

# Chicken What?!

Halloween... my SECOND favorite holiday. I guess you could say that it began last Monday when I ran into my very good friend at Wal\*Mart where we decided to get coordinating costumes. I'll share a photo or two later.

Friday evening was the quite festive game night... ALWAYS A TON OF FUN! My niece and nephew have had a pretty tough couple of days so I invited them to come along with me. Alex was his normal crazy self in his "professor who just graduated" costume. Poor Shelby, I think, finally came out of her shell as the games began. Later, I took them back home and returned in time to enjoy the very haunting *Exorcism of Emily Rose*. A very good mix of *The Exorcist* and courtroom drama.

Saturday night (or SUnDay morning) I was awakened about 4am by my cell phone. Oh, great! What joker is playing around when I am trying to get my beauty sleep. Somehow after I found out who the culprit was, I did manage to get a few more hours of shuteye. All good! I did get a good chuckle out of it ☐

After getting off my shift on the big day, itself, Dad, my second oldest brother and assorted nieces and nephews ventured to a relatives yard of terrors. Year after year, they transform their house and yard into a fun, family-friendly fright fest complete with touring train. After having your fill of frights, you are invited into the house to sign the guest book and each family is invited to take a plate of treats and goodie bags for the kiddies. All this for the exorbitant amount of \$0. Certainly is amazing that they can operate this year in and year out for the entire month and not charge a cent. Most of the items that are on display are generously donated. In fact, just the other day, a tombstone was given that had some defect which caused the original buyers to turn away. Visitors even bring along bags of flour and sugar for baking help. But leave your checkbook at home.

They may take donations in form of decorations but never monetary.

Even more amazing is the number of people who have signed the book in just the last month. Over 2000! From word of mouth and flyers passed around the area. We were shocked to learn the distance travelled by some of the visitors: Louisiana, "New" England (from "across the pond"), France, Germany. WOW! So... when next October creeps its spooky head around... be sure to visit the Geren's. I have not visited the site after daylight hours for more than a few years but I do remember that after the sun sets is when the real frightful fun begins. Unfortunately, some of the little ones are a little young for that. Even some of the older ones were a bit fearful of the maze in the daylight. OH, Puh-lease!

Hope you all had a Ghoulishly fun holiday weekend!



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## What WAS I Thinking?

AHHHH... Thursday! It is my favorite day of the week (After I get done at work, that is... today's 6 hours is another blog entirely). My voice lessons are progressing quite nicely and my coach and I are REALLY pleased with the progress I am making. I just have to wonder what the heck I was thinking in choosing some of the songs I am quickly perfecting. I think I have three (maybe 4) serious selection... the rest are my favorite types: CHARACTER driven pieces. Not only character-driven but requiring different accents. I think we counted three different distinct accents. What do you think... should I reprise a love/hate character?

We have also been brainstorming a bit about staging these songs and some of the ideas we have make me think that a slightly larger stage is going to be needed. I'll leave those ideas on the drawing board for now and mull them over to see if any of them are viable. But the possibilities intrigue me.

So while I am memorizing, polishing, and otherwise perfecting each piece the pictures in my mind are beginning to take shape.

But **3 DIFFERENT ACCENTS! WHAT WAS I THINKING!** ☐ Ah, well... if I didn't think it possible, would I have done it? Probably.

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## There Was A WHAT In The Front Seat?

Just in time for Halloween, I came across a macabre news story the other day involving a woman whose actions had even veteran police officers scratching their heads.

### *Woman Drove with Corpse for 10 Months*

*'It was very shocking'*

*COSTA MESA, Calif. (CNN/KTLA) – It's hard to shock a seasoned police officer, but cops in the Los Angeles area say they were shocked by what they found in a woman's car this week. They say a woman was driving around for months with a dead mummified body in the front passenger's seat.*

*"It was surprising even to myself. I've been a police officer for 15 years. To find a mummy in a vehicle, it was very shocking," said Det. Sgt. Ed Everett.*

*Police say a corpse was propped up in the passenger seat of a Mercury Marquis for the last ten months. A woman was driving*

*it around town during that time. Apparently, conditions inside the vehicle allowed for mummification.*

*But how did this happen?*

*“Initially the driver of the vehicle had indicated that she was unaware that this person was in the vehicle and didn’t indicate that there was anything wrong with the vehicle,” Sgt. Everett explained.*

*But later, the driver came clean. The 57-year-old woman says she met a homeless woman at a local park and allowed her to sleep in the car. One day, the driver discovered her friend was dead, panicked, and she left the corpse in the passenger’s seat. But she continued to dress the body and drive around with it.*

*“Due to the condition of the body, the coroner’s office was not able to determine the cause of death. There was no obvious signs of foul play at this point or trauma to the body that we know of,” said Sgt. Everett.*

*Police have few details on the deceased woman’s identity. The driver only had a first name for the lady and the poor condition of her remains will make identifying her difficult.*

First my sympathies to the deceased and her family, and I hope they can identify her and then let her rest in peace. But how does this happen? Was the woman lonely? Afraid of getting into trouble? Lazy? Crazy? Wanted into the carpool lane? Here’s to hoping she gets the help she needs, whatever that might be.

