

Eric And The Beast On A Rag

I did get to sit in the audience of the City Band Wednesday night. I wasn't sure if it was going to be at the bandstand or at its alternate venue. Before finding that out, I decided to locate the place of my Thursday afternoon voice lesson which was easier to locate than the directions given by my new coach. I googled the address and it was a breeze to find.

Especially with the number written on the mailbox. The house was buried by a wooded area but really easy to find. All I had to do was turn off of U.S. 6 onto County Road 13 and it was .3 miles away. Then, with plenty of time to spare, I went to Wal Mart and ran into some old friends and saw the truck belonging to another but was not able to find him. I must have been on the wrong end of Electronics (or he could have been hiding). ☐

After discovering that the concert would be at the ice rink with five minutes to spare, I decided that given the choice, I would have rather directed Stars and Stripes this week as opposed to last (not complaining, just sayin'). I just think this week's concert had better music. Many songs I was already familiar with... "12th Street Rag" I had sung in choir and played sometime. Of course, a different arrangement than I am accustomed to, but I would have enjoyed sitting in the low brass section playing "Selections from *Phantom of the Opera*" and the title tune from the animated classic turned hit Broadway show "*Beauty and the Beast*."

Speaking of Phantom, my brother turned to me and stated that the high school at which he serves as the tech advisor will be performing the musical next year. I did not believe him until I looked [on line](#) and discovered that the rights have just indeed become available from R&H productions for high school and amateur productions. There had been "test" runs a few years ago overseen by Lord Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group company. But how did the small school get the rights so

quickly? Hicksville had better "Got Talent" to pull this off. I imagine that the rights are probably for a tailored production of the musical.

I asked Liz if they were going to come next week for the announced ice cream social "before and during the concert." I don't think she realized where she will be next Wednesday because she didn't know if they would be or not. Probably not since they will be at Disney World. Maybe they could borrow Aladdin's magic carpet, Carpet. I'd rather be there when it is not so hot!

A fun concert moved to a different venue to be "safe rather than sorry."

Edgerton Bombed

It seems we have been inundated with storms, storms, and more storms for the beginning weeks of the summer. Our little area has been relatively lucky... UNTIL Wednesday night. I was fortunate enough to get off work in time to go to the City Band concert (more in that later). I got home around 9:15. I went out to the beauty shop to finish cleaning. At 9:30, here go the sirens (**AGAIN**). Looking out the window, there wasn't a lot to see at the moment so we decided to step outside and see what we could see. In the west, we could see the sky lit up with lightning. However, as our neighbor pointed out, it was eerily silent: no birds, no mosquitos (I noticed that myself).

A half hour later, I felt a rather large raindrop and decided that was enough for me. Thirty seconds later, the power went out. So... my brother, his wife, and two kids, my sister and her two little ones, my mother and I all headed to the basement. Someone failed to get batteries for the flashlights

or the radio so Dad was upstairs lighting candles. The rest of us lit our way into the chamber of secrets armed with cell phone illumination.

Around 11, we headed back upstairs. The corded phone in the kitchen rang. A neighbor was just informed that the town hall had been hit. Dad and a neighbor went up to check it out. The night was so dark that they could not see any sign of damage. Our side of town was completely black.

By this time, the excitement was over. Everyone decided to stay the night and hope that there was no damage in the morning. It gets hotter than... upstairs with a fan/air conditioning so I slept on the couch. About midnight, a car pulls up and someone comes in. Still not being able to see, I shouted "Who goes there?" "It's me!" Well... that helps a lot! It was our oldest sibling who had been out driving, surveying the damage. And HE had power at his house. Go figure.

The next morning, I walked around a bit before going to work. Limbs, branches, trees toppled. The east wall of the Flea Market wiped out. VERY noticeable now... the gaping hole in the 120+ year old former town hall. It really looked like a missile went through it! Also gone was poor "Clem" the one casualty of the war. He had been standing guard in front of the building for years whether he was in the courtyard or in the middle of State Route 49. I am too young to remember his transfer from the road, One of our fine firemen was injured while he was outside rolling up car windows... nothing life threatening but a broken femur.

At work all day, we joked out the condition of the town hall debate. For the last few years, the historical society had been wanting to purchase the condemned building, restore the second floor opera house from yesteryear, and create a museum dedicated to the town. A worthy ambition to be sure. But where was the money for this undertaking to come from? Well,

I guess that debate was settled Wednesday night.

