

And then the night was still

Had a bit of nasty weather last night. I really didn't think much of it at first. Being out in the middle of nowhere, I only hear the storm sirens when I'm outside. When there is thunder and lightning, I'm not outside. But my new phone likes to chirp when there are storm warnings, so I knew about what was happening.

The lightning flashed, the thunder rumbled, the wind was ripping through the trees. The phone chirped. It was an actual tornado warning. I did actually go downstairs to sit out the storm. It was ominous when the wind actually died during the heart of the storm. Seemed surreal. Then the lightning flashed, the thunder rumbled on again. Our lights flickered. The winds died down. All was well in my little corner of the world.

This morning I heard of some storm damage in the area. I haven't been by any serious damage, but I did have to detour around some downed tree limbs this morning. I always hope people will pass through the storms safely. I haven't heard any bad news yet. I hope all is ok.

Until the next storm, and in the next storm, stay safe.

My Psychic Moment

This is a strange thing that happened to me; just thought I'd write a little note about it.

I was in my laundry room, folding laundry and humming the song "You Light Up My Life", which is not a usual song on my

playlist – I probably haven't heard it in a few years. So I'm folding laundry, and the final Jeopardy question comes on the tv:

CATEGORY: Billboard Hot 100

CLUE: Besides Frank and Nancy Sinatra, they're the only other father and daughter who each had #1 solo hits.

Got your answer? Mine was Nat King Cole and his daughter Natalie. Although wrong, my guess must have been a reasonable one as two of the contestants also incorrectly guessed the Cole's as their response. The correct answer, however, was Pat Boone and his daughter Debby – whose only #1 hit was ironically enough, "You Light Up My Life" – the same song I had inexplicably had in my head just minutes earlier!!

PS – I've never really heard of Debby Boone, and I certainly didn't know who sang "You Light Up My Life". For all I knew, it was Lee Ann Rimes, whose version of the song is quite enjoyable.

Another High Tech adventure!

What is it with me and high tech toys recently? I bought myself a book reader (read the many nook posts.) ☐ and now I have a new 'smart' phone.

All I really ever wanted in a phone was the ability to make phone calls. You know, dial the number, the phone rings and someone on the other end picks it up. Then you have a conversation until it is finished. You hang up and that is the end of it until the next call.

My first journey into the cell phone age occurred just a few

short years ago. I thought I would get a cell phone for the two oldest daughters at home just in case they needed to get in contact with me. Little did I know that the the oldest of the two already bought a cell phone. So the extra went to the youngest. I thought that at 13 she was a little young to have a phone, but I did not want it to go to waste. I had that 2 year contract and all.

Just a little over 2 years later, my original cell phone would no longer hold a charge. So I went back to get another. I found out that there were no cell phone 'deals' on any phones that just made calls. They all had things like cameras, the ability to play music or even download news. Hmm. All I wanted to do was make phone calls. I got an inexpensive phone that did come with a camera, but I don't think I ever took more than 5 to 10 pictures with it. I did use the phone part.

That brings us to late last week. Again just a little over 2 years have gone by since the last cell phone adventure. Everybody is now carrying around a 'smart' phone. These things can take good pictures. You can access your email. You can access the internet. You can even access your blog or other social outlet. There are even games to play on the phone. You might say you are carrying around a little computer that just happens to make phone calls.

Because of some updates to things at work, I was looking at these new smart phones. One of them would allow me to stay connected if I ever had the need. Since I could see a benefit to this, I was casually looking at new smart phones. The cost was a bit much, but I could see myself getting one at some point in the future. No big deal, my phone was working well, and I liked it.

Then came the fateful day that my cell phone died. It would no longer dial numbers. It would no longer turn on or off. It was almost less than a phone. I could still receive calls, and because of the lucky fact that I had the blue tooth turned on,

I could make calls using voice commands. But I could see that it was not going to be a good way to go. The voice commands were (and still are) a bit inconvenient at times. Some of my contact names are very similar to others on the list. The voice calling would sometimes miss the actual person I wanted to call. So I took the phone in to see if they could revive it.

To make an already long story shorter, the phone was dead (and it would cost more than a new phone to fix it). I am now the proud or not so proud owner of a new 'Droid' phone. It plays games. It accesses my email. It post to my blog (if I had teeny-tiny fingers). It can take pictures. It can load videos. It help me when I'm lost. It can play music. It will even store books. And it even makes phone calls!

