

Florida 2011

Well, I've been back in town from a glorious family vacation to Florida for a few days now, and realistically, I guess I could say that I'm getting back on track. But catching up is going so slowly, and it's easy to feel overwhelmed and like I'll never be done. But you know what? With 4 small children in the house, I NEVER feel caught up on the to-dos, even when I don't leave town, so what does it matter if I took a week and a half off? It was great! Eventually I'll get around to posting an in-depth trip diary – these have come in such handy when I go back to find the name of a restaurant we visited or certain info about the trip; it's fun for reminiscence purposes too. For now, I will just post a small run-down of the 20-hour drive from Florida to Ohio which illustrates the dramatic temperature decrease we endured between the south and the north. There will be more to come later, I promise, so please don't forget about me and my little blog.

Sat Jan 22:

Orlando FL = 58 degrees at noon

GA / FL state line = 48 degrees at 5:20pm

Atlanta GA = 34 degrees at 10:15pm

Sun Jan 23:

Chattanooga, TN = 24 degrees at 12:30am

TN/KY border = 18 degrees at 2:45am

Van Wert/Paulding County borders, nw Ohio = NEGATIVE 8 degrees at 7:45am

BRRRrrrrrr!!!!!!

NewShoes=NoFun

Well... got back a few days ago from a week in the sun (and just one day of rain) with some of the best friends ever! Along with a couple of stragglers from Chi-town. It was a ton of fun except for ONE thing... I did a number on my back. There is speculation abound as to the cause: could it have been the extremely fun extreme go-cart track we adults check out; could it be the new shoes I bought just days before I flew out; or any of a myriad of scenarios.

I just know that by Tuesday, I needed to rent a wheelchair to be pushed around EPCOT and the Magic KIngdom on Wednesday. It would have been a funny bit of payback since I had to push C around when he had his ingrown toenail. However, although I tried to keep a light heart about the situation I discovered that it was not very funny.

Thursday, I stayed behind and soaked in the giant tub then slept on the rollaway bed so I did not have to climb the stairs.

Friday, saw my return flight to Detroit (\$117.00 roundtrip, still marveling at the price). The three of us were greeted to a shower on the way to the airport. I was given VIP service by a skyhop who pushed me to the front of the security check line and from there to my gate. Would rather have not had to zip by, but hey it beat standing.

When I arrived in Detroit, I had to wait 3 hours for my brother and his significant other to pick me up. On the way home, we stopped at Applebees just inside Toledo. We were warned that the heater was broken and were shortly shown to our WINDOW booth. This may be a bit of a coincidence, but half of the staff was out sick. Welcome back to NWO... from 70° to single digits all in a few hours time.

Monday, I went to out hometown chiropractor who was

recommended by my aunt who is enjoying Florida as we speak. Dr. Scott was very personable and gave it to me straight. At my age, the chances of a disc injury increase. I am able to stand and do some menial tasks as well as the stretches I was given. I know it will take time but for now I feel so useless. I'm used to being up and around and here I am sitting on a bag filled with rice. My first heating pad met with a grisly end. Someone put it in the microwave for 1:45 and before the time was up... **BOOM!!!** I did not see the aftermath but I could smell it.

I did have fun on my week off but I got a little more than I bargained for...

January 20th

I'm usually very good at remembering dates. I don't always remember to do something on the dates, but I do remember them. Kids' birthdays, sure, and if I think about it I can remember the years. Siblings' birthdays, yep all of them A few other birthdays yep. First crushes birthday, now why would I remember that? First serious girlfriend? Yep, got that. So I really have no trouble remember this date at all. But as there is one half of the interested party missing from the celebration, the day brings a touch of sadness with it now.

Today would have been 27 years of marital life. I have no doubt that those would have been 27 good years too. Today, I remember. Today, I may shed a tear or two. Today, I may smile at some inner thought. Today, i remember that it has been 7 years without her.

Without her, I would never have been the person I am. Our love changed who we were, but let us reach who we were supposed to

be.

SJO 1962-2003 Always in my heart.

Pure Campy Fun!

