

# Thanksgiving Tragedies

The holiday weekend was replete with joyous gatherings and happenings but two events seemed to have drawn a dark curtain upon its close. One was the passing of one of my all-time favorite slap-stick comedy performers. Leslie Nielsen was known in his later days as a master of deadpan antics in such classic spoofs as *Airplane!* and the *Naked Gun* trilogy of movies. However, did you know that he got his start as a serious actor mainly as guest spots on Golden Age television?

It was 1980s spoof of the airplane disaster movies of a decade earlier that put him into the comedy spotlight.

Shortly after that came the short-lived *Police Squad!* television series which led to the films. Mr. Nielsen lost his life Sunday after complications from pneumonia. He was 84.

Another event hit much closer to home. Three young boys have been missing from their Morenci, Michigan home since Thursday. An Amber alert has been issued for young [Andrew \(9\), Alexander \(7\), and Tanner \( 5 years old\) Skelton](#). They were last seen with their father who now is in a mental health facility undergoing treatment after an apparent suicide attempt. The search led to the small town of Pioneer and the surrounding communities, a mere 25 miles from my own small town. Very little is known at this point about the whereabouts of the youngsters. I'm sure that any prayers offered up to the family of these three little ones would be more than appreciated.



# A tangled web is woven.

Yes, something about Tangled, but no spoilers.

I was able to see the new movie Tangled with my youngest over the long Thanksgiving weekend. It was good little show. As with all Disney movies, it was a little be removed from the original story. A good family show that I recommend to all, but that is all I'm going say about it.

As I sit thinking back to this and other fairy tales, and I think back to the origin of these types of stories. They were all lessons to be learned. Morals for a good life. Things happened when you disobeyed. Hard times happened and the stories did not always have happy endings.

Now a funny thing happened when our society grew up, we no longer had the same needs. The endings of the stories were changed. Then we ended with "everyone lived happily ever after." Not real life, but everything was cleansed for the children.

I remember reading the stories as a child, and of course these were the updated versions. As an adult, I remember finding some of the original stories. The endings weren't as nice. People died. They were tortured. Life was not good and they didn't live happily ever after.

[Some original tales are here.](#)

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## Opening weekend

Production week essentially started the Thursday before Thanksgiving, as we had no rehearsal last Wed. and Thurs. for

the obvious reason. Well, we didn't have Wed. rehearsals period due to the church being used that night. I have to say that those rehearsals left me drained. We were there until after 11, and with my sleep troubles and having to be up for work- well, let's just say that I didn't always maintain a good handle on my frustrations. Not that there were any blowouts or even close to them, just periods of anti-social me. The biggest struggles were moving sets around. There is no stage crew, so we all chip in with moving set pieces and props around. Between some scenes there are a **lot** of changes.

On to the topic, we opened this past Friday to a sold out crowd. Saturday was sold out as well. I should add that the small church only seats about 140, so it is actually not hard to sell out. In fact, at least one more performance is completely sold out and a couple others have less than 10 seats available. Not bad for a theatre in a church, eh? So Friday night we performed after a two-night break and I had two spots where I messed up. One minor, one not-so. For some reason, there is a set of lines I constantly struggle with. An excited Dr. Campbell runs out to George and excitedly informs him that the Building & Loan will keep going and that in fact there is a special treat for George (which *he* doesn't think is so great, but that's beside the point). Well, with the excitement and my slow brain, I tend to fumble some of this. Even after going over it in my head several times during the day. Sigh. The not-so-minor messup was me not making it out in time for the start of act II. I don't know what happened- I *heard* the one-minute call, but it just didn't register. I realized the problem when I heard the start of the scene and rushed up there. Too late. Well, my role was very minor with one line that wasn't really necessary, so it wasn't as bad as it could have been. Still...

Fortunately the next night I did much better. I don't know if we as a whole did much better (the second act dragged Friday- we were told it lasted 15-minutes longer than it should have!)

but I would be surprised if we didn't. Anyway, I don't know if there will be a pickup rehearsal or not, we'll see. Otherwise, next performance is this Thursday.

By the way, you may have noticed I wrote "Dr. Campbell" above. In addition to Mr. Gower I play three other roles (two others really- I combined a couple of them). Mr. Partridge is the third. His first name became Charlie, the fourth role.

