

Shoutout to the James

No... not THAT James, I think he has been getting enough press of late. My cousin, Dan, is on the campus of the Ohio State University at the James Center where is recovering from surgery which he underwent on Friday for an [acoustic neuroma](#) (a tumor on a nerve on the inner ear, which is usually benign, and was). He had been having troubles with dizziness, vertigo, and some of the other symptoms of the phenomenon. Glad to relate that other than the recovery, all is well. Just got done talking to him on the phone and he did sound like (as he described it) he was "run over by a Mack truck." I'm sure that Carla will be most appreciative when he can return to normal and help out with the little ones.

The fact that the James was where Emily spent most of her time battling leukemia nearly 2 years ago was not lost on us as Dan made mention of. But now that he is recovering, hopefully resting, and getting well... he will be reading once again. Commenting via email since he does not like to comment directly while at work but maybe, while recovering...

Get well soon, Dan Jo... Maxwell Smart. Remember the days?

Another Year Older, A New Role, And More

Thank you everyone for the many birthday greetings: facebooked, emailed, phoned (from one of my best friends), or delivered in person. They all were greatly appreciated and helped make my day. I am happy to announce that I have been offered and accepted the role of Barrymore in *The Hound of the*

Baskervilles. A much more limited role than my last but important, nonetheless.

Following my audition, I returned to E-town for mass which was being given in memory of Aunt Carol. Quite a memorable experience. No one beyond the back 3-4 rows of the church could hear the opening hymn because something was afoul with the sound equipment. The organist leaned over the loft railing and asked me to run upfront to see what I could do with it. Being the technological genius I am, I went into the closet and flipped the switch and voila! Father Steve wears a pack on his vestment and usually turns it off when he is not speaking. However, he for some reason, kept forgetting to turn it off and lets just say that he does not possess the most glorious voice ever. Just being honest. To lie about a priest surely is not a good thing.

After mass, I traveled to H'ville for an impromptu birthday celebration. I provided a bag of Sun Chips. The reason for this... the bag they come in is made of some type of material that creates a very loud, obnoxious sound when the bag is rustled but the Harvest Cheddar variety is tasty. Thank you Mare for the yummy, German Chocolate Brownie cake... a little too much water necessitated the need for an additional package of brownie mix and the result was delectable.

Travis brought an assortment of games. I was really tempted to pick my obvious choice and was encouraged to do so since it was "my day." However, I picked Trivial Pursuit. Started off well and went downhill. Later, Amber brought Star Wars Trivial Pursuit and we divided into teams. I tried to be intelligent and attempted to pick the person I thought would help me most, but that idea was nixed. I did all right the first round until I received a question I had not excuse for missing. "Who lives out beyond the Dune Sea?" UGH! I was victorious in round two.

After some stargazing and a return to Mare's house, it was

time to hit the road at 4.30AM! Megan pooped out shortly before.

July 11, is always memorable as I have a little buddy who turned TWO! After I got home @ 4.50Am, I sent a cool ecard as well as a response to my own birthday ecard. Hope you had a super birthday, BEEBS!

Also yesterday, Yankees fans lost a great one. Bob Sheppard was the voice of the Bombers from 1951-2007 when his health prompted him to retire. The voice of the great ones... from Dimaggio, Mantle, and Berra, to Mr. October, and to Captain Jeter. Ups and downs throughout but Mr. Sheppard had one of the distinct voices in the box. So beloved that Derek has the voice resonate each time he steps up to the plate. An honor which humbled the announcer.

And I still have today off until I go back to work! A fact that stymied a co-worker of mine who thought I was going out of town. How she came to that conclusion is beyond me.

Coming from one who likes to change schedules without informing the other person involved I didn't really pay much attention to the comment. I will be going out of town next Monday and Tuesday.

Ok... this post is quite long enough thanks again everyone!

7-10-2007

Another year and eleven minutes older...o maybe not exactly, I'll have to find out what time I actually entered the world.

Well... yesterday, I had to run to the big city and get my picture snapped. I abhor having my mug shot for my little piece of plastic for three years. Look at the little smiley

sticker, drop your jaw, now move slightly to the right. UGH!

A fashioned model has it easier and they get paid for it!

Then, I endured a long nine hour work day. Better yesterday than today especially when I get three days off in a row! I don't have to be back until TUESDAY! Today, I have to go to an audition for *Hound of the Baskervilles*. I believe that I have stated that I will not be auditioning for either Holmes or Watson. I think my talents are better served in a return to a more character driven role this time. And I do not believe that the detective or the good doctor had facial hair... Watson, perhaps.

