

Who Knew In NW0?

Tonight, I joined Megs to partake in a concert performed by The Black Swamp Strings of which CC is a cellist. I remember learning a month or so ago that the concert was this weekend but I was not sure of the date, thank heaven my friend invited me to come on my SATURDAY OFF!

The music was phenomenal! It ranged from Bach's *Jesu. Joy of Man's Desiring* (one of the most beautiful pieces EVER written) to more contemporary fare such as theme from *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Schindler's List*, and "All I Ask of You" from *The Phantom of the Opera*. Another favorite of mine... Brahms's *Hungarian Dance No. 5* was also presented. I know that almost everyone has heard this piece somewhere.

I was particularly impressed with the age range of the musicians. There were several who had just or were about to graduate high school who started with the group at age 14 back in its "garage days." There were also the seasoned veterans.

I don't know how long it takes to become even close to being proficient enough on a stringed instrument to perform with a group of this talent, but it seems like you would have to start at birth!

One of our neighboring audience members has a nephew who was a member of the group who is now a professional musician. He will soon be heard on the scores of two of this summer's sure-fire hits: Steven Spielberg's *Super 8* and *Cars 2*. He is also in the Santa Barbara Orchestra. I guess it is possible to achieve a life-long dream no matter where you grow up. The audience member told me to congratulate "my wife" on a great job! Sorry, she only plays my wife on stage. ☹

THANKS MEGS...Had lots of fun! And great job, wife ☹ Until next time.

Here is Brahms's Hungarian Dance for those of you who think

they have never hear it!

Saturday In The Sticks

WOW! My first Saturday off in at least 2 months (I'm not counting the three weeks I was pretty well incapacitated... no fun!). Gloomy, wet, cold day that it was there were moments of enjoyment. Decided to tag along with Mom and my oldest niece to grocery shop and use my gift card to pick up a certain DVD that came out yesterday. As we parked at the grocery, I noticed a vehicle with a very recognizable license plate holder. I told Shelb "Guess who's here?" Always fun to run into your best friends (all 6 of them).

Tonight, Shelby and I went to see the musical version of the Adam Sandler/Drew Barrymore flick *The Wedding Singer*.

Although the cast and crew were phenomenal, I would definitely not have taken any of my nieces and nephews under the age of 15. I'm sure that the innuendo would have flown over their head but some of the language would be cause for concern.

The show was great fun and a great transport back to the age of excess with catch phrases, pop culture references of 1985, and the CLAPPER!!! YOU HAVE TO LOVE THE CLAPPER! And who doesn't love seeing the fake Rainbow Brite (Played by another one of my nieces... Alyssa Davis... and I thought she was only 7), Joan Jett, Cyndi Lauper, Brooke Shields, Punky Brewster, and I did spy a nerd who had the orange and black striped shirt and rainbow suspenders of a certain Orkan. Plus, a Princess Leia wannabe complete with a cinnabun hairdo. I wonder if the script called for the Princess Leia character; knowing the actress, she probably had some input.

The leads and ensemble were all wonderful but there were several standout scene-stealing cameos particularly the always

engaging Tiff who brought the house down as Linda, Robbie's fiancée. Another pure delight was a fellow [tangenteer](#) who was ALMOST unrecognizable as Robbie's grandma. The rap she performed with the flamboyant George was a hoot! If I've said it one, I've said it a million times... lots of times a show is not all about the leads. Give a cameo or supporting role to the right thespian and they will steal the show. It just so happened that this show had more than one great cameo role ☐

I stopped at the entrance after the show long enough to congratulate Carol and say hi to Megan. My leg was getting tired and I did not want to fight the mob but the show was a TOTALLY TUBULAR!

As an added bonus, I even get NEXT Saturday off! Not going to complain since I will have a Saturday and Sunday off (provided that the store I work in continues to recognize the resurrection of our Savior).

A Year Full of Ups And Downs

2010... What a year! So much happened that I do not know where the time went! It started off LAST January when I received my first two awards for acting in *You Have the Right to Remain Dead* (as everyone's ill-fated, lovable, hammy narrator... Harnell Chesterton) and for bringing the Grinchi Scrooginess of Mr. Henry F. Potter to life in *It's a Wonderful Life*. Even my best friends gave up a Bears' playoff game to share in my moment as well as family!

I can't even fathom the reality that I had limited myself to only two plays this year. I tackled my first lead role in the three person DRAMA, *Miracles*. I hope that Dawn and Rebekkah share in my belief that this play was one of the best shows I

have ever been a part of. Thank you Beth for pushing for this show to be done and spreading its important, powerful message.

