

# Fire and Rain

I have relatives all over this country. Some I know quite well, others not so well. But just about a month ago, my daughter was in the middle of some wildfires blazing in her area of Florida. Now my little sister is in the midst of massive flooding in Iowa. I suggested putting the water in buckets to carry it to the drought areas, but I think the cost of that is a bit much.

This did get me thinking about all the things that happen and get out of control.

Fires, on one hand they are beneficial. For warmth, cooking, light, ambiance, and at one time protection, fire is wonderful. Out of control, it can be a very destructive and fast moving force. After seeing the destruction of a wild fire, it is a wonder how anything can survive them.

As bad as that is the destructive force of the wind (hurricanes and tornadoes) can overwhelm our control at an even quicker pace than fire. There is nothing humanly possible to stop the quick and often deadly force of the wind.

And finally rain and floods. If you've ever seen the power generated by flood waters first hand, you would know enough to stay very clear of them. As little as 1 foot of quickly moving water can move a full size car. Just recently on the news 2 story houses were shown washing away in the power of a flooded river. Bridges, road, houses, and the land itself are washed away by the power of water.

We need the air, rain and even fire (I don't care what you use to heat your house I bet something is burning to provide it) to survive and flourish, but we need to heed the hidden strength these things carry. It can sometimes make you feel very small to see the power released.

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## The end (of subbing)

Well, it is truly the end for the year. All districts have officially finished (well, one has a 50-minute day tomorrow, but that's beside the point). My last day of work, and only day this week, was Tuesday. I was a little stressed from my organic chemistry class the first time I subbed in that classroom and because of that had one of the TAs complain about me, but Tuesday actually went fine. I just let the TAs do the teaching- nothing I agreed on, but the one just automatically did the lessons. The lessons were only in the morning mind you. The afternoon was a rescheduled picnic. When I arrived, I saw that last Wednesday was the scheduled field day with the picnic scheduled the following day. When I read over the plans I found out the picnic was that day since it rained Thursday (and Friday, and Saturday, and... well you get the point). Besides the picnic, with a regular fourth grade class- the class I was in was a self-contained special ed class with six students- with games all afternoon, the class watched a movie off of [hulu.com](http://hulu.com), [Fudge-a-Mania](#), based off of [Judy Blume's](#) book, which was a sequel (published nearly 20 years later, and it's not even the most recent one!) to her popular [Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing](#) book. Interestingly enough, [Florence Henderson](#) and [Eve Plumb](#) played mom and daughter in this movie. Of course, the movie was from 1995 so Eve's character had her own children who were the focus of the movie. Nope, none of the rest of the bunch were in it.

So, what do I write about now? Well, at the moment it's kind of up in the air. I do want to write a longer piece on my new computer, which will probably appear on its own page so another site can link directly to it. Aside from that, I don't know. I will probably do at least a couple of camp

writeups as well at the end of the month, and maybe some preview from my last few years before I leave. Well, enough for now. Good night.

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## Vacation!

In case you've been wondering where I've been lately (or even if you haven't) – Grandma has helped us get one last little vacation before baby arrives. We were going to head to New York, but decided not to do that, thank goodness. Admittedly, the gas prices were the original deterrent, so then we explored taking a Greyhound bus there, but in my huge condition, I didn't see any opportunity for good rest on a long bus trip. I am really glad we declined the big trip, though, because my feet have been killing me, just from everyday tasks, like cleaning or shopping. I would have had to cut short all of our sight-seeing in New York or rent a wheelchair for the week. And staying home had afforded us time to do much needed catch-up work around the house. We've been making landscaping plans, and I will be very excited to see how that turns out in a few weeks when it's finished. We cleaned out the famous closet o' games, and we didn't even need to knock down the wall to expand the closet as I was talking about in another post. We found enough room for all of our games by sending all the kids' games upstairs to their room. Our house has lots of built-in shelving and drawers, and the kids had a huge cabinet in their closet that wasn't even being used. So, up went all the kids' games. I am a little concerned that they will tear apart their game collection and scatter pieces and whatnot, but they will have to be taught somehow that this is not going to be tolerated. Most importantly on our vacation without the kids, we achieved the cleaning of their room. It is a huge bedroom, and we have

all 3 of our girls sharing it, but until we cleaned it, they could barely fit in there because they had so many toys. Whenever we'd make them clean it, we noticed that they would play in there for such a long time afterward because they actually liked having all the open space. So we donated about 90% of their toys to charity while they were visiting with Grandma. It might sound mean, but we kept the important stuff, and like I said, they actually enjoy their room and the things in it much more when everything is picked up and they have fewer things to appreciate. I will keep you posted on how well (or not) this is received when they get home. They will probably forget exactly what toys they once had, and by donating everything, more kids can enjoy them.

