

From old tech to new tech

I was talking today with my 3rd daughter and her husband about movies I have on VHS tapes. They remarked that they didn't have a VCR, so they could not watch those movies. I casually remarked that they needed a USB VHS player. I never saw one, and wasn't even sure if they did make them. Well, I found out that there is at least one company who makes them. So from the company that brought you the usb turntable and the usb cassette player, [ION](#) brings you the VHS 2 PC player. Now you can watch your VHS tapes on your PC. You can also take your home VHS videos and put them on DVD. What more could you want?
□

I didn't see the 8-track to PC player. Or BetaTape to PC? Or Edison recording tubes to PC? Sheet Music to PC? Player Piano sheets to PC? OK, I'm getting silly, but what about the 8-track to PC. I had a few not too many years ago. I gave them to someone with a working 8-track player.

I noticed that they have a turntable that goes directly to an Ipod.

They have a 35mm slide to PC scanner and a few other items. Interesting stuff I ever win the lottery.

I went to the top and ... Jumped

off the elevator or stairs.

This used to be one of my favorite things to say to people.

There were times when it caught them completely by surprise, and other times when they got the joke. I've been to the tops of many tall and natural locations.

So far

A few tall buildings in Toledo Ohio. I started in high school when one of the Toledo buildings had a restaurant near the top.

The Sears Tower in Chicago, when it was still the Sears Tower

The CN tower in Toronto

The Empire State Building

Pontiac Silver Dome Top row

Tiger Stadium, second deck

The Arch in St Louis

Observation Deck at Niagara Falls

Ash Cave in Hocking Hills State Park Ohio (Jumped over the waterfall at the top of the cave, ok I jumped over the creek that becomes the waterfall.

There are other buildings in other cities, but I can't recall them the names of all of them. The cities are Detroit Mi, Cleveland OH, Columbus OH, Cincinnati OH, Dayton OH, Ft Wayne IN.

I missed opportunities in California, Florida, Wisconsin, Minnesota. I'm not even sure what tall buildings I missed there. But I did jump off of a pier in Ca. or was that a long walk on a short pier? ☐

Just remembering this evening to have fun with words...

Names and Ties

Another week, another post. As one of you mentioned in a previous post of mine, this blog lets my friends know about my life even if I don't post often so I guess any danger of this blog closing has vanished as it is a really good point. Anyway, I finally finished the DVD I was working on for my cabin last Saturday- well, mostly. There is still one I am trying to fix because the DVD player I tried it in kept glitching at the menu, even after I changed the video and readded it. Yes, each camper got a DVD with a customized menu- an animation of themselves done with Corel's Painter 4 Essentials. With it, you can turn a photo into something that looks like a painting. Oddly enough, though it goes through an animated process "painting" the picture, you can't save the animation. Luckily though I still had Camstudio installed from when admin was trying to save a video when JibJab was a bit slow in allowing his paid download last year. It did the job perfectly.

Since then, I have been busy or just plain tired. Mondays are back to having no time to post, and I have been getting up early every day this week, today included, so I have just not felt like posting. Today however I had an incident that couldn't wait for a post. Actually, it's the latest in things that have been going through my mind as a post for awhile about names and relations. About names, a couple of recent namesakes have run across my life either personally or in the news. One of them is the CINO (if you are familiar with the political term RINO you will understand this abbreviation considering his recent interview with the local paper) named Milton Bradley. I wonder, is that his real name? I know many entertainers have stage names, but I don't really know if that

applies to sports figures. If the name is real, how did kids treat him growing up? Milton Bradley of course was once a big gaming company in case anyone reading this has forgotten. It's not a big name anymore of course having been absorbed by the gaming behemoth Hasbro, but still when the ball player Milton was growing up I'm sure the company was still known.

On the same topic I met a student teacher the other day when subbing at a middle school. His namesake was a famous inventor every child in school learns, so I am sure he must have been teased mercilessly. His name? Tom Edison. Undoubtedly he is still asked by kids about it, and will be for some time considering his chosen profession. I can attest to this considering my own last name is a common word if not a namesake (though kids did once ask if I'm related to a character on TV with the same last name- yes, a character- not an actor ☐) and I get asked about it all. the. time.

Before I move on to today, I should start a bit earlier. Kids aren't the only ones who ask about relations when they encounter a name. When I encounter a child with a particularly famous last name I sometimes ask about it. Of course, most either have no idea who I'm talking about or just say no, they aren't related. Well they are, as we are all related to the first man and woman known as Adam and Eve, and later Noah since he and his family were the only survivors of the great flood. They are related, but many generations removed of course. However, one time when I was student teaching myself, I came across a girl with the last name of Fogerty and of course had to ask about John Fogerty. Instead of the expected response she said that yes, he was her uncle. Pretty old for her uncle I would have to say, but maybe she meant great-uncle. I clarified since John Fogerty could still be a common name and not in fact refer to the former CCR member, but she maintained that he was her uncle. Well, I suppose *someone* has to say yes to this question.

