

# Goodbye To Yet Another Childhood Fixture

In a shocking turn of events, it has been announced that Ronald McDonald will be getting a makeover. Apparently, the chain wants to promote a healthier, trendier menu. OK... are we getting rid of Happy Meals, the Big Mac (hold the pickle), and all the rest? I can;t believe that they would be doing away with the character totally with the Ronald McDonald House which he has given his name to for the past several years. While the decades (48 years to be exact) old fixture has not been as visible in ads for the fast food chain, I remember my birthday party the summer after I completed Kindergarten (I think I was 9 at the time... I had a little problem with eating glue... HAHA!). McDs was the place to celebrate when you were a child of the mid-70s... my corner of the woods did not have a Chuck E Cheese or Crazy Pinz.

<https://www.dailyfinance.com/2011/03/03/ronald-mcdonald-put-to-pasture-as-fast-food-chain-gentrifies/>

Hope the video doesn't frighten anyone TOO much.

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## Another Wonder Gone

Ironic that I just posted about the defunct new Wonder Woman series. After 33 performances (and 31 preview performances), [Wonderland](#) wrapped its Broadway run May 15th. The new musical about a grown up Alice who yearns for a more adventure-filled life, sets out on a quest beneath the streets of New York City. There she meets a cast of familiar yet outrageously re-imagined characters. Funny that with such a short run, the show had produced a cast album. I suppose that when your wife is [Linda Eder](#) who has a recording of some of the songs, it would be entirely possible. I wonder if somewhere out there is a cast recording of the most celebrated (celebrated but by far NOT the only) flop in Broadway history... *Carrie*.

Sad to say that I do not think Frank Wildhorn has had a long Broadway run since *Jekyll & Hyde*. Although J&H had a 4 year run, it still lost \$1.5 million. His *Scarlet Pimpernel* and *Dracula* also were not successful. I guess that being married to a diva is no guarantee of creative success. OOPS... according to another source the couple has been separated since 2004. So much for that theory.

Maybe the show was overshadowed by an endlessly publicized, overtly ridiculed, accident prone, re-imagined, back in preview mode, soon to open show. Hmmm.... wonder what that is?

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# On The Other Side Of The Audition

Since my leg still will not allow me to audition for a full-length show, I had to settle for assisting the audition process for [FCF's](#) production of one of my all-time favorites, *The Wizard of Oz*. Although it was fun hanging out, signing the auditioners in, I really REALLY wanted to be one of those who filled out the form, had his headshot taken, and led down the long hallway to face the three rather intimidating ;)judges. It was so hard to just not throw caution to the wind and say "To heck with it!" and grab "Master of the House" out of the car and deliver my best Lion. I really don't think it would have been so hard if it was not THIS musical (ok... who am I fooling?). But I WILL be back on some stage in some venue soon! I am confident in that!

In total, we had 22 people sign in. Most of them were teenage girls. We had a few young kids and a few adults but no where near enough to choose a cast of this shows magnitude. We really need more of the same to come in tomorrow from 9am-2pm. I think we had two guys total. Squirmy even held back a few minutes after his audition ended and asked how I am doing. Better... just annoyed, but I'm plowing through it.

So... if anyone in the area is available (Age 8-80+) stop by the Wesley United Methodist Church in Bryan from 9-2. Kids... be prepared to sing "Happy Birthday"; "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"; or some other like song. Adults... have a two minute prepared song and be prepared to read from the script. To say that I wish I could audition is an understatement, but I know what must come first.

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# What's The Use Of Wonder-ing

Well... it looks like one contender for next fall's NBC lineup is now defunct. The network passed on the new adventures of the Amazonian Princess after a disastrous screening of the pilot. I wonder if it will ever be shown... probably over the internet in the coming days. I remember a few years ago, the creators of another superhero inspired series attempted to bring a live-action Aquaman series to the small screen. It too failed but the pilot was shown on outlets like itunes.

Perhaps, the shows creators will continue to shop it around. Either way, at least we will not have to be disappointed by another heartless update of another television series gone by.

I dunno if it would have been the comic book geek in me or the nostalgic value of the series. Of course, the updated Bionic Woman travesty did nothing to endear itself to anyone and the Knight Rider update lasted about as long. Maybe it was the new [costume](#)? Personally, I prefer the original Lynda Carter version ☐

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## Should I?

