

New Adventures

This week has started off with two new new opportunities.

First, the casting results of the Village Players' production of *The Sound of Music*. I will be playing the role of Franz, the butler. At first I was unsure of how I felt about that... Dejected, miscast? I told me voice coach that I was really unsure. Of course, this is knowing the film as well as I do.

It seemed that I would have very limited stage time. However this morning, I researched the stage role and learned that Franz is in significantly more of the original stage version. And I am determined to create yet another memorable role.

Although I have no idea of much of the cast I do know that Mare has been cast as the Mother Superior. Anyone who knows her and the role would think that they two were tailor-made.

A very formidable presence on-stage with a crazy powerful voice. I am also happy to welcome Jessica and her daughter, Melody to the group. Jessica played Gretl in high school and will be playing one of the nuns this time. Melody has been cast as Louisa. CONGRATS ladies!

This morning, I was asked to begin contributing to a new blog which my pal has initiated as part of the group he began over the past year. I will be providing my own personal views on the Catholic faith I was born into and have chosen to follow over my 39 years. While C is still diligently searching for a new congregation to lead, he has started [Disciple Day](#), a group initiated to help spread the good news. It began back in September with the inaugural Famine Games and moved onto the adventurous "Slip 'n' Slide into the New Year" and just finished a makeover night given by a group of wild and crazy cool young ladies.

All this, plus, I am plowing my way through the 1463 page complete and unabridged *Les Miserables*. I bought my copy back in the Spring of 1994 right before I went on tour with the

BGSU Men's Chorus where I first saw the stage version on Broadway. Over that time, I have tried to make my way through it at least twice. I think this time, I have been pacing myself and for whatever reason I am enjoying it more (although some of the long passages exploring Paris... Napoleon, etc... at the time can be a bit dry).

Check out the new site and come and check out *The Sound of Music* March 1-3! And SEE the best stage to screen musical adaptation ever!

How Do You Solve A Problem

Well.. another audition has come and gone. THIS time, I did say that I definitely was trying out for Captain Von Trapp. I had forgotten that Max does indeed sing in the stage version. However, since the general public is more familiar with the classic film version, most people may not know this. I feel that the time has come to stretch myself dramatically. I have portrayed the lead male in a play before (still my greatest on-stage challenge to date); yet. the dramatic lead of a HUGE musical is something I have never been presented with. I have always felt that while Uncle Max would be another fun scene-stealer but the Captain would definitely be more of a challenge as he is much more dynamic in that he starts out as a strict disciplinarian to his seven children but his heart begins to soften as Maria reintroduces music and fun into the household.

I felt that the audition went really well. There were a large number of children the first day (of two) try outs. Some of them were really quite impressive ranging in age from 5-13. They each sang a bit of "Do-Re-Mi," and "My Favorite Things."

Each of them were also asked to yodel as the seven children need to during "The Lonely Goatherd" number (one of the many differences between stage and screen... there is no marionette show). After singing, they read a bit of the scene in which Maria is introduced to them.

Being the only adult male in attendance who wanted a singing role, it was difficult to judge the competition. I was asked to sing "Edelweiss." The version in the score is a little low for my taste but I thought I performed nicely. I also brought a selection of my own which must have impressed. One of my friends in the room even told me that she had never heard me sing before. WOW! I then read for the role of Captain Von Trapp in the scene in which he and Maria meet and he insists that the house is run with a discipline. Later, I did read for Max. Seriously, I know what kind of character Max is but I was asked to start over as I was "reading the part like you read the Captain."

There must have been more adults Sunday as there were a total of 65 auditioners. However, there is still a need for a Rolf (the "seventeen going on eighteen" love interest of Liesl). The thing that I am apprehensive about is the limited amount of time we have to put this together. There are callbacks anticipated for this weekend and the first rehearsal is next Tuesday. The show opens on March 1st. However, I am sure that the cast and creative hands will pull together nicely.

