

Three Is A Magic Number?

Today, I have had three very strange occurrences involving the same numbers. I was called downstairs at 8 o'clock to be asked if I had to be at work ("No, not until 12"). At 9, I received a phone call informing that our manager goofed and really meant for me to be there at 8 (a good thing I was ready to go). At 9:19 precisely, I clocked in. A few minutes later, I waited on a customer whose purchases totaled \$9.19. The very next customer had a completely different set of items and her total came to \$9.19. Now if something strange happens at 9:19 this evening, I will know that I have stepped into ["The Twilight Zone."](#)

semi high speed

I'm moving up in the world. I now have semi high speed internet. I have a internet connection through my cell phone company, and it works!!!

For those who don't know, I live out in the middle of no where. I have no chance of getting cable, DSL, Fiber Optic, and even our local wireless. I could get satellite, but I would need to cut down a few trees, since I live in the woods and have no clear southern skies. I've been using a dial-up connection for years. Now have speeds at least 4 times as fast, sometimes more. I think if I get a good external antenna for the receiver, I will approach DSL speeds most of the time. I am just impressed by this.

I'm going to be checking some things out over the next few days, and if all works out, I will be getting rid of my dial-up account, or at least going back to the free 10 hour deal

with ads. If I get rid of the dial-up completely, I may get rid of my land phone at the same time. That would more than pay for my high speed connection. Cool stuff, no install fee, the hardware was free with rebates, and I didn't have to cut any trees.

Six Little Engines That Tried

Tonight was the episode of "American Idol" that I have been waiting to see since season two. Not because it featured music from the Andrew Lloyd Webber songbook but that a good question was posed to a certain British judge whom everyone admires greatly: "Given the rather negative comments you pose to performers who would be better suited for the Broadway stage how does one approach these songs?" Mr Cowell responded: "Make them memorable yet contemporary." A rather cryptic response if ever there was one.

Six contestants remain. Those who were familiar with the songs showed it and those who were less familiar showed it (perhaps even more so).

Sysha Mercado started the evening with "One Rock & Roll Too Many" from [Starlight Express](#). Not being extremely familiar with the show, I cannot say too much about it. However, the bluesy rendition was quite nice.

The next contestant, Jason Castro, did not fare as well. Even Lord Andrew commented that he never thought he would see the day when "Memory" would be sung by a young man in dreadlocks. The composer even provided a bit of background into the character from [Cats](#) who performs the song ("a rather old glamour puss"). Jason looked like the proverbial deer in the headlights on stage.

The halftime performer, Brooke White, also had difficulty. The song "You Must Love Me" was composed by Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice for the [movie version](#) of *Evita*. It is sung by Eva Peron (played by Madonna) on her deathbed. Unfortunately, Brooke lost her lyric in the first line, stopped, apologized, and started over. I'm not sure if this would be allowed in an actual audition but to do so on a television show which is seen by (reportedly) millions of people each week takes some degree of chutzpah.

The "contestant to beat" this year, 17-year-old David Archuleta, chose to take a diva song of nearly operatic proportions and turn it into a boy band pop ballad. Lloyd Webber wrote the role of Christine in [Phantom of the Opera](#) specifically for his wife at the time, Sarah Brightman. For a young man to change such a song with the composer sitting in the audience watching and listening takes a great deal of courage. However, good ol' Simon did not find the performance especially memorable.

The Irish female rocker, Carly Smithson, decided to change her song from "All I Ask of You" to the title track of [Jesus Christ Superstar](#). A wise choice on her part.

However, the final performer did not choose wisely. Male rocker David Cook attempted to sing "Music of the Night." The rendition was as unimpressive as the movie version of [Phantom of the Opera](#). I was hoping he would chose a song better suited to his rock sensibilities, but he decided to go a different route and it just did not work.

I guess I found half of the performances enjoyable. But as Lord Andrew told most of the contestants: you must know not only what you are singing but also what you are singing about. Find the meaning behind the words.

Spring is in the Air = BABIES!!!

CONGRATULATIONS to my sister in Illinois, who gave birth to a healthy 8 lb. 15 oz. baby boy today!!! I can't wait to see pictures of the little darling, and I will post them when I get them (HINT HINT - no, just kidding, I know you have much more important things to do right now than to worry about sending pictures) I just wish I could hold him! And Congratulations to Austin on becoming a big brother - it's an important job buddy; I know you'll be a great one! Welcome, Ryan Timothy!

Other baby news - our kids' babysitter's cat had kittens the other day. Look how unbelievably cute they are:



See if you can count 'em - makes a good picture puzzle, doesn't it? There are 6 -

the little orange one kinda blends in with the towel - he's unique!