Even though it took an entire day of cleaning to reach the bottom of the toy pile in their room, we have managed to fit in lots of fun for just hubby and me. We've gone shopping several times, and yesterday we were in Toledo all day getting good food, seeing a movie, and taking in a [Toledo MudHens](#) game. If you're not familiar, the MudHens are minor league baseball. I've been wanting to get to a [Chicago Cubs](#) game last year or this year, but with the baby coming, I've ruled it out until at least next year. So, minor league baseball it was, and we had a blast – I got my live baseball game fix for awhile... there's just something about hearing the crack of the bat, the slap of the ball in the glove and the other sounds of a baseball game in the beautiful summer night air. And it was a great game. Seems a player from the [Detroit Tigers](#) was rehabbing with the MudHens, so we got to see a major-leaguer pitch for a few innings. The Hens were up 3-0 early in the game, then they let Indianapolis tie it up, only to hit a walk-off homer in the 9th with 2 outs to win the game – awesome! And if you're not from the area and want to experience food that is uniquely Toledo, I recommend a restaurant called [Tony Packo's](#) to you. Their menu is somewhat limited; there aren't very many choices, so pass on it if you're a picky eater. But if you're like me and you like to

try all different kinds of ethnic food, give it a whirl. They serve Hungarian food, namely sausage, cabbage rolls, and chili mac over dumplings. It's really good and a unique dining experience. It's also really interesting how we heard of the restaurant in the first place. We were in a thrift store and I saw this stuffed baby in a diaper with a tomato head. I thought it was really cute, even though it creeped my husband out, but it was only 5¢ so I bought it. Turns out, it's a character from Tony Packo's as labeled on the rear end of the baby tomato. I googled Tony Packo's, found out it was a restaurant an hour away from us in Toledo, looked at the menu, and we decided to give it a try. The guy who works their marketing in the gift shop really liked that story. What's weird though, is that while gutting my kids' room this week, the baby tomato never surfaced. Hmmm, I wonder what happened to it?

Sometimes you get more of what you want from a vacation by staying home. In this age of the horribly high gas prices, the media has even coined a new word for the 'vacation taken at home', but I can't recall what it is. If you know, post it in my comments – it's bugging me that I can't think of it. Anyway, by staying home, we saved a ton of money on gas alone, and we got some things done around the house that we will appreciate for months or even years to come, all while having a great time with just each other, no kids! Thank you, Grandma!

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## **There Is Something To Fear**

Ever since the early days of television, there have been several anthology series dealing with the supernatural, the occult, terror, and things to scare the daylights out of

audiences. There was Alfred Hitchcock, Twilight Zone, Night Stalker, Tales from the Crypt, and Tales from the Darkside. There were a few instances that big screen horror movies lent their names to anthology series (anyone remember "[Freddy's Nightmares](#)" or "[Friday the 13th: The Series](#)"). This summer some writer's of big screen horror movies have created a new anthology entitled "Fear Itself" (Thursday Nights on NBC... 10pm Eastern Time).

The premiere episode, "The Sacrifice" dealt with four criminals (two of whom were brothers) who unwittingly become stranded in a nearly deserted fort. Nearly deserted except for a trio of seductive vixens who are the keepers of a dark, deadly secret,. The sirens entice their prey by feeding them (who knows what but whatever it is must have been appetizing), and then they become separated and the terror begins. One of the criminals, who is already injured, comes to a rather grisly end (at least grisly for a network television series). Another of the four bears an uncanny resemblance to Matt Damon who eventually becomes a member of the undead.

While the plot was pretty predictable, the episode did entertain and was creepy for (again) a network series and I plan to continue watching the rest of the 13 segments.



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## Time Travel...

I commented on something in another site, that got me thinking about time travel, instantaneous travel, and relativistic travel. Some heavy thinking for this late in the day, but I'm here now.

Time travel has been in our collective stories for centuries. The early stories were all using magic or wishes to go back in time. This was used to correct mistakes, make different choices or somehow get something you missed out on. I don't have any of the myths and stories available to me at the moment, but I seem to remember a common theme. It generally didn't work out the way it was planned. That doesn't always mean bad things happened, just not the planned things.

In 1895 H. G. Wells published a book where a machine was used to travel back in time. [The Time Machine](#) was one of the early science fiction works on time travel. Many other authors have written works on time travel, and there have been many movies and even a TV show or two about time travel. As these stories progressed, the time travel paradox was brought up. What would happen if you went back in time and prevented your birth sort of thing. This stuff can get deep quickly, so I'll leave it for another topic. I was just thinking about the time travel stories..

Then we have instantaneous or faster than light travel. Used in almost every Space science fiction story known this type of travel was invented by the story tellers out of need. They needed to get from one end of the Galaxy to the other without writing about long voyages or worse yet relativity. Transporters on [StarTrek](#) were made to save money on the effects of a shuttle craft landing. If you ever noticed the when a shuttle craft was used in the original series, it was always a plot device, and that justified the cost.

