

Audrey's Adventure

It all began with my husband suggesting the play *Little Shop of Horrors* to our community theater's play-reading committee. Somehow, they actually chose it and my husband was chosen to direct it. That was months ago, and the play is slated for production in October, which is rapidly approaching. Realizing the enormity of the scale of a production like this, we've begun to work on it, even though it's only April. Among the many challenges we will face are casting, music (do we cram a band into the theater or use pre-recorded music?), blocking / dancing, and props – which are going to be a doozy for this show. Normally these things are all part of the fun of staging a production, but given a unique set of circumstances, we are in for quite an endeavor – mainly, the fact that we are to perform this thing on a very small stage with an even smaller back stage area. If you are familiar with the show, then you know that the plant involved is HUGE – it must be big enough to eat a person. Not only that, but there are actually *four* of the plants – it starts small and gets bigger during the show, and at least 2 of the Audrey's are VERY large. Also challenging will be filling the role of the plant – it is a VERY physical role, as the person actually has to get inside the plant and use all of his/her muscles to move the thing around – very challenging, and it's not like they will get a lot of glory in that role; their face will never be seen on stage. I expect it to be challenging to fill such a role in community theater where most all of the actors I know LOVE the glory that comes from a role well-played. I am really looking forward to the challenge, however, and I think great things can be accomplished!

What we need is a lot of HELP! Manpower, brains, talents all intersecting to achieve what might seem impossible – to stage an awesome production of *Little Shop* in a small theater. The good news is, we've already had LOTS of volunteers, with some

people actually stepping up to help already – and it's only April! Take [JustJ](#), a fellow blogger for instance. Yesterday he ventured to Lima Ohio with us, an hour and a half away (thought it took much longer than that to get back – you'll read why later), to pick up Audrey II, the man-eating plant needed for the show. And it was an adventure, to say the least. Let's begin by saying that the three quotes I'd gotten from costume shops and other theaters to RENT an Audrey range from \$900-\$1200 – WAY out of our theater's price range. So when I found a theater down in Lima who was willing to see us all four Audreys plus some miscellaneous props for \$250 to KEEP, not rent, I was excited and charged ahead with the arrangement like an idiot who made a New Year's resolution to curtail her bad procrastinating habits. Was \$250 too good to be true? I guess that's something I should have thought about before we made the drive. Their \$250 Audrey II was a heap of foam mess on the floor. They did throw in a curtain for the last scene of the show, a huge (and awesomely scary looking) dentist's drill, some "seedlings" for the flower shop and a flower display case, but the Audrey II was in a state of ... well, I'm going to say disrepair, but only because today is our 10th wedding anniversary and I'm in a good mood. But you know what? We're going to set up a PMS Team (**P**rops and **M**ovable **S**et Team – what were **you** thinking?) who will start working on repairing Audrey II and breathing some life back into her ASAP. I am going to be totally optimistic, and that's why we're starting so early – it's going to be a GREAT show!

Back to the adventure portion of this post... We loaded the heap of foam that was Audrey into JustJ's pickup truck, along with all of the other props, and it all fit! Well, sort of...



Of course it had to be somewhat windy yesterday, and that complicated things. We're driving along, and next thing we know, JustJ and my husband (who was riding shotgun) are seeing pieces of Audrey flying down the road in their sideview mirrors! So we pull over, and my husband goes to retrieve whatever lost pieces of Audrey he can find while JustJ adjusts the tarp that we had to stop and buy earlier in the day. My husband didn't quite get all of Audrey's pieces, so don't be surprised if you read about little man-eating plants sprouting up somewhere in the farm fields outside of Lima, Ohio! We get back in the car for take two and didn't make it more than a few miles before Audrey is flapping in the wind again. The cycle continues, and now Audrey is breaking (eating? Nah, she has a taste for only flesh) bungee cords too, so we have to stop at the first hardware store we came across – a little hole in the wall place in Bufu Cooper Ohio, wherever that is...