Today's encounter started with a guided reading group. We

were discussing a book where a shy boy had a talent for playing the piano. He started out telling no one, even his friends, about this talent but ended up overcoming nervousness and performing in front of the school in a talent show. We talked about performing and of course I shared that I acted. The kids' eyes really lit up at this, and I mean **really**. When I said this they assumed I meant I acted on TV. I have never met this kind of fixed attention before when I brought up acting, but it turns out they had a reason for linking acting with television. Their teacher is the mother of an actor who plays a major role in Smallville, and even came to visit last year. I probably shouldn't say which one, but his last name is not the same as his mother's, so I might if prodded. I looked up his bio at a few sites and there's no mention of his mother's name so it may not even take much prodding...

EDIT: I guess I should have looked up [Milton Bradley on Wikipedia](#) before I asked my question, as it has this to say about the baseball player:

Bradley is named after his father, Milton Bradley, Sr., who filled out the birth certificate form without his wife's permission. As Milton's mother says of his father, "He wanted a Junior, and made damn sure he got one."^[1] Junior, who shares a name with a [popular board game pioneer](#), has always been teased about his name, but has never changed it because the memories it evokes "only drive him harder".^[1]

Eileen Escapes Fightin While

Having A Pina Colada

This morning before leaving for work, I was listened to our local [Classic Rock station](#) to see if I could listen and win. Thursday is the Three Songs with a Theme in which you listen to the three songs in their ENTIRETY. I listened to the first song then by song two had the solution. While the final song was playing, I put the station's number up, waiting until the song faded, and hit the talk button. **BUSY SIGNAL!?** And Mr. Brigle came on and said... "Let's see if we have a winner." Sure enough, we had a winner. Someone must have been a little quicker on the draw than I.

OK... test your musical expertise and tell me what these three songs have in common. I can offer no more than your name and answer to be posted on my blog... but isn't that reward enough?

1. "Kung Fu Fightin'"
2. "Come On, Eileen"
3. "Escape (The Pina Colada Song)"

In the past I have won a few prizes: a gift certificate to an area coffee shop, and two CDs (the soundtrack to one of the *Scream* movies and one by Daryl Hall and John Oates that must have been their attempt at a comeback). My mother won a phone-in contest years ago. Her prize? A trip on the Jet Express that ended at the end of the season. The end of the season being that very weekend. Unfortunately, she was not able to use the prize.

And Yes... They Keep On Winning (some)

Not all but some... and look out... her comes the return of the Red Stockings (on Friday)... B0000!!!!!! no doubt on the war path following the sweeping of the last series. The Yanks have clinched a berth for the post season. They slipped a bit but thanks to a win or two and a loss from Boston, New York has gone back to a six game first place lead and defeated the Angels of Anaheim tonight. Just sayin'. Last season, I did not get to say that.

And it looks like the Tigers (another team on tangent's radar) will be a post season hopeful, correct, [justj](#)? What about the Cubbies, [taylhis?](#)

Just strange ads

Something weird is going on with the ads I see on many sites. I've been getting bombarded with ads for 'bidets'. Now I would understand this if I had been making comments about toiletpaper, toilet humor, bathrooms, plungers or the like. Or even if I was doing a search to replace various plumbing fixtures. The only site I know of that had something to do with bathrooms, was the [repair blog over at taylhis's site](#).

Seeing the things I'm interested in, or places I frequent, I would expect ads about widows/widowers, maybe dating, single parents, college information, comic books, geek stuff, movies, books and a few other things. Bidets were at the bottom of my list of things I thought I would be interested in.

The other strange ad I've seen is for Ugg boots. While a fascinating site and the boots are quite comfortable (I had a pair of Ugg slippers once), I'm not currently in the market. But then again, I did write about finding boots for my college daughter.

Hmm, does Vet Tech talk suddenly bring up ads for Bidets and Ugg boots? I wonder. For now, I guess I will just be followed by these strange ads. (Check the tags, I'm in for it now)

Another Thespian In The Family?

On Tuesday nights, my niece Elizabeth and nephew Noah come to the house while their older brother is taken to Boy Scouts. Last night after returning from rehearsal, I asked Elizabeth when her school play is going to be. I never got the dates but I remember last year's was sometime in November. I was able to drag out that she has the title role in *Mulan, Junior*. I was excited for her and even had to ask again to make sure I heard correctly. How awesome is that?! I asked if Joshua got a part... forgetting that he is too old to be in the 4th and 5th grade show.

I must admit... and I don't know why... but I have never seen the movie. It must have been because I lost track of Disney movies in the years following *The Lion King* up until Pixar joined the studio with *Toy Story*. I do remember that Lea Salonga was the title voice with Donny Osmond and Eddie Murphy also voicing roles.