Maddy Patty

I was directed to this blogsite by a friend who taught school with the little girl's mother. I was still in college during Dorothy's time at the elementary school but cannot

remember her. Three years ago, Maddy was diagnosed with leukemia... a terrible illness I know all too well and not a day goes by that I don't think of the special woman who was taken by it. Maddy was recently released from the hospital and brought to her home in the area under Hospice care. Just before Christmas, she was taken off the ventilator she had been on and is still fighting. Lots of prayers to the Lambert family as they continue on this trying journey,

[MADDY PATTY](#)

Here's To An Even Greater 2013!

I have to say that 2012 went out a lot better than it went in. I will not dwell on the hardships we faced last year but I still contend that it made us all (in a sense) stronger and brought us closer together.

There were some happier times. I did get back on stage after 2 years and now I am back to the "no stopping me now" attitude since the next audition is this weekend! I am going to be honest here and say that I AM trying out for Captain Von Trapp. Max might be the comedic foil in [The Sound of Music](#) but not much of a challenge, personally. I feel that Georg would be much more of a stretch dramatically and it would be my first time playing the male lead (such as it is) in a musical. He does change throughout the course of the show so that would be very interesting to play. However, I will pray that whichever (if any) role I am asked to present that the next 2 months (or less) is successful for our little community theater group.

New Year's Eve was a HUGE day! The bank closed at 3PM and unlike Christmas Eve I was home in less than a half-hour after the doors were locked. Some of the family headed to mass and met others for dinner later. Then, my sister, nieces, and I headed over to "brother number 3's" home to ring in the new surrounded by great friends and **OODLES!!!!** (hopefully, this becomes a tradition as **EVERYONE** just **L0000000VES** that game. MWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!)



Keep Them Safe

I was debating upon how long to wait until I put my reaction to the latest in what seems to be an endless stream of tragedies of late. The events which befell the community of Newtown, Connecticut have left yet another indelible mark on not only that town, not even this country, but I am positive the entire world. The lives of 20 SMALL, INNOCENT children taken so senselessly by a literally ill human being before he ended his own life just sends chills through my entire body.

It is not for us as humans to ask why this continues to happen because there is not a person alive who can definitively state the reason. A person can hear just so many takes on the gun rights issue. To me, the most important thing we can do is to pray for those children and others who lost their lives, those injured, the survivors, the families, and the entire community which we are all a part of. For a time yesterday, school prayer had returned to Sandy Hook Elementary School in the closets, bathroom stalls, and other secluded places where teachers led their students. One

teacher told the children that if they believed in the power of prayer to do so and if not to think happy thoughts.

Last night, the family attended the concert of my junior high school aged nephew, Alex. Before the music began, the elementary principal gave a word about the tragedy and without saying the word "prayer" asked for a moment of silence.

Another issue driven from this... how soon and what to say to our own children. I don't know that there is a definitive answer to that problem, either. I would think that being open and honest with them as the situation presents itself. I do know that there is no way that they can be totally shielded from the tragedy but lending an open ear and loving words will help them and maybe ourselves take strength from that sharing.

I do think the media takes these things a bit too far. I don't think it can go any farther than having a young child being asked questions hours after their school had gone through such an event.

One good thing did come out of this event. Hours after Alex's concert, a couple in the audience welcomed a healthy, new born son into the world.

May God welcome the little children home in his warm, gentle embrace where they will celebrate the coming birthday with He who saved us all. And may we all continue to pray for those who lost their lives and those families who have lost so much.

Final Miraculous Thoughts

To say that the weekend of *Miracle on 34th Street* was great is putting it mildly. I am so proud to have been part of this wonderful cast of on-stage and off characters. Several

newcomers who have never before been in a show, some who have not been on for years, and the veterans who just seem to come back for more ALL made it stupendous... well, judging from the great numbers and reviews from the audience. There were several performers I have worked with previously whom I consider it a delight to work with. Others that I have watched from being in audiences and have wanted to work with or have heard good things about. And some of the most adorable kids starting out (when they are on stage... off-stage in the basement could get a bit hairy). But overall, another worthwhile venture.

I always find myself totally grateful yet humbled by all the comments especially when it is directed to my own performance.