The good news is that only seven stops later, we finally made it back to the theater with Audrey, just a little worse for wear. Hey, she needed much repair in the first place, so what's the difference? Now she is ours and she's here! So any takers for the PMS Team? And thanks, JustJ for making the trek and keeping your cool during Audrey's adventure. A producer job is yours if you want it!

Some “edjicayshun” humor

It has been a long, long time since I have posted education humor, so I hope you enjoy this one. The [two-person trailer-run operation known as Snopes](#) has this marked as undetermined, but whether Tennessee, Florida, Alabama, or whatever state in the title I'd like to think that these notes from parents could have actually existed. Have fun reading!

Sick Notes

These are real notes written by parents in a Tennessee school district...(spellings have been left intact.)

1. My son is under a doctor's care and should not take PE today. Please execute him.
2. Please exkuce lisa for being absent she was sick and i had her shot.
3. Dear school: please ecsc's john being absent on jan. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and also 33.
4. Please excuse gloria from jim today. She is administrating.
5. Please excuse roland from p.e. for a few days. Yesterday he fell out of a tree and misplaced his hip.
6. John has been absent because he had two teeth taken out of his face.
7. Carlos was absent yesterday because he was playing football. He was hurt in the growing part.
8. Megan could not come to school today because she has been bothered by very close veins.

9. Chris will not be in school cus he has an acre in his side.
10. Please excuse ray friday from school. He has very loose vowels.
11. Please excuse pedro from being absent yesterday. He had (diahre, dyrea, direathe), the sh**s. [note: words in ()'s were crossed out] .
12. Please excuse tommy for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea, and his boots leak.
13. Irving was absent yesterday because he missed his bust.
14. Please excuse jimmy for being.It was his father's fault.
15. I kept billie home because she had to go christmas shopping because i don't know what size she wear.
16. Please excuse jennifer fo! R missing school yesterday. We forgot to get the sunday paper off the porch, and when we found it monday. We thought it was sunday.
17. Sally won't be in school a week from friday. We have to attend her funeral.
18. My daughter was absent yesterday because she was tired. She spent a weekend with the marines.
19. Ple ase excuse jason for being absent yesterday. He had a cold and could not breed well.
20. Please excuse mary for being absent yesterday. She was in bed with gramps.
21. Gloria was absent yesterday as she was having a gangover.
22. Please excuse brenda. She has been sick and under the doctor.
23. Maryann was absent december 11-16, because she had a

fever, sore throat, headache and upset stomach. Her sister was also sick, fever and sore throat, her brother had a low grade fever and ached all over. I wasn't the best either, sore throat and fever. There must be something going around, her father even got hot last night.

Now we know why parents are screaming for better education for our kids *[ed- and parents!]* !

A Short Post before a Long Post

Today was an eventful day, and deserves a long involved post. It will take a bit of time to set the correct tone.

So on to more trivial things.

Baseball season: All I can say is I hope things turn around for the Tigers. 1 game out of 4? Ouch! The Cubs are doing better, so that is something. But there are a few things more important than the scores of games and who is in first place. [jamiahsh puts the whole thing in perspective.](#) I don't think there is much I can add.

Friends: It is good to have them. They help in many ways. Sometimes they don't realize how much they do help. But I guess sometimes I don't realize how much I help them. It goes both ways doesn't it?

News: Pirates should only be discussed in Baseball terms, movies and plays. Hearing about pirates attacking merchant ships and having world governments bargaining with them is not right. That type of 'handling' of the situation only gives

them reason to keep doing what they are doing. So I guess crime pays. Something isn't right here, but then life is not fair is it?

Movies: Soon the summer block buster season starts. I'm looking forward to seeing a few good ones.