Back in the 1960's a TV sensation swept the country. With "POWS", "BAMs" and "SMASHES" Batman made it to television. Everything was bright, colorful and loud. In 1966 there was a spinoff from Batman called "The Green Hornet". Adapted from a 1930's radio program, this series (which lasted for 2 years) was a bit darker than Batman. The Hornet fought real crime, and of course Bruce Lee stole the show.

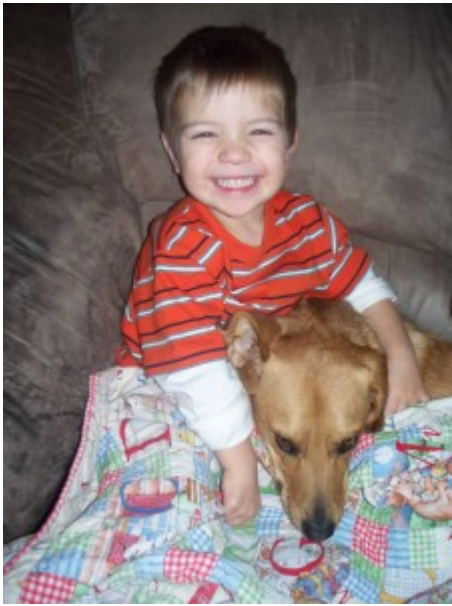
Now on to 2011, a new Green Hornet found his way to the big screen. This show is somewhere between the Campy fun of the 1960's Batman and the darker 1960's Green Hornet. Seth Rogen plays an inept jerk who wants to do good. He has one good idea and Kato (played by Jay Chou) is the master mechanic, martial arts expert with the knowledge to pull it off. The Vigilante, thought by all to be no better than the rest of the criminal underworld, Green Hornet is born.

If you go into this movie expecting it to be soul searching or a deep revelation into the mind of a vigilante hero, you are in the wrong show. There are some martial art fights, lots of things blowing up, a crime syndicate to wipe out, more things being shot at and blown up, some more fighting and more stuff blowing up. And there is comedy, yes there are things to laugh at in this film. 2 hours of mind numbing fun with lots of things being blown up and shot at.

I give it a must see again rating. I may even get the DVD when it hits the cheap shelves.

The Dude Is Growing!

My son had his 30-month ($2\frac{1}{2}$ years for you laypeople) check-up at the doctor today. All is well, though he wasn't very cooperative for the student doctor in training when it came to getting his nose and ears checked. And he had to get a shot, which of course was sad to witness. Unlike his 3 brave older sisters, he did cry, but he got over it quickly and proudly showed off his "owie" for the rest of the day. The little dude weighs 29.2 lbs. and is 2 feet and 10.5 inches tall.



Life and experience

Now that I've lived over 1/2 of a century, I guess you could say I've got a little bit of experience living. In my life, I've been a child, student, husband, father. I've experienced the death of people close to me. I was married to the same

woman for almost 20 years. I know about love, commitment and trust. I know about making promises and keeping them. I know grief, depression and anxiety. I know happiness, pride and hope.

But in those 50+ years there are many things I know nothing about. Things that I've never experienced. Things I never want to experience.

I know that with two ears, you should listen twice as much as you talk. I know that disagreements can only be solved by communication. I know lack of communication causes a lot of disagreements.

I hope to gain more experience in better things. I hope not to experience more 'bad' things. Realistically, I realize that I will experience both in the years to come. I don't need to like it, but to survive, I need to live with it.

A God Story

I love coming across God stories. Real life anecdotes which display the way God works in our lives, God stories can be experienced by Christians and non-Christians alike; it's just a matter of recognizing them and taking the time to be thankful and appreciate them.

