

Where is my lion?

In trying to get last minute additions to our set, I was trying to decorate some torch holders with the lion from the Crest of Henry II. Very intricate lion for me to cut out.

I've never had good sissors skills. To top it off, I'm trying to make it about 5.5 to 7 inches long. Hmm that's not going to work for me.

So what did I do? I passed this project on to my youngest daughter. She must have passed the scissors portion of art in Kindergarten. Since I never went to Kindergarten, I missed that class entirely.

Final projects, line and character touch ups, clean up for the theater are all things we do the week before the play begins.

We need a few additions to our costumes (shoes). Maybe an additional knife or two (yes, sharp, pointy, dangerous things).

And of course a heavy helping of vitamins, cold remedies and anything else you can think of so that the cast remains healthy and able for the entire production.

Chrunch week is here, and all I want to know is: "Where are my lions?"

[GO TO A SHOW!!!](#)

Light at the end of the tunnel

There usually is a point during show rehearsals when the cast and directors know they have a show. Sometimes that point

doesn't come until the last dress rehearsal, and there are times it never comes. The show I'm in now had that point twice. Because of our extensive scene changes (they are getting better, and we got more help), we split the show into two nights to work on both acts. Both acts came together this week.

On Sunday, I wasn't sure if the show was going to be there. There was a problem or two that just had things feeling wrong. The hows and the whys are unimportant, but that was a bad feeling for the show. I'm glad things came together this week. Since our show starts in a little over a week, it is nice to feel good about the whole thing.

I'm actually looking forward to our double tech Sunday. For those not in the know, it is the day we work out most of the last kinks. Technical kinks, wardrobe kinks, and even the acting kinks. We run through the complete show twice. It makes for a very long day, but when the show is going well, it goes by quickly.

First audience will be Wednesday (some school kids I think), and Opening next week Friday. All signs are pointing to an enjoyable show. I hope some of my readers can make it to a show. Check the side bars for the link to the playhouse.

Apparently I was missed...

It seems that taking a few days off from this blog caused a bit of concern from a couple of friends. I know I hit 50 and it is all downhill from there. ☐

For those who desire to know, I have been spending a bit less time on the computer and working on the lines I need for [The](#)

[Lion in Winter](#). Last Sunday was the first complete rehearsal without books. I was trying to get all my lines in place before then. I had most of them, but had problems with two scenes. I got through the Sunday rehearsal Ok, so by the start of the show I should be very comfortable. Now that is a bit of a concern for me, because I've never been this comfortable with my lines this early. Now, I did know most of the lines for one other show I was in, but because of the role, I was never completely comfortable with them. I really feel comfortable with these lines, that is different and a bit of a worry for me. Really, that is a good thing, I never want to be comfortable in a role. The bit of nervousness gives a role its life.

I am also working on a complete list of my 50 most important life moments. It was much harder than I thought. I've had so many important things happen in my life, and it has been difficult to put them in some sort of order.

Back to the lines...

Theater award night...

An annual event for our [little community theater](#) is our award banquet. Fun time with good food, fun skits, and of course, awards for the actors and shows.

It is always fun to be involved in a show. At the time it is a lot of work and it takes up quite a bit of time. But when the show is over, there is always a let down of sorts. For me, this award show brings back all the good memories of the shows, but the time and work involved is a lot less (unless you are setting up the show).

I won't go into all the awards won. My memory of who won what and what show it was for, and how to spell the names is lacking at this hour of the evening. Even with that, I would ask them first before putting their names in my blog.

Me, I wasn't in any shows this year. I didn't design any sets. I wasn't a director on any show. I wasn't expecting to win any award. I did!! Shock of shocks. It was an award that is decided on by the president of the playhouse trustees. Big honor I will have to say.

Winning this award got me thinking. I have strange thoughts all the time, so this was no exception. After the show was over, everyone was congratulating everyone with an award. The common phrase heard was: "You deserved it." Of course most if not all were well meant. But in common, polite society would we ever say anything else? Would you say: 'Why the heck did they give that award to you? So and so did much better, they should have won.'" (of course behind the scenes, they are saying those words to so and so.) No, polite society will generally refrain from those remarks, until enough booze is swallowed. □ Polite society will refrain from making comments other than the 'congratulations' if they feel the award was not deserved, or they won't say anything.

