

Down Time

Ok, Ok... It has been three weeks since the curtain fell on the last show. It will be sometime before the next one (at least a few months as I committed to being my godson's sponsor for Confirmation in March). Can we say cabin fever? Ah, well... something will come up. I do have a Star Trek Scene It game night coming Thursday night that I am REALLY looking forward to. I have about 5 versions of the game and really like the game although finding victims to play a few of them with can be difficult at times (Anyone for a little Bond... James Bond?)

I know that there is an 80s Pop Culture version to go along with the Trivial Pursuit version. I would also like the Harry Potter edition but I think I will wait until after the 2 part finale is finished just in case there will be more than one Harry Potter version. BTW, taylhis... how's that first book? I just started rereading *The Sorcerer's Stone* last night. Not sure when the first part of the cinematic *Deathly Hollows* is being released, but we'll see if I can make it through the seven books before that.

Back to another topic. One of Star Trek's finest was recently knighted. Sir Patrick Stewart now joins such icons as Sir Paul McCartney, TWO James Bond's (Sir Sean Connery and Sir Roger Moore), and *Lord of the Rings* director Sir Peter Jackson.

Of course Mr. Stewart is not limited in his credentials by being the captain of the USS *Enterprise* (NCC 1701-D and 'E).

He began his career in the Royal Shakespeare Company and was in a production of the most haunted play in history, *Macbeth*.

I remember watching a video of him playing Claudius in *Hamlet* during a class. He also starred as Professor Charles Xavier in the three blockbuster *X-Men* films. Stewart has now returned to the London stage in a play which I have yet to learn the title of. Anyone?

Hopefully, my down time will not lead to heaviness but with great friends and a crazy family to keep me busy... a few days to relax may be all I get ☐

Modern Day Grinch/Scrooge/Mr. Potter

I think this real individual is NOW the king of the humbugs. Last weekend, a rather disgruntled gentleman shoved a Salvation Army bell ringer to the ground and stole the kettle that held the money passersby had dropped in. When he was apprehended, the person stated that he “hates Christmas and got tired of the ringing bell.” So much for the mob of Black Friday last year who trampled a Wal-Mart employee to death.

MAUMEE, Ohio (AP) – A man who claimed to hate Christmas shoved a Salvation Army bell ringer to the ground and swiped one of the charity’s red kettles stuffed with hundreds of dollars, police said.

The bell ringer, an unemployed woman, tried to pull the kettle away from the man Saturday evening, but he pushed her down and said, “I can’t stand you and your bell-ringing. I hate Christmas,” police said. The bell ringer chased him into a store parking lot before he tossed the kettle into the back of a stolen pickup truck and sped away, police said.

An empty kettle was found a day later. Police arrested Shawn Krieger of Toledo on Monday morning and charged him with robbery.

The Salvation Army estimated that the kettle held \$500 to \$700.

The bell ringer, whose name hasn't been released, had been collecting money outside a general store for most of the day when she was shoved from behind, said Capt. Steven Lopes, coordinator of the Salvation Army in northwest Ohio.

"She was so upset," Lopes said. "She was concerned that she wouldn't be allowed to bell-ring anymore. We want her to continue."

Krieger, 44, walked by the bell ringer at least twice before he made a grab for the money, said police Sgt. Jeff Siebenaler.

No witnesses have come forward even though the store was crowded, he said. "These things happen so fast sometimes people don't know what they saw was a crime occurring," Siebenaler said.

One shopper wrote down the truck's license plate number, and others consoled the bell ringer, who suffered a small cut when she tugged at the kettle, Lopes said.

Evidence inside the stolen truck, which was found in Toledo, led police to Krieger, Siebenaler said. Krieger could face more charges for the stolen vehicle, Siebenaler said.

Krieger was being held Monday on \$25,000 bond. The judge will assign a public defender to his case.

Not everyone likes the holiday season but what a hideous way to display it. Coal is too good to put in this man's stocking.

Like A Good Neighbor...



I don't think State Farm could have helped in this case that fittingly enough happened in the state up north. Until recently, a Michigan woman has been helping three of her neighbors by making sure that their children were safely put on the school bus for the 6 mile trip. Shortly after the beginning of the school year, [Lisa Snyder](#) received a letter from the Michigan Department of Human Services warning her that her charity was in violation of a law aimed at unlicensed day care centers and she would be fined if she continued. This for watching THREE children (not including her own daughter) who each had their parent's permission. They each spent about an hour at the woman's home preparing for school. One has to wonder how and why the authorities learned of this generosity. I can understand a houseful of children but 4 children do not a houseful make (of course others might disagree).

At least after learning of this travesty, the state powers that be are in the process of changing the regulations allowing good samaritans like Mrs. Snyder to continue making sure that a few of her neighbor's children make it safely to school. I realize that not everyone can be trusted but this individual was just doing a good deed and known well enough and trusted to do it.