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# my life in 144 characters

I did say that I may blog more, but I'm living a boring life and nothing is happening. So here is my life in 144 character bits. More or less.

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I can't understand why twitter is such a big deal. Even the place I work has a twitter account. I don't like the character limit, it seems to g

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I'm not one to use word abbreviations like lol and l8r, so the character limit on twitter would really slow down my fluid writing style. It woul

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So I decided to try my hand at this 144 character stuff. I was just wondering how coherent I could actually be. It seems to be a bit of work to

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I am fairly certain that the character counts on all these little snippets is 144. And with that, my thoughts are getting cut off. I could cont

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My youngest and I went to the Hut today and they had wings for 50 cents each. I liked the wings, but they didn't like me, so I am up at 3:30 am.

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Ok, this is getting a bit silly, even for me. I will say that I am under the influence of a late night wing attack, and a brain that doesn't kn

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Twitter asks the question: "What are you doing now?" To the logical soul I am the answer would always be the same. I'm writing drivel on twitte

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Never give a blog to a slightly crazed brain after midnight. You will never know exactly what you will find there. Tonight

I was on a twitter

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I think that the wind is what really woke me up. We've had heavy winds for the past few days, but it seems to be gusting a bit more this evening

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Good night all, or is that good morning. My life is boring, even 144 characters at a time. I think that is a good thing.

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## RIP Oreo

This post is a few weeks in the making – my daughter Sammie's favorite rat died on October 11. She took it pretty well; I was dreading having to tell her when she got off the bus that day. She got off the bus and promptly handed her younger brother and sister each a piece of her candy. 'Oh great', I'm thinking – she gets off the bus and immediately does something really nice for her siblings, and I have to tell her that her favorite rat died. But I didn't have to tell her – she asked me first if he had died. I said yes and asked her how she knew – turns out that big sis had taken it upon herself to tell Sammie on the way to the bus stop that morning. What are big sisters for? ☐ But like I said, Sammie was ok with it, but now that just leaves us one pet rat: Buckeye. We began with 2 rats, Bobby Jack and Oreo, and then we took in 2 more from a friend who was unprepared for pets, Mater and Buckeye – 4 rats at once was a bit much, but we didn't want to see them wind up as snake food, so that gave us 4 pet rats.

Bobby was the first to pass away in June of this year, followed by Mater in August, then Oreo in October – every 2 months we lose a rat, I guess. That's the only downside to these otherwise great pets – they only have a lifespan of 1-3

years. Otherwise, they are like mini dogs: affectionate as can be and very trainable. My girls love their rats and do very well at feeding them and giving them water every day, cleaning their cage, giving them baths, and taking them for walks. The rats would always seem depressed when my girls spend their week with Grandma in the summer, and they get really excited when the girls return. The only thing that keeps ME from getting too close to the rats is my allergy – what a bummer. I found out I am allergic to rats right after we got them as cute little babies. I would play with them and wonder why I broke out into hives on my forearms and sneezed like crazy and had itchy eyes for hours afterward. In a way, it's a good thing, otherwise I would be more sad than the girls when they die, and at this rate, we are poised to have to say goodbye to a long line of pet rats!

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## **Last Call For Haunted Houses!!**

This weekend sees the last of the Halloween season of 2010. I always try my best to do as much Halloween and fall-related things as possible; I just love the season. This year I've been lucky enough to have gotten to try THREE haunted houses, and I will rate them here in case anyone has time to check any of them out. I would really like to fit in a few more or even a repeat visit to one I've already been to, but I have a jam-packed weekend planned with other fun stuff like Halloween parties and Trick-or-Treating.

A few weekends ago, we visited the Chicago area and were able to get to two haunted houses, both in the area where we were staying – Aurora. We would have liked to check out some other

of the MANY haunted houses in the suburbs (as well as other entertainment offerings), but alas, we quickly ran out of time. So the haunted houses visited were:

[BASEMENT OF THE DEAD](#) – 42 W. New York St. Aurora IL 60502 - This is by far the best haunted house that I've ever been to. I've been able to visit here 2 years in a row, and it's gotten better with time. The makeup on the creatures is incredible – horror movie caliber – and the characters waiting to scare people waiting in line are great. They ALWAYS stay in character, which is very important, and they are creative in their scariness – much more than the typical monster or “B00!” yelling psychopath. I tried to get video of the ultra-impressive 7+ foot tall monsters that hang around outside, but Basement of the Dead is located in downtown Aurora, so I had to help my husband navigate around the tricky one-way streets instead. A MUST SEE for any haunted house enthusiast! We will probably be making the trip next year, if not just for this haunted house alone; it's that good! 4!'s for fright out of 4.

