, line prompting during a hug, someone else saying the line (if this works), or just smoothly skipping by the flub, are ways we help each other on stage.

Not everyone is a Star. You can't always have top billing. Sometimes you need to support the front people. It is part of theater, it is part of life.

Even the Star needs support. Even in shows with only one actor on stage, usually has many people behind the scenes. From lighting to props there is always somebody looking out for you.

All jobs are important. That backstage manager that never shows up on stage is sometimes seen as unneeded, until the day

they can't make the show. Then the props aren't on stage where they should be, and the flow of the show just goes down.

Satisfy the customer. If you don't do a good job, and leave the customer satisfied, they won't be back. Repeat business is essential.

Relax, have fun! One of the most important things I've learned. If you are relaxed and having fun on stage everything flows more smoothly. It works in the real world as well. You can't always have fun in theater or real life (some jobs are just the pits), but you can try relax and make the best of the situation.

Be ready for the unexpected. In live performances almost anything can happen. Be prepared for it. You may never need to know what to do when something on stage breaks, but you have to go with the flow. In life, this makes very good sense too.

Do your best. No matter what job/part you have do your best, it makes it easier for you and for those around you.

Do your job. If your job is telling people what to do, do that. If that isn't in your job/part description, refrain from doing it. Sometimes it is nice for new actors to get a helpful hint from other actors, sometimes not. Make sure that your helpful hints are just that. They should not sound like directives, those should come from the director.

But then again, Share your knowledge. An additional note about the above. Telling someone what you do to help remember lines, or stage directions is a good thing. Helping someone get over a bit of stage fright, also good. Knowledge of any field (except secret stuff) is best shared.

Goodbyes can be hard. We all need to say goodbye to someone every so often. Sometimes you know you may never see the person again. Make the best of the time you have with people,

it will show benefits in your life.

Life is a stage, where we are the actors and the audience...