Donning my explosion-proof suit



Back to the school entries- it's been too long. Before I continue though, one of my friends mentioned that I have been too general with my district descriptions, that she is always wondering which district I'm talking about. I have been thinking about how to refer to these districts because I want to play it safe so any wondering eyes from those districts don't lock on to my posts and figure out who this is in case I post something I shouldn't. I could of course refer to the districts as A, B, C, and D, but that would probably get to be just as confusing. How about I come up with some better descriptions:

- ◆ Hometown district = the district in which I live, presently my favorite district I might add.
- ◆ Near-city district = the district I work in that is closest to the big city, Chicago, to where I live and bears a few similarities. This is the district that has the really tough ELL and BD classrooms.
- ◆ Next-door district. Of course, there is more than one

town next to me, but the ones to the north, east, northeast, and southeast of me I am not signed up in at the present time. Two are too small, and the other two called me so rarely I didn't sign back up with them.

◆ Supersized district. This district has a lot of schools. It encompasses one entire town plus parts of at least three others. It of course isn't as big as Chicago's school district, but what is? Besides which I am not signed up for that one of course.

With that out of the way, I was in near-city district today doing something quite crazy- I returned to the classroom I had big problems in just a few months ago. C will be glad to know that this is officially a BD/ED classroom, no LD kids to be found, unless they are also BD or ED (behavior, emotional disorders). I was in my full faculties when I accepted this assignment just so you know, tired but not so much I didn't know what I was doing. I reasoned that there were unusual special circumstances last time- all four teachers/assistants were sick the day before, and I was one of two subs that day. If you think young kids need consistency, these kids are like autistic kids in their such need. They just broke down without it and I happened to be one of the targets that day. So, in full figurative battle gear I headed to the school this morning, expecting anything. I was early, got a look at the plans, talked with the other teachers, then read a book until the start of the day. Fortunately I was the only sub this time. The kids arrived, I waited for the explosion, then.. nothing. It was actually a quite pleasant day. One 8th-grader was absent for the first few periods meaning I didn't have him at all which turned out to be a good thing as when he arrived it was apparent he remembered last time and got visibly upset if I just *talked* to him. As for the rest, they had no such problem even if they did remember last time I was there. Also making for an easy day, two of the classes involved just listening to an audiobook while the kids

followed along (and they did, I guess S.E. Hinton is a hit with them), and one class was a single girl watching a movie. The other two had potential for disaster as they actually involved my input and/or teaching, but the other teacher smoothed things out before they happened. Kudos to her for using her planning time to keep watch as I led reading a story together before they could get a chance to work independently, which is what they are most comfortable with. The other two, assistants, were off in watching the ones in specials at this time. The last class was tutorial, and because this is the last day of the week (Good Friday tomorrow) the ones who did well that week got to watch part of a movie. The other teacher took the ones who didn't earn it to another room.

You were looking for a, err, more *exciting* day, weren't you? Admit it! Sorry I had to disappoint you 😊

How about the other three days this week? Well, I subbed for art in hometown-district yesterday, special-ed math the day before (same district), and, lessee... oh yes- Spanish in the near-city district on Monday. All days went very well. The Spanish lesson, oddly enough, was actually social-studies lesson on Latin America rather than a lesson or worktime on actual Spanish. At that school the 6th-graders don't take Spanish so it was all 7th and 8th. They also don't do industrial tech which leads me to wonder what they do instead of these classes. Art was movies for all followed by a little drawing. 5th grade had the most problems but the rest of the day went well. The only real thing to report for the special-ed math day was 8th grade at the end of the day- they were so quiet and really worked- was this really 8th grade in April (the start of 8th-grade-itis, a common condition in those who know they will be in high school in a few short months). That and there was a little mess-up at the end of the day when I found out I was supposed to bring the 8th graders down at 2:00 for an assembly. Couldn't they have announced it at 1:55 or something? Oh, well. They only missed 15 minutes of it.

For the other two districts I haven't worked much in them as of late. Next-door district continues to have next-to-no assignments available for some reason and supersized district actually canceled the last two days I signed up for. Thanks a lot. At least they didn't do it the morning of so I was easily able to get other assignments. Speaking of canceling, I wonder how long it will take to cancel this next one I signed up for? This isn't bitterness talking, but reality. You see, it's a three-week assignment. Yes, you read that right- **three weeks**. As a noncertified sub, they are sure to pull that one away when they realize what happened. I have my suspicions it wasn't even meant to go up on the system. Perhaps another sub canceled the assignment by using the system instead of calling the school. I will be genuinely surprised if I still have the job come next Friday. I am more than willing to do it- I just don't think the district will let me. Anyway, make your wagers and I'll keep you posted.

One More Angel In Heaven

I know what you are thinking... this is yet another post on the upcoming summer musical... but you would be wrong. Opening week of the new baseball season took a tragic turn early this morning when a 22 year-old rookie pitcher for the California Angels of Anaheim was killed as the result of a hit and run accident after he had pitched a stellar game. [Nick Adenhardt](#) was a young man like a lot of other kids who dream of someday playing major league baseball was achieved for one moment. He called his father Tuesday night and told him that he better come to the game Wednesday because "something magical is going to happen." Unfortunately, that magic ended just a few hours after the rookie celebrated his six innings of pitching shutout ball against the Oakland A's.

It really puts a damper on the new season and puts life in perspective. I turned the tv on to see if the Yankees had started the year at 0-3 and saw the headline "Angels postpone game with Oakland" and shortly discovered the reason why. Suddenly, the Yanks victory over the Orioles seemed totally trivial. Hopefully, not only do the Angels cancel their game but all baseball takes a moment to honor the young man whose life was cut so senselessly, dramatically short.

Boldly Go... To The Beginning

As the days count down to May 8, so too does the speculation of whether or not J.J Abrams' vision of (IMHO) one of the two most iconic and enduring franchises in sci-fi will live up to the legend. Even if you have never seen one of the hundreds of Star Trek television episodes (spanning over 40 years, 5 spin-offs, and an animated series), any of the 10 big screen movies, or could care less... unless you live under a rock, you have at least heard of the phenomenon in some way. Last night, a group of movie goers who thought they were walking into a screening of *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* were given a huge surprise. Patrons at the Alamo Draft House in Austin, TX were greeted by the movie's writers and the "old" Spock: Leonard Nimoy, himself and given an advance screening. Unlike the recent problematic internet leaking of another summer blockbuster: *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*. Of course, in today's world I would not be surprised to hear that *Star Trek* has by now made its way onto downloads... if so, I don't want to know.

Personally, I want to know as little about the movie as possible; but the trailers look amazing. What I want from the movie is basically what I enjoy most about the original series. A good plot, a good villain, action whether it be on

land or in space (however, a good ship to ship confrontation with phasers and photon torpedoes blazing is always enjoyable. However, what I enjoy most about the old show is the chemistry between the three core characters: the devil-may-care, go where angels fear to tread Captain Kirk; the logical, usually stoic half-Vulcan/half-human Spock; and the certainly outspoken, cantankerous, passionate Dr. Leonard H. "Bones" McCoy (my personal favorite of the original characters). Some of my favorite moments revolve around heated displays of verbal one upsmanship between the first officer and the chief medical officer of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*. Most often, Captain Kirk would be the man in the middle who had to ease the tension.

Overall, I hope to be entertained and feel like I am stepping back into the world of 22nd century excitement. The actors on screen may not be the same, but hopefully the characters they portray will be recognizable.

May 8th seems like an awfully familiar date to me... wonder why
□ Maybe if I check out my countdown widget...

Small Town Networking

The other day, I had signed up to work the annual county business and industry show – this is my 4th year working the show; third year for working it for the community theater. I always sign up for this job because I find it fun. Lots of people in the theater thank me profusely for working it; I guess they don't find it fun? I wonder why I like it so much... Well, first of all, I get to hang out with adults all day – that's a plus and not something I'm used to. And there's the food – Dairy Queen has a booth about 5 away from ours every

year where they give away samples of ice cream cake – YUM. And then there are the spice people in the gym – they give samples of delicious spiced chicken. Also in the gym are the dairy farmers with their samples of cheese – usually, but I didn't see them this year; darn economy, I guess. But a new booth this year was [Myro's Pizza](#), and they were giving samples of their baked potato soup (for a donation – you can't give that stuff away for free, it's TOO good!). Most of all, I like working the Business and Industry show because I like meeting people from the area, spreading the word about the theater, and just being a part of and learning about things going on in the county. I always see many people I know; people I haven't seen in awhile and some I see every day, and that's always fun. I usually work the show with a friend beside me, and we can chat in between "customers". That person usually introduces me to people whom I've heard of but haven't yet met which is also fun.