I was at our babysitter's house last week picking up my kids, and there was a little girl cuddling a dog. Being an animal lover, I had to say hello to the cute little furball and find out her name and age. The little girl's father said he didn't know the pup's age because they had found her, and then he said, "I have to tell you the whole story." So he begins his story, not knowing me or that I am a Christian who appreciates

God stories. His story went something like this:

“My wife left me; she left me and the kids and even took our dogs, so these poor kids lost their mother and their dogs. I kept telling them I would get them a dog, but I had lots of other things to work out too. So for Halloween, we went to one of those ‘trunk or treat’ things at a church, and there was a little girl walking around inside the church with a puppy in her arms. I thought, something doesn’t seem right there – why is this little girl walking around a church with a puppy, so I asked her about the dog. “We’re not even sure what we’re going to do with her – we just found her outside.” the little girl told him. “Well,” I told her, “my kids have been looking for a dog.” We took home the little puppy, and she was mangy and starving, just skin and bones. We didn’t estimate her to be more than 10 weeks old at that time, and she has been a part of the family for the last few months. She is thriving physically, and she has helped provide some of the healing the kids needed as they spent Christmas without their mom.”

After hearing the story, it was magical to see the little girl cuddle her puppy. It warmed my heart to see them together, knowing that God brought this little puppy into the lives of a family who needed her – and brought a family into the life of an ailing little puppy who needed them as well. God works in wonderful ways, and being a witness to it is awesome – you just have to stop and look around; He is always there!

Once Again Hollywood Has Come

Up With A Creative Idea

Or maybe not so creative idea. It seems that ABC and Selma Hayek are combining forces to create a magical miniseries which is based on a popular novel which was based upon a beloved classic movie which was based upon another book. The popular novel was also the basis for a megahit Broadway musical which is (the last I heard) is being turned into a big-screen production. Whatever happened to an original, creative idea.

The miniseries in question is based upon the novel, [*Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*](#) by Gregory Maguire. While the musical may be a blockbuster, one of Maguire's newer "Fractured Fairy Tales" was made into a telefilm. Anyone remember *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister*? That's ok... neither do I.

I think I will stick with the Fractured Fairy Tales as ready by Edward Everett Horton as seen on The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle Show. For your enjoyment, I have chosen a classic Mr. Know-It-All segment.

FIVE MORE DAYS!!

Only FIVE more days until we leave for a family vacation to warm sunny Florida!! Making this one even better than most are extended family and friends that are able to meet us down there. The kids (and us!!) could not be more excited!!!

I just have to figure out how to get 6 people and all the stuff that goes along with 2 adults and 4 kids into a mini-van and keep us sane for a 20+ hour car trip and one again on the way back... Every time we take a big vacation I worry about it, every time it goes better than I could have imagined. Not going to make that mistake this time; I am just SO appreciative and happy to be going! Thank you God for blessing my family with such a fun opportunity for some togetherness!!!

Much work ahead of me this week, but the most fun kind of work: preparing-for-a-vacation work!!!

CAN'T WAIT!!!

Migraines SUCK!

I used to get them quite frequently while growing up but every once in a while they rear their ugly heads and I am done. My only regret is that I had to miss my voice lesson for which Kathrine was more than understandable ☐ Next week promises to be interesting as she is hosting an exchange student from New Zealand, I will have some one critiquing me full time.

Kathrine tries to play the piano and watch me at the same time.

My New Years Day was ehh. After getting to bed around 5AM, I was awakened 4 hours later by the dulcet tone of "Can you come in to work today?" I probably would have been more receptive of the idea had I not been brought out of a deep sleep. I did go in from 1-6 and at time and a half plus the 9 hours at the same rate that I put in the day before, I wasn't all that upset. Even the fact that the day just SEEMED to DRAAAAAAAGGGGG did not put that much of a damper. At 5:45 however, a customer called asking if we had Similac Baby formula. About 30 seconds later, the man of the house called, asked the same question, and thankfully asked how late we were open. So, being the nice guy I am... waited for the customer's arrival. But as he was checking out with his 9 cans of formula (which put us over \$100.00 for our last hour) I turned out the lights.

Bowl Games for Big 10 country have not been overwhelmingly successful. Thankfully, the Buckeyes ended their 9 game winless streak against teams in the SEC as they defeated Arkansas 31-26. And poor Rich Rodriguez is out of a job. I thought he did a fine job as the 3 year coach of the team up North but I guess the PTB had other ideas.