So hard to define what that feeling is but always remember to take it all in stride and acknowledge that it is a total group effort. Especially for this show with a few of the casted performers decided to not show up during the rehearsal process after they had been called and said that "Yes, I'll be there.

I'm still in it!" Thank Heaven for our director of many hats who stepped into at least three cameo roles.

Several on-stage and off memorable moments. One of my favorites occurred opening night when "Duncan" made his appearance as a witness during Kris Kringle's sanity hearing.

The reindeer keeper walked over to the witness box, took off his hat, and off came his wig! I also had fun during the courtroom scenes BEFORE Sawyer was fired!

Thanks Carmen, Bruce (the Totally maniacal and vicious Kringle) , Harriet and Carol (had a ball during the courtroom scenes before Sawyer was fired), Bobbi Jo, Terina and Natalie, Travis, Michael, John (I can't believe he fired me), Dusty, Bill, Carla, Beth (who did not flash me THIS show... LOL), Anna, Stefanie, Kate, Sydney, MacKenzie, Grace, Riley, Julia, Racer, MaGuire, Terri Lynn, AND MARY. Still not so sure about the karaoke celebration Saturday night/VERY early Sunday morning but it was.... Interesting.



Sawyer learning from Mrs. Walker about Macy's new Santa Claus. I had a ball working with Terina and the entire cast!



Sawyer asking the "dangerously deranged" Kris Kringle a simple mathematics problem. Bruce was an exceptional Santa!



A little eye twirl goes a long way. With the vicious maniac.



The entire cast. Thank you all for a wonderful experience!

Nuttin' For Christmas

Last night... Another Op'nin... Another Show! Have to work at 8 this morning so I saved my post til 7:17AM. This is WHY I LOVE THE STAGE! The first moments of a live production in front of an audience is so exhilarating. So pleased and

blessed that nearly all of the evening was a tremendous success! Thursday night, Mare informed us that we had nearly 100 reservations for just this one night. This might not be anywhere near capacity but A HUGE number and they were very receptive. At least 15 of those reservations were for my family and co-workers plus I saw others that I knew during the meet and greet.

The cast was tremendous! Everyone from the “dangerously deranged” Kris Kringle to the smallest elf were in top form. Sitting backstage, one my favorite scenes is when the kiddies sit on Santa’s lap telling him their wishes. And if you know the 1947 classic, the little Dutch girl sends an “AWWW...” tingle.

Following the show as I made my way into the house, the bank manager yelled over her shoulder to me. When I made my way to my family members, my mother informed me that I would be getting “nothing for Christmas, this year.” **YES!** “Kris’s” 17/18 year old nephew informed him that he wanted to come up on stage and punch me. Another huge compliment. Finally, a Village Player regular elated that in her opinion I was “the star of the show.” (**SHUCKS...** I don’t know about that...).

The Huber ghost must have been pleased with the production as he wrecked havoc with the light and sound in a few bits. Nothing like the scene in *Hound of the Baskervilles* in which “Selden” is found lying dead and the spotlight failed to go down so I could rise and exit the stage.

However, following the show Mary had to rush off the stage as an older gentleman had fallen outside and needed medical attention. Some of the steps at the front of the theater are in great need of repair and apparently the audience member had stumbled over them... **BADLY.** Praying that the gentleman is not seriously injured. Hopefully, this sends a message to the building owners to repair the steps as I have noticed their condition over the course of the last few years.

One performance down... TWO TO GO!

Back On STAGE

And I could not be happier. I know that it has been two years since *Hound of the Baskervilles* but it really seems like yesterday especially this week when the last three months of fun work come to fruition. Each experience is a different challenge and along the way I am lucky to meet new performers and work again with those I have previously been on stage before. It really does feel like a family over time... at least in this neck of the woods. Of course, tech week is full of interesting events: New sound system that will be extraordinary I am sure; Mishaps with the set; Attempting to control the young ones in the cast when they are off stage; and other assorted chaos.