I'm not exactly sure about all of the features, but I may get used to them.

27 years ago today...

Apparently not much happened. I checked on various places that google found and the only reference for that date was that tennis star Arthur Ashe had bypass surgery. I found that Summer Solstice occurred at around 7:00pm Eastern Daylight Savings time. But then I knew that. I've known that time for most of these 27 years.

At almost exactly Summer Solstice in the year 1983, I proposed to my future wife. Later on she wondered why I picked that day. It was VERY early in our relationship, and it could have been assumed that this could cause problems. I stated as an absolute fact that the stars were aligned properly. My lovely wife knew, even at that point in our relationship, that I did

not mean astrology. I was never a believer in horoscopes of any kind. She looked up what I meant, and found the time of the Solstice.

The timing was a complete coincidence, but it did help me remember that date. It was one anniversary that I could surprise her with. I always remembered to get her a little something special on the first day of Summer.

I remember that day even now. There are many important days that I tend to forget, but this will never be one of them. 27 years and counting. I remember that first day of Summer in 1983...

My Darling Susie

While everyone else dispersed to the various ballgames for the evening (a niece and a nephew actually played against each other on the t-ball field while another was in a neighboring community), I took my 5 year old niece to Story Hour at the library. I had taken Syd to the first gathering a few weeks ago and learned that someone needed to stay for the entire hour (of course, this was after I left and came back after the hour). Tonight, I stayed for the entire hour.

It was a cute hour... thankfully, I knew a few of the parents (one being a church organist I know). This week being dolphin and shark week, we heard true life stories about each of the creatures. Then the kids sang "If You're Happy and Ya Know It." Then, arts and crafts in which the little ones made tear out sharks. They took a piece of construction paper and tore their sharks and glued them to another sheet of paper. No snack... Sydney was slightly miffed about that.

I remember Saturday morning Story Hour at the old library. I attended (until I was in the third grade) and later was the leader. The one thing I remember aside from the stories, Farmer in the Dell, London Bridge, and musical chairs was my darling, Susie. She was the library's resident mascot. A rather green, birdlike marionette. Who knows where she is now? To the great aviary in the sky, one might surmise ☐

But, it was kind of fun to see the little ones hearing the stories (even adding their own commentaries at times) and being creative

Just a quick update.

I know I haven't written in over a week and I am sorry about that. This one is going to be short as well. I need to get back to packing. My husband and I are moving to Maumee to live with my oldest sister and her husband until we can afford our own place. I have a job at either the DeVeaux Goodwill or where my sister works: Midwest Tape. I need everything packed and ready to move by Friday night. Wish me luck.

And yes, my anniversary was awesome!

Fun At The Jubilee

For the life of me, I could not think of a creative title for this blog post, so I just went with a logical one. Our town has an annual Jubilee – a little carnival on the town square

that comes once a year. For all but 1 of the 7 years that we've lived here (we were out of town during that missed year), we've enjoyed the Jubilee, especially now that we live within walking distance and don't have to worry about parking – we can come and go as we please, and it's especially nice to spend a night at the Jubilee and run home for potty breaks rather than using the disgusting Port-O-Potties. It's fun to walk around the square and soak up the bustling atmosphere while chatting with familiar faces among the crowd. Although carnival rides are quite costly these days, we are lucky that my husband's birthday always falls during the week of the Jubilee and that we have some generous relatives who send him much-appreciated birthday money (which my husband is always more than happy to spend on the kids at the Jubilee). The kids had a night of fun on the carnival rides, and there was an extra treat at the Jubilee this year – an animal show!!!

I, like many of my friends it turns out, was thinking that the animal show would not be anything spectacular – a few snakes, a parrot, and maybe a jumping dog or two. But this was more like a traveling zoo – *in my backyard!!!* First, a disclaimer – I love animals. But I'm not one of those PETA activists – I find most people like that over-the-top; you know, those people who spend their time protesting the “horrible” conditions of zoos, blah, blah... that's not me. I won't go into too much detail, but basically I believe in taking good care of animals. I believe that most zoos accomplish that, and overall, I believe that zoos are a great way to educate the public about animals and get people to care enough to want to take actions that will stop the destruction of wild animal habitats and the killing of species throughout the world. That's it in a nutshell, and I'll stop there since that isn't really what this post is about. My point in bringing this up is to say that when I first heard there was going to be an animal show at the Jubilee, I wasn't going to go, much like when I refuse to attend circuses (I'm not an extremist, but circuses ARE bad for animals!! But that's a whole 'nother

post...). So we were at the Jubilee, and there was a huge crowd over by the animal stage, and my curiosity got the better of me – so we checked it out.