Why did I think of this, well I got a large number of those "You deserved it." comments. Being the humble person I am (no that isn't meant to be a joke), I was caught off guard again. Then again, thanks to the training my wife gave me, I can read body language very well (my secret is out now, oops). The language of the bodies, and the words said were matching up. The people saying the words, meant the words. Wow again, I was humbled.

Over the years people have done more for the theater than I've ever done. This year there were people that did more than me. But the big thing for me is this one little fact. The theater has done more for me than I've ever done for the theater.

Little things here and there, now and then, have kept this old soul in good health. The people in the theater were there at my darkest moments. Outside of my daughters and others in my family, the theater was an anchor to sanity. For me, that was better than any award they can give. I cannot say thank you enough for that.

All this from one little theater group. Wonderful therapy for a grieving widower, and good shows too. Is it any wonder I keep going back?

Hollywood Musicals

The big film style from the 40's, 50's and even into the early 60's was the Musical. Just did some background checks on Musicals in Film history.

In the 2000's only one musical won best picture (Chicago 2002)
In the 1990's there were no musicals winning best picture, If you count Disney's Beauty and the Beast only 1 musical was nominated.

In the 1980's none and I didn't see any nominated

In the 1970's none, I counted 3 nominations.

In the 1960's there was West Side Story (1961), My Fair Lady (1964), The Sound of Music (1965), and Oliver! (1968) with many others nominated

In the 1950's there was An American in Paris (1951), Gigi (1958) and again many others nominated

In the 1940's Going my Way (1944) again there were many more nominated.

Now I realize that Academy awards are not a good indication of all the films made, it makes some logical sense to me that if more musicals are being made more will end up in the

nomination process. That is just everyday statistics. So, I'm wondering, What happened to the musical? I may have to explore this when I have more time. The other question is, why do local community theaters always have to put on a musical? Never mind on that last question, there isn't a budget for big special effects and action movies, I mean plays.

Post Script...

Fascinating sidebar for me. I started thinking of musicals was when I was discussing Fred Astaire with one of my daughters. I made the comment on how he made all of his dance partners look good, even the inanimate ones.

An interesting weekend.

Saturday started out with a quick trip to [Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Fremont, IN](#). My youngest and I didn't take the truck trip into the preserve, but we were able to visit the 1850's Rendezvous and talk with a few of the 'trappers'. The main goal of the trip was to pick up some bison burgers for a gaming night at my oldest's house. Good food, good fun and a wonderful afternoon and late-late evening. More Dungeons and Dragons was played.

Today, I made a recipe that I submitted to our Theater's cookbook to serve at the final production of "Kitchen Witches". Fun little show and the audience/guests seemed to like my samples. The recipe is on page 6 of our cook book. (Just wondering if we could sell that on line? – E-Book???).

I'm going to try a recipe or more from the book, they all look pretty good to me. My oldest daughter got to be the on stage "guest judge" for the show today. She seemed to really enjoy the small bit of stage work. Another day of good fun.

And finally I see that some dear friends are all back from their Florida vacations. Someday, when I can get more than a day or two off, I will need to do something like that.

That's all folks...

Children of the night...

What music they make...

In keeping with the Halloween season, I thought that line was appropriate. Bela Lugosi's role as [Dracula](#) still is one for the ages. Today, that movie seems quaint and common, but in 1931 it terrified the audience. I've been told and read that the 1922 silent movie [Nosferatu](#) was even more chilling. Someday I must see that film.

Other versions of Dracula were horrific, bad, funny and just plain campy. There was Dracula vs Frankenstein, Dracula vs Batman. There was a Son of Dracula (Young Dracula) and an Old Dracula. Dracula was even [Dead and Loving It](#). He even discoed in [Love at First Bite](#). Today there are many more vampire stories out there, they all started with Dracula.

