

Time To Get This Thing On The Road

My lesson was delayed an hour today as K had to take her youngest to his very first day of school. I remember my mother taking me my first day every year up until the fifth grade after which I had to do more than walk out the front door. I do not remember my first day of preschool; however, I do remember that it was in a church in B-own not far from my current lesson locale which itself is a converted place of worship now serving as the South Campus of the local Y.

The lesson itself was GREAT! much better than last week's when we only made it through 2 songs. Today, we breezed through 6 of the 11 songs in 40 minutes (lost track of time and since none of us had anywhere pressing to we did not stop). One piece still had some problems but was better than the last time we attempted it. So, I think after we see how the remainder goes next week, I will be setting the date for the fruits of my labor to be put on display... no pun intended. NOW if I can just get over this cold/allergies that seem to have latched onto me. ☐

The Buzz, Buzz, Buzz of Those Irritating Bs

Good rehearsals and not so good rehearsals... all good just some better than others. Yesterday was one of those "some better than others." ☐ Only made it through two songs... the last 2 on my song list. The first song was the one giving me all the headaches. Probably concentrating to hard... relax! And the

note I was having trouble with was a lot of bs ... no really there were probably 10 of those little devils wrecking havoc, but they felt like a load of well... HEHEHE However, I decided that instead of throwing the song out the window and not wanting anything more to do with it, I decided to go back for round number two. Much improvement!

The second piece always had some problems for one big reason. I had made a copy for myself and let K have the original. Looking at both copies, I discovered that I had two pages in reverse order! Fixed everything! And not one flaw... THIS TIME! ... "I AM my own worst critic"

I also purchased a copy of K's new debut CD. Kind of a folksy sound that I really like. She wrote most (if not all of the 12 songs) herself and included her oldest son in one of my favorite pieces on the disc "1 Plus 1 Is Drew." Follow the [link](#) to the website to preview the effort and perhaps purchase the album digitally or a hard copy.



Puppetry Of The NewLyweds

I catch the Newlywed Game on Game Show Network occasionally. Tonight, I had the opportunity to watch a couple I actually know (well... the male participant, anyway) try to guess each other's answers. I came in midway but I thought to myself... "That looks a lot like Rich Binning." Given that the wife's name was Olivia convinced me even further. I was still like... "NO WAY!" Until a question that seemed almost tailor-made for the New York-based actor who grew up in this neck of the woods was asked. When a commercial came on, I rewound to the beginning to learn that it was indeed Rich and Olivia. Of

course, the actor's latest professional gig was well plugged... something about contorting his maleness in various... well, you get the point.

Rich's mother has taught at my alma mater since I was in elementary school. I also shared the stage with him when FCF performed *The Sound of Music* several summers ago. I played a party guest at the home of Captain Von Trapp as well as the Nazi guard who announces the escape of the family following the festival concert near the end of the show. Rich played Rolf, Liesl's love interest.

Unfortunately, the couple did not win but they had points on the board so it was not all bad.

Different Bat-Time/Different Bat-Channel

...or different location. It has been three weeks since my last voice lesson. The first week was due to the fact that I was needed at work earlier than usual and K was on vacation the last two. To add even more confusion, we are now meeting Monday afternoons at an entirely new location. A nice and cozy studio which harkens back to vocal lessons of the past.

For the most part, the three week hiatus did not hurt a bit.

There were two notable exceptions. A few of the more character-driven pieces (from the same show mind you) were not exactly up to par. **UNHEARD OF!** I was not pleased with those two. Ah, well... guess which two of the list will be pounded this week ☹ However, we plowed through most of my pieces leaving 3-4 to continue with next week. In all, we made it through 6 in slightly more than half an hour.

I believe that I have mentioned that the songs I have chosen to perform will be very family-friendly to accommodate my many nieces, nephews, and other special little ones who may poppin.

Something for everyone to enjoy so no one needs to ponder whether or not to bring the little ones.

Another Pointless Reboot

Well... with our free Cinemax preview for as long as it lasts, I have been able to DVR a few movies I have been interested in seeing. I always liked the original *A-Team* tv series but somehow missed the big screen adaptation so that is one movie on my list.

Another is the reboot of the 1984 classic *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. I am sooooo glad that I did not shell out the money to see this senseless remake in the theaters. I thought it would be good for a tv screening, if that. I admit that these movies are about the furthest thing from high art as one can get but I for one expect to go in and be a little entertained and (Heaven forbid) scared. Except for a few bits, this was an almost exact copy of the original. Several of the few killings made me believe that I was watching the original.

The names of the characters (save for our heroine... "Nancy") were changed from the old movie.