Chris next challenged me to seek out a new vocal coach. I had wanted to find one ever since Emily passed; however, I was uncertain as to whether I could find one as determined to help me in what I need to do. Thank God, he helped me find Kathrine. I could not ask for a better coach. I just adore people who know where your talent lies and are willing to guide you with suggestions on how best to cultivate them.

Over the years I have had and continue to have some of the best!

I also became a board member of a new theatrical group in which I get to spend more time with my friends and help to bring *The Wizard of Oz* to the stage next summer. I also had my first byline when I reviewed the company's production of *(Cr)Oklahoma!* last summer.

My final performances of the year came in the Mare helmed production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in which I played a dual role as Barrymore, the caretaker of the Baskerville estate and as the doomed Selden who met a rather grisly demise. Each production lends some challenge as well as fun working with old friends and making new ones.

The fact that I only limited myself to two shows this past year allowed me to do some very cool things with my friends.

In July, we went to Cincinnati to the zoo and then to Kings Island. I had not been to one of my favorite parks in several years and to go and be treated as V.I.P.s was extraordinary.

Not to mention the multiple game nights (from which I just opened 2011), chats in person and via I.M.ing. Just good times!

Of course a year is not all roses. On January 5, we lost our beloved Aunt Carol to cancer. Gone long before her time but held on longer than many thought she would. And more

recently, my brother separated from his wife. I think that ultimately with the help and guidance of prayer and the love of family and friends striving forward yet remembering the special times only make us stronger.

So as we bid farewell to 2010, wrap up the holiday season and look ahead to the new year, I wish all of you the very best of peace, joy, and happiness.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and days of auld lang syne?

For auld lang syne my jo,

For auld lang syne,

We'll take a cup of kindness yet,

For auld lang syne.

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE... GOOD NIGHT!

But We Did Go To The Second House

Today, the family gathered for an extended Christmas celebration which my mother, father, sister, and I ALMOST did not make it to. In my mother's defense, we did go to the second house along the road. Unfortunately, the correct house is now the third house as apparently within the last two years (the last time she must have visited her brother's house) a

new house was added. We went up to the house, my sister rang the bell, and when no one answered I said "Just go on in."

She tried the handle and it was locked. A few seconds later, Mom's cell phone rang. Bob and Lu were watching from next door and called to inform us that we were indeed at the wrong house. Just then, the inhabitant of the house we were at appeared and saw our collection of folding chairs, gifts, and bowl of cole slaw. He did offer to help us eat. We all had a good laugh! Guess Mom should visit her sibling (who lives less than ten miles away) more often. ☐ No one else went to the wrong house.

The gathering was very festive and full of fun and laughs. As usual, Auntie Lu provided everything except for the cole slaw (which is a favorite of many) and Aunt Sandy's goodie tray (which was nearly devoured by the end).

We had a very nice surprise from an unexpected visitor.

Unbeknownst to most, one of our cousins from Florida (whom most of us had not seen in more than a few years) had come up to visit and she arrived with her twin daughters. I guess I should keep closer tabs on my facebook page.

Football games, kids (under 18) opening presents, Grandpa falling asleep, and Chad being picked on all made for another perfect celebration. Hopefully, we can exit 2010 (which has had its share of ups and downs) and look forward to an even brighter 2011. Provided we can find the right destination ☐

Manny Returns

Last night, while the parents went to a holiday gathering I got to stay with some of my favorite little ones for a few hours. If I'm not mistaken they get a full two weeks for

holiday break?! I think our own school doesn't dismiss until Wednesday. As always, I had a ton of fun!

Little Beebs was put down for his nap being promised that I would be there when he woke up which (I am informed) put him down almost immediately. It did take him a few minutes to get the grogginess of sleep out of him when he first arrived. Get him busy on his new tool kit and we were all good. Although, I think the cordless drill might be running out of juice. So, I showed him the joy of pounding nails in with the hammer.

Sammie was captivated by her new digital camera. Carrying it around like an old pro snapping pictures here and there.

Dis was her normal, cute self. We cuddled on the couch and spent some time watching Spongebob. I must be outgrowing the adventures of the denizens of Bikini Bottom but delighted in the kids' excitement every time the sponge came on the scene.

Later, the three little ones played Thomas while Manny terrorized the train as the monster who kept throwing boulders from atop a cliff. Thankfully, I had dinner ready so I could put the Tank Engine to bed. Fold up kid size playsets are the best... only took a few minutes to figure out how each part folded up.