Like many storms, it is just amazing the spottiness of the devastation. Indiana Street was definitely the hardest hit.

Two blocks north along North Michigan Avenue, I found a small branch lying on the ground. Family safe... could have been so much worse.



town hall



sign from
the bank
across from
town hall



what's
left of
"Clem"



a new
window into
town hall



clem's old
home buried



flea market (former True
Value store) across from town
hall)

The strange thing the weather “experts” have yet to assess the situation fully and state unequivocally what caused the damage.

My Darling Susie

While everyone else dispersed to the various ballgames for the evening (a niece and a nephew actually played against each other on the t-ball field while another was in a neighboring community), I took my 5 year old niece to Story Hour at the library. I had taken Syd to the first gathering a few weeks ago and learned that someone needed to stay for the entire hour (of course, this was after I left and came back after the hour). Tonight, I stayed for the entire hour.

It was a cute hour... thankfully, I knew a few of the parents (one being a church organist I know). This week being dolphin and shark week, we heard true life stories about each of the creatures. Then the kids sang “If You’re Happy and Ya Know It.” Then, arts and crafts in which the little ones made tear out sharks. They took a piece of construction paper and tore their sharks and glued them to another sheet of paper. No snack... Sydney was slightly miffed about that.

I remember Saturday morning Story Hour at the old library. I attended (until I was in the third grade) and later was the leader. The one thing I remember aside from the stories, Farmer in the Dell, London Bridge, and musical chairs was my darling, Susie. She was the library’s resident mascot. A rather green, birdlike marionette. Who knows where she is now? To the great aviary in the sky, one might surmise ☐

But, it was kind of fun to see the little ones hearing the stories (even adding their own commentaries at times) and

being creative

AHHHH... Togetherness

Today being Father's Day, the family took the three dads to dinner. Then... two of my siblings and I took a horde of crazies to see *Toy Story 3*! Definitely worth seeing although not sure the 3D was worth it... not much there that would not have been just as enjoyable on a decent 2D screen.

Getting to dinner was an adventure, the parents were not interested in seeing the movie, so my sis and I followed them. We quickly got left in the dust! Thank goodness for cell phones. If someone had told me where we were headed, I could have easily gotten us there, but always interesting!

I found the latest installment in the adventures of Woody, Buzz, and the gang to be as enjoyable as the original and better than the sequel. This time, Andy is packing for college. He still sleeps in the same room but his toy box has been long forgotten until a week before he is ready to head out. His mother gives him a cardboard box in which to put everything he is taking with him and a garbage bag in which to put everything he wants to be put in the attic. Fortunately, the bag headed for the attic gets mistaken for garbage and the adventure begins.

Several themes run rampant through the movie: the power of friendship and sticking together; growing up; saying goodbye.

All of the favorite toys are here along with a gaggle of new toys many of whom have interesting backstories of their own.

And as always, the end credits are worth a look as the story doesn't end as they start to roll. Highly recommended! You are never too old for a Disney/Pixar movie!

A New Coach

I have been pondering the possibility of finding a new vocal coach for the past year or so. However, I have been very apprehensive about doing so. While going to BGSU, I had a great mentor who was on the fast track to an operatic career. He left as I was going into my second year at the school. One of the people I should have remained in contact with over the years, but...

Then after leaving the fine institution (I use that term sparingly), Emily helped me more than any one ever has. You can go home again. The reason I have found it so difficult to even consider the possibility of finding a new vocal coach is kind of unexplainable. I was so hurt by the events surrounding my leaving school and the fact that she took me under her wing training my voice and helping me go BEYOND the pain I felt is unequivocal. That above all is why I have a hard time trusting anyone with my voice.

After *Miracles*, my newest mentor and amazing friend seriously suggested that I search out a vocal coach. In no way did I see this as a put down to my abilities but as a way to further develop my performance ability. I even told him that I had been thinking about the possibility. Tom Hudson was my first meaty, dramatic, non-musical lead role. How about tackling a meaty, dramatic, musical role? Not that the dream of continuing my phenomenal success as a character actor has not diminished. I'm on a roll of one meaty, dramatic role.

