

A tale of two gatherings...

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times... (Sorry Mr. Dickens)

But then again it was. This weekend families gathered to mark similar yet different events.

On Saturday, my nephew celebrated his birthday. He has reached his teen years, and is more interested in the presents, food and television than the actual gathering. I do believe he 'suffered' through the gathering just to make sure he got his presents. Nothing really wrong with that, I'm sure most young people of his age do exactly the same thing. The gatherings, unless totally oriented toward the youth, are for the adults. We ate, talked, laughed and remembered many of these events during the day. This is what, through the ages, kept families together. We share common bonds and we celebrate those bonds. Be they birthdays, anniversaries, or holidays, times with family and friends keep our bonds alive.

On Sunday, another gathering was held. This was a memorial of the birth and death day of my grandson. He received no physical presents, and he won't be living into his teen years to complain about the attention he is or isn't getting. This was a day to support those who will miss his presence in the world. It was a time for family and friends to gather and support one another. We ate, talked, laughed and remember many events, but we also shared a tear or two. Coming together in the hard times is another thing that keeps families together. Death, sickness and other troubles are also something we all share. Another common bond. Another way to show support and love.

While on the surface, I wish that all we ever had to do was share the happy occasions, I realize that it is the difficult situations that are the true measure of what we mean to each

other. These hard times can show the best humanity has to offer.

So this weekend was the best of times and the worst of times, with the best of times far outshining the worst. Those closest to the sadness may not feel this for quite some time, but in looking back they will eventually remember “The Best of Times.”

Thinking of the Fair

Our local County Fair starts this weekend. I don't think I missed this fair since I came with my wife and oldest daughter back in 1983. While it has change some, it really hasn't changed at all. Most of the same vendors come year after year, the local producers (pork, beef, dairy) serve the same food. There are always fresh fair donuts. ☐ The biggest thing this fair has to offer is all of the hard work the kids put into their projects. Animals, displays, showmanship, riding skills can all be seen. The fun I get from this is seeing the fun the kids have.

Even though my youngest was home for the Labor Day holiday last week, she wants to make the trip home again for a trip to the fair. She still has friends that will be showing their animals. She may get to run into a friend or two. One never knows at the county fair.

What next?

This may be a difficult post to read. It was certainly hard to write.

No happy or witty sayings in this post. This is a story of life, death, mourning and maybe life again.

At the beginning of this year many wonderful things were in the making. My 3rd daughter had her wedding scheduled for June. My fourth daughter was to graduate High School. Those two events happened as planned.

Also occurring early in the year, my two oldest daughters told me they were expecting new arrivals. The oldest was due in September, my second daughter due in November. Expanding of family going full force this year. I was really looking forward to visiting my new grandchildren.

The first bad news came when my 2nd daughter had a miscarriage. I was unable to fly down to Florida and be with her. I am very glad she has a wonderful network of support with her. At that time, I had a countdown to the impending birth on my blog. I quietly removed that and all other mention of that news from my blog. This was news I didn't feel like sharing with the rest of the world. Stick with the good news. Too much bad news news in the world.

Last Thursday brought news that my oldest daughter lost her baby too. Much farther along, she had only a month before the due date. I quietly removed the countdown that that impending birth, and wrote a quick cryptic post. The mind was not working well enough to post anything else. I could write about the cause, but I will let [this site](#) handle that. I just needed to get these words out.

I spent the past few days with my oldest, at the hospital and her house. There were many tears flowing. Hugs given and

received. While the words were not initially spoken, we were worried about my oldest daughter's life too. She had a serious medical condition that could have taken her as well. In this we were fortunate. Physically she is recovering well. The emotional and spiritual recovery will take more time for all of us.