Tonight, mass at 6 is being given in memory of Aunt Carol.

After that, the sky's the limit. Spontaneity on your birthday is always fun!

Well... 22 minutes into another year. Tired, maybe I'll get some sleep.

Non King James Related Sports Evening

For the last two days, it seems the nation has been in the thralls of LeBron fever once again. Holding out on his free agency decision until a live, hour-long press conference. I say... "Who cares?!" Who does he think he is... Tiger Woods?

I did however, enjoy a sports related movie totally unrelated to basketball. I enjoyed the 2004 movie, *Million Dollar Baby* starring Clint Eastwood, Hilary Swank, and Morgan Freeman. I must say that Clint has sure made an impression on me with his more dramatic films instead of the macho, big gun shoot fests.

The last few films I have seen have been poignant and emotional. He plays the curmudgeonly roles quite well. Accomplished not only as an actor/director but as a musician as well along with his son, Kyle.

I was hoping that *Million Dollar Baby* was not going to be the typical boxer/trainer situation and I was not disappointed. The movie was an intelligent, profound piece following the lives of a young female wannabe boxer and the very hesitant veteran trainer/manager. It's more about Maggie, the 31 year old's dream of beating the odds, rising from her "trailer trash" roots, and becoming a contender in the prize ring. I know, been done countless times in countless ways.

Eastwood's character is well-defined as well. Not the typical one-dimensional trainer but so much more. Why is Frankie so hardened? Why does he play it safe with every fighter he manages when he knows they are worthy of their "one shot?"

Not so surprising but a very good movie which won Oscars for Best Actress, Supporting Actor, Direction, and Best Movie of 2004. And so much more entertaining than the question that **seems** to have been on the minds of tens of people.

Fireworks & A Pool On An RV

Quite an enjoyable Independence Day Weekend for us.. made even longer by most everyone having Monday off, as well! Sunday, I work from 8-noon... four hours at time-and-a-half, pretty quick and the extra will come in handy. After work, I came home to see the All-Star picks for the game on July 13: Captain Jeter and Robinson Cano will be starting for the Bombers. After the selections, we watched a thrilling 6-7 Yanks win over the Blue Jays with Marcus Thames (just off the DL) driving the winning

run in during the bottom of the 10th. Ace catcher Jorge Posada is day-by-day as he received a finger sprain as the result of a foul tip.

Later on the 4th, we commented that we were all hungry for some hot dogs cooked over a fire but no where to build the fire. So, my oldest brother ran to WalMart to pick up a firepit. That night, we enjoyed hot dogs, toasted marshmallows nearly falling off the stick, and s'mores. Then the kids enjoyed throwing some poppers (ok, I did too) and sparklers that must have been duds because most of them would not light. And we were entertained by the approach of a bullfrog that some thought was a bird. Have we never heard the sound of a bullfrog? There was another sound that can only be described as a laughing monkey or some crazed woman laughing hysterically.

To conclude the evening, I returned home and watched a few episodes of [The Greatest American Hero](#) on Syfy's (yes, the SciFi channel changed its identity about a year ago. I believe, [Derek](#) pointed that out) day long marathon. An interesting tidbit about the name of the high school teacher turned questionable superhero. Click the link above to discover the link between Ralph and a would-be presidential assassin.

Monday afternoon to beat the heat, two of my siblings and their families and I went to the area pool. Jeff has a pool at home but decided against opening it this year. The public pool was very fun especially watching Chad jump off the diving board and getting stuck coming down the water slide. He did, eventually manage to boost himself along.

Monday night, I watched [RV](#) starring Robin Williams, Jeff Daniels, and Kristin Chenoweth. I thought *Vacation* in recreation vehicles. Suburban dysfunctional family takes a summer vacation to "become closer." May have been cliched but it still had lots of laughs.

I hope all my fellow tangenteers had a fun holiday weekend!

How Long Did'ya Stay Fresh In That Can

Over 70 years and still as beautiful as ever. I may have seen *Wicked* on Easter Sunday. I may have enjoyed it... even appreciated it but there is not even a remote chance that I will ever LOVE it as much as the original 1939 masterpiece *The (Wonderful) Wizard of Oz*. I remember watching it as a young boy on CBS once a year on a Friday night pre-empting *The Dukes of Hazzard* and *Dallas* (heartbreaking that my mother would miss a week of J.R.). I was one of those kids who held a cassette recorder up to the television every time a song came on. I memorized where every commercial break would be. Tonight, Turner Classic Movies had its first of two trips down the Yellow Brick Road over the holiday weekend (tomorrow at 8PM is the final showing this time around).

