

# Different Directions

It is strange how life takes many twists and turns. Just a few short years ago, was it really over 8, I was very happy. I had everything I ever thought I needed. Events changed that happiness. After that time, I had happy moments, but not really a happy life. Everything was tinged in a bit of grey. It seemed the color in my life was gone. I wasn't sure how long that situation would last, and I really didn't care.

Things did change over time. The happy moments became more frequent and the grey periods less dark. I was open to new things. This blog was a very instrumental part of my coming back to the world, so to speak. In it I opened my own mind to living again.

It is interesting to me to see the changes in me. I actually started looking for a way to get out and see the world again. I was surprised that during the searching, I actually found a world out there.

Through the various blog posts I opened my heart and soul to electronic world. I am glad I did, but that part of this blog has come to an end. I found that in sharing here, I was able to share in the real world. Fascinating that it turned out this way.

With less to vent about, I think I need a different direction. I have a story or two developing in my head, they may need a place to go. This blog may or may not be the spot for them. I have many other interests that I only touched on here, I may go back and visit them. There are other parts of my life vying for my attention, they do come first.

In the few years I've been blogging, I had 3 of 4 daughters leave high school and graduate from college (the oldest was already out on her own when I started blogging) 3 of 4 daughters were married (youngest is still single). And 3 out

of 4 daughters blessed me with grandchildren. I have a busy life indeed. I met someone very special and I guess you could say I'm building a new life too. That adds to my time away from blogging.

I will be back. I guess you can look forward to more recipes, thoughts on astronomy, computers, and other things of science. I may even post a political piece or two when I really get tired of the election year.

Here is to starting on a different path....

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## **all about friends**

I've been thinking recently about friends and friendship. I value my friends and value my close friends highly. If it is within my abilities, there isn't much I wouldn't do for a friend. Now there are some questionable activities that I won't consider, but if asked for, or needed, I try to be there for my friends.

I have a few very close friends, a few close friends and then there are friends that I think I should get to know better. Generally, once I decide someone is a friend, to me they will always be my friend. The only consideration, is how close of a friend are they.

I've often wondered how others make the determination of a close friend, but I know how I do it. Should be obvious that a person should know how they determine who is a friend and who isn't, but in the age of Facebook, friends seem to be something to count instead of count on.

My friends are people I trust. I trust them with my secrets, I

trust them with my children, I trust them with me. How much trust I give, depends on how trustworthy I deem a person to be. This can change over time, but when the trust is lost, it is difficult to regain.

I wrote something on Facebook that I think is appropriate for this post.

*We never really know the depth of our friendships, until we trust our friends when we are in something really deep.*

I was going to say “when we are in deep shit.”, but that didn’t sound as philosophical to me. So my thoughts were already in the trust area weren’t they?

And today I wrote

*A friend will stand with you when others are against you. A real friend will know what to do with the bodies.*

Not really a realistic statement for most people, but in the humor lies the real depths that friendship can take. A friend isn’t always trying to stay on your good side, but they should be willing to have your back, even when you are wrong. If you are wrong, expect them to kick your backside when it needs it. That is one of the true marks of friendship.

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## **When all is said and done...**

it was a good day.

I was able to talk to a very special lady today, even though we were not able to see each other. For me, just saying I was talking to someone special is a good thing. I guess that is

the special part. ☐

Then I had a long talk with my little sister. We haven't had a chance to talk for a while, so it was nice to reconnect. Idle chitchat about things happening in our lives, a search for a wandering grumpy dog, talk of flip top noses, getting old, and new things in our lives. A nice time.

Then I did a chore I despise more than any other. I did laundry. Not having a working machine at home means a trip to the laundry mat. Usually a boring time, but as luck would have it I ran into another friend and we had wonderful conversation.

After that I talked to my youngest for just a bit, but it was nice to hear her voice on the phone.

Throw in a couple of quick updates on Facebook, and a Detroit tiger win tonight, yes it was a good day

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## Bittersweet

Bittersweet: Producing or expressing a mixture of pain and pleasure.

That is one of the definitions of this word and the topic of this post.

In June, my life started heading in a new direction. A lot has happened in the past few weeks. Most of the events were extremely pleasant, but there is a touch of sadness involved.

I am now in the middle of a growing relationship. The wonderful time learning how two people can fit their lives together has been occupying a good portion of my days. I must

admit that the start of the journey is most enjoyable. I am looking forward the continuation of the time we have had. But other things took me away from the experience.