This was an exciting year; we were very busy until about 2-3 pm, and during the busy time, we had many people who were interested in our theater – from audience to backstage stuff to kids stuff to donating things – I saw interest in almost every facet of the theater. And there was interest in auditions for parts in plays; including a *male who sings*. Those are an endangered breed around these parts. I sure hope he shows up for auditions for our musicals.

At our booth, we had a display of pictures from our last show. A passer-by pointed at one and said, "He used to be my neighbor." And I said, "That's funny, he used to be my neighbor too!" Turns out, the lady has been my next door neighbor for 2 years, and I didn't even know it!

And the Humane Society had 6 adorable 6-week-old kittens at the B and I show! I want a cat so badly – I did research on the internet to find out if they've come up with some miracle cure for cat allergies, but they have not. In fact, webmd.com kept saying that people with cat allergies should refrain from

getting a cat. That's enough to stop me for now, but I don't know for how long...

So anyway, it was a great show – I did actually get a little bored, but only because the action slowed down right as my co-worker had to leave. I read our theater's cookbook cover-to-cover, which was nice because I've barely had a chance to look at it before now. It's a nice cookbook, and I'm going to try a recipe from it for game night – had another frustrating trip to Walmart to shop for the ingredients. But I don't want to go off on a Walmart tangent right now; things are calming down for nighttime. I did notice that the cookbook has my peanut butter bars recipe (MMmmm, peanut butter bars!) under Halloween treats, where they don't belong as they're just a regular dessert. Oh well, they're somewhat easy to make and really good – I have to make those again soon!

Time and then some

Today, I didn't forget to help at the theater. Yesterday I did. Time slipped away from me. I would like to say prior commitments prevented me, but I was back in time to help out. I just forgot. Time passed me by.

Now I look at the clock and see it well past time to get some sleep. But I was working on some video editing and sleep won't come.

Life is all about change. And my life is changing. Time ticks down the events of my life and the life of my friends and family. My family is growing again. For those who don't know, I 'adopt' each of my daughters' husbands. They are my sons. The good part about this is that they are grown sons, and I don't have to 'raise' them. As long as they treat my daughters

with respect, I will treat them as one of my family. Some may say this is an honor, it could also be a curse. Talk to my daughters sometime. I expect a lot from them, and have rarely been disappointed. I've always felt that they have made their ways in life because of what was expected of them. I always wanted them to give their best effort in the things they do. Never perfection (that is almost unattainable, until you inherit it. □ family joke), but to give their best. I now expect that from my sons (and the 'future' son). That way I can expect the 'best' for their growing families.

Time, it slips by and things change. Sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. Life is what you can make it, or so I've been told. Time slips by, and things stay they same.

Feelin' Groovy And Yet Not So Groovy

I recently posted on my friend from high school who went to her first movie audition a few weeks ago. Today, she came into the store looking rather depressed. As I was waiting on her, I asked what was wrong. Thier family dog had just passed away. I still remember being really upset for a long time after losing MY dog so I knew how she felt.

However, she did have some good news. Monday was the day she was to get any callbacks for the movie. She got a call from the director and SHE GOT THE PART! She was absolutely floored. The director said that her casting was totally unanimous. Excellent for a first-time auditioner! I have only been told that my casting in any role was unanimous one time and it was not the first time I ever auditioned. I was

not able to ask for details and Peg did not look like she was in the mood to discuss it. But from what little I know, she is cast in the role of the mother in a horror film (ironic that she is the wife of a church pastor... wouldn't you say?). Apparently, the shoot starts in June in Coldwater. Peg also told me that she has definitely decided to minor in film at UT after one of the faculty advised her to. Doesn't it just give you a great feeling to know that you helped someone achieve something special in some small way? Congrats, Peg.