The New Bonnie & Clyde

This story is so sweet, I just had to share it.

Blind border collie gets his own guide dog

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By [Aidan McGurran](#) [24/07/2009](#)



Collies usually round up sheep not each other... but as the eyes of her blind canine companion, little Bonnie steers Clyde away from trouble.

The five-year-old long-haired border collie, who has lost his sight because of a degenerative disease, relies entirely on Bonnie as his guide dog. He follows her everywhere.

And like the American gangster lovers they have been named after, the friendly dogs are on the lookout for a safe, new hideaway.

They were recently dumped in the street during a storm and are currently being cared for at Meadow Green Dog Rescue Centre in Hales Green, near Loddon in Norfolk.

The centre's Cherie Cootes said: "If Clyde's unsure where he is, he will suddenly go behind Bonnie and put his face on the back of her so she can guide him. He totally relies on her.

"And when she walks she tends to stop and make sure he's there – she does look out for him. When she's about you wouldn't notice he is blind, but when she's not about he refuses to move. There's no option of homing them separately. They've got to go as a pair."

A driver found the dogs running through Blundeston, near Lowestoft, Suffolk, during a storm three weeks ago. Neither

Clyde nor Bonnie – a short-haired border collie aged two or three – had identifying collars or chips.

Cherie, 40, added: “They’ve got very nice manners and they walk well on the lead.

“They really are a very sweet pair of dogs.”

If you can give Bonnie and Clyde a home, call the centre on 01508 548 216.

A Potter Pot Head

I noticed two decidedly absent characters from the latest Harry Potter film. I believe there was only a passing glance or two of Draco Malfoy’s partners in crime Crabbe and Goyle. Well, it seems that [Jamie Waylett](#) who plays Vincent Crabbe in the films was charged with growing 10 marijuana plants in his mother’s England home. The 20 year old actor was sentenced to 120 hours of community service after pleading guilty to the charge on July 7th. The judge went easy on the malefactor after deeming the botanical exercise “small scale.”

Actually, I have been noticing a limited amount of screen time for most of the supporting cast. Very little of Professors McGonagall and Snape and Hagrid was only in one major scene. One scene in which the head of Gryffindor House appeared brought a chuckle. Once again, Harry, Hermione, and Ron were once again in the thick of trouble and Minerva ever so eloquently pointed this out:

[Professor Minerva McGonagall](#): [to Harry, Ron, and Hermione]
Why is it that, whenever anything happens, it’s always you three?

[Ron Weasley](#): *I've been asking myself the same question for six years, Professor*

Maggie Smith (who plays Prof. McGonagall) is definitely starting to show her age. It has been nearly 20 years since she got into the habit as the Mother Superior in *Sister Act*. Surely the supporting cast will all be front and center for the final 2 installments.

Also, the concluding two films better be made quick or the young stars who are entering their twenties will be too old. As one commented, by the time Harry Potter graduates from wizard school he will be collecting Social Security.

Man Of Steel Stolen; Report At Eleven

While in the process of changing from his garb as "Clark Kent, a mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper" the Man of Steel was abducted from a red 1940s London-style phone booth. Apparently, one of the Last Son of Krypton's vile enemies discovered his alter ego and tracked him to the town of Steamboat Springs, Colorado. I take you now to the report filed by *The Steamboat Pilot and Today* newsman Jack Weinstein:

Steamboat Springs – The Man of Steel is missing.

A mannequin dressed as Superman – complete with blue tights, the familiar "S" logo on the chest and red cape – was reported missing Monday. Superman dutifully greeted customers in front of the My Wireless location at 675 S. Lincoln Ave.

Superman was taken from a locked 1940s London-style red phone booth. It appeared someone had broken the lock with a rock, said Andy Brown, founder of the Steamboat Springs-based Verizon Wireless retailer.

Brown said the Superman mannequin and phone booth were placed outside the store shortly after the company opened its second Steamboat location there, about 1 1/2 years ago. He said it reflects the way My Wireless operates.

"We kind of have a light-hearted approach to everything," he said. "We want everyone to smile."

An employee noticed that the 6-foot-tall, 40-pound Superman had been taken and reported it missing. Steamboat Springs Police Department Capt. Joel Rae said Tuesday that the incident is under investigation.

Aside from some scratched paint to the exterior of the phone booth and a broken light bulb inside, there was no other damage. There was also no damage reported to the store.

Because the store's first location at 1755 Central Park Drive is open Sundays, the South Lincoln Avenue location is not. Brown said Superman could have been taken anytime after closing Saturday to when the store opened Monday morning.

Brown suspects the incident was just a prank and doesn't want anyone to get in trouble. But for a prank to be a prank, he said, Superman would have to be returned.