Why is the movie so beloved? I don't think any two people has the same reason. For me, there are many reasons why I watch it year in and year out. The theatricality for one. The set looks like it was created on a huge stage. Painted backdrops. You can tell that the land of Oz is created artificially and that is part of the movie's charm.

The casting is brilliant. Even at 17, Judy Garland portrayed a magnificent young Kansas farm girl. She won a special miniature Oscar for the role in Best Performance by an Adolescent (I believe the official award was). To generate the on-screen chemistry between Dorothy and Toto, the dog Terry lived with Garland for a time prior to filming. The

actress became so enamored with the dog that she asked the owner for permission to adopt female canine. The trainer knew what a gold mine he had as he turned to offer down.

As has been reported quite frequently, the classic "Over the Rainbow" was actually cut from initial screenings of the film.

The song was thought to have slowed the action of the film. However, level heads soon prevailed and who can imagine the film without it. 1939 is considered to be the year of the classic movie. More classics were made during that year than any other in history. Another little film, *Gone with the Wind*, also premiered and was the odds on and run away winner at the Academy Awards. *Oz* was a cinematic hit from the start but it took a few years and re-issues before MGM felt that it was a financial success.

Of course my favorite part of the masterpiece, is one of my favorite character roles... The Cowardly Lion. But to carry around an 80+ pound costume must have needed a large amount of physicality. I could do it, though!

Who wouldn't mind getting up at 12; starting to work at one; taking an hour for lunch; and then at 2 be done? Or being clever as a gizzard? Wait a minute, clever as a gizzard? Unless there is a reference to something other than a bird's internal organs.

A Wonder Through The Ages

Since 1941, my favorite Amazonian princess has undergone slight changes in her costume. However, beginning in the 600th edition of the Wonder Woman comic book, Diana's [costume](#) will dramatically change. In the beginning, she wore basically the same outfit that millions of fans would come to

recognize with one difference, her blue, white-starred lower half was a skirt. By the '50s she was in the short short version which Lynda Carter would famously adorn for three seasons over a 40 year time period on the television series.

I see a certain logic in this I guess. Who would take a gorgeous female Amazon fighting crime in a skimpy outfit seriously? On the other hand... why mess with tradition?

Let's look at Princess Diana over the years:



Classic version
from 1942



Fall of '42.
Skirt to
shorts



Remember this horrid
costume from the horrible
failed pilot of the early
70s? Starring Cathy Lee
Crosby from That's
Incredible.



The 1st
Season
WWI
outfit.
Almost
there...



No THAT is a classic look.
"Modern" 70s look. How did
they explain the forward in
time with the same actor
playing Steve Trevor?

✘ And finally...

✘

The new look. Not as
revealing but there is
something there.

So... what do you think... classic or new look. I seem to have
forgotten how to create a poll. So comments will do! I just
discovered how to add a poll so here we are:

[poll id="20"]

More Pictures

As requested... here are a few more photos from the Relay:

✘ Ma2's luminaria

✘ Aunt Carol's luminaria. I would have liked the full effect
lit only by the glow stick in the bags, but this will do.

✘ False alarm with Jerry at the non-functional clippers.

✘ Amber and her new friend, Zoe.

✘ Jen and the first clip.

☒ I recognize the arm, but who took the picture?

☒☒ Does Travis look slightly too happy about his turn?

☒ Beth's turn

☒ The next Sweeney Todd?

Well that's all I's got. Hope you enjoyed! But wait... here's one more!

☒

Beth and Morat walking the path on my 12 lap walk.

I forgot a photographer was around snapping pictures and caught up with us. He must have liked the Super hat.

Walking (and shaving) For A Cure

All day Saturday and into the wee and lit hours of Sunday morning, I participated in the Defiance County Relay for Life and the Actors for a Cure team led by co-captains [Mare](#) and one of my favorite directors, Beth. It all began when I arrived at the fairgrounds shortly after 9AM to help Travis in his logistical duties (read, moving benches, picnic tables, and chasing a red head pulling two garbage cans behind him while we followed with a pickup... GOOD TIMES!).

The 23 hour fest found our team and other groups walking a 1/3

mile track in order to raise money for a cure. Don't ask me how many laps I completed but during one session, I completed 12 laps walking with Beth who only completed 11.5. Please leave comments if you want to hear the reason for Beth's .5 mile loss.

