

The Lights Filled The Sky

Ok... so I am a few minutes late posting a 4th of July entry, but I had an absolutely wonderful end of my day. I started out by putting in a fun-filled 10 hour day at work. Somehow for the most part it went by relatively fast especially when we had those few major rushes when I had 4 people in my line with carts and needed to call for reinforcements. Finally, the shift ended and I got to rush home (not before I overheard a few opinionated people loudly complain that we were closed already). Clearly marked on the door that we would indeed be closing at 6PM and it was 6:05 when we stepped out.

I ran home, changed into some other more comfortable clothes and headed to the country home of some other theatre cronies where we congregated, had a cookout, and enjoyed watching the sky light up with some very cool fireworks. I missed our local display last weekend for some strange reason. They usually run them the SUNDAY before the hoilday. This year, they decided to have a two day celebration and had the fireworks on Saturday night. However, I think the display presented tonight was quite exceptional and rivaled some of the best I have seen produced in our local park. I think the only thing missing was some great accompaniment of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* with its thundering cannon or John Phillip Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever*, *Liberty Bell*, *Washington Post*, or any other grand march. Maybe next year we can have the sound system hooked up. But the chance to congregate with a large group of friends to celebrate our freedom, a birthday, and the coming birth of a special guy was such a thrill.

The Great California Scam

My parents returned Tuesday afternoon from their 2 week vacation to the Golden Gate State. Some of their highlights included: visiting San Francisco, San Diego (no zoo), the Hollywood Walk of Fame, and Grauman's Chinese Theatre. It also included a nine hour car trip to Santa Rosa where they visited my mother's cousin who owns and operates a winery ([Lauterbach Cellars](#)) along with her husband. I asked if they could not bring back some wine so I could share with friends... Probably not.

I would say that the most memorable tale concerned their "guided tour" of the walk of fame along Hollywood and Vine. My parents and my father's sister were approached by a gentleman offering to give them a personal tour of the stars for a grand total of \$50. Apparently, they thought this was a steal (read on). My aunt produced the fifty dollars. The gentleman informed them that he had to get something, said he would return, and left. I'm not sure how long the three of them waited but they came to realize that they had just been swindled. Surprisingly, they somehow managed to encounter the thief along the way (probably attempted to pull the same stunt on other unsuspecting tourists). However when they confronted the gentleman, he quickly denied ever seeing them. They really got "taken" on a tour. However, the trio did walk the stars.

Their return flight arrived in Indianapolis Tuesday morning at 10 following a five-hour layover in Atlanta. Needless to say, they were both exhausted and went to bed exceptionally early.

A Tragedy of Operatic Proportions

Yes, tonight was our final rehearsal for *Little Women* before we have an audience and any audience expects to be entertained and tonight while still good also had a few pitfalls. Huge gaps where a character forgot her entrances, fumbling backstage to move sets and props into place. Just little things that can and frequently do cause an audience to become distracted and lose interest. But overall, these were only minor things (admittedly the person who forgot her entrances was not so minor but I am sure that her professionalism will return and will be fine).

Also missing tonight was our assistant lighting person. When I returned from practice, I had a message informing me that Carol was really sick so I immediately called and talked to her daughter. I was really concerned because Carol is always so dependable (as well as a fun member of our game night gang who played my mother in our recent Murder Mystery night) and I was hoping most of the evening that nothing was seriously wrong. Thankfully, she was feeling better by the time I had called. This was on her birthday of all things to boot. So Happy Birthday Carol and I hope you feel much better ☺ . And see you tomorrow night. I will also have to attend some of the Summer City Band concerts on Wednesday nights through the summer as Megan plays the trumpet in the band. She should have told me sooner. I started playing trumpet in 5th grade and by the time I was in high school moved to the tuba (many tales about Susie and I ☺) with some gentle nudging from a certain high school band director.

I almost forgot to mention that a certain well-admired writer from a newspaper was in attendance. Not to review as some feared, just to flash his camera and leave. Hopefully, he does not bring his book Friday night and have it out before

the first scene is over.

Wild And Crazy Kids And Some Other People

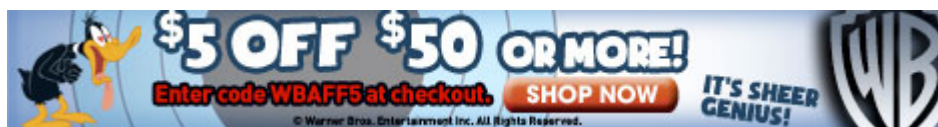
Yesterday (it was yesterday as I am making this post) was a fantastic fun-filled day full of little people, great friends, and a surprise or two. It actually began last night when I received a phone message that I was to return to see if I would like to do something this weekend. It was a good thing we did not plan it for Friday night with all the storms in the area. Instead, a bunch of us went to an indoor Entertainment Complex known as [Crazy Pinz](#) full of arcade games, games of skill, mini-golf, and mini bowling (which I must admit to being a real master of... my score may not have shown it but a master nonetheless). Watching C walk up the lane crawling on his hands and knees to fix the lane several times was humorous at times. Then it got to the point where it became ridiculous.