Tuesday morning after a t-ball game, a candidate passed right by us. C told me to go introduce myself. I told him that I don't know her, so HE ran over and introduced us. I remembered seeing her in *Working* a few months ago so she

definitely can sing and she gives lessons and she came very highly recommended. Plus, it was nice to put a name to a face. After 3 days of playing phone and email tag, we finally found a moment when I was around to discuss a schedule.

She asked what sort of music I would prefer beyond the obvious. You have no idea the bag full of Broadway books I have! Contemporary Christian (although not much contemporary is sung in a Catholic church ☐), some duets, some standards. Just a bunch of stuff to increase my repertoire.

So... my choices were wither 8.30 AM on Fridays at her office (which I could have done but...) or 4:15 at her home with the kids being sitted which is nothing new to me. In fact, my 6 and 5 year old nieces were hanging around while I was on the phone. So Thursday at 4.15 it is! I can't wait! ☐

Fearless At the Jubilee

AHHHH, my moment had arrived! What a great rush! It was almost like being on a roller coaster. Thank you Terry for the opportunity by donating the gig to the WCCT. Back in January while waiting for my pal to come over the radio during the Blizzard Auction, I heard the item up for bid. I thought it would be an extraordinary and priceless experience. A female bidder and I went at it and I finally got it for \$72,341.56. LOL ☐ If I had that much money, I am sorry to say that I would not be here.

Prior to the 8 o'clock start time, the director had a few words of encouragement and asked me for a bio. I actually thought about giving him one last night, but his intro was just fine. I had some family (biological and chosen) in the

audience and apparently a sizable fan club as I heard a loud cheer come over the crowd as I was called to the podium.

After another helpful assist in starting the tempo, I was really ready to roll... no false start tonight. I was maybe the tiniest bit nervous until I gave the down beat and the opening strain of *The Stars and Stripes Forever* began. I was in control and I relished every moment of it.

After my conducting was done, Terry reclaimed the baton and told me that it was "Very Well Done!" I knew it was. It felt that good! After the concert was over, I greeted my family, friends, band mates, well wishers and walked with Megan, Carol, and Brock to the Little Theatre. I still had one mission to complete but I did not see him at the concert. I walked to C&Ls house after phoning them to see if it was all right to stop over for a few minutes. After I got no response, I KNEW they had to be there somewhere. After making a lap around the square, I decided to hang around with a few of the remaining band members. Within moments, here comes Tay and Sam. PERFECT! Strangely enough, they were really close to the bandstand and had a great view of my moment in the spotlight!

Then I saw C, pushing Beebs and Dis in the stroller. I was not leaving until I gave my mentor and friend his birthday present (an hour or three early but who knows what tomorrow will bring). He admitted that he knew nothing about directing but said I looked good. Any compliment is a good one! Then we walked the grounds watching the little ones ride. I went on the Rock and Roll Wheel with the fearless one. Think a ferris wheel on which you are in a cage which flips around as the ferris wheel turns. It was fun!

Then at 11, a cart driven by Jubilee workers came around and told a group of teenagers to disperse as it was closing time.

The adults with the four little ones were ignored.

Tired but not tired. It was so much fun. I wish my work

schedule allowed me to be off Tuesday and Wednesday nights throughout the summer. Thanks Terry, Polly, and the Bryan City Band for an unforgettable experience. Another addition to me resume, too!

The Sun WILL Come OUT!

I have it on good authority that tomorrow will be a beautiful day. I just don't listen to the weatherman! It wouldn't rain on my parade! I got to sit in with the Bryan City Band at rehearsal (the director found me a suitable tuba, thank you!) and conduct my piece. He asked me before rehearsal began how I was going to start. Holding the tuba, I held one hand up and started going one, two... down, up (down beat is one, up beat is two). But how was I going to set the tempo for the band to follow? Get it in your head, give a little suggestive beat to the ensemble and BRING IT!

A few of the selections were familiar. Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* is a piece I remember ALL TOO WELL from high school and it was no easier tonight than 18 years ago. There was medley of music from the 60s. A lesser known (to me, anyway) J.P. Sousa march called *Fairest of the Fair*. And a variety of others.

My moment had finally arrived. As I made my way from the back of the band to the podium, I was given an impromptu introduction. I took my place behind the conductor's stand with the baton. I gave the tempo, gave the down beat, and... nothing. I forgot to BRING IT! Try again. It worked! It was such a thrill. WHAT A RUSH! You darn well bet ya that I will not fail to bring it tomorrow night. Just keep the beat alive.