✘ Later in the afternoon, Megan and Carol came over and we sat and enjoyed some of the dancers and singers who were part of the entertainment. Maybe next year... The girls had to leave but would return following the city band concert and fireworks at the B-town Day in the Park for a special event.

At our teams' table, Mare had a jar in which she collected donations (including the dollars collected from putt putt and popcorn sales). If she raised \$500 before midnight, she would sit in the barber chair and get a nice shave. After some rather strategic donation collecting by Jen and Jerry, we topped that total and more!

At dusk, the moving luminaria ceremony got underway. In years past, people could purchase candles that were placed around the Relay track. For the ceremony, these candles were placed inside paper bags with the name of cancer survivors, those currently battling the disease, or to remember those who have gone. This year, it was decided to place a canned good in the paper bag and break a glow stick inside to provide the illumination. Apparently, there were some bags set aflame in years past. Also, a huge screen displayed the names of those honored as they were each announced. I purchased a luminary for Ma2 and Aunt Carol. Being my first ceremony, I was deeply moved when I saw first Emily's and then Carol's name.

After the ceremony, it was time for the shave. We had a false start as the clippers brought did not work. A beautician in the audience volunteered to go and get her set. Good thing, because Megan and Carol had not arrived. When the moment arrived, Mary was placed front and center of the entertainment stage. The entire Actors for a Cure team took a

turn playing barber.

Then, Megan and I took a few laps around not only the Relay track but the entire perimeter of the fairgrounds. I thought we had done at least 5 cycles, but my companion informed me that it was only four. I surely walked a good 10 miles in the 23 hours.

By the time 7:30 arrived, we were all ready to load the putt putt course, tent booth, and other equipment and go home! It has been a long time since I have gone 24 hours with no sleep, but all fun and for a good cause.

✘ The good captain preparing for a shave.

✘ After the cutting!

A Buckeye In Wolverine Land

On to another great post! Thursday afternoon was my first voice lesson in about two and a half years. I am pleased to say I am very ecstatic about the next coming months! We began with a review (for me) about breathing, support, the diaphragm, the mask, and other technical terms that we quickly glossed over. Then, we determined that I have an octave and a half range with the same above that in falsetto which totally surprised the both of us. Then, it was time to get down to business... FUN TIMES!

I decided that "Younger Than Springtime" would be good to warm up on. It would have been if the copy I had was complete. We got to the last page and discovered that there is something missing. So I dig and find the book with the song... only to discover that it was in a lower key! But manageable... only

slightly lower. But I prefer the higher range. I like to shoot for my POWER notes, but those would come later.

Next, I dug out "This is the Moment." Kathrine is unfamiliar with *Jekyll and Hyde*?! Blasphemy! Just don't listen to the Hoff's version. Then, we went to "If I Can't Love Her" from the stage version of *Beauty and the Beast*. The big ballad which closes Act I. The only suggestion she had for both pieces is to find the soft moments in both pieces. They are both powerful songs but powerful is not always meant for volume.. Build up to the big moment! Then you will have them eating out of your hand. Sounds like homework. But she said that with a slight polishing they are already prime for performance. I wanted to do the Beast's number previously; however, the gig I wanted to sing it for was limited to musicals of the past decade. So, I sang "Under the Sea."

It is a good thing I was introduced to *Miss Saigon* earlier in the week via youtube. My new coach had me read (sight reading... YUCK!) two duets from the show with her. Not the character driven pieces I had hoped for but those will come in time. It has been advised that I check out both the Engineer and Thuy (although Vietnamese I am not but...). Kathrine mentioned that we should sign up for one of the weekend gigs starting up again in the fall. I am totally against that idea ☐ HAHHAHAHA! Just need to get some more cool character pieces in with the big dramatic ones. Several I can think of easily... maybe go dig an old fossil of 18 years ago. Go in there and blow everyone's minds. Of course, provided that anyone would actually come and see me?! I'm sure I could get at least 3 people there... and that is a crowd.

Who knows what the next few months will bring? I just know that the next musical on a nearby stage is not my cup of tea.

I better stop with those two songs. When I do perform, I don't want to spoil it all for those three in the audience ☐ Two big, powerful ballads now for a few duets and at least

three character pieces.

As I was pulling out my checkbook, my new coach sneered at the picture of the Script Ohio on my first check. "Since it is money, I guess I can accept it." Oh, we're going to get along REALLY well. At least she is not a BoSox fan... I hope.