But of course, Einstein said that the Universe has a speed limit, the speed of light. That gets rid of the instantaneous/faster than light travel, but again brings back the time travel story. Space ship captain goes away an some high fraction of the speed of light, comes back to earth and finds out many many years have passed on earth and his twin brother is now a very old man.... I remember a story or two like that, but I don't recall them at the present.

Just a few thoughts off the top of my head, so I can relax and get some rest...

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## Sad sack droopy drawers

This of course comes from the famous [South Pacific](#) by Rodgers and Hammerstein. However, the latter part refers to boys and their shorts (or pants). It would seem that the older or darker the kids are, the lower the shorts. There have been many times I have had to tell them to pull the shorts up. Of course, just like runners in the hall continue when the teacher is out of sight, the shorts will come back down as well- I'm realistic. But I tell 'em anyway. I recall one black student who had his pants down past his buttocks. He had to have a belt buckled tightly or they would have finished the journey down unhindered. I have had another student tell me it was okay to wear his shorts so low because he was black. But of course it isn't just black students, but as I said older students like to do this as well, as I witness in eighth grade especially and some of the high school leaders in church. In fact, during the camp meeting a few weeks ago the camp (and high school) director flatly said the shorts stay up or he will give them a rope to hold them up.

I have gotten softer on this lately and will usually tell them if they want to wear them low, they have to compensate with a long shirt. Basically, as long as I can't see what color their underwear is I'm happy. The problem is when they sit. The amount the shirt covers is a lot less than when they are standing, so I constantly have to say thing like, "I'm pretty sure I'm not supposed to know you are wearing red plaid underwear." They usually take the hint and pull them up.

This fashion I am told started in prisons, where guys would show they are "available," if you know what I mean. How this got out of the prisons and to our youth I have no idea, but sadly it shows why black boys tend to do it more as they are vastly over-represented (by demographics) in jail. It can't be comfortable. I certainly know how uncomfortable it feels when I forget to put on a belt and my pants are just a bit loose. I suppose they do it for the same reason adolescents do most things adults don't like- because the adults don't like it ("heh, heh- I have to live in the old man's house following his rules, so I'll get him back by doing stuff he hates!").

Then there are the younger boys. Usually there is no problem with them, but today I ran into the opposite case. I was in a very low LD class today and one of the students had his shorts pulled *up* as high as possible. This is often seen on more, ah, *senior* men (covering up the *tire*- I have been tempted to do the same, which I resist by picturing what I would look like to others if I did!) but not so much on kids. Perhaps part of what made it look odd was that the shirt was tucked in, another rare occurrence among our youth. In any event, I didn't say anything as no one had a problem with it and at least the shorts pulled in this direction didn't reveal what was underneath.

Another trend I've noticed is age affects the size or length of clothing as well. With the girls the clothes get smaller (see [this picture](#) for an example that is sort of an analogue to this topic- it shows undergarments by year, but the outerwear by age follows the same trend...) and with the boys the shorts get longer. Girls seem to want to reveal more as they get older (and they wonder why teenage sex is a problem) while the boys want to reveal less. I think this was true in the eighties too. Some I know didn't wear shorts at all no matter the heat. My brother was one of them.

Well, I think I will stop here. Some of you are already wondering about me, a guy, writing about something like this.

Yes, I'm done. Definitely done.

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# In With The Old; Out With The New

I recently discovered a website totally devoted to one of my favorite television series from my youth. [\*The Bionic Woman\*](#) was a dynamite spin-off from the successful [\*Six Million Dollar Man\*](#). Lindsay Wagner starred as Jaime Sommers, a former tennis pro who after a nearly fatal skydiving accident was endowed with bionic limbs (two legs, right arm, and right ear) that not only allowed her to function normally but gave her great speed, the ability to lift enormous amounts of weight, leap great distances, and hear sounds from a five mile radius (don't quote me on that). The character was introduced on a two-part episode of the *Six Million Dollar Man* as the childhood sweetheart of Steve Austin, the bionic man (played by Lee Majors). In her debut episode, Jaime was killed as a result of a brain clot precipitated by her body's rejection of the bionics. However, fan response was so great that the character was revived and eventually given her own series.

Jamie (as well as her male counterpart) was an agent for the Office of Scientific Investigation (O.S.I.). She had the cover of a junior high school teacher. Each week, she was assigned to battle spies, international terrorists, or evil robots called Fembots. On occasion the bionic woman and bionic man would have crossover episodes. On a few occasions, the duo would come face to face with Sasquatch, the mythical Bigfoot. In the final season of *The Bionic Woman*, Jaime became the guardian of Maxmillian, the bionic dog.