Like I kept saying all weekend, it was like a zoo in my backyard! They had a tortoise, a turtle, a huge python, an albino cobra, a monitor lizard (komodo dragon's cousin), an eagle owl (largest species of owl in the world with striking orange eyes), a blue and gold macaw parrot, a binturong (rare mammal who is always sleeping every time I see it at the zoo – this is the first time I've actually seen one awake and in action. They have an odd buttery popcorn smell. I put a picture of one below if you're curious.), a kangaroo, a monkey, a full-sized leopard, AND... a 4-week-old white tiger! The animals seemed well-cared for and their keepers were caring and knowledgeable, so I was quick to become a big fan – in fact, I attended 3 of the 8 shows they put on while they were in town! I would have gone to more, but it was tough enough to get my little guy to sit through the two we brought him to (especially when there were very rude kids standing in front of him – I was so mad!).



Saturday was one of my favorite days ever with me getting to take my kids to TWO animal shows and another one of my favorite things – a PARADE!! I just love small town parades, and this one was especially great – the weather was perfect (in the 80's, but with big puffy clouds and a nice breeze, humidity not too high for once), and two of my kids were

marching in it! PLUS, there was a vehicle handing out free stuffed dogs at the end, so we got one for each kid! Best. Jubilee. Ever. ☐ Even if I didn't make my annual trek to the Dippin' Dots stand this year – that should tell you how much I enjoyed the animal show!



AHHHH... Togetherness

Today being Father's Day, the family took the three dads to dinner. Then... two of my siblings and I took a horde of crazies to see *Toy Story 3*! Definitely worth seeing although not sure the 3D was worth it... not much there that would not have been just as enjoyable on a decent 2D screen.

Getting to dinner was an adventure, the parents were not interested in seeing the movie, so my sis and I followed them. We quickly got left in the dust! Thank goodness for cell phones. If someone had told me where we were headed, I could have easily gotten us there, but always interesting!

I found the latest installment in the adventures of Woody, Buzz, and the gang to be as enjoyable as the original and better than the sequel. This time, Andy is packing for college. He still sleeps in the same room but his toy box has

been long forgotten until a week before he is ready to head out. His mother gives him a cardboard box in which to put everything he is taking with him and a garbage bag in which to put everything he wants to be put in the attic. Fortunately, the bag headed for the attic gets mistaken for garbage and the adventure begins.

Several themes run rampant through the movie: the power of friendship and sticking together; growing up; saying goodbye.

All of the favorite toys are here along with a gaggle of new toys many of whom have interesting backstories of their own.

And as always, the end credits are worth a look as the story doesn't end as they start to roll. Highly recommended! You are never too old for a Disney/Pixar movie!

I am off

And with no time left for a decent post. Well, see you on the other side- of the week that is!

Total loss

Quite a storm today- I don't know if it reached OH, but it did move fast. The sky went dark around 4PM and pouring rain followed. However, as I mentioned the storm moved fast, so within an hour it was pretty much over. I was actually in Waukegan at the time. We started to walk the lot when Rene took one look at the sky and decided we were done. Good thing, because two minutes later the rain came down. I headed

home, no incidents praise God, and stopped at a local electronics store to wait out west-bound rush-hour traffic which was much worse than usual. I actually had to turn **left** off of the expressway because the right-turn lanes were backed up beyond the exit toll! One main street further south, the traffic was no better, so I turned south on 21 and went to Abt Electronics where I bought a needed new dehumidifier and played a couple games of Ms. Pac-man and Galaga which were set on free play.

Once home, I learned that a local resale shop was struck by lightning and burned to the ground- yikes. The lightning strike was actually witnessed by one of the pastors at my church across the street, the one who oversees all of youth and children's ministries. There was no mention of injuries or deaths in the article I read, praise God, though at the time of the ABC news segment they didn't know. The article mentioned insurance, but only for the building as the goods inside were all donated. I know the Lord will use this as a ministry opportunity, especially with the church being right by the store, but it will obviously be awhile before the store is up and running again. Just take a look at the news segment at ABC News Chicago:

**ABC News: Fire destroys
Palatine retail store**