

Come On, Get Happy

The last job I would ever even consider having is a school bus driver. Not only do you have to put up with crabby, rowdy children for up to two hours a day while trying to get them safely to and from school, you have to put up with their guardians. My mother drives a school bus. She is up at 6am ever morning. She drives a morning route, a kindergarten route, and the afternoon route. Last Tuesday NIGHT, the grandmother of one of these tykes visited our humble abode. It seems that her car was totally ruined and completely undrivable after my mother backed into it with a bus that morning. The woman stated that she was outside in the yard at the time of the incident. Yet she did not attempt to stop the bus or call the school or police after she watched the bus damage her vehicle. Not only that, but who would wait until 9 o' clock that night to do anything about it. Plus, if the car was damaged as badly as it was claimed to be would the bus driver or kids not have noticed hitting it?

The next day the sheriff's department came to the house to investigate. Apparently, the victim's automobile was not nearly as damaged as everyone was lead to believe. To make matters seem funnier or more ironic, the woman is the mother of the rather plump boy who broke my sister's arm in phys ed nearly 20 years ago when he sat on it while playing scooterboard hockey. It does not take a genius to realize that you should report an accident immediately after it happens and not 14 hours later.

Why the Cubs will NEVER win a World Series!



The Cubs don't just lose. They lose with style. They find new ways to make people say to themselves "I can't believe the Cubs found a way to choke again!" But why do they keep losing? Is it a CURSE? Yes it is... But it has nothing to do with goats and everything to do with dollars.

You see, a franchise that has build a cult-like following on the platform of being "Lovable Losers" needs to maintain their status to keep their following. And the following is where the money is...

Take the Chicago White Sox for example. They won a World Series not too long ago. But now, that is history and they are no longer selling out every game and in the national spotlight. They have no story. They are just another team that wins some and loses some.

But, to be a money machine you MUST have a story. You must either be a big winner (like the Yankees) or a big loser (like the Cubs). If you're just floating around in the middle, you are not a story. You are no longer the eternal underdogs everyone roots for on the side. You are... Just another baseball team.

If the Cubs were to win a World Series, *Lovable Loser* would no longer fit. And unless they could consistantly win, neither would the title of *Elite Team*. So, I wouldn't expect to see the Cubs winning a World Series any time soon. They will always be a devistating injury, botched play, or Steve Bartman away.

Because baseball is a business and a good story is good for

business.

Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton a New President for the Democrats?

What separates these two candidates? Their foreign policy? Their position on healthcare? NAFTA? In the end it is only two things. The two already stated.

Cleaning up the streets?

Apparently someone who was attempting to clean up the state he governed needed to look in his own backyard. As more details rise from the controversy surrounding the sex scandal of New York governor Eliot Spitzer, one of the leading stars involved in the prostitution ring is an aspiring actress/singer named Ashley Dupre. It is really unfortunate that a young person would feel the need to become involved in such a lifestyle... even living with the governor in an apartment in Manhattan until he walked out on her. Although she does not want to be thought of as a "monster," who can say whether or not she will ever be seen as anything but the governor's plaything. It just seems like a lot of young ladies (and men) who want to become stars are prone to controversy. Britney, Jamie Lynn (good name... wrong spelling), [Lindsay Lohan](#), and several others seem to grace entertainment periodicals and news broadcasts

everywhere. Not very good role models for teenage youngsters. The evils that celebrity leads to.

Which is not to say that the main character in the mess is the young lady. On the contrary, it is disgusting that the man who had been praised for reportedly decreasing the amount of crime and smut in New York state would be such a hypocrite.

Horton Sees the Idols

What better way to promote a new movie than on America's number one television show which is seen by millions every week. Last season two movies peddled themselves on American Idol, [Shrek 3rd](#) and [The Simpson's Movie](#). The top ten finalists were treated to the premiere showing of Shrek and got to go backstage for the behind the scenes work of The Simpsons. The Shrek connection kind of threw me since Dreamworks is not affiliated with FOX (that I am aware). Of course, money talks.

Last night's result show also featured a promotional opportunity for 20th Century Fox's latest attempt to transform a Dr. Seuss book into a theatrical masterpiece. The last two (The Grinch and The Cat in the Hat) were mediocre at best. I'm not sure if Horton Hears a Who will follow in their footsteps, but the cast list seems promising. Jim Carrey, Steve Carell, Carol Burnett, and Amy Poehler are a few of the talents who are lending their voices to the animated feature.

In order to further promote the film, Jim Carrey was in the American Idol studio audience with a giant set of elephant ears on his head and humongous elephant shoes on his feet. I personally felt sorry for the man who sat behind him. Later, the man of a thousand faces blended in with the finalists who were nervously awaiting the announcement of the contestant who

would be getting the hook, axe, or otherwise sent packing.

I hesitate to tell you that the poor soul who was voted off the island (oops wrong show) was a young man who (according to newspaper articles) previously was employed as a male stripper at an establishment that catered mostly to male clientele. It would not be American Idol if there was not a bit of controversy.

The Wedding Singer

Yep, that is me. I've probably done five and will be doing my sixth on March 29th. The first was for my cousin about 10 years ago. I sang at my 2 brother's weddings (one of which is divorced) and my sister's (who is separated (wow... scary thought only 1 out of three is still married)). Then I sang for another cousin's ceremony. Last night, the organist and I met to go over what I am expected to sing on the 29th. Most of the songs I have done before... more or less traditional wedding songs (The Rose, Sunrise Sunset, One Hand One Heart, and Theme from Ice Castles (Through the Eyes of Love)). When I saw the list, I asked the organist why we were singing so few. We will need to add at least one to the Pre-ceremony list; there were two and I have been known to have as many as five. We must be going to rush those guests into the church in a hurry. Even with the organist playing between the two songs, it would take no more than 10 minutes to get through it all.

As for the songs themselves, I have sung "The Rose" during at least 3 weddings. I have been in two different productions of [*Fiddler on the Roof*](#), so "Sunrise Sunset" is familiar (but at a Catholic wedding seems strange). "One Hand One Heart" from [*West Side Story*](#) is about as traditional as "The Bridal March."

The Ice Castles theme is probably the most unfamiliar to me but I have been to enough weddings to have heard the piece more than once. I have always wanted to do "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" but maybe for my own. At least they are all in English.

Baby You Can Drive My Car

Finally, after 7 seasons on the air, American Idol contestants can sing songs from the Lennon/McCartney songbook. Of course, what better way to celebrate the feat of convincing Michael Jackson to allow it (since he owns the rights to the Beatles works) then to have an all Fab Five show. Let me also point out that (IMHO) after seven seasons, the show has lost some of its luster. It is no longer the "must see show" of the week. It is becoming tedious watching Randy say: "It was just awiight fo' me Dawg." Or Paula exclaim: "You look beautiful" when what she really means is "That was really bad." Or even Simon bashing the hopefuls. It has all become a bit formulaic.

Two of the performances stood out to me (one good; the other... welllll). The first was a performance of "Let It Be" (the final single released by the Beatles in 1970). Brooke White chose to perform the song while accompanying herself on the piano. It was a truly heart-felt performance.

However, Kristy Lee Cook decided to change the classic "Eight Days a Week" and give it a country flavor. Not only did the judges totally dismiss the brave choice, she will probably be in the bottom three tomorrow night. I am not what one would call a country music aficionado, but it was just a strange rendition.

So while it is becoming a bit tedious, I still do try to catch

American Idol when I can. I can actually say I know where Carrie Underwood came from... and she is a country singer.

In The Beginning....

There seems to be a fascination with franchise re-boots in movies today. If memory serves, one of the first was George Lucas' idea of deciding to tell the back story of Darth Vader. While the idea of *Star Wars* Episodes 1-3 seemed good in theory, it failed in many respects.

The plot of the trilogy had more to do with political mumbo-jumbo than actual lightsaber and space battles. It took three movies to explain how a Republic failed and became the Empire of the original *Star Wars* trilogy. Anakin Skywalker's transformation into Darth Vader almost seems like a secondary plot. And don't even get me started on the ridiculous concept of "midichlorians."

The acting seems stuffy in Episodes 1-3. Hayden Christensen's acting style is so wooden and forced that the audience really does not care about Anakin Skywalker. The dialogue makes it sound as if the audience is watching a Shakespearean play instead of the fun, swashbuckling atmosphere of episodes 4-6.

However, there are good moments in the second trilogy. [*The Phantom Menace*](#) includes a lightsaber duel between Obi-Wan Kenobi, his mentor Qui-Gon Jinn, and the evil Sith Lord Darth Maul. By the time [*Attack of the Clones*](#) came about, enough technology had been created to allow Yoda to become more than a mere puppet and engage in his own lightsaber fight. Finally, [*Revenge of the Sith*](#) features the climactic battle between Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker.

On a side note, the title *Revenge of the Sith* is a nod to the title which Episode 6 was to be. *Revenge of the Jedi* was to be the title of the final movie. At the last minute after posters, advertisements, and merchandise had already been created, George Lucas decided that a Jedi does not seek revenge. Therefore, the title was changed to [Return of the Jedi](#). *Star Wars* collectors must have a field day looking for and selling these rare pieces of memorabilia on [ebay](#) and at conventions.

While both trilogies are among the most popular movies in history, the redemption of Anakin Skywalker as seen in episodes 4-6 are much more imaginative than the newer films. However, if you are a *Star Wars* purist and want to know how and why Darth Vader came to be then you should watch the newer films which are the first in the timeline of the series...
WOOLY SHEEP!!! MORAT CONFUSING SELF!!!!!!

Zip-a-dee-doo-dah

It is very hard to imagine but one of the most controversial movies of all time is a Disney film. Released in 1946, *Song of the South* has never been released on video nor DVD in the U.S. It won an Oscar for Best Song and has been re-released in theatres several times (most recently in 1986). However, the powers that be at Disney feel that the movie has a strong racial tone. As recently as 2007, the issue has been raised with the same result: no release. However, the movie has been released on video in foreign markets.

It also seems peculiar that there is an attraction based upon the film at Disney World. Splash Mountain takes riders on a journey through the Briar Patch which is populated by Br'er

Rabbit, Br'er Bear, Br'er Fox, and other characters from the stories of Uncle Remus.

As explained in the following [article](#), it seems highly unlikely that *Song of the South* will be released in this country in the near future. However, outlets such as ebay.com may have access to copies.

Dinner And A Show

Tonight was Williams County Community Theatre's second performance of *Murder with a Silver Spoon* at Rita's Family Dining in Bryan, Ohio. It was a very different venue than the country club where we presented it last weekend. Rita's had a very cramped banquet room in which the audience enjoyed a three course meal between acts. Although space was extremely limited, it lent itself even more to drawing the audience into the action and allowed for even more audience/cast interaction. Because the space was so small, the number of audience members was extremely limited. However, the event was sold out which was great for our group and the theatre-goers all seemed to enjoy themselves tremendously. For those poor, unfortunates who did not get tickets for whatever reason (trouble finding a sitter :), etc), tentative plans are being made to again perform the show at a venue near you.