Cheesy, definitely by today's standards; however, I much prefer the adventures of the ORIGINAL bionic woman to the failed "updated" version from last season that lasted all of 5-6 episodes. The writers strike may have been the final nail in the coffin, but it seriously lacked the heart that both previous series had.

You can either relive or introduce yourself to classic episodes of *The Bionic Woman* at the [Official Bionic Woman website](#). You just have to love the cool bionic sound effects. On a personal note, my family took a trip to California in 1978 and visited Universal Studios where many of the set pieces for the series were on display. My brothers and I were locked in a jail and bent the steel bars of the cell, escaped, and flipped over a van. Jaime Sommers... not a bad name for a very attractive character.

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## What makes an interesting Blog

I've only been blogging for a little while, but I've been reading blogs for longer than they've been called blogs. While I won't say I created the internet, I've been on it since for a very long time. So now I'm asking the question what makes an interesting Blog? Of course, since this is my blog, I'm going to answer that question too. At least in my opinion. ☐

The first thing that draws my attention to a blog is the person who writes it. I don't hop from blog site to blog site looking for blogs to read. My personal preference, but to each their own. The second is content. Here I will do searches and sometimes find blogs that fit my search. If they have good

content, I will read them. Are they accurate if it is an informational blog? Funny if a humorous blog? Clever, fun, easy to read, catches the eye, interesting. All these play a role in the content of the blog. Finally, blog personality. How does the person writing the blog 'sound'? Do they seem like a person I could get along with, or get in an argument with (I like a good argument every now and again)? Does the blogger seem real?

That's it one paragraph on what makes a good blog for me. And I have found them. Check my blog links, they are some good ones. Unfortunately, one of my favorite blogs is no longer in existence. My nephew wrote a blog years ago, but for some reason gave it up. Some of the most interesting reading I've ever seen, from a person I only thought I knew. His blog was everything a good blog should be.

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## How Much Per Pound?



While reading the newspaper the other day, I read on the front page in the little box beside the banner about an airline that charges passengers by the pound in order to fly. Not the weight of your baggage, but by the passengers body mass as well. The masterminds behind the rather humorously named Derri-Air (a play on the French term *derriere* or bottom, bumb, rump, behind, I think you get the point). Apparently the owners are environmentally-conscious fellows who want to find a way to offset the amount of carbon emissions released by airplanes. For every pound of emissions released by Derri-Air aircraft, they will plant plant trees.

However, the geniuses also want passengers to do their part.

Because it takes more fuel and energy to transport a corpulent passenger from point A to point B, the airline charges less for customers who weigh less. For instance, a flight from Philadelphia to Los Angeles will cost a traveler \$2.25/lb. You will be treated like royalty as there are no class divisions only the best service and amenities are provided by the finest attendants one could wish.

You can read more about Dick Derrie and his mission “to offer passengers the finest luxury experience in all the world’s skies and the freedom to enjoy it with a clear conscience” by [clicking here](#)

Ok... so the name was not intended as a play on words, but was named for the creator. I just found the name catchy. Dick Derrie must be proud and the “butt” of many jokes.... sorry, I had to.

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## The Mole Week 2

After getting to watch week #2 of the new Mole season UNINTERRUPTED by kids since they’re with Grandma this week (can’t put a price on that by the way, it’s funny how simple pleasures like watching a favorite tv show uninterrupted can feel really nice :)), I am going to change my mole guess from Clay to Kristen. I don’t really have a good reason why; she was just acting kind of moley. And her way of sabotaging the task could have been to get that chain to keep falling off the bike, cuz that was unfortunate. Clay had like, one comment during the whole episode, and I just don’t think they would shove the mole into the background like that. And I have to add that I just knew this week was going to be the end of Liz somehow. Chris thinks the mole is Paul, going with his first

week's guess. I guess what I will do is give everybody a point for every week they guess the mole correctly at the end once we find out who it is. Do you have a guess this week, Jamiahsh? I got your comment on my other mole post, and I will repost it here:

*After watching the first 2 episodes. It is definitely NOT BOBBY. Trying way too hard to draw attention to himself with his 'overexertion. It could be Alex... unless he really did leave his journal behind by mistake.*

Interesting comment. We too, think that Bobby is drawing way too much attention to himself to be the mole. He's just coming across as a lazy jerk, and it's not fun to watch. I will go with Chris' theory on him – he is trying to throw off other players by acting like the mole. I see Alex as the guy who wins everything – there's always one of those on every reality show – and I don't think he's the mole. I don't know whether or not he left his journal laying around on purpose. He could have done so or he could have left it accidentally and just tried to cover it up with the explanation of trying to throw others off. But anyway, another good episode, and here is where we stand on mole guesses:

Lisa – Clay, Kristen

Chris – Paul, Paul

Jamiahsh – Clay, ?