Why this fascination? Hard to say. Terror lurks in dark places. We as a society gather in light areas. We bring light into the dark. We try to chase away all shadows. Vampires, werewolves and their ilk are creatures of the shadows and dark. They strike a nerve with us. They chill our bones. They the moral of a story. Live a good life and evil will not happen to you. Stay with the group, do not go off alone after dark. There is evil out there and it has a name.

Today, we try to scare ourselves and we call it fun. We have

horror movies, haunted mazes and houses, horror books. Things designed to get a bit of thrill in our lives. Things designed to get our blood flowing.

I do love the Halloween season. I wish that our haunted theater had been a reality, now I have no plans for Halloween. I'm too old to go "Trick or Treating" and I know of costume parties yet. Last year, even without the party, I put on my Dracula cape and went around the local area. Maybe this year, I'll shop at Wal*Mart.

And what brought all this up...

The Children of the Night, what music they make... Owls in the trees, a dog or coyote howling in the distance on a chill dark night. Yes, the children of the night make music, and to my ears there is nothing better...

And yes, this is a [play](#) our theater should do... if we don't do a haunted house in October, we should at least do one themed play...

Actor: Not Believable as a Human Being.

If you've seen friends you might remember the episode when Joey, a often unemployed and ridiculously bad actor, gets a review that reads "Not believable as a human being."... Well, today I am the received such acclaim.

I am in a local production of the Nerd and play the title character or Rick Steadman; the Nerd.

With such choice phrases used as "over the top" and "upstages

the others” and “hard to believe he is a real person” it is indeed time to ask myself the question... Am I as bad as Joey?

The good news is the show itself got a good review and so did some of my VERY WELL DESERVING castmates!! ☐ ☐

Oh well. I can only learn for next time. I have always found myself a little better at dramatic roles; not a character actor am I. For now I will have to live with “not being believable as a human being” – or at least “hard to believe he is a real person”.

Adding a site or two

Notice on the right side of this page there are links to various things. There are of course links to the blogs I write, and comments people make about them (Hey, I like the comments, so keep them coming). I have links to other blogs. I now added a few links to other places. I will be adding more in the future. These are the places that have some interest to me.

Since I’ve given a good percentage of my writings to things that happen in and around our little theater group, I thought I should add that site too. I don’t go to it that often, because I often know what is going on there. I was going to write a little bit about the theater anyway.

Last year in or around February I celebrated my 10th anniversary with the theater. Funny, I can’t remember the dates of the show, but I do remember it was the first show of 2007. It was the 3rd show of the 2006/2007 season. At that time, we were known as ‘The Williams County Playhouse’, or in most cases, just the Playhouse. People who knew about it, knew

what you were talking about. I've averaged participating in 2 shows a year since 1997. I wasn't always on stage, sometimes I would just run lights or help building sets.

Me, I'm what you could call a character actor. I've only had a couple of lead roles. Most of the time I'm in a supporting or cameo role. I kind of like it that way. I can only think of a couple plays where I would really want the lead role. To my great satisfaction, I have played the lead in the one show where I really wanted that part. Too bad we don't have a history section for the theater web site. As a local community theater we've been active for over 50 years. I did notice today, that I am in a couple of pictures for some of the shows I've been in. Didn't remember taking some of those pictures, and I'm glad none of the "Run for your Wife" pictures got in there.

Anyway, what was I going on about? A yes character rolls. I can't say I was much of a character my first year or so. I just didn't have the confidence in my acting to really start having fun. I had fun during rehearsals and after the shows, just not during the shows. The turning point came in a show called "Wait Until Dark". While the director wanted me to smoke, it was pivotal to the rest of the show, I never managed to look comfortable smoking. I never smoked a cigarette in my life before that one on stage. Even though I looked like a rookie smoker, I think that caused my comfort level on stage to make a turn. The next time on stage, I was adding a little more to my characters. I've played an old man, a young kid, a psychiatrist (three times), a few cops, husband, minister, gay neighbor, British Sgt. Major, Silent film Actor, card playing buddy, gentleman's gentleman, and a friend to a 6' 4 1/2" tall rabbit. I'm sure I have left something out, but that should cover most of them.