There was also a very fun and if you were not careful, addictive, Deal or No Deal game. However, the prize was not **ONE MILLION DOLLARS**, but anywhere from 1-200 (or 2-400 depending upon which version you played) tickets to be redeemed for prizes. I did pretty well collecting tickets from this game (better than the bowling which was great too).

The surprise came in when we were getting ready to sit at a table to enjoy a small break. I suddenly felt someone wrap her arms around me and say "Guess Who?" After giving up or just allowing my captor to get off her tiptoes, I discovered my "Aunt" Carol standing behind me. She then led me over to her group where my cousin was having a gathering of her own at the

bowling alley. Some of them were dressed for what seemed like Halloween party or a superhero convention. Stacy was dressed as the Amazon Princess Wonder Woman. There was also a Batgirl, Catwoman, and a few others in costumes I do not remember. But how strange was that?!

After eating dinner, and being taken back home, I was ready to crash. A great day but most great days do seem to wear you out. I did forget to mention the rather lame amusement park roller coaster simulation that gave you the sense of nausea however, none of the rush of speed and euphoria felt during the real thing. Just watching it from behind I kind of got the same impression.



Get Me To The Church On Time

No... not for my own wedding. My cousin and her boyfriend were married today and my brother and I were the vocalists. Last night, he went to a karaoke bar and went home with no voice...GREAT!!! Thankfully, he was better today and at least made it through his song and the two songs we sang as duets. For some unknown reason, I seem to get nervous singing at functions like weddings and I do not know why. I stand in the choir loft high above the congregation whose backs are to me. So it is not as if I could be seen. Maybe that is it. I need to be seen. However, I am sure it sounded fine (no one ran from the building covering their ears).

Moments of the ceremony were hilarious. My 3 year old nephew

served as ring bearer and the groom's young niece was the flower girl. When the time came for the pair to process down the aisle, they were nowhere to be seen and the organist was getting near the end of the piece. All of a sudden like a shot, two little people come running down the aisle arm in arm. Honestly, the other attendants could have learned a thing or two about how to walk down the aisle.

During the ceremony, the little ones were all over the place. Noah kept dropping the pillow he carried up... luckily the rings were not on it. Then, they were constantly wandering around smelling flowers having a fun time. I think the priest was just as amused.

More hilarity continued at the reception during the cake cutting ceremony. Rich smeared a whole slice all over Charnel's face (WTG... welcome to the family). All Charnel managed was a little dab of frosting on Rich's nose, forehead, and chin. Probably because she could not see him to get him any better.

So, anyway, another relation sent on her way to married life. I am starting to feel the pressure here.

UPDATE: To read more about the pre-wedding adventures follow the link [here](#)

If Music Be The Food Of Love, Play On

This afternoon two communities who are usually big rivals came together to honor someone who has touched the lives of quite possibly every person who either lived in either town or

attended school in Edgerton, Ohio. Emily Curtis grew up in Edon but has taught music in Edgerton for 27 years at all levels (junior high, high school, and, most recently, elementary). Last year, she was stricken with leukemia and is in Columbus at the medical facilities on the OSU campus undergoing treatment. Through it all, she has been the same tough, strong, stubborn woman she has been for at least 20 years. She has given so much to everyone not only in this area but worldwide. Since 09/11/01, she has spear-headed a Troop Care package program sending supplies to the armed forces in Iraq and all over the world. The program has sent tons of necessities and has received numerous plaques, letters, and medals for its generosity.

At the benefit, there were thousands of dollars worth of donated items in a silent auction. Ohio State and Michigan memorabilia, beautiful artwork, Edgerton apparel, too much stuff to even begin to describe. School children danced and sang. Mrs. Balser, who started her teaching career at Edgerton 40 years ago, has generously taken Mrs. Curtis position for the year. A second grader sang "Rainbow Connection" and sounded like he should have provided the voice of Kermit the Frog in the "[Muppet Movie](#)."

There are just so many personal levels on which I could write about my experiences with Emily. She is one tough cookie and will push you until you have reached your potential. During my four years in high school, she arranged for the band to travel to Chicago to see [Phantom of the Opera](#). We attended a performance of Annie in Toledo as we were just beginning to stage our own production. Speaking of our production of [Annie](#), I originally auditioned for the role of Daddy Warbucks. The day after tryouts, I was called over the PA to report to the band room. "OH, LORD... what have I done now?" I was asked to read for the role of Rooster. Read a bit of dialogue, sing "Easy Street," and CROW. Emily and the drama director told me then and there that I had nailed the role of Warbucks, but

they thought I would do even better as the villain.

In November 2006, I played the part of Vinnie in [The Odd Couple](#). This was the first time I had been in a non-musical play since 1991. Two people were instrumental in my decision to try out (aside from myself that is). I called Emily the night before auditions and asked her what she thought. She has told me for years that I need to let my light shine bright (among other things) and that she knew I would do well. And following the Sunday matinee, she told me "Who is it that has been telling you for years to stop limiting yourself?" Thanks Ma