

Not A Very Patient Patient

I am happy to say that my dad has returned home and no more scares unless he continues to be a terrible boy. Monday morning, he decided that he could resume his crossing guard duties at school in the freezing temperatures and snow flurries. I had a day to sleep in that morning and mom is on the school bus from 6.45-8.00. Needless to say, there was no one to stop him. At 10.30 when he should be getting ready for the pre-k students to come and go, he was lying on the couch sleeping. I tried to revive him, but to no avail. So at about 2, mom calls the village office to say that he will not be doing the crossing guard until at least Wednesday when he has a follow-up appointment. I guess it makes sense that they only allow employees of the village do the job or I could have walked out the door and done it just as well. At three, he attempted to go out the front door to cross the street. However, I put my foot down and, surprisingly enough, he actually listened. In the meantime, he is not taking his meds as he should be. Yesterday, he did not take them AT ALL. This morning, we asked if he had taken them yet; he did not know which ones to take. WOOLY SHEEP (I actually said that under my breath!!! Stubborn!!! Send HIM to Liswathistan (kidding). Hopefully, this doesn't last long. But for the most part, he has been resting and allowing his body to recover while driving those around him CRAZY!! But patience with the patient is sure to win out, eventually.

Where Was Mr. Morton?

Tonight, a great friend and I went to see my niece and nephew in their elementary school's production of *Schoolhouse Rock*,

Live! Ok, so it was the juniorfied version of the show. phooey! A year ago our [community theatre](#) did a production of the full 21 song-filled show in which I was the central character, Mr. Mizner, on his first day as a teacher. The 80 kids on stage tonight delivered a very fun, energetic (but shortened) version. The kids were broken down into four groups each of which were on stage in turn during certain songs (you try putting 80 kids on stage at the same time). I attempted to find my two stars and easily spotted Elizabeth when she was on stage. However, my godson, Joshua, decided to hide himself whenever possible. BUT, I did catch him getting into the dances a few times.

I was pretty impressed with the work put into the show. Lots of high energy (as it should be) and choreography that even I could have done. There were only eleven of the songs from the full version present. I was surprised that "Lolly, Lolly, Lolly" was not included. I thought that the kids could have done a good job with that and had fun. Most disappointing, to me anyway, was the absence of "The Tale of Mr. Morton." But, as Megan pointed out repeatedly... "It's the JUNIOR version... j-u-n-i-o-r!!!" I thought... ok, but... I don't see why I got to sing the song and the young man playing Tom did not. THAT IS HIS BIG NUMBER. I would have been disappointed if I were him and did not get to sing it. The kid did a good job in the part, but he could have shown a little bit more apprehension at the beginning.

Tonight's version of "Do the Circulation" featured a soloist resembling Elvis Presley singing the song and doing some moves. This was a fun bit, but I liked our idea of turning the cast members into gym equipment (treadmills, weight benches, etc) and having the kids in the choir operate them. Since our version had a female singing the song, it would not have worked.

I also missed the added dialog that our wonderfully gifted and talented director and awesome friend added to the show for a

more cohesive and flowing plot. Tonight, the constant raising and lowering of the lights between each song was at times tedious but I don't suppose there was anyway around it with all the kids coming on and off stage. I wonder how many parents had to be behind the scenes to corral all 80 of them. Carol... could you have done THAT by yourself? You only had 30 to work with. Here is your chance to COMMENT on our blogs... hmmm.

A fun evening although our plan to eat at the Olive Garden before the show did not work out. Promise Megan that we will go there reaaaaaaly soon... thanks for coming. And you can comment, too. I know you are both out there reading and lurking in the shadows ☹ .

More Of The Best

My dad got home from the hospital this afternoon (HOORAY!!). I think Mom was getting annoyed driving the 45 minutes to see him sleep and mumble through the day. Yesterday, the doctor was concerned that Dad's blood pressure was erratic (at times high at others low). Mom asked the doctor when he might be coming home and he just looked at her as if to say... "You must be joking." So today, after her shortened day in the beauty shop, she set out again. Apparently, Dad was better, blood pressure stabilized, everything good. Being a good boy for a change. Terrible patient. When I got home from work, it was as if he hadn't just gotten out of the hospital. He was walking around, bending over, picking things up off the floor. I asked Mom if he should be doing this. The only restriction he has is on driving. I will not be surprised to see him go across the street tomorrow to do his school crossing guard duty. The town was SUPPOSED to get someone to

do it for him the last 4 days, but I was informed that some of the time no one was there... How nice. It's like I'm sure the whole town knows what is going on with him (the town is not that big) plus Mom called yesterday to tell them that e would not be doing it today. Oh, well... at least he is home and things will get back to normal... whatever that is. BTW... thank you all for the warm wishes and support. Knowing that all my loyal friends and readers are thinking of us sure helps a lot... you are all "The Best."

Not Coming Home Today

Got a bit of a scare today. After my Dad's successful surgery yesterday, things were looking really good and he may have even been able to come home today. However, that changed as my Mom was on the way back to the hospital this morning. She got a phone call that informed her that dad had to go back into surgery... RIGHT NOW! She immediately called here to give us the news but not sure what was going on apart from that... no whys or wherefores. Before I left for work, we learned that he had a blood clot that had to be removed. Shortly after my shift started, I got news that the clot was successfully removed and all is going well again. It was a good thing he was there overnight. Thankfully, big brother was with Mom so that she would not be travelling alone. To try and lighten the mood a bit, I commented that it would not be my father if he was not causing some type of problem. So, it will be another few days before he is able to come home. On a good note, I had a call on the caller id waiting for me when I got home from work... THANKS C & L ☺ .

Lunch With Sweet Cheeks, Sweet Potato Puff, And More

This week is going to be a tough one for my Mom. Not only does she have to contend with the departure of a niece that she and my dad has raised for years, she has had to deal with my Dad's approaching surgery to unblock the arteries in his neck. A few summer's ago he had a major stroke. While recovering, it was discovered that there was blockage but at the time doctors determined that it was not serious enough to warrant surgery at that time (and they were uncertain whether or not he was strong enough to endure it). The blockage has since reached 85% and today was the day for the cleansing. He and Mom left for the hospital around 6.30am. Three of my siblings and I met our big brother at his school around 8.45 to be at the hospital in time to meet the parents before 10. When we arrived, Dad had already gone into surgery.

The surgery was to take no more than 90 minutes. Sooooo... around noon, we became a bit concerned. Finally, at 12.30, Mom went to the information desk to see what was up. Apparently, he had not gone under the knife before **11 O'Clock**. A few moments later our paging system (similar to the doodads that they hand out at restaurants to inform you when your table is ready) lit up and vibrated. From there, we went to a consultation area and waited another 45 minutes before the doctor came in and informed us in about 2 minutes that all went well and they were waiting for Dad to come alive before moving him to his room. Then, we all went to lunch.

Our waiter at Logan's Steakhouse was very out-going, hilarious, friendly, any superlative you can think of. He took our drink orders and returned with them. When he finally

came to mine, he wasn't sure what I had ordered and he eventually got it right after going through every drink on the menu. Then he took our lunch orders. My oldest brother is not a fan of salad dressing. So when he ordered it dry, the waiter (wish I could remember his name) made some humorous comment.

On our first round of drink refills, the waiter returned and had names picked out for all of the females at the table. My sister became known as "Sweet Cheeks." My sister-in-law was renamed "Cherry" (Cherry Coke). Finally, my cousin received the moniker "Sweet Potato Puff." Not sure if Mom got a new name. A short time later, our friend from Liswathistan decided to make his presence known. He asked the waiter if he was a married man and if his wife would be interested in going on Wife Swap. Like so many before him, the waiter was totally floored and left speechless. I think he thought Morat had had one too many Coke Zeros. When we had finished, the waiter asked Morat to come to the back of the restaurant where his manager was waiting and Morat asked if she was a married woman. Yet again, Morat was left empty-handed.

When we got back to the hospital, Dad was awake in ICU. Awake and alert because the first thing he asked was if I had gone to the garage and paid for the oil change my car got while I was in Florida. The first I had learned of this was Sunday night when he told me that I needed to pay for it. Niiiiice of him to get a bill for it or even tell me that it had been done three weeks later. But really nice that they had thought to do it. So, although he mumbled a lot and acted like he was flying with the birds, it was a relief that he was slowly returning to whatever he thinks is normal (which is in itself a little(?) less than normal). With any luck, he should be allowed to come home tomorrow...IF he is a good boy. We will see

An Early Christmas

Christmas came early to our humble abode this year. We have members of our family who are moving to Alaska next week. My cousin lived with us from her first grade year until she graduated from high school two years ago. Her husband is now a PFC in the Army and was recently stationed in Alaska. My father's niece came to live with us after she had been in at least three foster homes and my mother was approached by her case worker to discuss assuming custody of her. It was deemed much more beneficial for her to live with actual relatives. So on Thanksgiving Night of 1994, she came to our doorstep. I hate talking about her in the third person, but the first few years of her life were less than idyllic (and I will NOT get into that). Needless to say, she eventually became a much more important part of our family. Some of the little things that most of us take for granted she had to accept over time (leaving the bathroom door closed, getting too emotionally close too fast). However, I am ecstatic that she has grown into a young, mature, caring wife and mother to their 17 month old daughter. But like any siblings, we have had our share of quarrels.

So today was spent watching the Buckeyes handily defeat Northwestern (a three-peat to the National Championship is now out of the question, but a Bowl berth is still entirely likely). Then eating a feast after which I took a nap. After the nap, we watched all of the little ones open their gifts that were given to them before the departure. Later on, my cousin's best friend stopped by to deliver a rather expensive Build-A-Bear (or penguin as the case may be) and we played some Phase 10. I kept getting skipped time after time (by the same person) while another player continued on her way and

eventually won the entire game. Not very strategically minded I must say. So, a bit of Christmas cheer arrived a bit early. May God bless the little family as they make their way WAY North to Alaska.

She Had The Final Word

For anyone who knew Emily Curtis well has at times encountered her fierce, stubborn determination get get things done **HER WAY!!!** Every band show, choir song, organ piece, musical scene everything down to the minutest detail had to meet with her demands. She was the teacher that you either loved or hated but always respected. Her devotion to family, country, students, everyone she touched was stronger than most; very few could match her will and strength. This profound quality showed in true fashion in the memorial service that she orchestrated herself.

The prelude music was traditional Ma. From the religious to the patriotic to musical theatre to CHRISTMAS? was all there. You heard correctly... Christmas. The woman had Christmas trees in every room of her house every year... yes, even the bathroom. "Silent Night" closed every holiday concert she ever directed. The choir (be it high school, junior high, or elementary) stood in the darkened auditorium with lighted candles and sang all three verses alternating from English lyrics to the traditional German. I also heard "O, Holy Night."

The Broadway pieces also were typical. "You'll Never Walk Alone" from Carousel would fit most funerals and is a regular piece in many church hymnals. I also heard "Edelweiss" from The Sound of Music which was the last lyric that Oscar

Hammerstein II wrote. I was half expecting to hear the guitar opening the overture of Jesus Christ Superstar, but must have come in late.

On to the service itself. I'm sure that Emily chose each reading herself. However, the point that drove the whole thing home was Amanda's "Time of Remembrance." Her mother asked her to deliver it.. they did everything together. At the end of her delivery, Amanda took out a micro-cassette player and pushed "Play." then, Emily's voice filled the church as she told of her love of family, country, and large support group. She ever joked about her need to have the final word. She never gave up her battle with leukemia. The doctors and nurses at the James Center on the OSU campus were all amazed at her fortitude. They dubbed her either "princess" or "general." They knew her well, too. Unfortunately, the disease finally defeated her.

The music played during the service was also quite unusual for most... but not for Ma's. A violinist played "Carmen Ohio" (the Ohio State alma mater). Although she was a graduate of Miami University of Ohio, Emily was a traditional Buckeye... she bled Scarlet and Grey.

Following the internment service, a large number of people returned to the church to celebrate and remember Emily. Teachers... remarkably who found subs for the day (probably 15 total), family, friends shared some personal memories. My mother told me that we had until 1.45 because she had to get back to drive the school bus. I can honestly say that I am a stronger person because my life has been touched by Emily and her typical lunch of fat-free pringles or honey mustard pretzels and her can of Diet Coke (I would not want to be around her if she did not have her can of Diet Coke). So many great, profound, life-affirming memories that will last forever. **THANK YOU MA, I LOVE YOU...SON2.**

Spread Your Wings And Soar

Boy, I am just now beginning to see that this blog can be therapeutic as well as entertaining. These past few days have been really tough but I am finding that with the support of some of the “bestest” friends I have ever had, grieving and remembering one of the best people I have ever known is bearable. I know that I will repeat myself so bear with me. I have already told you that Emily Curtis was much, much more than a music teacher to me. The last few years of her life, she gave up at least one of her lunch periods a week TO ME. I would go to school for a voice lesson on Tuesday mornings. Sometimes we would use them for other things as well. Upon arrival, I would always ask how Amanda and Jonathan were doing. Being the proud mother she is, Emily would boast about their latest accomplishments. On one occasion, she told how she and her daughter had just gone to see *Jekyll and Hyde* (WITHOUT ME!!! ☹). While Jonathan was at West Point, they would travel to NYC to see shows at least twice a year. One of my lessons was mere hours after Jonathan was sent to Iraq. I asked her if she wanted me to come that morning. She told me that she needed ME more that day than I needed her; just to hear me sing? I even called her at 10pm on a school night to tell her that auditions for an area production of *Joseph...* was in two days. “Get your butt (ok...maybe not that word, but, I like to keep this a family site) over here TOMORROW!!!”

The last show of mine that she came to see was *The Odd Couple*. Following the Sunday matinee, my crowd of admirers gathered at the Dairy Queen across town. When I entered the restaurant, a group of at least 10 rose to their feet and applauded all led by Emily. It was then that she again reminded me that I should not limit myself to musical theatre alone but to “spread my

wings and soar” and to “not hide my light under a bushel basket”. Definitely, one of my staunchest supporters and biggest fans.

The End Of An Exhilarating Weekend

This weekend was for the most part very enjoyable. My shifts over the last two days just dragged by. Friday, I did not have to work and except for a trip to a nearby metropolis to renew my license plate tags, pick up a prize at the radio station,, and stop and pick up a present for a baby, I waited by the phone in anticipation to hear some good news. Finally, around 5.20 PM I get a call from the hospital saying that mother and baby are just fine.. an 8 lb 2oz baby boy. Some nerve wracking episodes but all worked out well for their fourth child and first boy.

Saturday’s shift could not have been slower because I knew that I would have a phone call telling me where to go after I got off... and sure enough. I headed over to the hospital to see the little bundle of joy complete with a green slimy diaper that I watched Daddy change. After visiting with Mom and another visitor, we went and ate Chinese. We then went to the house where we quickly moved a crib from the nursery into the parent’s room. We had to totally disassemble the device and put it back together all while Dad was talking on the phone. Correct me if I am wrong but we had the crib together in half the time that it took to take it apart. We then played a game called [Snout](#) in which the object was to roll a pig and try to make it land in random positions. It was fun but frustrating when you kept rolling the same thing over and over again which

did neither of us any good. Finally, we ended the game long after it was discovered who had won about 3 rounds after the winner had gotten the 100 points needed to win. But still fun and a great evening once again although we were both tired by 11PM (very unusual but totally understandable). We also played another fun game, but the name escapes me... help me out on this one oh great admin. But it was just a blast seeing the wee one on his first days in the world and the proud but exhausted parents.



A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY :D

Work today just dragggggged by, especially when 3.00 hit and I was still waiting to leave. I asked for some dollar bills to fill my drawer with thinking that would send a clue. I received by 50 singles and paid for them and still I waited. Finally, at 3.15 I had no line and I went to the time clock punched out and said "adios, places to go, people to see." Oh, they were sorry.

I arrived at C & L's house at 3.27 (by my reckoning, anyway). They asked me where I would like to go. Honestly, I hate deciding things like that. We ended up going to the mexican place by Wal-Mart which was actually great by me because it has been a while since I was there. After dinner, C had a meeting to go to so L and I went to see [Hancock](#) which I found to be entertaining and very different from the typical superhero fare. I really liked the premise but we both agreed that the twist was somewhat hokey, but still entertaining. It only increased my appetite for [The Dark Knight](#).

After the movie, we went back to the house and awaited the

results of the meeting which we all agreed was favorable. The theatre season for 2009-2010 was approved as presented. *Little Shop of Horrors* is in and *Jesus Christ Superstar* appears to be a go along with the rest. Those are just two of the shows I was really hoping for (the fact that they are musicals is beside the point).

Before leaving the home of my dear, dear friends, I was given money to revisit the ice cream shop. If I had taken it and not gone, it would have been stealing. So, I went and indulged in a cake batter ice cream cone. I guess you could say I had ice cream and cake in one. All this on the night before L is to go to the hospital to be induced for her fourth child and first boy. **YOU TWO ARE THE GREATEST!!!** My birthday celebration will continue in my next blog.