I did get to bring gifts for the little ones for Christmas and one for the young lady, Taylor on her birthday. Hopefully, the four can share the joint gift I bought. I thought it was a fun way to enjoy the holiday. But Taylor really has grown from the little girl I met nearly 5 years ago into a very helpful, mature, and fun pre-teen. While changing a little package of my own, Taylor was quick to answer a phone call and to release the hounds. Although SOMEHOW! "Beasel" got into the garage and created havoc or at least paw prints and diaper breath.

C&L and I did get to play a game when they returned and after the game was finished, I knew that we were all ready to say

good night after a long weekend. An evening filled with fun and the unexpected (PSHEW!) as always.

A Bear-y Rockin' Holiday

AH... the holiday programs continue. Last night, my first grade niece, Alyssa, and fifth grade nephew, Alex had their Elementary Christmas Program. Unlike Elizabeth's production of *Seussical, Jr.* last weekend, every student in grades K-5 were involved. However, the evening was divided into 2 (or three if you count the 6th grade guitar class) musical extravaganzas.

The youngest 3 classes presented *A Bear-Merry Holiday* in which the Kindergartners were dressed in brown as Grizzly Bears. The first grade group as white Polar Bears. The second graders transformed into either Black or Panda Bears. Some of the highlights of this show were the angry, rapping grizzlies who promised to "be good." However, when they thought they were not being watched, returned to their rappin' ways.

"Panda-monium" found a group of pandas chasing each other in a circle... not much room on the stage and one nearly fell down; however, I think this might have been slightly intentional as the near stumble looked a bit choreographed.

After two intermissions (after the K-2 were finished and following the guitarists), it was time for the big kids to present *Santa's Rockin' Christmas Eve*. The televised variety show featured an array of musical talent everything from a 60s Motown girls group, to a bluesy Mrs. Claus, to a Beatles-esque fivesome (ok, the Beatles were the fab 4) who made the girls swoon and faint.

There were more individual character roles in this production and I would have to say that my favorite was the quick talking, frequently "ad-libbing" emcee Swingle Kringle (brother of the guy in the red suit who everyone was waiting to make a surprise appearance) who was often admonished for his penchant for going off the cue cards.

When Santa finally arrived, he did not come alone. He and his back-up group performed the traditional holiday Disco hit, "S.A.N.T.A." I think the costumes could have been a bit more creative for that number. Perhaps not the traditional garb of a police officer, construction worker, Native American, biker dude, and military guy but a little more than just the jolly old elf in his polyester suit.

After the performance, we came home for our annual viewing of the 1938 version of *A Christmas Carol*. One tidbit gathered from the pre-show introduction: Scrooge was originally supposed to be played by Lionel Barrymore who had for years performed the role over the radio and was the original choice. However, just before filming was to begin, Mr. Barrymore took a nasty fall and was unable to be in the film. He would create a role just as curmudgeonly (love that word) some eight years later, Mr. Henry F. Potter, himself. Tonight, the Muppet's take on the Carol is on. Haven't seen that one in years!

Another fun-filled holiday extravaganza. Monday night (weather permitting) I will take in my final concert at the glorious Huber... weather permitting of course. We could be in for a bit MORE of the white tonight into Sunday.

A Person Is A Person No Matter How Small

Another fun-filled weekend! Friday, I invited a trio of lovelies to take in Elizabeth's elementary school's production of *Seussical, Jr.* It was a cute show and what A LOT of work!

THIRTY-FOUR songs and a group of 58 youngsters on stage the entire time. I have no idea how much more is involved in the full-scale edition of the musical but I remember how daunting a task of a 21 song show was especially for the director. For those of you who do not know, the musical combines the tales of Horton the Elephant who Heard a Who and Hatched the Egg.

Along with Horton, we were entertained by the Cat in the Hat, JoJo (the son of the Mayor of Whoville and his wife), Gertrude McFuzz, Mayzie LaBird, and other characters from the pages of Theodore Geisel. I have found myself humming the signature piece from the show "Oh, the Thinks You Can Think" for the last few days. Unfortunately, the youngest of my three companions did not make it through the entire 90 minute production.

Saturday night, I was the leader at mass which went really well as celebrated the Second Week upon the journey to celebrating the Birth of Our Savior.

Following mass, I headed out to another fun-filled game night with an 80s flare. I decided to wear my Indiana Jones t-shirt. One of the other party-goers was REALLY creative and came as the White Cosby in slacks and colorful sweater. He even brought a box of Jello Instant Chocolate Pudding (after his search for Jello Pudding Pops turned out to be fruitless).

While playing Life, we had *The Goonies* playing with no sound which somehow made it go quicker. After Life, the 9 of us formed teams for a round of Trivial Pursuit 80s style while *Christmas Vacation* went on without sound. About 1:30AM without a clear champion, the game broke up and I bid *adieu* since I had to be up in 5 1/2 hours for work.