MIDNIGHT MASSACRE – 3440 Odyssey Court Naperville IL 60540 – Well, there really isn't much to say about this lame attempt at a haunted house. I don't even think it was made less scary by our visit to Basement of the Dead before this one – it wouldn't have been any better even if we hadn't just visited a spectacular haunted house first. The scariest thing about Midnight Massacre was the hour and a half we waited in line, which was hidden from view when you buy your tickets. We got a bad clue when we saw a snack stand in line – you know they won't want you taking food or drink into their haunted house, so if they let you buy food and drink in line, you know you're going to have a long wait. And in this case, a long wait for what? The haunted house was not scary. This one did consist of actors (?) yelling cheesy things like “B00!” There was a guy dressed like Freddy from Nightmare on Elm Street, and his “scare” was jumping up from a bed and yelling “Freddy!” We

even had one actor apologize to us and say, "Hey, I tried." Talk about breaking character! But in a haunted house as bad as this one, it didn't really matter that he broke character, that wasn't the only thing wrong with it. The first part of it was a black light maze that was so obviously part of a laser tag course – they didn't even try to hide it. But there weren't any monsters in it or anything. They had a couple of cool robots and animatronics, especially this one large dinosaur thing, but it was just a head, and they didn't do anything to cover up the robotic looking body. And the actors were terrible. Enough said about this one, not recommended – well, maybe for a kid's first haunted house. One ! (for effort I guess) out of 4!'s

[Leader's Family Farms](#) – near the intersection of Ohio State Route 24 and Henry County Rd. 16 near Napoleon, Ohio – I got to go into this haunted attraction with one of my youth group girls, and she was a screamer. It was a lot of fun, especially since the ghouls and monsters focused their attention on the screamer and left me alone! We did not have the time to check out their new haunted attraction, PanDEMONium, but Screamacres was a nice haunted attraction as always. 3! out of 4! – Lots of the same old haunted house effects, but being outside and in the middle of nowhere certainly adds to the effect. I should also note that Leader's has activities for the entire family, every age group. Great fall fun to be had here.

Well, there you have it – those are the 3 I've gotten to this year. If you have the time and are looking for a good scare, I highly recommend Basement of the Dead in Aurora Illinois or Leader's Family Farm's Screamacres in Napoleon Ohio. I wish I had more time to visit more and get some reviews. Maybe some day I'll be able to get down to Columbus Ohio to go to [Dead Acres Haunted Hoochie](#); it looks very scary and really cool!

Anyone else think haunted houses should extend their seasons into November for those of us who are very busy in October

taking kids trick or treating and to fall parties, etc?? I sure wish they would!!! Have a GREAT Halloween!!

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## Paranormal Weekend

Well... this being the first weekend following the wrap of a show, I found myself slightly down. I had to work Friday night (only to come home and watch the Bombers get sent home by the Rangers... but it IS their first time EVER in the World Series... but really how long is that). Saturday, I had the entire day to myself... so I watched the Buckeyes dominate the Purdue Boilermakers and some season one Bionic Woman (the original and best). It's about time both bionic series got out of legal brouhaha and finally are being released on DVD (Six Mill is set to be released next month). Finally, I went to church Saturday night.

Sunday, saw work, room cleaning (funny how messy a room can get after three months), and fun with friends. [Mare](#) sent me a text early in the afternoon asking if I wanted to go with other friends to see Paranormal Activity 2. I did not hear very glowing reviews of the original so I went expecting little but with great friends, it was worth it. I do not remember ever laughing so much at a "horror" film but some of the things involved were just so hokey that at times, I wanted to crack up especially the loud comments made by other moviegoers. I will say that one of the biggest complaints that I have heard about the previous film was the slow pace and the fact that anything scary did not happen until the last 20 minutes of the film. I will say there was a great amount of creepiness. Not the best suspenseful movie ever but if you go in with limited expectations surrounded by friends going out for a good time...

Some of the coming attractions:

- Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part I (I'm sure a certain nephew of mine will be hitting me up for that one) REALLY looking forward to this one. Interested to see where they divide the film.
- Yogi Bear... I think the main draw is Justin Timberlake as Boo Boo. But Dan Aykroyd is playing the "smarter than average bear."
- The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (The third movie in the Chronicles of Narnia series). I wasn't even aware that this was coming. An eventual viewing will be in order.
- No preview of Tron:Legacy I'm sorry to say.

So... all in all an enjoyable weekend!

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## **Drivin' a wagon**

No, not that kind of wagon- though I freely admit my first vehicle was an 80's Chevy station wagon. What other kind of wagon can one drive? If you're a creative couple, this kind: