

Silence and the Truth



The last time I wrote, I forgot about a big detail from Friday. I have been subbing for a few years now and I must either have been in elementary schools on this particular day, or in districts that don't support it. The day I'm referring to is the day of silence. This is a day where non-heterosexual students, and those who support them, make vows of silence (which many don't keep outside of the classroom by the way) as a response to the bullying many receive. Being what and who I am, I cannot support their lifestyle of course, but neither do I support people bullying them. As such I do support their right to make this particular point. However, in doing so it does bring to the forefront their lifestyle for everyone to see and discuss during schooltime, so naturally I support the counterpoint that follows on the next school day—the Day of Truth. The truth being that this lifestyle is dangerous, particularly for males, and it is counter to God's Word. As such, some Christians started this day in response, though I understand many schools that support the DoS do not support the DoT even though it is completely run by students and so doesn't fall under separation of church and state. This year there were some who promoted a Christian walkout on Friday, but I think this person has a better Christian response:

I propose instead of walking out, that evangelical kids pledge to do better, to do things differently.

Last year, on the Day of Silence, Campus Crusade for Christ Regional Director, Michael Frey and I promoted the idea that students in high school and college take the [Golden Rule Pledge \(LINK\)](#). In response to silent peers advocating for safety and respect, we hope evangelical kids will agree and pledge to treat others the way they want to be treated in

return. Over 30 schools took part last year, and we hope this year we can build more bridges instead of walls.

[Click this link](#) to go to Dr. Warren Throckmorton's blog to read the whole thing. Anyway, the school I was at supported the DoS in a big way, even giving students packs of notes they could hand to teachers in each class they were in. I really didn't do much about it, though as I said I (silently) supported their right to do this, and at the same time I treated it as a small blessing- fewer students talking in class ☐ . Unfortunately Monday I was in an elementary school in supersized district so I have no idea if the Day of Truth meant anything at Friday's school.

I Smell A Rat...

Make that 4 rats. We now have 4 pet rats. How did that happen, you ask? A bit of mistaken identity when they were picked out at the pet store resulted in rat babies? No, all 4 are male – I don't think there's any mistaking that. What happened is this...

We got our two pet rats, and the kids' friends decided they wanted pet rats. This family has a history of obtaining and disposing of pets at a record rate. It bugs the heck out of me, but I don't want to say anything to them and step over the boundary of telling people how to raise their kids. We took a cat they decided they didn't want anymore, but we had to give it back because our dog was constantly trying to eat her and I was more allergic to that cat than I am to most cats. So anyway, this family is notorious for getting pets and then "getting rid" of them when they're tired of them, want new pets, or just plain can't take care of them anymore. To a

degree, circumstances like these are understandable. We had to “get rid” of a dog because she bit my daughter in the face – understandable that we can’t have a dog in the house who bites kids when we have 4 kids. Getting “rid of her” upset me at the time, but I also knew there was no choice. I’m putting “get rid” in quotes because it’s a term I don’t like to use about pets. I don’t like to think that this is something people should regularly do with animals. I’m a firm believer in pets being commitments – you must keep them until they pass away (extenuating circumstances don’t count – stuff happens sometimes, but not to EVERY pet, as in the case with this family). You need to do all the research about care before you obtain the pet; such as cleaning up after it and how much it will cost to feed it – which is why our daughter’s friend’s family needed to “get rid” of their rats.

It was a fine line to walk. I don’t want to encourage these people to get more pets by taking their leftovers, but on the other hand, I’m an animal lover, and I can only imagine what would happen to unwanted rats (snake food, turned loose in a field = hawk or cat or coyote food, etc). Besides, my kids have been just GREAT about caring for their pet rats. I barely know the rats are in the house, except when I actually have time to play with them, which is exactly how I wanted it. The girls feed and water their rats, clean the cage weekly, and play with them and give them exercise daily. So how could I say no to getting their friends’ rats and yes to sending them to certain doom?

So, yes, we now have 4 rats in the house. Please don’t start calling me ‘crazy rat lady’; it wasn’t entirely my fault; I was just trying to help! Here are the new additions – Buckeye and well, I can’t remember his name, so here is Buckeye and what’s his name (his head is barely visible underneath Buckeye – he looks just like Oreo, one of our original rats).



And while I'm at it, here are our original rats, Oreo and Bobby Jack:



My Bookshelf 0' Rats – just what I've always wanted ☐



More Melancholy...