Well... let's hope I get some friends, [WCCT](#) fans, [BCB](#) fans, AND FAMILY! there tomorrow night. But, once again, it is Jubilee week on the square so come early and bring your chair/blanket to sit on!

The Singing Potter

Sunday night while watching the Tony Awards, Daniel Radcliffe was on stage, presenting some trophy (can't remember which one... sorry). Filming just wrapped on the finale to the Harry Potter film series and as can be expected, there was a sense of sadness over the cast. I would imagine that young adults especially who have worked together side by side for half their lives would find it difficult to separate themselves.

The first part of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* hits theatres November 19th. The finale hits mutiplexes July 15, 2011.

Radcliffe is no stranger to the stage. Just over a year ago, he was on Broadway in a tale about a boy and his horse. As he was introduced Sunday night, it was announced that he would be appearing on stage in a revival of [*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*](#). When I heard it, I thought it was a joke and dismissed it totally. Today, I read that he has indeed been cast in a new production of a 1961 musical that was last revived in 1995 when Matthew Broderick starred as J. Pierrepont Finch. This made me question how soon is too soon to revive a show. Or perhaps, it is a red herring much like the web-slinger's much delayed debut.

I think it would be interesting to see if the wizard can sing and dance.

A New Old Look

In preparation for what I hope is my next stage performance, I was informed that the role had to have a full beard... the "handsome" part? Well... the say beauty is in the eye of the beholder. More than a few summers ago, I was cast as Motel in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Of course, the tailor had to grow facial hair as well. Nothing new, it will just be a bit warm under there once again. Of course, a Holmes play requires the cast to have English accents, or no go. It would be very odd having a cast with American accents. Maybe I could give a Liswathistani interpretation of the character. A non-Jewish *Fiddler* would be strange for that matter.

Today, my mother had had enough. I previously had an electric trimmer but after 8-10 years, it seemed to have died out. So, she took me to the beauty shop to help it along. She was worried that she would make a booboo, but I thought there is plenty of time to grow it back. I think it only took a little over a month for the beard to develop on my last attempt; it has only been about a month since I started this one. I started the day after *Miracles* wrapped. Nothing like preparing for future parts. Plus, I got a hair cut, such as it is. □ The script says nothing about a full head of hair. □

Ah... The Antoinette Perry's

Tonight, we honor the toast of Broadway. I will just touch on some of the highlights.

- In the much coveted Best Musical we have Green Day's *American Idiot*, *Fela!*, *Memphis*, and *Million Dollar Quartet*. Best Musical Revival nods go to... *Finian's Rainbow*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Ragtime*. I think both categories will come down to two. I think B. M. will come down to *Fela!* and *American Idiot*. Revival will be either *La Cage* or *Night Music*. They both have been getting a bunch of press. I would like to see Finian walk away with it but alas...
- Can you imagine *The Addam's Family* with Nathan Lane as Gomez (only 2 nods and the king of Broadway is not one)? Bebe Neuwirth is Morticia.
- Scarlett Johansson just won her first statue for her role in the revival of *A View from the Bridge*. Ever since she was a little girl, she had dreamed of being on Broadway. WOW! Sounds like someone I know all too well. From Iron Man to Broadway.
- Ricky Martin is going to be in *Evita*? He was on Broadway in *Les Miserables*? Aren't we about tired of the jukebox musical? This year we have Frank Sinatra in *Come Fly with Me* (I think it is actually Ol' Blu Eyes set to dance... eh. Plus we have *the Million Dollar Quartet* who were the back up singers for everyone from Jerry Lee Lewis to Elvis to Johnny Cash.
- Oh, boy... Will and Jada Smith. Perhaps to dote on their son's breakout performance in *The Kung Fu Kid*. I've actually heard mixed comments on that one. Think I'll wait until Netflix gets it in about 3 months. So, get them over with already! AH... two of the producers for *Fela!*
- Back to *La Cage*. In Junior High, I remember that my English/Lit teacher took a trip to New York to see the show. Unaware of the show's plot, she and her husband walked out prior to intermission. I believe that it may be the big winner of the night. It is tied with [Fela!](#) with 11 noms. And Kelsey Grammer just lead his line of "lovelies" in *The Best of Times* (probably the only thing

I really know about the show aside from the obvious).