A wet, snowy journey home

It seems as if yesterday I skipped over Saturday morning, so I guess I will go back to it before skipping ahead to Sunday. Saturday morning several of us met at Ritzy's (did I get that right?) for breakfast. For those who weren't there, they somehow interpreted a party of 12 as a party of 20, so here were five tables put together in a C shape. Most people sat together, but Jamiahsh and I kind of sat alone on the opposite side, though in my defense there was only one seat between C and I. The eldest girls and their cousin Austin had some fun being little animals under the table. The look on J's face when he was caught unawares one time was priceless- sorry J! ☐

Following breakfast (oh yes, the food was good) L's family bid farewell and headed out. The rest of us headed back to C and L's house. The girls invited J and myself into their room to play with their pet rats. Now, I never had rats growing up, but we did have hamsters, gerbils and guinea pigs at various times so I was familiar with rodent pets and didn't freak like the preschool teacher mentioned in T's blog. I was happy when they didn't relieve themselves on me during this playtime as often happens with rodents. After we had enough of the rats,

T took us into their closet and showed us some Viewmaster (R.I.P.) slides on the ceiling using their projector. Call me old-fashioned, but I think the whole point of the Viewmaster was lost by using the projector, that of the images in 3D. I think we went through their entire library. Finally, T and S put on a puppet show for J and me, during which time I was called away and we finished organizing our fun activity- see previous blog entry.

So... Sunday rolled around and I got up and showered, then went to Mickey D's for a small breakfast before church. Too bad for me it was 10:28 and they had just closed breakfast. I'm I the only one who thinks anything before 11AM should be considered breakfast? I must be in the minority, else why would McD's have changed to 10:30 so long ago and stuck with it? So breakfastless, I headed to the house. Fortunately I had bought a box of Crunch and Munch at the dollar store the previous day. That worked.

We headed to their church, which I had to admit was pretty nice. I'm not sure I liked their pastor's preaching style, but that's probably because I'm used to my own pastor constantly on the move while he gives his sermons. I did enjoy the worship time though. Following this service T, who had gone to children's church was waiting for us- apparently grade school kids can be trusted to be let out on their own, or maybe their teachers were still watching, I don't know. The younger ones still needed to be retrieved from their rooms though. After church, we headed to a hotel by the turnpike for brunch. There was no waiting time to be seated as there were plenty of seats, but there was definitely some waiting to get the food. I would have to rate this meal lower than Saturday's breakfast unfortunately, but at least I could eat as much as I wanted since it was a buffet.

Back at the house again, C and L pulled out their Office board game and we played. Unfortunately, I learned that seeing every episode only once, including deleted scenes for seasons

2-4, did not mean in any way shape or form that I would remember the details. I did manage to get three Dundies, though once by a complete guess and once because C pretty much gave the answer away (thanks!). L won the day though, but even C earned more than me even though he took the harder ("regional manager") questions while I barely managed the "assistant to the regional manager" ones. Oh, well. Finally, they had to do some cleaning for the meeting that night and I bid my farewell. This, however, doesn't end the post...

As most of my readers here are well aware, Sunday was a day of rain, starting after brunch. For much of the trip driving was fine, but as it got later it started coming down pretty hard. The worst parts were the trucks- just approaching one would cause a torrent of water to be unleashed onto the windshield from their wheels. Passing them was a nail-biting experience. Remember- the speed limit for trucks is 15MPH less than for cars until Illinois. Speaking of Illinois, when I got there- you think I'm going to say traffic, don't you? Well, traffic can be a hassle, but I lucked out. While there were some traffic spots, for the most part it was fairly light for suburban Chicago. Maybe people just weren't driving because of the sleet. That's right- the rain turned into sleet and snow. Wonderful. No longer was it a nail-biting experience just to pass a truck- now just driving was problematic. But as I said, traffic wasn't bad at all and I did manage to make it home in one piece. Next time I think I will check the weather report before I leave, even if it might mean having to leave earlier.

So, that was my weekend, how was yours? ☐