A fun weekend filled with great friends!

Bon Voyage, Boo Boo

After a fun weekend, I just found out that one of my very good friends is leaving to make a new home for herself Down Under.

It has been some time since I have seen Britt but I do think about her often. We met when she was in junior high and sat from time to time with my cousin. In high school, she worked at the grocery store and I came home on the weekend from school to work and we often were scheduled the same shift.

"Boo Boo" spent her senior year in Australia as an exchange student something she wanted to do since she was in elementary school but took her that long to make her dream a reality... ironically, she was among the first to welcome in the millennium. While she was gone for the year, we wrote back

and forth and I got to hear about her cool experiences... kangaroo hunting, going to the beach in January, and all the rest.

She is also a relative. My uncle and her mother married several years ago. Last summer, Britt returned to Australia and Lu went along for the ride. Shortly after her return (or even before), Boo Boo decided that she wanted to move there! WOW! Talk about shooting for the stars and going after your dream! Some others could learn from that example.

She is also a very staunch supporter of your truly! One who saw me as Rooster as well as some beyond. Teaching and coaching at a school in a city school a hour or so away kind of makes it difficult to make it to a lot of shows when you are in as many as you can.

Godspeed my friend. You will be missed!

Thankful

I hope all of my faithful co-tangenteers, readers, lurkers, and (maybe even) spammers had a blessed Thanksgiving Day spent with loved ones celebrating all the wonders and gifts that He has bestowed upon us. As has been the tradition at the home of Jamiahsh and family for the past 29 years (I believe) we had the noon meal with the parents, siblings, and their children. Alex offered up a prayer of Thanksgiving before we dug in. Noah offered up his own take as he lifted up his forkful of food.

After lunch, SOME of us took naps. I dunno how anyone managed this as 8 children do tend to create a lot of (at times) happy noise. At other times (when the three oldest went upstairs to

get away from it all and the other 5 wanted to go), we encountered the cries of the littlest who got her fingers caught in the door. Later, I tried to organize a game of UNO... thinking that this would alleviate a bit of the rambunctiousness. It kind of worked... especially when a 5 year old kept winning.

For the evening meal, we had another crew join the rest of us.

Since my mother's mom passed away nearly 30 years ago, we have served leftovers for my maternal aunt and uncle and their families as well. Every year it seems to get more crowded.

Maybe that community center idea is getting better. Of course, it would be kind of hard to gather around the television to watch the Cowboys get beaten... poor Chad!

Finally, after the game and the annual feast of popcorn, buttered toast, pretzel sticks, and jelly beans of *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*, the festivities came to a close for another year... well for a month, anyway... wonder who gets the honor of hosting the big Christmas bash? I guess Uncle Bob and Aunt Lu.

I did forget my part in the day's festivities. I was asked to go to my oldest brother's house at 8:30AM to pick up his crock pot. I figured that everyone would be up and about so I did not grab the spare set of house keys. When I arrived, I found the house locked up. I went back home to discover that Jeff had decided to hit the stores early. I grabbed the keys and went back and grabbed the pot.

Now let the fun, hustle and bustle, and celebrating take us to 2011.

Super Saturday

What a Super day! It began after game night with just a few of us late comers Friday night... more intimate but great fun as always. But today was a GREAT day. Went to see *Harry Potter* with my brother, nephew, niece, and new little friend. I must say I have a new favorite in the cinematic adventures and it was only the first half. It is definitely the most emotionally impactful entry as well as the most thrilling yet.

Absolutely NOTHING was taken away from the absence of 3D (I even think that like Dan, himself it would have hindered it).

The film crew made a marvelous decision on where to divide the two chapters... definitely the moment of highest dramatic tension.

After returning and hearing the the Buckeyes won their game against Iowa, I went to mass and then over for another gathering where some of us got to meet Alex Trebek, himself.

I do enjoy Jeopardy! just not sure I enjoy it THAT much.

Courtesy of Miss Mare, we celebrated the betrothal of Prince William and his Kate. We offered up any number of "proper English toasts" to not only the happy couple but also to the Queen, Margaret Thatcher, Winston Churchill, Charles Dickens, and several other British celebrities. Quite an entertaining evening if only one of us was not under the weather but the jukebox full of Beatles, the Who, Culture Club, Monty Python, and other Invaders made for quite the event. All while SOME of us insisted upon playing text tag (unfortunately, I could not as for some reason my signal keeps being lost in the gathering place).

Thanks everyone for a fun weekend!