Another aspect of Elizabeth that amazes me is her voracious reading. For her birthday, I gave her two books: a mid-level

edition of *Marley and Me* and a Peter Pan prequel (it had Disney's stamp of approval for whatever that's worth). I thought the first book looked a bit simple for her (she has read all 7 Harry Potter books) but, eh. I was right because I asked how far she had gotten in them and she finished the first and started Peter Pan earlier that day and was already beyond the first 100 of 500 pages.

Apparently, school children are rewarded for outside reading far more than I was. When I was in elementary school, we received a coupon for a free personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut after reading so many books. Today, children can read a book go onto a website, take a quiz, and earn points which they can build up to obtain all kinds of fabulous gifts. I had no idea there was such a thing until my cousin asked if I made sure the books were on the [AR](#) list? I think it is a neat idea but for one thing: The points do not carry over from year to year. I really don't have a problem with rewarding those who enjoy reading and I don't believe that the incentive is connected with the classroom.

Not trying to take anything away from the fabulous news of Elizabeth's first lead role, so CONGRATS! Break a leg! OH... my brother came in the store tonight and he had no idea of the news when I asked him about the show dates. And I was informed as I walked into the house last night? Priorities.

What's That Called?

A while back, a tangenteer (tangents.org blogger) wrote about a type of obstacle course based upon cause and effect relationships between different objects. You know, like the board game Mousetrap – a ball rolls and falls into a bucket,

which triggers another ball that goes down a ramp, etc. I forgot what this is called (and who blogged it! Was it me or derek?), but I think it's a Japanese word. Anyway, I came across [this website for a Dutch department store called Hema](#), and they have an animated one of those obstacle course thingys using their products on their website. Just follow the link above and watch to see what happens! It's pretty creative, and I thought people might like it!

The Informant!

I haven't reviewed a movie on my blog in awhile – mostly because movie-watching was a favorite summer activity this year, so I saw too many to mention. I don't think I'm going to start reviewing them now, but today's experience at the movie theater (saw *The Informant!* with Matt Damon) is worthy of mentioning. Not for the movie itself – it seemed to be an interesting enough plot line, but I couldn't follow the entire trail of corporate deception and greed, so I dozed a little. And I wasn't the only one. The guy two rows behind us began snoring very loudly in the middle of the movie! It was distracting, and he began by breathing heavily, so first we were worried about him (seeing a man drop dead at a Chinese buffet will make you a little paranoid). But then he started the snoring, so we knew he was ok; but then it became obnoxious. So we tolerated that for the rest of the movie, and then he woke up during the last scene with a loud "BURP!". Well.

We go to the movies almost every week and I've never heard someone so full of rude noises, including teenagers! I feel badly for the guy, but mostly, I just want to know why he paid \$6.50 to take a nap – the movie theater seats aren't *that*

comfy! As for my dozing, it wasn't really a nap, and I was (mostly) entertained during two hours of The Informant. I don't know that I would recommend it – if you like to unravel these kinds of movies, then go for it. But I sometimes find myself zoning out, and by the time I'm back to the movie, something has happened or there are too many characters who look alike for me to be able to follow the plot, as both were the cases here. I did find Damon's character, Mark Whitacre, quite entertaining, as was the narrative style of the movie. It kind of reminded me of a Coen brothers movie – you know, greed gets the best of people, a plot to gain money unravels, and people get killed, except The Informant was decidedly less violent – rated R only for language, in fact. An entertaining two hours for some, but apparently not for all!

Off The Book & It Feels Soooo Fine

YAHOO!!! I took the plunge and ditched the script for the entire rehearsal. As a wise scientist once stated: "Once you set your mind to it, you can accomplish anything." I will not say that I was perfect but I felt good after the evening was complete. So fun and ultimately rewarding... now I can begin the tweaking of my character. We also attempted to run the show using the lights: extensive blackouts, many light tricks and sound effects that will definitely need to be worked out during the next three weeks. Hopefully, our tech crew will arrive soon to get all of their cues. The entire cast was fumbling around in the dark on numerous occasions tonight but no one was seriously injured... yet. I even got to provide a word following the run through. As I have stated previously, this show is much more than an audience-participatory murder-

mystery, I think it closely rivals some of the best melodramas out there. I mentioned that most of the characters have lines that can be delivered as asides to the audience. That was one of my few complaints with the last melodrama I saw staged... there were asides but the director chose not to have them blatantly directed to the audience which limited the amount of booing and cat-calling.

This new internet is crazy cool. So much faster than the old Verizon. Just sitting here makes me feel like a kid in a candy store. Three weeks to go and our rehearsal schedule has changed so that we now have practices every night except Saturday. Well... if they are needed (and I think they are, there is just so much to work out technically as well as theatrically).