"Hopefully someone will get their jollies in and bring it back," he said.

My Wireless is offering a \$100 store credit, free cell phone upgrade or accessories for the safe return of Superman, Brown said.

Which of Superman's dastardly villains perpetrated such an act

of villainy and who will follow the clues to his whereabouts. Could it be the evil Metallo, the trickster Mr. Myxyzptlk, the sinister Darkseid, or perhaps the “greatest criminal mind of our age”: Lex Luthor. Only time will tell. Curse you evil doers!

Cats Can't Dance

Unbelievable but true, a Findlay, Ohio senior has been suspended for taking his girlfriend to her prom. Tyler Frost was warned by his school, Heritage Christian, to not attend his girlfriend's prom at Findlay High School. The fundamentalist Baptist school distributes handbooks to the students and includes rules that prohibit such things as rock music, dancing, hand holding, and kissing. Whatever we may think about the rules, they were printed and distributed to every student. Who can speculate on the student's decision to attend the school: was he encouraged by his parents? However, the more press I see about the incident the more I think Mr. Frost was just out to make a name for himself. He and his girlfriend are on their way to New York to make the rounds on news programs. However, he will not be participating in his high school graduation exercises but will receive his diploma following his final exams. Honestly, it sounds like the old issue of rock and roll being the devil's music. Read more details [here](#).

Any Landing You Can Walk Away From...

is a good landing. At least that is what I've heard. Recently, a pilot flying his Cessna 182 had to make an emergency landing when his engine suddenly failed. After the pilot's attempt to turn the plane around to return to the airport failed, he set down too quickly, hit a fence, and flipped over. Miraculously, the inverted aircraft landed in a field of [Port-a-Potties](#). Reportedly, the plane got three hundred feet in the air, the engine sputtered, and sent the pilot and his passenger on a fast descent. If the pilot did not have to go before he left, I am confident he had to go when he landed. Fortunately, the pilot and his passenger only received a few bumps and bruises and walked away from the accident.

Back On The Mound

On Sunday, the Seattle Mariners defeated the Oakland Athletics 8-7 in 15 innings. While neither team is high on my radar to follow, the Mariners possess one player with very close ties. [Denny Stark](#) pitched to four batters in the game. This came after an absence of 1747 days (last appearing on the mound in 2004) and two Tommy John replacement surgeries on his right elbow.

How well I remember back in the day (he was a year behind me in school) when Denny was on the mound or on the hardwood either scoring 1000 points in basketball or pitching on the mound at EHS. Totally amazing and he was definitely one who

started out as soon as he was big enough to throw a ball to his father. I know for a fact that his parents encouraged his talent and gift. His father, "Connie" (and mother, Roz), coaching, developing him, but never being the stereotypically domineering parent.

Sometimes, coming from a small town and knowing everyone and what they are doing is a good thing. In little league, I remember having Connie as a coach who never demanded anything less than what you were capable of giving. So often we hear of coaches or parents who push as hard as they can in order to realize their own dreams through their players or children, but it was absolutely untrue in this case: THIS IS DENNY'S DREAM and it has been realized once again... if only for four batters. Hopefully, this is only the beginning. Perseverance does have its rewards. I remember going to a Ft. Wayne Wizards game one summer when Denny was scheduled to pitch for the opposing team. However, we were unable to see him pitch as he was called up to the next level.

UPDATE: According to a more local [newspaper](#), Denny will be used in a middle relief capacity.

Yet Another Theatrical Tragedy

It seems that recently there have been a number of tragedies happening in the theatrical world most of them involved in small companies. Last weekend a full-scale murder occurred at a reunion picnic for the Town and Gown Players of Athens Georgia. This theatre has performed everything from classic Shakespeare to Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals to the

screwball comedies of Woody Allen. As a proud member of the [community theatre](#) of my own corner of the world, my heartfelt condolences go out to not only the families of the victims but to the entire theatre, as well. Three of the members of the 55 year old company were shot. As with the feelings I hold for many in my own community theatre, these three were seen as members of a second family.

Two of them were the technical wizards behind many productions who built elaborate sets. The third was the small theatre's president, herself a veteran of numerous on and off stage roles. That is what is so special about community theatre: Everyone has the opportunity to be involved in every aspect of a show. An actor has as much to do backstage as on whether it be helping to construct the set, paint a wall, sell tickets, or clean the restroom the Saturday before a performance opens. Sometimes it really does seem like a second family that has its share of disagreements and squabbling, but the final results are usually (if not always) well worth the effort. Members also become life-long friends.

Although I have never had the opportunity to meet these three people, my heart goes out to them and their families both immediate and theatrical. Please keep the [Town & Gown Players](#) in your thoughts and prayers. By following the link you can read about the three victims as well as view and sign a condolence book.