I did say something about life again didn't I. There is a little bright spot in all of this. I've written a few posts about my daughter's friends. These are people I consider to be my friends also. Our ages and backgrounds vary widely, but they are true friends. People who will be there for my daughter and son-in-law. My children came home to a clean house, because someone thought this would be a good thing to do. They didn't ask, they acted. The bedroom for the newborn was in the final stages of finishing, but the door was off the hinges. It was put back in place and closed. Friends and family will supply food, companionship, or solitude when needed or wanted. Can we ever ask for more?

Through all of this, I've had many old wounds opened again. I keep wondering if each new death will bring back the memories of others. Faces I've not seen in years, faces I never saw, came into my thoughts and dreams. The past and future molds into one. The laugh of a child not heard may be one of the saddest moments in life.

After 5 and 1/2

Today would have been my wife's 47th birthday. She never got to celebrate any birthday past her 41st. In the past I've bought coffee for everyone that entered our favorite coffee shop. That little place closed many years ago, and that

'tradition' has ended.

A new tradition started that first birthday she did not get to celebrate. I took my available daughters to a Mexican restaurant. Mexican food was always her favorite, and would be the request if we went out to dinner on her birthday. So what family I can get together, celebrates the day with a little Mexican cuisine.

Today it was my two youngest daughters and newest son-in-law. It saddens me a bit that the two youngest son-in-laws never met their brides' mother. From what has been said, my first son-in-law liked her. I'm a bit biased, but I thought she was special.

After lunch today we celebrated the first birthday of a very special young man. Check other Tangents blogs for more information on this.

All in all a very relaxing day.

The Village Green

Yesterday I spent the day with my youngest daughter, her friend, one of my sisters and her husband. We traveled to Michigan and back in time to visit [Henry Ford's Greenfield Village](#).

The very first thing we did was ride a Model T. Our group had to split into two and we road in two separate vehicles. The one I rode in was one of 6 historic reproductions made by Ford. (I can't remember the year these were made – Sorry) The driving tour on the Model T was a history of the car itself. The number of cars made, number of years in production.

Location of the gas tank (I was sitting on it in the front seat). And how people differentiated their cars from all the other Model Ts on the road (mainly with special radiator caps and maybe a blanket or throw on the seats (no heat in these cars, so winter travel almost demanded a blanket). Top speed of the car 30-35.

We then road on a 1913 Carousel. I was able to ride on a frog. I'm sure I would have missed out on this if my recently married daughter had been with us.

We saw skits of the Wright Brothers, and a Waterford general Store. As an community theater actor, I was impressed by the way the period actors stayed in their roles. They told a good story and gave an insight into the times and life of the periods.

The afternoon continued with a horse drawn Omnibus ride and and also a ride on a steam locomotive. We had lunch after getting off the locomotive and walked to a 1860's rules Base Ball game. The home team La Di Dahs were playing the Nationals. The pitching was underhand and they players wore no gloves. Foul balls caught on one bounce were outs. Players were warned if they did not keep their caps on their heads. Very interesting to watch ball played by the old rules.

Of course we walked around the Village. We went into a variety of buildings that exist. There was no way that we would be able to tour the entire village in 1 day, and we didn't even try. It was a very enjoyable day.

Wow Pictures

I just have to add... Made you look... ☐

I just got back the official pictures from my third daughter's wedding. I'm going to talk to the photographers to make sure I can put their contact information here. All I have to say is, these have been the best wedding shots I've seen in all three of my girls weddings and then a few others besides.

It is going to take quite a bit of time to see which ones will be printed and put in the album. There were some shots that just blew me away. I will recommend them to anyone I know needing a good photographer. They also did my youngest's senior pictures and I was very pleased with them.

Show and tell later?

Up on the roof

I spent some time at my eldest's house on the 3rd of July. With my two youngest daughters, and the youngest son-in-law we (and a few others) climbed on the roof to get a better view of Maumee's Fireworks. It was a wonderful location. A bit far to get the full effect of the detonations, but close enough to have a full view of the fireworks. It was a good evening.