Things have been up and down these past few days for me. Semi-enjoyable day Saturday with the filming of the Clinic (see posts from others). Very nice evening Sunday watching my daughter in her show choir. Monday I was able to 'Save the Day' by delivering some Fruit Loops... ☐ However, (you saw this coming with the title) things aren't good.

A good friend's son died over the weekend. Young with his whole life ahead of him. Sad, so very sad. The other thing in my life that happened isn't for blogging.

There are times when things just seem to stack up, and this is one of them. Up then down. Down then up. Mini Roller Coaster compared to other times in my life, but uncomfortable anyway.

Just my time to vent a bit.

You Say It's Your Birthday... Well It's My Birthday, Too

I was feeling rather curious to tonight and I decided to check out celebrities who celebrate (or celebrated) their birthday the same day as I do.

- I have known for years that Fred Gwynne (Herman Munster from *The Munsters* and Judge Chamberlain Haller from the hilarious *My Cousin Vinnie*) was born on July 10th.
- Phyllis Smith who plays (ironically) Phyllis on *The Office*. Isn't it curious that many of the supporting cast members share the first name as the actor playing

them? For instance, Oscar Nunez plays Oscar; Angela Kinsey plays Angela; and perhaps most ironic, Creed Bratton plays Creed Bratton (but has his last name on the show ever been established).

- Jake LaMotta the boxer who was the basis for the movie *Raging Bull*.
- Jonathan Gilbert (Willie Olsen from *Little House on the Prarie* who is the brother of Melissa" Laura" Gilbert and half brother of Sara "Darlene #1 from *Roseanne*").

There were 3 pages full of celebrities who share my birthday. Some I would call infamous and some I have no idea who they are. Follow the [link](#) to see who shares your special day.

The Race for the Comment

I was recently amused when a few of my blogging friends were talking about which post had the most comments. So, this morning I thought I would quickly look for a cool image (below) that everyone would have to comment on... I think I found one! What is the boy in this picture doing!?!?!



Now, after seeing the photo, [click here to hear a sound effect](#) that will answer the question – WHAT is the boy in this picture doing?

Yet Another Rainy Day And Monday

Well... after a long and blessedly eventful weekend, I had my regular Monday off. I usually spend an hour or two cleaning my mother's beauty shop. I did not mind today since the weather outside did not look to inviting after a decent Saturday and Sunday was a blah one, too (I guess the old adage that if it rains on Easter Sunday you can expect 6 Sundays of the same does not mean the same if it is opposite... meaning: If it does not rain on Easter Sunday, you can expect 6 Sundays of no rain. Kind of like a groundhog predicting the weather).

So after spending some time chatting with a sick friend hoping to dispel some of her dreariness and getting to see a teaser of the short film we began shooting on Saturday, I read a bit while the suds were on television (YUCK) and found that the Yankees were on tv tonight. After the first series at the new stadium with the Indians ended in a 2-2 split (we **WILL NOT** mention the happening of Saturday afternoon. Remarkably, they now stand at a 7-6 record), I was looking forward to the beginning of a new round with the Oakland As). Hopefully, the announcers would be a bit more even in their commentating than the seriously one-sided announcers on the Cleveland net. I may sound biased but those announcers were terribly pro-Indian. Unfortunately at 7PM, ESPN announced the bad news: The NY/Oakland game has been postponed due to rain. Guess I should have kept a better eye on the weather in the Bronx: at 2:00, it was cloudy, but rain was forecasted. I was in the same predicament as [Taylhis](#) last night. Maybe I will catch up on some of the 70+ *Simpsons* episodes I have waiting on the DVR. Honestly, who has time for regular tv viewing anymore? Well... the occasional Thursday night from 8-9.30 but aside from that...

The Clinic – A Preview

As you may or may not know, my husband – the almighty admin – wrote a play called “The Clinic”. We spent last Saturday turning it into a short film. Here is a teaser...

ALS Is An Awful Disease

Well, ok, what disease is NOT awful? But ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease) robs a person of his or her motor skills and leaves their mind intact. So essentially, ALS victims are imprisoned in their own body. And ALS often strikes at a young age, and most people struggle with it for less than 3 years before it takes their life. We watched my husband's father struggle with it for over 2 years. We watched as it robbed him of his ability to walk, talk, eat and pretty much everything else. He passed away very peacefully, a week before Christmas. We were all in the room with him, and a hospital volunteer was playing Silent Night on the harp as he passed. It was beautiful, but it's still hard for me to hear that song. The reason I'm bringing this up is because the most famous victim of ALS, besides Lou Gehrig himself, is Stephen Hawking, and I was sorry to read in the news today that he is very ill.

Stephen Hawking is a brilliant scientist and an inspirational man – he has lived with ALS for over 40 years. Lou Gehrig had it for nearly two years before he died at the age of 37. Gehrig's was a New York Yankees player, and he was forced to retire when he was diagnosed with ALS. His record of most career grand slams still holds at 23 today! We watched *The Pride of the Yankees* (which tells the story of Lou Gehrig) with my father-in-law after his diagnosis, and that was tough. Same thing with *Tuesdays With Morrie*... why did my father-in-law want to do that to himself? To get a better grip on what was happening to him, maybe? I don't know.

My father-in-law was a remarkable man. He had the biggest heart of anyone I've ever known, second only to my husband. He was kind, generous, smart, and funny. He knew a lot about

everything; especially movies and religion – he had the Bible practically memorized. One of my favorite memories of him was when we took him to the zoo. It was after the ALS had already taken hold of his body, but his humor was still intact. As we were wheeling his wheelchair over a bumpy bridge at the zoo, he said, “Ahhhh” – not because the ALS had taken away his speech (it hadn’t yet) but because it was a bumpy ride and he was jokingly letting the bumps affect his voice. He was taken from us too soon; I wonder what he would have thought of having 7 grandchildren? He’s been gone longer than I knew him now – over 8 years. His funeral was on our oldest daughter’s first birthday. But anyway... I don’t know why I’m going into all of this now. Let’s pray for Stephen Hawking. ALS is a terrible disease.

I’m Grounded

I will spare you the details, but apparently I’ve caught some sort of stomach virus (and it causes stomach pain – OUCH!). Of course, I can’t call in sick to my job as a SAHM (stay at home mom), and just my luck that my husband has work today, so I’m stuck with the two little ones. Actually, they’re stuck with me – I don’t feel well enough to go to Walmart or to take them anywhere else, so I can’t even kill time that way – I’m grounded. And I do need to go to Walmart – I’ve already endured one tantrum about our lack of fruit loops. I don’t think I could handle another one. Is there fruit loops delivery? I actually *want* to go to Walmart – like I said, it would kill the time anyway. At least I can blog like a maniac right now while the baby is napping. When he wakes up, I will be at his mercy. He gets really bored around the house and wants to be held all the time. But when I hold him, he just wants to grab things he shouldn’t and bang on my computer

keyboard. I guess I might say I'm bored. It's not that I have nothing to do; there are always blog posts to write (I'm sitting on 14 drafts right now!), newspapers from weeks ago to read, thank you notes and birthday party invitations to write, a messy house to clean, laundry to do, an anniversary photo album to put together... it's just that I don't feel like doing any of that. Or feel like doing much of anything, for that matter. I guess I'll sit here and watch Dora the Explorer all day. I'm getting hungry, but I'm scared to eat anything because of my stomach. I have a meeting I'd really like to get to later... sigh. Being sick sucks. I hope I feel better for date day tomorrow!!!

Busiest Weekend EVER! Part Two

(continued from a previous blog post)

So here's a recap of Sunday – church, brunch, Hannah Montana movie – and that is where I left off.

So we get to the Hannah Montana movie, and of course our 9-month-old son wakes up from his nap just in time for the movie (couldn't be awake to play at church, couldn't be awake to indulge in brunch, alas – that's always the way when you have kids – they sleep thru everything good, and I swear it's a rule – they always wake when the irony is thick!) But, because the Hannah Montana movie is a musical, our 3 youngest were kept too busy to perform their usual awful antics at the movie theater. It was a girly movie, especially with a double love story plot, but our little boy is only 9-months-old, so he didn't notice the girliness. Instead he loved the

musical interludes, and he clapped to each one enthusiastically. For some reason, and I've written about this before, the movie theater turns our normally sweet 2-year-old into a little stripper. Luckily, by the time the idea to take her clothes off occurred to her today, it was near the end of the movie, so she only got as far as taking off her socks and shoes – although she did make sure to note (yell) while doing so, “Don't look at me – I take clothes off!” Ok, Disney, if you don't want people looking, why are you taking your clothes off? Such is the logic of a 2-year-old, I guess.

We had no major spills this time (I'm referring to our last experience when we saw Monsters Vs. Aliens and we somehow dumped an entire soft drink into the lady's purse who was sitting behind us – major oops!), and today our baby was on his best behavior as well because of all the music in the movie – something that I think saved us as far as our 3 youngest kids' behavior at the movies today. As for the movie itself, I enjoyed it more than I did Monsters Vs. Aliens, probably because I actually got to watch this one. But an extra nice surprise for me was the country music add-ins – surprise performances from Taylor Swift and my favorite group, Rascal Flatts. They sang one of their best songs acoustically as if they were relatives just sitting around jamming at a family get-together (can this be MY family get-together?), and it was thoroughly enjoyable. Miley Cyrus even showed her country roots in a song which attempts to revive line-dancing; I guess kids these days (now I sound like I'm 80 – GREAT, when did THAT happen?!?) have a dance they do to this song, but whatever, I kind of liked the song. Overall, I truly enjoyed the country theme that was abundant in this movie – groovin' country music, gorgeous farm fields, cowboys ropin' horses... what's not to like? There was also a surprise (for me) appearance by Jan Levinson Gould from the tv show, The Office. Of course in this movie, she wasn't Jan – she was some southern belle who played Miley's dad's love interest – almost as far away from Jan as one could be, but I

still enjoyed the Office reference. Also, keep in mind that this is a Disney film, so there are LOTS of prat-fallish types of humor, as well as recurring movie themes. For example, 'lobster trouble' (ala Splash, circa 1984), 'switching identities for different dinner dates' (ala Mrs. Doubtfire, circa 1993), 'major celebrity comes in to save a town' (ala Wayne's World 2, circa 1993 or ala Mystery, Alaska circa 1999), it's always best to be yourself' (ala... wow, WAY TOO MANY TO MENTION – take your pick...)

So anyway, I have to (reluctantly) admit that I was pleasantly surprised with the Hannah Montana movie – plenty of stuff in this one for the parents as well as the tweens and even the stripping two-year-olds. But the movie wasn't as plot-less as I had hoped – in other words, we didn't get home until 2:55 – just 20 short minutes before we had to leave for a class we had signed up for through church. So for the next 20 minutes we scrambled around – letting dogs out, repacking diaper bags, changing diapers, etc. We arrived at our class pretty much on time, though a bit exhausted, thank you very much!

The class was great! We learned a lot about our church – their beliefs, their history, as well as their foundations for building a relationship with Christ – a very well-spent 3 hours. And we got to meet other couples at our table too – which is memorable for me because they were surprised to learn we had 4 kids – and I quote, "You don't look old enough to have 4 kids!" NICE!

Following the class was a great dinner of homemade pasta provided by a local chef. Following the delicious dinner was a tour of the north campus of our church – we worship in the south campus, so it was nice to learn the ins and outs of the north campus – so awesome! Our oldest daughter was so excited to show us where her Sunday school was held, and their rooms for youth were VERY impressive! There was a room with a stage for youth productions, and it even had backstage areas, which is almost more than I can say for one of our community

theater's stages, haha! Also, there was a game room with multiple foosball tables and 'carpet ball' – something new to me, but a game I'd definitely like to try! One of the youth rooms had state-of-the-art stage lights and restaurant-style booths for kids to 'hang out' in... Overall, it was a fun evening, and I learned a lot. But, as became common for today, we had to rush from the church class in order to be home in time for the community theater's play reading committee meeting and my much anticipated Cubs game. I was looking forward to this game for days. It was a long series (most are 3 game, some are 2 game, this one was 4 game) against the Cubs rival – the St. Louis Cardinals, with whom the Cubs are vying for first place. The game was at night, which is rare for a Sunday, so I was VERY excited about rounding out my weekend with such a game. But alas, the darn rain had its way, and the game was postponed. So only play reading meeting to look forward to for me – at least I didn't have to rush the meeting and kick people too hard to leave my house since there was no Cub's game! And for once, I think we actually achieved a lot at the play reading committee meeting. Probably because of the fact that there were only 4 of us in attendance – but hey, maybe that 's what needs to be done in order to achieve something... too many people get in each others way, I guess. It will be interesting to see what the absent members think of the decisions the four of us made while they were absent – I hope the decisions stick!

In summary, a great, if extremely exhausting weekend. Come on now, would I have it any other way?