I did not like the new Freddy, at all. He sounded quite reminiscent of Christian Bale's Batman growling. The finger-knives did not screech giving the nails across the blackboard effect. Instead, they produced sparks as they glided over the steel pipes of the boiler room. I also did not like the addition of Mr. Krugger's complete backstory. It painted him

to be nothing more than a pedophile who was hunted down by a group of “justice seeking” parents and incinerated. OK... so he was in the old movie as well but to actually see it played out? Not sure of the intent of the backstory but it did nothing to endear itself.

All in all, this masterpiece only almost PUT me to sleep without any fear of the boogymen slicing me to bits. Should have stuck with *The A-Team*.

Take A Sad Song And Make It Better

I was very honored to join with the church choir this morning as we said farewell to one of our own. Mark lost his long battle with the nasty “c” word this past week. I first learned of his condition almost half a year ago when I began my own recuperation. Mark’s 59 years (while only a blink of an eye) were lived with love, hard work, and a lot of fun.

Until being struck by the illness, he and Barb faithfully climbed the steps to join us on the Sunday mornings we sang at services. He also was an avid classic car enthusiast and the procession outside church this morning was a testament to that (I will not display my ignorance and even attempt to name the makes and models). He was also a passionate music fan. In years past, Mark and a select group of gentlemen made up Stevie and the Studebakers (a 50’s-60s doo-wop group). Not entirely sure what became of the group (and their barbershop equivalent, The Edgertones) but they were great fun to watch.

I was still young in their heyday.

Father Art... in the short time he has presided over our masses,

he has really endeared himself to the congregation. His message today was full of meaning and a bit of laughter as they have been for the last month or two. He went to a corner and pulled out his 1951 "Something-or-other" saxophone and mashed together three classic 60s tunes ("Blue Moon," "Mbube," and "Hey Jude"), the first two of which had been performed by the Studebakers. The Beatles hit was Mark and Barb's "song." Although Mark and Father Art only knew each other a short time, they are both the same age and were born in the same era. Never pretending to know him anymore than he did, Father described a man who really took "sad songs and made them better." Later, the sax joined the organ and choir for "How Great Thou Art."

The choir sang songs hand picked by Barb (and Mark I am sure) including "Oh, Holy Night." You may ask why in the middle of August one would choose to have a Christmas carol sang at a funeral. I have been honored to have attended two in which the untraditional seemed traditional. Another tribute to Mark's legacy was the number of choir members who sang this morning. Usually, we have no more than ten. We had double that and more today, even some from a neighboring parish.

Another good guy to join the heavenly chorus. May we all strive to make our own sad songs better.

Have to Watch Out for the Old Ones

Never a dull moment at a small four-aisle grocery! Receiving prank phone calls, nasty notes from the boss telling you that you do nothing, and co-workers who (after 6 months on the job)

still do not know what to do. I thought I would help these two along by leaving polite notes reminding them of what needs to be done while they are working. For the most part, they helped and kept those who needed a little nudge busy. That is until last night when I worked a whopping 4 hours and had a list of duties that I would normally need a full day to accomplish plus the addendum that the helpful notes I had been leaving "Will stop!" So much for being helpful.

Today, no note... the boss left before I arrived at noon leaving one person in the store (at noon?!). I was able to get sooooo much more done than any of her laundry lists demand me to do.

How long have I worked in retail?! My leg is feeling SOOO much better... maybe not 100%, but I "See the light at the end of the tunnel!" Of course, the last hour arrived leaving me there all alone because the other person leaves an hour before closing(never understood this). Of course, the last hour is one of the busiest but somehow, I did get the coolers straightened and everything ready to lock up.

And now... to the title of my post. Around 8:15 a female who is getting on in years, came into the store and purchased a good quantity of groceries. I offered to help her out; however (like so many), she pushed the cart outside. A short time later, after I realized she was not bringing the cart back, I went outside and noticed a surprise. Inside the cart, I discovered a squarish green bottle and my jaw dropped as I read the *Jagermeister* label. No wonder she wanted to push the cart out herself (not that I'm 100% sure that it was hers). And noooooo... it was not mine. Warfarin and alcohol do not mix. I showed a customer who I know well the bottle and we had a good laugh. I took the bottle and left a note on the desk. This might backfire as I may get yet another note about leaving notes.

A Feudin' Festival

The end of a weekend full of fun and excitement. Saturday was the final day of our annual Festival of Flags. Around 10AM, our street was being bombarded by fire engines and police cruisers from surrounding communities as well as sporty cars that would travel the parade route. Being right on the main route, our house is a wonderful, shaded point from which to view the extravaganza. I must say that this year's parade was very enjoyable. It featured 3 area high school marching bands (two more than the last several years, the traditional pageant contestants, Citizen of the Year (who according to the local paper was born in 1984 yet graduated with my mother in 1966), various floats, and handfuls of candy. I saw more adults run up the hill in front of the house than kids. The three nieces all went down the street to the unshaded library lot. I did not understand why because we were getting just as much candy thrown our way. Ah, well...

After the parade, the sibs and I had a few hours to kill before the second round of Family Feud. For whatever reason, our preliminary round was the only game played on Friday night. I would have thought that it would be more beneficial to play the entire first round (8 teams in all) and continue with the semi and final rounds the next day. It definitely would have been a little cooler. We were told not to expect to play our second round game until 3-3:30. However, the host breezed through the games and it was probably 2:15 when we took the stage. Jeff printed out a huge banner and name tags complete with a symbol indicative of our own unique personas.

His was an OSU emblem; Chad had a Cubs logo; I had a Star Trek insignia; Christi had a NASCAR auto; and Charnel had a baby bottle.

We played a team made up of employees of a local factory. The three questions:

- Name a beautiful breed of dog.
- What does a fancy restaurant have that normal restaurants do not?
- And the third escapes me.

We had control of the first question; however, there were 8 answers and after going through the line once, the responses got more difficult. Daschund and shi tsu are beautiful? Unfortunately our rivals won on a steal.

We got control of the second question as well. I blew my turn when I said "menu" was something fancy restaurants have that regular one's do not. My thinking was that the menus are at the tables and not on a board ala McDonald's and the like. A bit of controversy... Chad said "waiter" which got an X. Maitre D' was a correct response. For whatever reason, my second brother thought that the two were synonymous... Sorry, Charlie.

Our fate was sealed when I faced off at the podium for round three and for the life of me I cannot remember what the question was. I did get the number three response but my opponent came up with the number one and they never looked back. A fun experience bonding with the siblings and there is always next year. However, I wonder if a different host could be found. Not that his honor did not do a fine job... We did stay and root on as the Perry family was crowned champions after they defeated Team Matsu (the team that dealt us our defeat).

A Shower In Indigo

Today was an extremely busy fun day I had to run to Btown for my monthly poke and got a call this afternoon informing me that all is well and they'll see me in another 4 weeks. From there, I set off to find decorations for a small baby shower, Lutz and I were preparing. Around 4:30, I went to the shelter house to decorate. I hope the guest of honor was a LITTLE surprised?! Fun while I was there briefly, as always. I had to bolt shortly after the festivities began as my siblings and I were set to compete in our hometown festival's version of Family Feud.

The set left something to be desired. Our oldest commented that he could have done a much better job... I would have to agree. Have you ever played Family "Fued?" I don't think I would want to. Our revered mayor played host. He did a fine job but could have slowed the pace a bit. We were done in 20 minutes. I was going to ask if he was going to kiss the girls on the teams, but decided against it.

The Shaf siblings took on the team of Main Stop. We were relentless. We won each of the three rounds. "Name a place where you meet obnoxious people." "Name an expression with the word HEAVEN." "Name an activity teenagers engage in when they should be studying."

After some debate, Jeff and I played Fast Money. Since I went last, I was driven around the grounds in a cart so I couldn't hear the questions and answers. It would not have hurt too much to hear the answers since the smart one only got 81 of the 200 points needed.

- Name a vehicle named after an animal. J: Mustang; Me: Cougar (number 1)
- Name any color of the rainbow. J: INDIGO?!; Me: Red (number 1)

- Name a College that generally has a good basketball team. J: Ohio State; Me: Notre Dame (first thing that came into my head)
- Name a Cable Network beginning with the letter "C." J: CNN; Me: C-SPAN
- Which President has the most streets named after him. J: Washington; Me: Lincoln (tied for top answer).

Indigo may be a color of the rainbow but apparently not a very popular color of the rainbow. In fact, I think I read that it had been downgraded. In the end, we totaled 211 points and move on to round two! The rest of round one begins tomorrow at 1PM. Six other teams play (3 games total) before we take the stage sometime between 3 and 4 o'clock! Would be nice to see some Jamiahsh fans come and cheer us on!

There's No Place Like The Merry Old Land Of Oz

Yesterday was quite the busy day. It began around 9AM as I went to the area chamber of commerce office to sell tickets for FCF's production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Quite an experience (fun but at times busy). Answering phones, waiting on the line of theatergoers, marking charts, getting the tickets, running credit cards, and attempting to keep an accurate count of sold tickets was fun. Of course there were down times, but by 5PM, each of the 4 performances were really close to 300 with Friday night just one ticket shy of 400. I found it amazing that Thursday night's opening is the second strongest. Sunday afternoon is a typical slow day but Saturday night?! Ah well... it was only Tuesday.

After selling tickets, I had a few hours before I needed to be

at the Arts and Ed building to sit and review said show. I must say that it was much easier to review Oz since it remains one of my perennial favorites than it was my first time doing a review for (Cr)OKLAHOMA! It certainly took less time... or maybe last night's show ended sooner. I must apologize for any omissions to the cast as I attempted to include everyone including the adorable Toto. At review time, the programs had not yet arrived and a full cast list was unavailable.

However, most of it was available on the theatrical group's [website](#). So after completing my task, and forwarding it on to the President, my second review will soon be on the printed page, if not on the screens of cyberspace. Hopefully, it will appear before the show completes its one weekend schedule.

There's No Place Like The Merry Old Land Of Oz

by Jamy Shaffer

In 1900, Lyman Frank Baum published the novel *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* having no idea the impact that the little children's book would have on the world. Twelve sequel novels, stage plays, and silent movies followed. However, it was the 1939 beloved classic motion picture starring Judy Garland that would catapult the tale to atmospheric proportions. This weekend only, under the very capable direction of Beth Schweitzer, Fountain City Festival presents the most faithful stage adaptation of the cherished film.

McKenzie Frazier leads the cast as Dorothy Gale, the young naïve farm girl who dreams of going "Over the Rainbow" and escaping the dull, lifeless Kansas prairie. Miss Frazer who is in her late teens does a fine job of portraying the young dreamer by use of subtle body gestures and a childlike voice that give Dorothy just the right mix of naivete and, at times, fear.

As in the movie, the Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion each are characters from Dorothy's Kansas life recreated in

more colorful, dramatic fashion. Brian Coon is exceptional as Hunk who, in Oz, becomes the man of straw with no brains. Coon's agility on stage is phenomenal as he falls down, picks himself up, and puts the stuffing back in.

Casey Wood delivers a dramatic Hickory/Tin Man. Even for a character with no heart, Wood does a fine job of portraying the emotions he lacks. His stiff movements on stage are wonderful as he stands as if posing for his statue.

The third friend Dorothy encounters along the Yellow Brick Road is hilarious slapstick at its finest. Adam Coon is brilliant as the Cowardly Lion. Even as Zeke, Coon is remarkable as he runs away in the face of danger. Once in the costume of the fearful king of the forest, he goes all out with his perfect comedic timing and fabulous stage presence.

Amy Vondeylen is hideously delicious as Miss Gulch/Wicked Witch of the West. Her over the top, extremely melodramatic, villainous portrayal is sure to draw hisses and catcalls from the audience.

Caprianna Parrish brings a delightful, airy quality in her portrayal of Glinda, the Good With of the North. Her costume, like many of the other characters' is almost a direct replica of the original film version.

The Great and Powerful Wizard of Oz himself is brought to fine life by Tom Schweitzer. His showman approach to the character is just the thing needed to portray the humbug who is a good man but a very bad wizard. Hopefully, this comes as no surprise to anyone.

Anyone who has ever seen Keith Day in action knows what a fine character actor he is. Mr. Day displays a great sense of warmth but befuddlement as Uncle Henry along side Sarah Schaper as Auntie Em. Later, he brings the same greatness to his role as the Guard at the Gates of the Emerald City.

What is Oz without the adorable munchkins? There will sure to be a collective sigh and laughter as Marlee Yoder, Katherine Seaman, Vivien Ewing, Hannah Goodrich, Kayla Arnold, Veronica Nichols, and Lizzy Canield portray the female variety. Austin Damrod, Cory Yosick, Jesse Short, Seth Short, Milo McRobbie, Logan Psurny, Mason Frazer, Mason Bassett, Wyatt Short, Keegan McCashen, and Micah McCashen play their male counterparts.

The three apple trees who seemed to have a larger on stage role than in the movie are played by Jeremy Scott, Jared Wigent, and Thomas Vandal.

Some of the Witch's Winkie guards ("O E O Yo Ah") are played by Cameron Lyons, Austin Teegarden, Mason Bassett, Wyatt Short, Evan Raub, and Jeremy Scott.

Other Emerald City Ozians are played by FCF stalwarts Ron and Linda Jinks, Noelle Goodson, Sara Yosick, Nanci Frazer, Briana Gearhart, Megan Fry, Maddi Heisler, Kathleen Walsh, Remy Cousino, Emma McCashen, Chloe McCashen, Heather Teegarden, Edwina Phillips, Sandy Bowers, and Faith Stambaugh.

So... take your own journey along the Yellow Brick Road and go Over the Rainbow as FCF presents *The Wizard of Oz*. Thursday July 28th – Saturday July 30th at 7:30pm and Sunday July 31st at 2PM. Unlike years past, the show runs only one weekend at the Bryan Arts and Education Building. Tickets are \$10 each and may be purchased at the Bryan Chamber office or by calling 419-636-2247. Don't miss this cherished family-friendly show!

(Jamy Shaffer is a veteran community theater performer who has been involved in more shows in the Northwest Ohio region on and off stage than even he can count.)