

# All this and something more

Did you every have a day you thought would have turned out differently? Did you ever expect one thing, and have something else happen? To answer those questions, yes, I did. Yesterday was one of those days.

It was decided earlier that my daughters and I would go to the Zoo to see the Christmas Light display before it closed for the season. As a family we've always enjoyed visiting the light display. As a family we were members since 1984. The Lights before Christmas started in 1986 and has been our family tradition since that date. We took our small children in strollers, pushed grandfathers (due to health or injury) on wheelchairs. We took relatives from warmer climates on very cold evenings. We even went on cold rainy nights. It was a winter escape. As a family we enjoyed the evenings together.

Since 2003, we have not been able to attend as a complete family. My wife was too ill to take the cold weather in her final month, and I stayed with her. She hasn't been there since that year of course. The years following one daughter or another has not been there as we toured the lights. This year my daughter in Florida was not in Ohio to attend. I am very sorry she missed it again.

So three of my daughters, my son-in-law, some friends when to the lights, on the 5th anniversary of my dear wife's death. I thought a melancholy day was in order. I forgot who much I enjoy the company of my family and friends. I also forgot the magic of seeing hundreds of colorful lights. A day of memories and togetherness. Not really a sad memory last night at all.

After the evening of lights, we went to my eldest daughter's house and shared a glass of wine and bit of dinner. A toast to her memory and more conversation. A wonderful night. I needed that. It was another healing effect on my life. Family is

wonderful.

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## Last Post of 2008!

Because I barely have time to fit in the writing of this current blog post, I can safely say that with 4 kids running around (Christmas break = parental nightmare) this will be my last blog post of 2008! What better way to go out then but to experiment with the new polling feature of tangents.org and make a New Year's themed poll? Enjoy, and have a very happy and safe New Year's celebration! Here's wishing you the best of luck in 2009! Check all that apply:

[poll id="3"]

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## Marley and Me

Reluctantly, I saw [Marley and Me](#) in the movie theater yesterday. It's not that it was a bad movie, but I didn't want to see it in the theater because I knew it would be a tear-jerker since I read the book by John Grogan. Unfortunately, I don't remember much about the book since I read it a long time ago, and I do all of my book reading while I'm dozing off just before bed, which sometimes makes it difficult to remember what I've read. But I know I really enjoyed the novel and recommended it to my family and friends. The story is about a family who gets a puppy named Marley, and the novel follows his journey through life as the 'world's worst dog'. But eventually, Marley charms his way

into the hearts of his family, even helping them through life changes and tragedies.

From what I remember, I think the movie stays pretty close to the book, although I don't necessarily agree with the casting choices of Jennifer Aniston and Owen Wilson as Marley's masters. I was a big fan of the tv show Friends, but every movie I've seen Jennifer Aniston in since seems like she's still Rachel, her character from Friends. She's just not a very diverse actor in my book, which I also think she has in common with Owen Wilson. But characters in this heartwarming family film were not very deep, so in the end the poor casting did little to sink the movie. And you'll notice that I crossed out family film. Another thing that disappointed me was the PG rating Marley and Me received. There are about 3 too many adult-themed scenes that I wouldn't want my kids to see, and I'm really glad I previewed this film before I let them see it, which I usually do anyway. This movie should NOT have received a PG rating, and it will make me more careful about making sure I preview *everything* before the kids view it, regardless of rating.

But overall, cute movie. If you're an animal lover or have ever owned a dog, prepare to cry. Sorry if you consider that a spoiler, but it's been all over the media and has dominated water cooler talk everywhere about how sad the movie and book are. I'm sure you can guess what happens and you think you can prepare yourself, but you can't. I was a total wreck in the theater and have had a bit of a cloud over me ever since. But don't let that scare you away from seeing Marley and Me. I think it just struck a chord in me because we own a dog who was once 'The World's Worst Dog' and is now an old lady who has been a huge part of our family for over 10 years. I probably would not watch this movie again, but only for lack of wanting to ride the emotional rollercoaster it provokes in its viewers. The big screen version of Marley and Me was entertaining, and it made me definitely want to read the book

again... if only I had time for that.

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## High School – yuck

I don't have many fond memories of high school. It wasn't horrible, but it certainly hasn't come close to being the best years of my life as some people had promised. Even so, when I saw this copy of an email forward on my friend's blog, I couldn't resist filling it out and making it a blog post of my own, especially since he didn't send me the email version for me to forward. Feel free to make it an email and forward it to your friends. Coincidentally, I've been working on a post about a different version of classmates.com... stay tuned – I might eventually have time to finish it! Here is a copy of the email forward:

*Here is a fun email I received from my cousin who shares my alma mater as well as the year I graduated. Some of the questions brought a chuckle as well as made me think. See if it does the same for you.*

*Fill this out about your Senior Year of high school! The longer ago it was, the more fun the answers will be!! FORWARD (or post in comments) with name of high school and graduating year in the subject box. Send this to all your friends, but don't forget to send it back to me.*