Monday night I was at the library browsing DVDs and such. I found a few- a reserve waiting for me for season 4 of Psych, ah Megamind- I think I will watch that one, many, many skipped for one reason or other (seen before, lack of interest). Moving on. Wait, what's this? Should this even be on the return cart? It should have a reserve list a mile long. Ah, I get it- "Here and Now," meaning that they chose not to allow reserves on it, though no doubt there are a couple dozen copies available for reserve too. A few copies then to give people a sporting chance without having to wait months on the

reserve list. So which recent blockbuster am I talking about? None other than Harry Potter 7.1. The thing is, I have been gambling as it were on a short return to the big screen just before 7.2 next month. If anyone would do it, it would be AMC, the biggest chain around and with a 30-screen complex about 10 miles away. But I don't know if this will really happen- I certainly haven't heard news of it. But they have done it before, so...

Yet, now I have a copy in my that I could watch now, for free, in a much smaller and lower-resolution venue as a DVD on a 32-inch CRT TV. What should I do? Hmm.

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## Goodbye Childhood Classics

FIRST, it was the recent [Red Riding Hood](#) which looked totally asinine. Now, I hear of not one but two updates of [Snow White](#). Finally today no less, I learn that "the boy who never grew up" is getting a new adult makeover. [Pan](#) is going to revolve around Captain Hook and his partner Smee who are on the lookout for the title character, a serial killer who preys upon young children... . DEPLORABLE! I mean, this story could just as easily been named something else, the names changed to protect memories of childhood gone by. No... I do not intend to watch any of these masterpieces but when I hear that classic tales which millions of children have grown up on are skewed into such utter trash, then I think it is worth a post!

I just have to wonder who the intended audience is for this rubbish. Certainly not the toddler set who have been read these tales for years. I would think that the wise (?) adult movie-goer would be turned off. Maybe it is the Twilight-obsessed teenage female set? I just have to shake my head at

the very thought of such travesties. I thought the Jim Carrey *Grinch* movie was a disaster... at least that presented some resemblance of the classic Dr. Seuss tale.

Is this Hollywood's attempt to bring originality to the big screen?

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## Sharing the Stage with a Monkey

Tonight was my first recital EVER and the first time I have been on a stage since I graced the halls of Baskerville Hall WAAAAAAAY back in October. Last Thursday, K was not sure where in the program of 12 students she wanted to put CC and I. When I arrived at the Little Theatre, I found out that we would be last! "Who would want to follow you?" she asked. WOW!

I have always, ALWAYS, ALWAYS wanted to perform the showstopping "Master of the House" from *Les Miserables* and I am so glad that it was the piece I chose to do. Not to worry, plenty of other things I want to do, too. In the context of a recital, the song lends itself beautifully to a bit of audience participation. I needed two "Monsieurs" to come in at various times during the song. One was a fellow student (named Davy Jones) who was more than willing to fill the bill.

The other was a little (or more so) hesitant about the bit since he had no advance knowledge. But happily, he played along. Thanks justj! I do think the guillotine in my old age would be the way to go.

If I had one critique, it is the size of the stage we performed on. The other 11 participants were all seated

upstage and all the equipment limited the amount of movement I could do. I could always do more with the song no matter the size of the stage... so not really complaining!

The end result was **EXTRAORDINARY!** An audience member said that I was “the best Thenardier” she had ever seen. I’m not sure how the other 11 did but they sounded good. CC and I were in the green room until it was our turn. Kind of a grand introduction if you will. Either that or she did not want a slovenly innkeeper and his wife slopping up the stage the entire time ☐

Thank you CC, justj, Monkeyman, and K for making my first recital super! And in all the excitement prior to heading for the theatre, I forgot to take my rat poison but did take it before typing the post.

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## **Widower’s rant. You’ve been warned.**

Just read a comic strip that involves a widower. His new love interest said the following words to him: “today was special... Because it was the first time I didn’t see Lisa in your eyes.”. Ok, that did it. Something in me tripped, and I knew I had a rant to write.

