

Grandpa Meet The Trolley

Tonight Act numero dos with the orchestra went much better than any of us had planned. Perfection... I would not go that far. There were some problems. Missed qs or rs. Songs falling apart, but I have been in a show or two when during the final week of rehearsal, we had the same thing happen. "A Victim of Gravity" comes to mind. But, I am really getting into this Grandpa thing. I had everyone on stage, in the orchestra, and a few people sitting in the audience laughing at some of his antics... to which madame director was quick to admonish. Tonight was also bio night. "John Truitt" mentioned that he had no idea what to include so I let him glance at my rambling. When he came to my favorite roles, he had to comment. Morat Notboratnichkov? Once again, the Liswathistani came out for a moment. Confusion arose since everyone naturally assumes this is Borat, but NO, NO, NO... not Borat... MMMMMMORAT. Plus, we attempted one of the most dreaded moments of any show: the curtain call. Has anyone EVER been in a show in which the curtain call went perfectly the first time? OK... maybe not the first. But I am sure we will need to work on it again and again. Especially when there is a 13 member chorus along with several walk on cast members and 11 principals. Grandpa took a seat on the trolley while everyone else fell over each other. Two weeks from tomorrow!

Something new, something old

Wow, three posts in one day!

I've been working on a very old laptop (Compaq Armada), and installing Ubuntu Linux on it. This little machine has just

been collecting dust for the past few months, patiently waiting for me to install a working operating system.

With an old wireless card, I am now able to use this computer to access the internet anywhere in my house.

Why in the world would I want to do that? Well, I'm looking forward to download updates to this machine. Of course, I'm enough of a geeky nerd to like playing with a different OS. And finally, I really like giving this old machine new life for at least a while.

The machine is much too slow for any serious work, but it will give me a chance to work with something different. I may start converting some of my other old boxes to linux of one flavor or another. If I can find good video and picture software, this may replace windows on one of my everyday computers. Still too early to tell on that.

So far so good. I was able to post on my blog, and read email. Maybe with additional memory, this things wouldn't be that slow either.... Nope, the processor is very slow.

If I make two posts a day..

If I average around two posts a day from now until the last week of March, I may end up with around 1 post per day when I reach my 1 year anniversary of blogging. I'm not sure that will happen, since I do have a few other things going on between now and then. Today is a fluke because I have a little bit of time to blog a bit, while I'm waiting for some things to download. I just noticed, with my last post on fish sandwiches that I only needed 1 more to hit 300. Then only 65 more for the 1 post per day average by the end of March.

Unless I really want that distinction, it ain't gonna happen..

I'm only adding more words, since on one of my other 'century' posts, I was given a bit of a rough time for the length of it. I do believe the comments on the post were longer than the post itself.

Fast Food Fish

There are 6 national Fast Food Restaurants that serve a Hot Fish sandwich at least during or around Lent. Yes, Subway exists and does server a tuna fish sandwich, but that is an entirely different animal. As I try them, I will give a short review.

McDonalds Fillet-o-Fish Served all year

The Fillet-o-Fish has been my perennial favorite. I'm sure this has something to do with eating so many growing up in a Catholic family, and of course spending lots of time hanging out in McDonalds. For those who don't know, this sandwich is a square fish stick on a bun, smothered in Tartar Sauce and a slice of melted American Cheese. This sandwich, as was usual with most McDonalds products is the same year after year, sandwich after sandwich. Even though my tastes have grown up a bit, I will still get one of these on occasion. I don't eliminate the meat from my diet during lent, or on Fridays, so the desire for fish has to out weigh my desire for beef. It happens, but the Fillet-0-Fish is not the comfort food that a cheeseburger is. ☐ These used to be a cheap sandwich at McDonalds, but the price has gone up in the past few years. There should be a two-fer sale in the next few weeks to coincide with the Lenten season. Not a bad sandwich, and it is my scale for all other fast food fish sandwiches... so it is a 7

on scale of 1 – 10

Burger King BK-fish Served all year

Been a few months since I've had one of these sandwiches. Always, and I do mean always overcooked. Doesn't matter what BK I go to. I'll stick to their Angus burger. Score 3. I may try this one again. I was told they got better, and it is Lenten fish sale time.

Arbys Fish during Lent

Decent fish sandwich, A large fillet with lettuce, tomato and tartar sauce. When I last had it, no cheese was offered. Since I was used to the McDs sandwich I felt it was missing. They are usually only offered in the spring, with some sales during lent. I think last year it was during the entire period, but sometimes the sale is only on Fridays. With a sale price this is a very good value, not so good if not on sale. I'll choose it over the McDs sandwich when on sale. Give this one an 8 when on sale, 6 when not...

Wendy's Fish During Lent

I just had this sandwich a couple of weeks ago. I will have to try it again. On my first sandwich the fish was overcooked, but not served piping hot. Must have been sitting around a while. To give it a fair review, I will need to go back when they are busy on a Friday to make sure I get a fresh sandwich. Served with lettuce, tomato and Tartar Sauce with cheese as an option. So far the score on this sandwich is a 3.

Dairy Queen Fish Fillet sandwich (all year?)

I had the DQ Crispy Fish Fillet sandwich this week. What can I say? The onion rings were tasty. As for the fish, I would almost complain of some false advertising. It wasn't very crispy. That being said, it was a nice sized piece of fish. The sandwich also contained tartar sauce and lettuce. The bun was very fresh. Nothing really special, but not too bad either. I'm thinking a score of 6 fits this sandwich.

A&W/KFC Fish snackers during Lent

99 cent mini fish sandwiches. No frills, just Tartar Sauce, fish and a bun. I like these little sandwiches a lot. If our local KFC had better service, I would get it more often. Just not worth the time spent waiting to get them, unless I really want a draft Root Beer too. Interesting combination of KFC and A&W in our town, but I think that confuses the servers. Score 8

Your Favorite?

[poll id=8]

Sick Of Winter?

If you're like me, then you are sick of winter. I'm sick of getting snowed in, sick of bundling up the kids, and sick of the high heating bills. So even though it's a very dark type of humor, I did have to chuckle at this picture of a poor snowman I received via email; no doubt created by some poor soul who is a victim of the winter blues:



And since we're on the subject of snowmen, I read an article a few weeks ago with many interesting tidbits about them, so I'll share a few. After all, it's the least I can do after sharing such a depressing picture like the one above, right?

– Snowman art is one of the few activities modern man shares with his earliest ancestors. The earliest illustration of a snowman found was made in about 1380, and snow sculpting was a popular pastime during the Middle Ages.

– In the year 1494, Michelangelo sculpted snow figures in Florence, Italy.

– In 1999, residents of Bethel, Maine constructed the largest snowman ever built with 8 million pounds of snow. They beat

their own record in 2008 using 13 million pounds of snow when they created Olympia (actually a snowwoman) who stood 122 feet and one inch tall and could be seen from 4 miles away! They used snow skis for her eyelashes, car tires for her lips, trees for her arms, and kids created her 6-foot nose from chicken wire and muslin. Her hand-stitched hat had a 48-foot circumference. Here is a picture of Olympia:



So don't let the winter blues get you down, especially since us here in the Midwest are having a winter relapse today with icy winds and snow flurries – yuck! Get some snowman inspiration, and go out there and try your hand at building your own winter work of art! Hurry – the first day of spring is only a month away – and thank goodness for that!

The preceding blog post contains information obtained from [American Profile magazine](#).

I got cheeseburgers

During the summer, a contest in our local community was held to determine the best burger in town. I was unable to go to that event, and I don't even remember who won. I understand it will be a large undertaking, but I may be taking my own survey on the local burger scene. Since I really like cheeseburgers, I imagine most of the burgers will have cheese on them.

Let's eliminate the fast food burgers first, starting with the smaller dollar menu burgers. I'll have to make a trip to all the fast food joints in the area (Williams County), but I can start with McDonalds.

Recently to save money, McDonalds now have a new burger on the menu. It is called the McDouble. This is a standard double cheeseburger minus one slice of cheese. All this for 30 cents less than the old Double Cheeseburger. 30 cents for 1 slice of precut American processed cheese. Hmm. Still, the Double Cheeseburger was a memory comfort food for me. Kind of like White Castle sliders only bigger. Not the best burger around, but a taste that remained the same from restaurant to restaurant. Since the introduction of the McDouble, I've been able to tell the difference from the restaurant in Bryan and the one in Montpelier and from the time of day it is purchased. I'm not sure what they do different, but it is no longer the comfort food I was used to. Being the cheap person I am, I'm not about to spend 30 cents for a piece of cheese. So I have to find another \$1.00 burger to replace my old standby.

I'll try to keep you posted...

Also on the list, in time for lent, Fast Food Fish

sandwiches... □

2-18-08 to 2-18-09

As [taylhis](#) pointed out in her recent post, today is the first anniversary of our foray into the blogging world. I have found it to be a very fun yet therapeutic experience in recalling the good and otherwise events of the last year. Memories that will be enshrined in this site forever unless something totally unfortunate occurs. Truly fantastic times spent with friends on and off stage, on vacation (still one of the greatest weeks I have ever had), and some family experiences thrown in. Then, one of the hardest times I have ever had to endure in my 35 years. I think about Ma2 everyday. I just know that she is in a far better place looking down on all of us who loved her so much and is there giving me a good swift kick everytime I fail to meet my potential (or maybe it is just me, but knowing Emily as well as I do... I don't think so). So... here's to [taylhis](#), [Derek](#), [admin](#), and I. The rest of you [tangential](#) posters are just as good, too.

Happy Birthday To My Blog!

Happy Birthday to my blog! Today is the one-year anniversary of the day I started my blog on tangents.org! And 381 blog posts later, here we are! So even though I haven't been able to blog every day, there were a few days when I got more than one post up, and so in a 366 day year (leap year in 2008), I

was able to make 381 blog posts, and that averages more than one a day, surpassing my goal I had when I started this thing! So I'd like to thank everybody who trudges through my rambling garbage – those who have read all 381 My Food Chain Gang blog posts and those who pretend to have read them ☐

Having this blog has been a great way to vent my feelings (from pride about my kids to my frustrations with Walmart), share news stories I find interesting (from funny police happenings to interesting animal tidbits), write movie reviews, and most importantly, keep in touch with my family and friends who live far away – especially when our lives are too busy to allow us to chat on the phone when we want. THANKS AGAIN FOR VISITING my site!

Throw Him In The Pit

Tonight was the first rehearsal for which we had an ORCHESTRA. And I am pleased to say that it went remarkably well. We finally started about 7.30 and got to the end of Act I shortly after 9. Remarkably, we stopped very little although there were some problems with lines but only once or twice did anyone call for a line. Good, bad, or indifferent we mae it through. I was even surprised by the young girls playing Agnes and Tootie. But for getting through the act in just over an hour-and-a-half was remarkable... evn the director said so after she delivered her long list of notes. The one note she had for Grandpa was the necessity to learn the Scene 2 song which we have not practiced a great deal.

Performing with an orchestra can be a very interesting predicament. You really have to be on your toes and know where you are in the music. We were informed that most

productions do not get the benefit of the orchestra until the week of a shows opening. We have 8 rehearsals remaining, but it is STILL great to be on stage taking to heart all the comments and making note to find ways to improve upon the character. Thursday nights Act II REHEARSAL SHOULD BE JUST AS INTERESTING. □

Seen but not heard



That's how the saying goes, only it's talking about children while I'm talking about me. Welcome to my journey in a deaf and hard-of-hearing classroom. I always like to joke about how I am monolingual, speak only one language, but even with others from another country, when I talk to them they can usually understand me at least a little. The problem with subbing in this sort of classroom, I know extremely little sign language. At least in Spanish, I can tell them I don't speak Spanish in, er, Spanish ("No hablo español). Without a translator I am hopeless in a deaf classroom.

This wasn't the first time I've been in one of these rooms. In fact, I subbed for this same teacher once last year so I knew what to expect. I arrived there and first thing I noticed was there were no plans. Sub plans that is- she did have the plans she expected to teach herself. For the most part, these plans worked out fine. For two hours in the morning the kids worked on packets called "News-2-You." Another teacher in the room for the morning actually taught that. What did I do in the meantime? I cut out word cards and laminated book pages, and put together number cards. They would have had me make copies too, but the machine was taken

over by the PTA for the morning. I did get to teach one lesson though, aided in part by an assistant who was none too happy about being sucked into a translator role. She was replaced by one much less cold to me about 10-minutes into the lesson (she had to be somewhere else). I taught the math lesson. It was an... interesting... experience. The students were at a lower level than I expected them to be, and I had to skip parts of the lesson and adjust. Yes, be a real teacher for the hour. 8)

The afternoon was far different from the morning, but I was about as useful. For most of the afternoon I was in other classrooms acting as ~~the third wheel~~ a teaching assistant for the classes. I couldn't help the deaf students mainstreamed in the classes- that was left to an assistant who could sign. I just walked around, made sure students were working, and in rare instances helped a student or two. There was a small portion of the afternoon where I was scheduled to teach. However, when the time rolled around it was myself and the two 6th grade kids (there were two each of 4th, 5th, and 6th-grade kids in her room). No translator. Well, scratch teaching. The cold assistant came in and set them to read for the half hour and then left again. About 5-minutes later a translator came in, sent by one of the assistants or a teacher as she said she normally wasn't in the room. Lesson time? Nope. I didn't have the materials for the lesson, so they continued reading before going off to speech at 2:30, leaving me to act as an assistant again in the 4th grade room where the two 4th-graders were mainstreamed for the afternoon.

All-in-all it was an easy, unexciting day. Compared to my time in this room last year, it went great. I remember some dramatic moments, one where a student swore at me in sign language- not that effective since I didn't understand and he was seen by the teaching assistant, but strange just the same. I also saw one of my weekend kids in the hall. When I call him up this week- I'm calling all of my two small groups

to remind them of rewards week- I'm sure he'll want to talk about it.