

The View From Here

As I read in the newspaper today, I was shocked but not totally surprised that one of my childhood mainstays is being retired. The [View-Master](#) is a small plastic toy in which was place a white white wheel full of 3-d pictures. The wheels initially contained scenes of actual places (The Grand Canyon, Disney Parks, I had a set from Cedar Point that probably would be worth something if only I had been a child who thought about such things). There was a [camera](#) made during the 50s with which you could create your own View-Master reels. Later, reels of movies, television shows, and other forms of popular culture were introduced. I had reels full of Mickey Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, superheroes (I had a series of Caped Crusader reels taken from the 60s television series featuring Catwoman), the Flintstones, and others.

In an effort to appeal to increasingly uninterested kids, new versions of the toy were introduced. I had the projector that enabled the images to be shown on a wall, or set up in a dark room on a "screen" consisting of a white sheet placed over a few boxes stacked on top of each other. Friends would come into my theatre and watch as the scenes unfolded to improvised narration. I believe there was a "talking" version as well.

Over the years, sales of the View-Master have decreased exponentially. The majority of children are much more interested in video games, DVDs and the like. But for at least one 8-10 year old growing up in the late 70s-early 80s, it provided hours of imagination and fun.

An Unexpected Song And Dance

Sunday afternoon is the annual All County Band and Chorus concert. While in high school, I always looked forward to this event. Not only did it mean two days out of school to practice, (I went for both groups all four years), but it also meant being surrounded by fellow students who shared a passion for music. However, one of the schools in the county, until recently, never chose to participate. During my junior year, we had the privilege of having R.D. Mathey as the guest clinician for the choir. It featured, among other pieces, a medley of Andrew Lloyd Webber pieces. I was among the brave souls who tried out for a duet of "Unexpected Song" from [Song and Dance](#). Unfortunately, I was not chosen to sing the duet. I do remember the performance of Jester Harrison's "Amen" which was a staple of the BGSU Men's Chorus under Mathey's direction. I tried to find a youtube video but they must not perform it anymore.

Another common occurrence was the typical winter storm that would either cancel the concert or postpone it for a week. One year, it was delayed twice before it was finally shelved for the year. Why it has always been in the middle of winter, I do not know. [Justj](#), is your youngest involved this year?

He Had A Bad Day On The Slopes

While listening to the news this morning, I happened upon the bit about the gentleman on the ski lift who got more than he bargained for on his journey. While the outcome was good, it

could have been catastrophic. The man was not identified and I can say with certainty that I would not want to be identified, either. I am sure that if onlookers had the means, photos would have been snapped and videos must have been captured for youtube fodder. Laugh if you must (hard not to) the situation must have been perilous... dangling from a ski lift while exposed for seven minutes. Must have been a chilling experience.

Man left dangling upside down, pantsless after Vail lift mishap

JANUARY 6—In a bizarre incident that will surely lead to litigation (or an out-of-court settlement), a skier at Colorado's ritzy Vail resort was left dangling upside down and pantsless from a chairlift last Thursday morning. The January 1 mishap apparently occurred after the male skier, 48, and a child boarded a high-speed lift in Vail's Blue Sky Basin. It appears that the chairlift's fold-down seat was somehow not in the lowered position, which caused the man to partially fall through the resulting gap. His right ski got jammed in the ascending chairlift, and that kept him upended since his boot never dislodged from its binding. As [seen in the photos on the following pages](#) (which were snapped by fellow skiers), the Skyline Express lift was stopped shortly after the pair's botched boarding resulted in the man dangling from the lift. The exposed skier was stuck for about 15 minutes before Vail personnel backed the lift up and [successfully dislodged the unidentified man](#) from the four-seat chair. The images on page [four](#) and [five](#) were taken by a local photographer who happened upon the rescue scene. In a statement released this afternoon, Vail Resorts, which operates the ski area, reported that the skier was not injured after being "suspended for approximately seven minutes." The press release did not explain how the mishap

occurred, only that "the man was caught on the chair."

Any other proud moment anyone would care to divulge? I was the victim of a depantsing in junior high. A group of us were on our way to the science teacher's desk and for some reason a fellow classmate had grabbed onto my back pocket and as I was walking, I suddenly felt a draft. It was a good thing I had phys ed that day so I had a change of pants. I did not stand around long enough to see if the architect of the depantsing got the typical punishment of writing spelling words 15 times.

Christmas Wishes

Over the past few weeks, I have been blessed to become re-acquainted with someone who used to teach at the local elementary school. She has since moved to North Carolina. She started commenting on my blog during the worst couple of weeks I have had in my 35 years when Emily became seriously ill and lost her battle with leukemia. I helped Terri and Emily direct the high school's production of Bye, Bye Birdie a few years ago. I am extremely sad to say that the theatrical tradition that was once so strong at my alma mater has disappeared. Growing up I remember watching great musicals performed on the gymnasium stage. The first being The Wizard of Oz in 1977. I was introduced to my favorite musical, Carousel, in the early 80s, as well as [Finian's Rainbow](#)[✖], You're A Good Man Charlie Brown (which [justj](#)'s daughter will be part of in her high school's production next Spring). I also watched both of my brothers on stage. THEN, I guess I made my mark in Fiddler on the Roof, I Remember Mama, and (finally) as Rooster in Annie. I also helped stage The Sound of Music, South Pacific, and the aforementioned Birdie. Do

any of my faithful readers have any memories of school musical productions they would like to share?

Terri recently sent this holiday greeting which features my favorite version of my favorite carol set to a beautiful scene which signifies the true meaning of the season.

This will be our final song to you before Christmas, which truly symbolizes our belief of the true meaning of Christmas.