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## **Definitely NOT Feeling Blue**

Please, someone remind me to ask for this weekend OFF next year. It may not have been a very exciting game for non-Buckeye fans, but I must say (from what I heard from the radio) it was OUTSTANDING! Running back a kickoff following a Michigan TD. An interception. Hearing that Nick Swisher was honored. Wonder if his fellow Yankee, Captain Jeter (a Michigander... nobody's perfect) was at the 'shoe. And the FINAL SCORE: OSU 37... UofM 7. WOO H0000!!!! It sounds like a tie for 1st place in the Big Ten which I believe gives Wisconsin the Rose Bowl berth... correct me if I am mistaken.

Next year will see the Big Ten decided playoff style; however, the tradition will continue for the Buckeyes and the team from the North. GO BUCKS!

I must agree with several of my family members and co-conspirators! Michigan should KEEP RICH RODRIGUEZ as head coach! 7 in a row for Coach Tressel and his men and 9-1 since the man in the sweater vest came to the helm.

**O-H**

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# Thankful

I hope all of my faithful co-tangenteers, readers, lurkers, and (maybe even) spammers had a blessed Thanksgiving Day spent with loved ones celebrating all the wonders and gifts that He has bestowed upon us. As has been the tradition at the home of Jamiahsh and family for the past 29 years (I believe) we had the noon meal with the parents, siblings, and their children. Alex offered up a prayer of Thanksgiving before we dug in. Noah offered up his own take as he lifted up his forkful of food.

After lunch, SOME of us took naps. I dunno how anyone managed this as 8 children do tend to create a lot of (at times) happy noise. At other times (when the three oldest went upstairs to get away from it all and the other 5 wanted to go), we encountered the cries of the littlest who got her fingers caught in the door. Later, I tried to organize a game of UNO... thinking that this would alleviate a bit of the rambunctiousness. It kind of worked... especially when a 5 year old kept winning.

For the evening meal, we had another crew join the rest of us. Since my mother's mom passed away nearly 30 years ago, we have served leftovers for my maternal aunt and uncle and their families as well. Every year it seems to get more crowded. Maybe that community center idea is getting better. Of course, it would be kind of had to gather around the television to watch the Cowboys get beaten... poor Chad! Finally, after the game and the annual feast of popcorn, buttered toast, pretzel sticks, and jelly beans of *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*, the festivities came to a close for another year... well for a month, anyway... wonder who gets the honor of hosting the big Christmas bash? I guess Uncle Bob and Aunt Lu.

I did forget my part in the day's festivities. I was asked to go to my oldest brother's house at 8:30AM to pick up his crock pot. I figured that everyone would be up and about so I did not grab the spare set of house keys. When I arrived, I found the house locked up. I went back home to discover that Jeff had decided to hit the stores early. I grabbed the keys and went back and grabbed the pot.

Now let the fun, hustle and bustle, and celebrating take us to 2011.

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## **Just when I thought I expanded my vocabulary,**

I found out that I did not know what the letters "NO" mean when put together. I really thought I could put those letters to good use. I really thought I was able to grasp the meaning. I thought I would be able to find some time for this or that. I'm afraid I haven't. Available time? poof! Not showing up at a theater 3 or more nights a week. Sure!. What were those letters again? I need to look them up in my Funk and Wagnalls. Of course I will help out a friend or two...

But on to the good news. I'm only in the light booth. Only 3 or so short weeks. No lines to memorize. And I have my youngest daughter there to help me out. Not a bad deal. On top of that, I get to see every show for free and that is in some of the best seats in the house. Ok, maybe not the best seats, but they will always be there. Cute show, so I shouldn't get tired of it too quickly. On top of that, it really changes every night.

But I'm not sure of all these Christmas Carols before

Thanksgiving...

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## JJ

My little parakeet JJ passed away some time during the night last night. Not much of a surprise there; he has been sick for a while, and even though he began looking well again a few weeks ago, he took a turn for the worse in the last few days. He looked so awful yesterday that I knew he wouldn't make it through the night. But there was always hope that I was wrong. He had been on what I called "death watch" before and made it through the night, so the hope was there.