My favorite role was that of Elwood Dowd in "Harvey". My least favorite role, was that of one of the beat cops in "Arsenic and Old Lace", but it was my first WCP show, and I was sick

during the run. My most memorable show was one I was in the light booth for. The very first show after my wife's death. It was a show that dealt extensively with death. It was pure, intense therapy. Theater, my friends, can heal the soul, calm the heart, and make life a bit more realistic.

Why talk about all this now? Well, I know our little theater is in a financial bind (nothing new here, but that is the way of things). I'm sure other community theaters are also on the lookout for cash. So, I guess I'm begging a little here. There is a very good chance that you live near a community theater. Look them up, stop by a show, support them. Yes, there is a little culture going on, and the people in the theater groups are doing it for fun (we don't get paid folks), but it can be so much more. Have a laugh or a cry watching live theater....

My life as a play

After watching "Little Women" from the light booth for a about a week now, I was wondering what kind of play my life would make. I know right now, if the author of the play knew me at all, it would not be a musical. Then again, some twisted mind would do that, just to get a reaction from me, or think of me rolling in my grave.

Anyway, would my life make an worthwhile play... That may take some thought. First off a good play needs many different features. A good plot is almost essential (there are a few exceptions to this). Engaging characters are required (my life has that). Some humor, maybe a bit of tragedy helps round everything out.

In my life, you can usually skip everything that happens at my place of employment. Yes, the characters there would be

wonderful, but the plot, or day to day happenings are not going to engage an audience. Who in there right mind would want to watch people sit at computers all day. While I've worked in a number of offices, they are not like the sit-coms. To watch would be boring.

Now, on to the rest of my life. For most of it I am a father of 4 daughters. I'm thinking the play could be written around the marriages of each. While only two are married, I think if the weddings progress in any way, there may be a story to tell.

So for this I've developed a cast of characters...

Father

Daughter 1

Daughter 2

Daughter 3

Daughter 4

Son-in-Law 1

Son-in-Law 2

Son-in-Law 3

Son-in-Law 4

GrandMother

GrandFather

Various other family members needed to round out the story (I'll let the writer worry about this, and any directors worry about the huge cast size ☐).

Act 1 – Wedding 1

Widowed father joins rest of males of the wedding party in wearing a Kilt. Is the groom late? Will the bride ever calm down? Will the music play? Will the wind blow and we find exactly what is worn under Kilts? It was an interesting day.

Act 2 – Wedding 2

Widowed father drives across many states to get to second daughter's Florida Wedding, in AUGUST!!! It is hot, and muggy,

and the wedding is outside. Will the alligator in the pond climb up on the dock! There is no electricity by the dock for the wedding. The batteries in the boombox are dead. Play the music from a Car? Who will pass out? Who will get a sunburn? Who gets bitten by the gator?

Act 3 – Wedding 3

Not sure on this it hasn't happened yet. Star Wars theme and the Wookie Best man trips on his own fur? Lord of Rings theme and the Orcs attack during service. Take your pick, or it may be something else.

Act 4 – Wedding 4

Let's leave this one in the future. Dream like. It hasn't happened either, but as the father, I can't think of my baby girl getting married just yet...

And then again maybe the play of my life would not be these weddings/future weddings.

Maybe a play about my married life? The fun and warmth of the early years. Kids growing up, the bond between two people growing stronger. Tragic death, grief, and finally growth continuation of life.

May be too much of a downer for some...

And lastly, my life as a member of a community theater. The follies of live performance. Things not working in the light booth, problems of set building. This may not have a wide audience, but any person who ever acted in, directed, helped put on a community theater play may get a kick out of it.

Well, it was fun thinking of this anyway. There may not be a play ever written about my life, but I know that everyone's life is a stage. We perform live everyday. We are the actors,

and the audience.

Give it your best, people are watching...