Yes, I once again was cast in the role of the slimy villain. My favorite type of role! When Mare asked me which role I would like (after I was informed that I was not old enough to portray Kris Kringle), I did not hesitate when I told her... "Sawyer." I knew exactly what I wanted to do with the role and make it my own but still have some of the nuances of the original in the 1947 movie, *Miracle on 34th Street*. It must be paying off because Miss Mary told me after rehearsal tonight that she loves my character and what I have done with it. AW, Heck! As someone told me after I announced the role I had received "This could be your best role yet. Both as a challenge and fitting your acting forte." One of my cast mates even compared me (the role, I assume) to a Bond villain.

Come and like us on [Facebook](#) and hope to see some of you in

the audience with the great talent on and off stage.

Welcome Back, 007!!!

I am PLEASED to say that Agent James Bond, 007 is BACK armed with his license to thrill! After the rather lackluster performance of *Quantum of Solace*, *Skyfall* was a much needed breath of vitality to the 50 year franchise. YES, indeed in 1962, *Dr. No* was released as the first Bond movie. I will not detail the plot of the newest installment; however, I will touch on some of the things that made this a return to form.

- Old Friends: Chief among them was Q. Albeit a a very young Q but I see great things coming in future movies. Hopefully, a return to the repartee between the Quartermaster and Bond from days of old. A few other surprises along the way that I will save.
- M: Dame Judi sure breathes life into what was always a cardboard cutout. Instead of the stereotypical head of MI6 who presents 007 with his latest assignment, she has become a much more dynamic and interesting character. *Skyfall* is as much an M-centered movie as it is Bond.
- BIG ACTION SEQUENCES: These seem to have been missing in the last two movies. Trains, motorcycles, helicopters and other myriad pieces add to the **FUN** of the film. I would really enjoy another good snow ski extravaganza.
- Supporting Cast: I cannot remember a Bond film having such a cast of well-known performers. Ralph Fiennes (without his make up as Voldemort ... ok so he has been in other movies) and Javier Bardem (who plays ANOTHER memorable villain).
- Daniel Craig: Maybe the third time was the charm. Mr.

Craig has finally lightened up a bit from the stoic, seriousness of *Casino Royale* and *QoS*. You can almost see him winking at the camera. Thank goodness, as he has signed on for at least two more turns.

I am hard-pressed to find anything I did not like about *Skyfall*. Even Adele's theme song was reminiscent of the best of them. The previous theme was another less than memorable aspect. Perhaps the gun barrel **OPENING** the show would be nice instead of closing it?

Blah-blah-blah!

Well... the nephew, niece, and I have returned safely from the *Hotel Transylvania*. Rather humorous tale how the trip was initiated. I woke this morning to find a message from my eldest brother who is still down with SPOTTY(?) pneumonia... honestly, has anyone ever heard of spotty pneumonia? The message was sent at 3:43AM asking if I would take Noah since there was no way that Jeff would be able to. While at work, my brother-in-law was in and somehow I volunteered to take his oldest along. It was fine, one more would not hurt.

The show was actually really cute. It centered around Dracula's (Adam Sandler) efforts to protect his daughter Mavis (Selena Gomez) from the evil world of humans. While still an infant, Mavis' father build a hotel at which only the monster kind could check in. On the eve of Miss Dracula's 118th birthday, Jonathan, a young human male (Andy Samberg), happens across the hotel and the story takes off. How long can a parent protect their child from the world outside? Could monsters live amongst humans after 118+ years? Just two of the themes presented in this entertaining little movie.

Some clever bits scattered throughout most notably the cavalcade of misunderstood creatures... Frankenstein (Kevin James) and his bride Eunice (Fran Drescher); the Invisible Man (who is a terrible charades player... David Spade); Big Bad, his wife Wanda, and their brood; Quasimodo; the Mummy; and countless others. I found myself just attempting to recognize as many as I could. Of course, Noah's favorite part centered around Frankie's all-powerful flatulence.

There was nothing too scary about the movie (I would say over the age of 5 would be acceptable). Noah and Kyli both got a kick out of it as did their uncle. At least, we all went to the facilities before the movie started and were able to sit through the entire thing. Of course, that changed when we had to stop at Taco Smell to get a take out for a pregnant mother
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Next on the agenda, *Skyfall* with Alex... did not know he was a James Bond fan.