I don't really know what happened – he was only about a year old, and I had had him since January, not even a year. He started showing signs of illness about 2 months ago. I gave him medicine and TLC, and he began to do better, but like I said, I guess it just wasn't enough.

He was "just a parakeet", but I loved his company. I was so excited to see what kind of bird he would become; how he would look and act as an adult and who he would be when he felt healthy, but now I won't know. Honestly, taking care of animals is one of my favorite things in the whole world, so why do I have to be so bad at it? A few months ago, JJ was so happy when we moved his cage into the living room so he had company all day rather than living in the solitude (or was it protection?) of our bedroom upstairs. We kept him right near the Halogen lamp, could there have been a smell or the heat or something that made him sick? On the rare occasion that a bug would fly into the Halogen, yuck, what a smell that made. We tried to get rid of Teflon pans and things like that, but JJ's new home in the living room wasn't too far from the kitchen –

maybe cooking smells did him in? He was a fraidy-bird, so I couldn't really take apart his cage to clean it out; maybe it got too dirty? A dozen why's and what-if's, but no more parakeet. At least he is not suffering anymore – it was getting really difficult to see him in his cage looking so miserable and worse for the wear. Poor JJ. Even if he was just a caged bird, I miss him already. Ugh, and the cold weather is back today... fitting somehow, just feels like a miserable day all around – time to make the best of it.

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## **Harry Potter Movie – no spoilers**

Yes, I can review this movie and give anything away.

The first point on this movie is that I feel it is the closest to the written material of any of the movies. I just started reading the book again and some of the lines said in the book were even use in the movies. I was very impressed that the screen writers could do that well.

I also thought it was great that the same actors from the very first show were still in their roles. From the time they were young children until they became young adults these actors have been the center of the movies. Now they can carry it. These shows have always had an all star cast of fine actors. From Richard Harris as the first Dumbledore, to Ralph Fiennes as Lord Voldemort. These stars are now in more supporting roles as the younger actors found their roles and made them their own.

I was worried that splitting this story into two movies. While I knew it would be necessary if the complete story would be

told. The other books have bits and pieces that can be skipped. The last book has very little of that. It is far more than a 2 to 3 hour movie can handle. Let me just say the split was in the best possible spot.

So what else can I say without giving anything away? The Harry Potter movie was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon. 2 and 1/2 hours of movie enjoyment. A good story, wonderful acting and good ending. Now when does next one come out?

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## Super Saturday

What a Super day! It began after game night with just a few of us late comers Friday night... more intimate but great fun as always. But today was a GREAT day. Went to see *Harry Potter* with my brother, nephew, niece, and new little friend. I must say I have a new favorite in the cinematic adventures and it was only the first half. It is definitely the most emotionally impactful entry as well as the most thrilling yet.

Absolutely NOTHING was taken away from the absence of 3D (I even think that like Dan, himself it would have hindered it).

The film crew made a marvelous decision on where to divide the two chapters... definitely the moment of highest dramatic tension.

After returning and hearing the the Buckeyes won their game against Iowa, I went to mass and then over for another gathering where some of us got to meet Alex Trebek, himself.

I do enjoy Jeopardy! just not sure I enjoy it THAT much. Courtesy of Miss Mare, we celebrated the betrothal of Prince William and his Kate. We offered up any number of "proper English toasts" to not only the happy couple but also to the Queen, Margaret Thatcher, Winston Churchill, Charles Dickens,

and several other British celebrities. Quite an entertaining evening if only one of us was not under the weather but the jukebox full of Beatles, the Who, Culture Club, Monty Python, and other Invaders made for quite the event. All while SOME of us insisted upon playing text tag (unfortunately, I could not as for some reason my signal keeps being lost in the gathering place).

Thanks everyone for a fun weekend!

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## If Cats Ran The World

Because my family and friends know that I'm an animal lover, they're always sending me emails with pictures and articles about cute animal-related topics. All of them are adorable, but this one stands out as something to share – a man built an entire feline-sized village for homeless cats! Kind of sounds like something I'd like to do with some extra free time, money, and if only I didn't have the darn cat allergy that's always getting in the way...

Below are some pictures of his creation. For the entire story, [click here](#). And to visit the cat village online, The Caboodle Ranch, [click here](#).