My daughter's teacher had her baby, and my two cousins also had their babies, which means 3 of my grandmother's 4 expected great-grandchildren for this year are here already! I am the last one standing ☐

Seriously, I feel left out, being the only one left pregnant out of all the women I knew who were expecting. I am ecstatic that all the babies are healthy and thriving though - that is truly something to be thankful for! For the most part, I love being pregnant, though I have to say this one is the most difficult pregnancy yet in some ways. Also the easiest in some ways too, so it's not all bad... But my feet are killing me constantly... I feel like I can't stand for more than 10-15 minutes at a time, and with a toddler and 2 other little kids to care for, that is a tough feeling to have. Plus I'm exhausted much of the time, and have terrible heartburn a lot... all this and 3 months to go, not to mention the fact that the weather is only getting nicer, then it will get really hot and then I'll just be miserable. I hate not having the energy or the desire to go outside to enjoy these nice days... it makes me feel guilty, especially because it means my toddler can't enjoy them with me. Is it mean for her to be couped up in the house with me on gorgeous days like today? She doesn't seem to mind though, and we do play together lots while I'm sitting down, so it can't be all bad... I just tell myself that in August I will have much more energy and time to enjoy the weather. It's hard to imagine now, but some of the fatigue and aches and pains will lift, I HOPE!

Holy Regrettable Cooking Show, Batman!

For our date night tonight, we decided to attend the much hyped cooking show sponsored by our local newspaper. Maybe that explains why it was so hyped right there - being sponsored by the newspaper = lots of free advertising, and since I read the paper every day, maybe it was drilled into my

head that this thing would be fun. Was I ever wrong.

It began when we arrived only 10 minutes before the show started, and every seat was full. It was held in the high school gym, which means we now had to find seats in the bleachers and squeeze past everyone else – pregnancy bump and all. I was so close to turning around and leaving right then and there; the fact that I didn't was my second mistake after buying the tickets to attend the thing in the first place. Apparently our local high school has no air conditioning, because the 1500 or so people who were crammed into the gym were all fanning themselves with their free cookbooks. Which brings me to another reason why I thought this thing would be such great fun. The tickets were \$10 / person, then there were coupons in the paper for \$3 off, which brings each ticket to \$7. They advertised a "bag full of samples, goodies, and free cookbooks" to every attendee, along with a chance to win lots of pretty cool door prizes. The sample bag was alright – no complaints there. The "choosing which wine with dinner" wheel made a great fan to combat the heat, I must say, and I'm not the only one who thought so – most of the 1500 sardines in attendance were using it as such. But on the way into the show, apparently that's when they handed out the doorprize entry blank and the free can of chili sauce, and somehow (maybe it was my panic when I saw the crowd we'd have to conquer to find a seat) I missed getting either handout. So, here we were, sitting on the bleachers packed in like sardines in 100°+ heat, and I've just found a way to cut our chances of winning a doorprize *in half*. Even though we were a little on the late side, that actually turned out to be a good thing because by the time we bumped and stumbled into our seats (ie, the square foot of space each person was allowed for their person, legs, knees, pregnancy bumps etc.), the "show" was ready to begin, thank goodness. Except it became clear that once the show began, it was not going to pick up pace. It was a woman on a stage making recipes (she was there to do 8 of them she said!) so far away that you couldn't see anything she

was doing. Her “jokes” were lame, and she barely had a personality. So now, this was hot, boring, uncomfortable for my aching body, and my chances of winning a cool grill are like 1 in 1500 instead of 2 in 1500? Forget being polite or wasting money. Our time is so much more important; especially with 3.5 kids. We bumped and stumbled our way out of there, same way we got in, mumbled our apologies for stepping on people, and didn’t look back. We fled the cooking show.

So that brings me to the Batman reference in the title of this post. When we went to pick up the kids at the babysitter’s after the cooking show debacle, we went in her laundry room to check out the 2-day-old kittens... all of a sudden, screams erupted. I’m normally not a screamer, really more of a gasper when I get startled, but the babysitter and her daughter and my daughters were ahead of me in the laundry room and saw a bat. Their screams made me scream – I’m not afraid of a little Ohio brown bat, I swear, but apparently screaming is contagious. So both of our husbands come running, and hers goes for a broom. Mine respects how sensitive I am about animals, so he asked for a bowl and was going to capture it. So they open the door, only to find the mommy cat had beaten the babysitter’s husband to the murder of the bat. She devoured it whole, and there was really nothing left for me to be sad about, so I pretended it didn’t happen, took pictures of the really cute kittens, and left. What a night!

Jokes

I’m too tired to blog today, so here are a few jokes off the ‘net. Hopefully tomorrow I will have a real post for you. Enjoy!

A lesson about blood flow and circulation

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. Trying to make the matter clearer, he said: "Now, students, if I stood on my head the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I should turn red in the face."

"Yes, sir," the boys said.

"Then why is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary position the blood doesn't run into my feet?"

A little fellow shouted, "'It's because yer feet ain't empty."

Kids' Perspective

Kids' Views on School

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. "I'm wasting my time," she said to her mother.

"I can't read, I can't write – and they won't let me talk!"

On the way home from the first day of school, the father asked his son, "What did you do at school today?"

The little boy shrugged his shoulders and said, "Nothing".

Hoping to draw his son into conversation, the father persisted and said, "Well, did you learn about any numbers, study certain letters, or maybe a particular color?"

The perplexed child looked at his father and said, "Daddy, didn't you go to school when you were a little boy?"