I had a trip partially planned for quite some time. A daughter and her husband were expecting their first child together. After the birth, my departure to the sunny south was a certainty. I made this trip alone. The preceding sentence is filled with sadness. I could not take any of my children, or another special someone with me.

I got to Florida and was able to hold my newest granddaughter for the first time. As with all of my grandchildren, it was love at first sight. The only difference is that with this little girl, I was able to see her weeks after her birth, not the years needed for my daughters to meet their husbands and the children that came with them. My thought as I held her was how sad it was that her maternal grandmother could not be here to see her. Another bittersweet moment.

I've been spending time with my family, and the older two grandchildren went to spend the weekend with their birth mother. Time for them to bond with another parent, sometimes life can be so complicated for our young. There will be a few days without their smiles in the morning. I am grateful for any time I spend with them.

In a few short days I will again be on the road. I will be leaving behind a family that I love dearly, and going back to the rest of my family that I love with equal passion. I am torn with leaving, but I am looking forward to seeing the others again.

I am also looking forward to spending more time getting to know someone new in my life. We have grown quite fond of each others company. It is a very good feeling. That is tinged with another bittersweet feeling. The history of our lives and why we were able to meet and start a relationship has some sadness

and pain. There were difficult times in the past, and these experiences will influence our futures. It will be a journey of learning for both of us.

Bittersweet: Producing or expressing a mixture of pain and pleasure... A taste that is both bitter and sweet...

As long as the bitter and the sweet do not overwhelm the senses, this feeling or taste can be a fulfilling experience. Our lives are filled with these types of feelings. We must learn to take everything we can from these situations. They are part of life and they make it worth living.

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## Grumpy dog

Currently on my blog page, there is a picture of my little corgi. He is an old grumpy little dog. In the past, when I have to leave town for any length of time, I tried to take him with me, or in the care of family. If that was not an option, I would board him in a kennel, with some trepidation. I never liked the kennels, because the little guy always seemed to be a bit nervous there.

I'm in Florida now, and the grumpy pup is staying with friends. I've heard he is still being a bit grumpy, but I've also heard that he is getting some love and attention. This has allowed me to relax just a bit on this vacation. It is a welcome relief.

Mere words can never express the gratitude I feel. This is coming from the same person who threw a fit when the dog arrived in the house 12 years ago. He wasn't really my dog until recently. He always preferred the oldest female in the house. I let that oldest female take care of him. But with my

youngest daughter being out of the house, he became my dog.

No, I really don't have the words right now. My heart felt thanks are fully given. He is, after all, a very special grumpy old dog.

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## Packing for a trip...

I'm almost ready to go on a vacation. I've done as much laundry as possible. I have things ready to go. A few odds and ends to take care of, but I guess I'm ready.

Of course it won't be a good trip unless I forget something. For some reason I always forget an item or two, but that makes the trip right. It has happened for almost every trip as long as I can remember planning them. It adds to the excitement and adventure.

In just a few short days, I will be holding my newest granddaughter. I will be showering the other grandkids with hugs and love. I get to spend time with the family I see the least. That sounds like a good time doesn't it?

And yet, as with most of these trips, there is a little darkness in a corner. There are those I leave behind to be missed. There are those who will never experience this greeting of new life and missed family. I will admit that the feelings of joy and happiness out weigh those little gray clouds; the cloud still seem to linger.

I guess that is life. Ever moving forward, and onward. Only momentary glimpses into the past. Dwelling on past events and futures that might or could have been are left for other times. Looking forward to good times...

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# Just when I thought I expanded my vocabulary,

I found out that I did not know what the letters “NO” mean when put together. I really thought I could put those letters to good use. I really thought I was able to grasp the meaning. I thought I would be able to find some time for this or that. I’m afraid I haven’t. Available time? poof! Not showing up at a theater 3 or more nights a week. Sure!. What were those letters again? I need to look them up in my Funk and Wagnalls. Of Course I will help out a friend or two...

But on to the good news. I’m only in the light booth. Only 3 or so short weeks. No lines to memorize. And I have my youngest daughter there to help me out. Not a bad deal. On top of that, I get to see every show for free and that is in some of the best seats in the house. Ok, maybe not the best seats, but they will always be there. Cute show, so I shouldn’t get tired of it too quickly. On top of that, it really changes every night.

But I’m not sure of all these Christmas Carols before Thanksgiving...

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## An Evening at the Theater

I’m at a bit of a quandary. On one hand I could put this post in my personal blog. On the other hand I could put it in the theater blog. I guess I will write it up and see where it



goes.