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- 1. Did you date someone from your school? No*
- 2. Did you marry someone from your high school? No*
- 3. Did you car pool to school? yes*

4. *What kind of car did you have? black Pontiac Sunbird*
5. *What kind of car do you have now? minivan*
- 6 . *It's Friday night...where are you now? In high school? hanging out at a friends house, shooting pool or hanging out at Denny's – lots of hanging out*
7. *What kind of job did you have in high school? Wendy's*
8. *What kind of job do you do now? Homemaker*
9. *Were you a party animal? more than some, less than others*
10. *Were you considered a flirt? no*
11. *Were you in band, orchestra? band freshman year*
12. *Were you a nerd? depends who you asked I guess*
13. *Did you get suspended or expelled? no*
14. *Can you sing the fight song? no*
15. *Who was/were your favorite teacher? I don't remember*
16. *Where did you sit during lunch? in my car – how dangerous was it to speed to McD's and back in 25 mins every day?*
17. *What was your school's full name? this makes me nervous – are you trying to track me down?!?*
18. *When did you graduate? 1996*
19. *What was your school mascot? Tigers*
20. *If you could go back and do it again, would you? no thanks*
21. *Did you have fun at Prom? not really*
22. *Do you still talk to the person you went to Prom with? No*
23. *Are you planning on going to your next reunion? no*

24. Do you still talk to people from school? trade a few emails a year with some people back and forth

25. School Colors? orange and black

26. If you could do 1 thing differently in high school, what would it be? I would have been a little nicer to people – not that I was mean, I was just quiet and disconnected from my huge community of a school.

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## **Mine Is Edgerton High School, Class of 1992**

Here is a fun email I received from my cousin who shares my alma mater as well as the year I graduated. Some of the questions brought a chuckle as well as made me think. See if it does the same for you.

Fill this out about your Senior Year of high school! The longer ago it was, the more fun the answers will be!!  
FORWARD (or post in comments) with name of high school and graduating year in the subject box. Send this to all your friends, but don't forget to send it back to me.

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1. Did you date someone from your school? No

2. Did you marry someone from your high school? No

3. Did you car pool to school? No... walked out the front door and was there

4. What kind of car did you have? Ford Fairmont... the brown beast

5. What kind of car do you have now? Pontiac Sunfire
- 6 . It's Friday night...where are you now? In high school?  
Usually at a sporting event
7. What kind of job did you have in high school? worked in grocery store
8. What kind of job do you do now? the same... go figure
9. Were you a party animal? Do i seem the type?
10. Were you considered a flirt? Occasionally
11. Were you in band, orchestra? Yes – band
12. Were you a nerd? Darn right and proud of it!
13. Did you get suspended or expelled? nope
14. Can you sing the fight song? Yes
15. Who was/were your favorite teacher? Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Peters, and others
16. Where did you sit during lunch? usually at home
17. What was your school's full name? Edgerton High School
18. When did you graduate? 1992
19. What was your school mascot? Bulldogs
20. If you could go back and do it again, would you?  
Absolutely not. Although I enjoyed high school, I am having way too much fun in the present.
21. Did you have fun at Prom? Yes
22. Do you still talk to the person you went to Prom with? No, though I would if I ran into her.
23. Are you planning on going to your next reunion? Most

likely.

24. Do you still talk to people from school? A few people

25. School Colors? Maroon and gold

26. If you could do 1 thing differently in high school, what would it be? Follow my heart instead of my head when deciding what career path to choose.

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## Quite Possibly The Worst Movie Of 2008

This morning, I caught the opening chat fest on [Regis and Kelly](#). If I see nothing else on the show (when I am able) this is it; many times the guests do not interest me. However, I love the chemistry between the hosts. Bantering, poking fun, reporting on the headlines, etc. Also the trivia contest in which a caller selected at random attempts to answer a question about a previous show in order to win a fantastic trip. Today's question: "In which 2008 movie did Sir Ben Kingsley co-star with Mike Myers." It took me nearly the full 20 seconds to come up with the answer, unfortunately for Christine Neves from Cumberland, IN, she could not come up with the correct answer to win her stay in Gren-ah-da/Gren-A-da (however you pronounce it).

I won't even go into the details of [The Love Guru](#) only by saying that I have heard many poor unfortunate souls who have seen it and have said that they wished that they could have gotten not only their money but also their time refunded. I'm not sure but I think Mike Myers has gone the way of Eddie Murphy who has also added to his list of stinkers this year.

Anyone remember [Meet Dave](#)? That's ok, I don't either; I think it lasted a minute or two in theatres. I'm not sure if even Austin Powers or Shrek can resurrect Myers' movie career.

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## Another Audition

The last two evenings saw auditions for an upcoming production of *The Lion in Winter*. The play itself tells a tale set during the waning years of Henry II's reign in England, his relationship with his family (Eleanor of Aquitaine, Geoffrey, Richard, and John) as well as Philip, King of France. I must admit to being a bit overwhelmed. I have never tried out for a period piece, but I think I did my best. I was not sure which role I specifically intended to try for, so I put "Any I Fit" on the audition sheet.