It started out with food, drink, conversation, music and friends. I met a few more of my daughter's friends, and sometimes I wonder and then I wonder some more. A very diverse group met for the evening.

Our early evening fireworks started off with a few brats burning on the grill. Yes, in the things going on during the

party the grill was left unattended for a bit too long. There was still plenty to go around, so all was good.

At the end of the evening, when the group started to break up, I bade my own farewells to get some rest for what was going to be a busy 4th. More on that later...

Of course I want to be a superhero

Derek (another Tangents' Blogger), posed the question [“Who wants to be a superhero?”](#) in his blog. My first thought was about the Saturday evenings I spend with my oldest daughter, her husband, and a few friends. For the past few months, we spend Saturday being superheroes. A fun little [role playing game](#) based on Marvel Comic book characters and settings. Yes, there are mutants, armored, magical, or insect-bitten superheroes running (flying) all over the place.

Our game master has a wonderful gift in the design of the stories/settings the players face. We designed our superheroes and try to bring them to life during our Saturday games. Now as with most groups like this, sometimes the game gets set aside for a while and we have idle talk about this or that. I'm not sure if she knows it or not, but my eldest invited her dear old dad into part of her life she wasn't expecting. On Saturdays, I am not only her father, but I am a friend of her friends. By extension, that does make me my daughter's friend.

Hmm. I think that is a place any father would want to be. She still calls me and talks to me about her troubles. In her eyes, I can still make things better with a hug or the right words. By any other name, I am still her Daddy. And she is

still my darling girl. During the past few months our relationship grew. I am more than her Father and maybe a better Father. Maybe I am a superhero in my own life? And by all counts, I will be an important factor in the life of my soon to be grandchild.

Who would have thought of that 25+ years ago...

Interesting phone conversation...

and results.

My 2nd daughter lives in Florida and is trying to make it to Ohio for her sister's wedding. The cost of round trip tickets have gone up recently. She called today to see if she could get a little assistance from me for the tickets. Well, we started talking about the ticket prices she found, and layovers here or there. Found out that the major cost of the tickets was always the return flight to Florida.

So I realize it may cost a bit more, but I offered to drive her back down to Fla. This way I get to spend more time with my daughter and I get to see my son-in-law. He can't make it to the wedding since he just started a new job and does not have any time off accumulated yet. 2 birds, 1 stone. I like that.

Now there are a few hickups in the plan. I was planning on going with some friends to a Cubs/Tigers game. No can do. I'll be on my way to Florida. Sorry Taylhis and Admin... I will be spending a bit of cash to get the truck ready to go to Florida. I'm thinking I will need at least the a pair of

tires. The front tires are in need of replacement. Not bad for driving short distances, but I'm not sure I would trust them for 8 to 12 hours of non-stop driving. Then of course there are the general problems with taking care of the animals while we are gone, but I've worked that out before.

I'm really looking forward to getting some time with the Florida family. Can't wait. I don't even have to schedule any extra vacation, it is already taken care of for the wedding.

More plans and things to do, but that is the fun of life... Right?

In a galaxy far far away...

Well, I guess I haven't really been that far away but it sometimes seems that way. I've done nothing as energetic as pulling carpet and painting. I haven't tried out for any musicals (never will). I've just been dealing with daughters. Daughter getting married, daughter in her senior year, just being a dad.

I did take some time off to be with friends. A little help here (have truck will haul part 3 ☐), a little help there (moral support during tryouts), and that was that.

I really didn't have much to say or blog about. Except for two movies I was able to see. I may do some full write-ups later. Full of spoiler alerts.

First bridal shower for 3rd daughter seemed to go off without a hitch. I dropped off some food, and the youngest daughter, and then made my self scarce for a few hours. I was going to spend some time with my son-in-law, but since he had to work,

I spent the afternoon with my father-in-law. S's parents are good people, and they've kept me as part of their family. Another one of those 'family we choose' situations. Sometimes we get lucky.