I just saw the WCCT's very own Denver Henderson give his performance as Samuel Clemens or as he is more commonly known as Mark Twain. Denver has performed a Mark Twain monologue many times, but this was my first chance to see it. I'm kicking myself for not having the drive to see it at the earlier performances. I missed out on a truly enjoyable time.

I've seen the Hal Holbrook version of Mark Twain on TV once or twice, and I've seen a PBS special on the life of Mark Twain. Denver has the mannerisms and timing of his subject down cold. Since I am a fan of Mark Twain's work, I have been exposed to most if not all of the material from tonight's performance. There was nothing new. The wonderful thing about that is this. This was 100+ year old stuff. It was as fresh, timely and as humorous this evening as it must have been during Twain's life time.

My only complaint is that the show just wasn't long enough. I could have spent hours on end listening to the stories and watching an actor I know become Mark Twain. Until the question and answer period after the show, I wasn't watching my friend Denver on stage, I was watching Mark Twain. This show took me back to the time of river boats and crooked politicians (Oh wait, the politicians never left). I really want to go back.

I've been told that there will be another performance in the spring. I would strongly recommend that if you see it advertised, clear the date. This is one performance you should not miss. To paraphrase Mr Twain and Mr. Henderson, I just like to hear him speak.

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# You're telling me I missed Halloween?

Last year I was unable to celebrate Halloween with friends due to some ailment. I was all set to bring some 'frightening' festive holiday food to a party, but was unable to make it.

This year was going to be different. There as another party to go to,. More festive food to prepare. And I had a choice of many costumes. But somehow I missed the entire weekend plus a day or two.

Harumph No party, no costume, but one heck of a cold/flu/sinus infection.

Too make things worse, my oldest was moving and I was unable to help. I think that made me feel worse than my flu. Well, I understand there may be more to move, so as soon as I have my strength back, have truck will haul again.

Oh well, maybe I'll just have to make my next get together with friends my own personal costume night, complete with bloody fingers and toes. Yes, that may be on my list. It isn't like me at all to miss two Halloweens in a row.

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## Where everybody knows your name.

I don't often mosey into a bar, plunk down my cash and drink a beer or two. In fact, going to bars is generally foreign to me. Before the Ohio smoking ban, I couldn't stand to be in one for more than 30 minutes. But, I occasionally enjoy a quite

evening at a local establishment. The reason is quite simple, I know the bartenders. Since we have all been involved with the theater, I've known them for years. I knew them before they tended this specific bar.

Anyway, every once in a while, I will stop, get a bite or two to eat, and enjoy a drink. Then more often than not, I sit with a water while watching Jeopardy. I happened to be there this evening, since after my eye exam, I wanted someplace dark to sit. It started out as a nice quite early evening.

Then one theater person came in, and shortly left. We talked a bit, but he couldn't stick around too long. Then another theater friend came in, and we talked 'shop' for quite a long time. More theater people came by and everyone ordered their dinners.

To me the surroundings seemed like a friendly family dinner. We laughed, sighed and some even shared a song or two. Yes, I was in that place where everyone knew my name. Fun evening.

Now for me, this will never be a weekly event. I still tend to like quieter places. I have been, and probably always will be a 'small group' person. The fewer the people, the more I like it. Yes, that goes down to sitting by myself. I've never had a problem being alone. I guess growing up in a larger family helped me cherish the alone time. Good thing that I honestly like myself. □ From the years I spent with my wife, I learned to like that one on one time. Time to get to understand and know one other person. Time to listen and sometimes to share. Smaller groups allow some of this sharing, as we can all be part of one conversation. Everyone can be included

Larger groups, the conversations scatter in the wind. They tend to break up into those smaller groups. The unfortunate thing is that sometimes people are left out of any of the small groups. And no one seems to notice it. Except those that are left out, and those that choose to remain aloof. This

happens in many large gatherings. No known cure, it is human nature. The extroverts have no trouble adapting. The introverts have trouble joining the gathering or like to observe. And then there are those, like me (now), I can join the group, or I can sit on the outside looking in. I have no trouble joining a group (after many years of theater), but I've always enjoyed watching people.

(I think my randomness tonight is flowing well. I went from a topic of dinner and bars on to personality types.)

Back to the bar...

I was a joiner/observer this evening. I enjoyed my salad (yes, I was slightly healthy tonight, ordered deep fried mushrooms later), my drink and the company. I watched, I listened and I learned a thing or two. I interjected, talked and shared one or two things.

I enjoyed the similarities and shared the differences. I said many time that my theater family helped me in troubled times. I was not troubled today, but the theater family gave me an hour or two of fun. Today was a good day to live.