I think my lack of experience with the piece coupled with a cold (not trying to make excuses, just stating facts), hindered my success. I am happy for the gentleman who was cast as Philip as he was instrumental in pushing for the production to take place. The rest of the auditioners did really well, also. The women who read for Eleanor were so good that the decision on casting that role was put on hold. The role of Henry also is also up in the air as well as the part of the King's young whore.

In all actuality, I am not that disappointed this time. I can take a few weeks off and find a song to audition with for Honk and find the music (can anyone help with that?) and familiarize myself with that show. However, I must send a shout out to Megan who was cast in the theatre's production of *Over the Tavern* as well as the rest of the cast of *Lion in Winter* including [justj](#). I was not sure when he would find out

that he was cast as Geoffrey and did not want him to learn from anyone else but the director. A hearty congratulations to you, my friend.

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## Jobless

Well, what can I say? I haven't blogged in awhile and now I am writing about bad news. No, I was not fired from my job at Goodwill, but we have a leaky ceiling and we are closed for awhile, which means that everyone that works there cannot go to work until they fix the leaks. We closed down on Friday because of it. I didn't even know about it until I went to go get my paycheck and there was a sign on the door. Later that day, I received a call from the assistant manager to let me know that she would be there for a little while so that we could get our paycheck and that we would be closed for the weekend. That was all right, not great, since I was only working Saturday, Sunday and Friday for the next week, but it did mean that I was able to see the children's program at church. I thought that they would open sometime early this week, and I would at least be able to work on Friday, but unfortunately I received a call from my friend and she said that we would be closed for a couple of weeks to a couple of months! Thankfully, I have been looking for another job just to get a little more money, by having two part time job, since no one is hiring full time, because I would really like an apartment so I can get it ready for when Tony and I get married.

It doesn't help that Tony's room is getting a little crowded with stuff and I would really like to have a place to live once we are married. It would help everyone out, even though they don't want to admit it. I have put in two applications so

far, and will be wandering around Bryan tomorrow and Thursday most like picking up other applications to fill out. I just really need a job, whether or not I get an apartment, but so I can pay for the wedding. Okay, I will stop ranting for now.

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## So what did you get for Christmas?

Sometimes it isn't the gift, it is the thought behind it. Sometimes it is the gift. Sometimes it is both. Over the years I've had plenty of wonderful gifts. Sometimes they are things I specifically ask for. For the gift giver, it is very easy to get me exactly the gift I wanted. Sometimes the gift I want is very extravagant, and should be out of the range of anyone getting me gifts. Sometimes this is where have four daughters really pays some benefits to me. While I only get 1 gift from them, it is something I really want, and would never buy for myself.

Take two years ago, all for girls went in on an "official" Indiana Jones Fedora. I would have made to with any nice looking brown fedora, but they got me a very well made replica. I realize I should have put in in a case just to look at but I wear it almost every day. Fedoras are not made for heavy winds. They will fly off heads. That is why some hats have strings on them. ☐

This year they did it again. Something I wanted, and probably would never have spent the money on. Years ago, first on Showtime and then on PBS, there was a wonderful show called [Shelley Duvall's Faerie Tale Theatre](#). It was a wonderful show, and as soon as I had a VCR, I started taping the shows. When I

could no longer get them we had the girl's grandmother tape them. Fast forward to now, and the tapes we had of these shows wore out, were misplaced or just got re-used. I never did own the complete series. The girls knew I liked the shows, so they went together and bought the DVDs of this series. So now I have hours of faerie tale enjoyment ahead of me. If asked nicely, I would even be willing to share.

From the very first faerie tale "The Frog Prince" with Robin Williams and Terri Garr, to the very last show "The Dancing Princesses" with Leslie Ann Warren, these shows had big name stars from the 80's. The shows were made so that parents could watch them with their children. I'm not sure about any other family watching these, but after some of the shows, we would dig out the original faerie tale to read to our children. A wonderful family time and now memory.

So what did I get for Christmas this year? About the same as every year. I was given much love, wonderful memories all wrapped up with paper and bows. This was hidden in a gift given from the heart. Or in this case four very loving hearts.

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## **Holiday Hubbub**

The past few weeks have been busy, very busy. Here I was hoping for some time to relax and more stuff seems to happen. I had nothing planned for today or most of tomorrow. A time for catching up on all those things that get put to the side during busy times.

That isn't going to happen at all. I need to get my truck looked at by a body shop or two. I'm not sure how long that will take. Then I have to pick up a new head light and see if I can get it pointed in the right direction. Until the truck

get fixed up, the headlight assembly is pointing to the sky. The high beam works, but never hits the road. The low beam exploded when the deer hit the truck. The assembly itself seems to have lost any mounting to the vehicle. Which may be a good thing. It is still in 1 piece. Those assemblies are expensive.

Then there will be more things to go to. One more trip to Toledo, for the family, tomorrow night. And any New Years Eve plans. Go here, and there and everywhere.

This holiday season has been busy. In most ways that was very good. In some ways very tiring.

Oh well, off to see a man about a truck.