- *Superior Donuts*? I've never heard of it, either. And the play did not win its one nomination for Best Featured Actor in a Play.
- I must say that I am more interested in the plays of this year's season. I don't think the musicals are much to get excited over (coming from me, can you believe it?!). I have read August Wilson's [Fences](#) (up for a number of awards) and *The Piano Lesson*. Both remarkable plays and ones that I have little chance of being in unless we have a color-blind casting director. Denzel Washington is up for best actor in a play along with Jude Law (*Hamlet*), Alfred Molina (*Red*), Liev Schrieber (*A View from the Bridge*), and Christopher Walken (*A Behanding in Spokane*). Denzel must have gone from *The Book of Eli* (on DVD Tuesday) to New York. **WOO HOO! DENZEL WINS!!!** And the play itself wins Best Revival! HOOray!
- Yep... [In the Next Room or... The Vibrator Play](#) is exactly what it sounds like. The invention of... well use your imagination.
- The Grande Dame of the theatre, the first honorary chairperson of the theatre wing... Ms. Angela Lansbury. And she was beaten in the Best Featured Actress in a Musical category.
- Focus on that one thing. Don't let anyone stand in your way. Don't listen to anybody else. You will meet the right people (I have), teachers (still looking), circumstances (so far, so good... if you consider CT in NWO good which it is, but...).
- Mark Sanchez from the New York Jets?! That is too COOL! Presenting the cast of [Memphis](#).
- I see that Valerie Harper is up for Best Actress (Play) in *Looped* based on the life of Tallulah Bankhead. Neither Rhoda nor her 70s tv competition... Linda Lavin ("Alice") were winners. But Viola Davis won for *Fences*... **YAY!**

- Does anyone else find Kristin Chenoweth to be somewhat annoying. I maybe in the minority but perhaps its that voice.
- "Send in the Clowns" Catherine Zeta-Jones. 80th birthday of Sondheim. *A Little Night Music* is up for four... already lost its first. Never understood the show. I always thought it was overrated.
- Father's Day and the Tony Awards are presented by Wal*Mart?! OMG... it really is taking over! Whatever happened to *Wal*Martopia*?
- *Annie* is being revived yet again in 2012 (is that 35 years?). Too late to audition for one of my favorite parts?
- 10 o'clock... one hour to go.
- Best Choreography... YUCK! I admire those that can and do... those who can't... sing. Those who do neither? I'll just be Sean Hayes (*Promises, Promises*) sitting at the desk, working while the dancers do their thing around me. *Fela!* wins that one.. jumps ahead of *La Cage* with two.
- In Memorium... Lynn Redgrave, Rue McClanahan, Dixie Carter, and Larry Gelbart (co writer of *...Forum*, creator for television of *M*A*S*H*) were four of those that I knew of.
- Best Play... *Red*
- I haven't become a *Glee(k)*. But two of the stars were on singing "All I Need is the Girl" (*Gypsy*, I believe). And "Don't Rain on My Parade" (I forget the show □ No real reason but to promote the tv show.
- *American Idiot* (the show based on Green Day's album) set to perform soon. 25 to go... scheduled, anyway... we'll see how close they cut it. Is it just me or is Green Day trying to come up with the next *Rent*?
- Spider-Man coming on singing "Don't Rain on My Parade" muffled by his mask. Someday, somehow... he is set to make his Broadway debut this season. I'll believe it when I (don't) see it. The concept seems ridiculous. I

love the character. I think the post shows my extreme dislike of theatre. However passionate I am of both... they should not be allowed to combine!

- *La Cage aux Folles* wins Best Revival of a Musical.
- 14 minutes to go...
- Best Leading Actress/Actor in a Musical presented by two non-nominees (Bebe Neuwirth and Nathan Lane). **Actress:** Catherine Zeta-Jones (*A Little Night Music*). **Actor:** Douglas Hodge (*La Cage aux Folles*)
- One to go... five minutes and a final performance? Hmm... welll... I don't think there was a big winner of the night but I'm glad that *Fences* won so many well deserved awards. I haven't seen the show but it was a good read.
- **MEMPHIS** WINS BEST MUSICAL!? What an upset! Dark horse, definitely! WOW!

Well... I hope I haven't bored any of my faithful readers and hopefully, I gain a few! Good night.. congrats to the winners! Bravo to Broadway!