The homework schedule

Here is an explanation of the school homework policy for the average student. Students should not spend more than ninety minutes per night. This time should be budgeted in the following manner if the student desires to achieve moderate to good grades in his/her classes.

15 minutes looking for assignment.

11 minutes calling a friend for the assignment.

23 minutes explaining why the teacher is mean and just does not like children.

8 minutes in the bathroom.

10 minutes getting a snack.

7 minutes checking the TV Guide.

6 minutes telling parents that the teacher never explained the assignment.

10 minutes sitting at the kitchen table waiting for Mom or Dad to do the assignment.

Expanded Universe repeating history

I have been thinking about how the authors are killing a lot of the more popular characters off more and more often in Star Wars. Chewbacca, Grand Admiral Thrawn (though Timothy Zahn didn't know he was going to become a favorite), Anakin Solo, Mara Jade Skywalker, and I'm sure there are more that I'm not

thinking about. I believe that once they kill off the some more, mostly Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Leia Organa Solo, they will have to stop going forward into the series. They will have to go back and work from there. Though I might be wrong because the Solo children (Jacen and Jaina) and the Skywalker boy (Ben) might have cought the younger generation. They might want to continue reading about what happened to them, but so many who have grown up with Star Wars will most likely stop reading once at least when those three are gone. I might continue reading to see where they go, but it seems like they are redoing the movies (prequels). One of the Skywalkers is turning to the Dark Side trying to save something. In this case, Jacen turned to save the galaxy from war. Instead, he has just made it worse!

For Your Eyes Only

Is it just me or do some of the titles on my posts seem misleading. I am nothing if not creative. Today, I escorted my mother to the eye doctor to have her eyes dilated. Believe it or not there were some rather humorous moments waiting in the reception area. There was a patient who must have been extremely bored as she got up, walked to the 12" TV/VCR/DVD combo and attempted to get it to play something besides the Toshiba menu making its way across the screen. Finally, she managed to start the disc playing. She commented that it was the same disc that was playing the last time she was in the office (I sense a link coming up there... but hey, ya know). The woman must be a regular.

The movie playing was [Seabiscuit](#) starring [Tobey Maguire](#). Since it has been a few years since I have seen the movie about the thoroughbred and his jockey, I cannot honestly give

a full review but I remember that I did enjoy it. I do recall that Maguire needed to lose a fair amount of weight after playing Spider-Man to portray Red Pollard. Then after filming was completed for *Seabiscuit*, he had to hit the gym again to bulk up to play the superhero a second time. At least Maguire will not be typecast as a popcorn idol, summer blockbuster star as he has made several other films before and since which have been well received by critics and viewers ([The Cider House Rules](#), [The Ice Storm](#), and [Pleasantville](#) to name a few). Additionally, he also served as Executive Producer for *Seabiscuit*.

Although it did get a bit boring once the television whiz got called for her appointment, there was an adorable 3 year-old girl who kept those of us waiting entertained by explaining the trials and tribulations of a child. Apparently, a scary monster hid under her bed one night causing her to run into her parents' room to be consoled. She was not exactly sure what the creature looked like it was definitely "big and UUUUUUGLY." The monster "sure did" go away after the precocious tot told it to.

The colorful people waiting in the lobby kept the waiting to a minimum; however, next time I will have to remember to take a book of some kind... hopefully a script. It has been a few months since I have had one. Perhaps by then I will begin to make my titles better fit the post... BUT I DOUBT IT!!!!!! That would just be no fun.

Spring is in the air

It's that time of year again. Sun, warmer weather, swimming and yep, you guessed it, sunblock. Lots and lots of it. I was

outside yesterday for about an hour and half. I thought nothing of it. It was a beautiful day and I wanted to get out of that school. The weather was just calling to me, and no one else was out there, so I went. I lay in the sun reading my book and relaxing. I went back inside and I was burnt. I had forgotten that even in the spring I can burn very easily. My arms are much better, but my nose and face still hurt a little if I scratch it or wrinkle my nose. I will have to get a small bottle of sunblock to carry around with me everywhere. ☐

Shaken Gang Syndrome

I am a current events junkie, so of course I've been following the recent story of the earthquake in southern Illinois. This earthquake was pretty strong; so strong, that tremors were felt as far away as large cities like Chicago, Indianapolis, and even Atlanta, Georgia.

Another recent headline in the news lately is the rash of gun violence in the city of Chicago. Seems the previous weekend saw 36 people shot in the city, 9 of them fatally. [Click here for that story.](#) Since they're saying that the midwest basically has not stopped shaking since the the earthquake last Friday, let me offer up a possible explanation for this phenomena: Shaken Gang Syndrome.

Sure, the gangs in Los Angeles can handle earthquakes without batting an eye, but it's not something that people in the midwest have had to adjust to. Maybe the instability of the earth's crust contributes to people feeling emotionally unstable, and this is illustrated with rising violence and civil unrest.

All jokes aside, let's hope this weekend's skyrocketing

violent crime rate was an isolated incident in Chicago. The Chicago PD would like you to note that for the month of March, the violent crime rate was down by a whopping 1% compared to March 2007, so that is promising news!