So many problems with those thoughts. But let’s go back a bit in the life of a widow, widower, and just about everyone else. If you are not a hermit, there is a good chance that you will meet people who have great influence in your life. Whatever lessons you learn, you keep them close to your heart and mind. These things are important to you and they become part of who you are. To remove them is to remove part of your being.

Now, take the situation of a widow/widower who had a good relationship. (this was the situation of the characters in the comic strip, and my life for what it is worth.). They spent a good many years with on person, and that influence was immense. Then at some point, the relationship is torn apart and the surviving party only has memories to see them through what ever lies ahead.

The relationship, the following period of grief, and everything else that follows becomes part of who you are. But your only connection to your best friend, lover, parent to your children is in the memories you retain. If you believe that the eyes are the windows to the soul than a reflection of your dead spouse remans and is reflected out. It is a part you don't want to lose.

I guess if I heard those words from someone I felt close to, I would need an explanation. The reflections of my late wife that you may see in my eyes, made me who I am. I am not looking to remove or replace those memories. I'm looking to build new memories. Hopefully the new memories will build on and add to the old memories. The minute I feel that someone is trying to replace my memories is the time I say so long.

What you see in me today is the result of all of my experiences in life. I cannot remove parts of my past and remain the same person I am today. I cannot live life tomorrow without changing who I will be. What you see in me tomorrow, is the result of all I experienced through today.

Rant over.

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# The Return of the Commodore 64?

It holds the Guinness World record for best-selling single computer model of all time, so who had a Commodore 64?



My family had one when I was growing up, and I enjoyed playing hours of games on it. I remember how novel it was that we could create a sign, card, or banner on the computer and then print it out – complete with pixel-riddled graphics and what-do-you-call those side strips on the paper with the holes in them that you tear off and either discard or twist them together and make art out of them. My uncle had a subscription to Loadstar, which was a Commodore club of sorts – he would get magazines and new games monthly in the mail. I used to love some of those Loadstar games, unfortunately, I can't find them to play on emulators now. I really enjoyed an Activision game called Toy Bizarre, and my all time favorite game for the Commodore 64 was Maniac Mansion – I was addicted to it until I won it, and then I had to go back and win it with all the different character combinations. They did make a version of Maniac Mansion for the original Nintendo, but I was biased toward my Commodore version. I always thought that game would make a great movie (think Clue), and when I was younger, I tried to write the game into a novel but never finished it.

So what's got me thinking back to the 80's days of the Commodore today? I came across an article on [cnn.com](http://cnn.com) about how advance orders are being taken for the resurrection of the

Commodore here in 2011. It's being made to look just like the Commodores of the 80's, but it will have today's computer capacities since the '64' in Commodore 64 referred to the unit having 64 Kilobytes of memory – about the equivalent of one long email, according to the article. If you'd like to read the article, [click here](#).

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## One More Episode

The end of a 10 year odyssey is upon those who have been able to follow the formative years of Clark Kent on the series *Smallville*. I like to think of the series as an Elsewhere's storyline (one in which much of what you know about a character is somehow altered). Characters were introduced earlier than what long time fans were accustomed to. The "No Flights, No Tights" scenario concocted by the show's creators has been adhered to but something tells me that this may change as the young man finally fully accepts his destiny. If not, then I sense a HUGE letdown... even if it is for the last seconds of the series.

My favorite parts of the series were definitely the guest appearances of the past keepers of the Superman legacy. Dean Cain played a villain. Teri Hatcher played Lois Lane's mother (how ironic). Margot Kidder made an appearance. Get this... Terence Stamp (who played the EVIL General Zod in Superman I and II) has been the voice of Jor-El (Superman's father) for the last several years. Finally before his untimely tragic death, MY Superman, Christopher Reeve made two memorable appearances as Dr. Virgil Swan who taught Clark more about his Kryptonian heritage. The two episodes were definitely my favorite. It was if a torch was being passed from one man of steel to another. Not forgetting that Annette O'Toole (who

plays Martha Kent on *Smallville*) portrayed Clark Kent's high school sweetheart Lana Lang in *Superman III*.

So, while not always the most faithful of shows to what has come before, it will be very strange not to see new episodes of the series after this Fridays 2 hour series finale. Which will leave one must see show on the air.