

Younger Than Springtime

I will join in my two fellow tangenteers who have exuded about the beautiful day we had in our little corner of NW0. PICTURE PERFECT! Had to work, but got off at two so I had plenty of time to enjoy it! The down-side... learning from our friendly (no... really... he's always looking out for all his customers) mechanic that I will soon need to purchase four new tires.

Not so bad considering I've had the same car for 8 years and have yet to make the purchase. And he promised that he can get me a good set for \$300.00... not WM *el cheapos*.

On my way to the garage, I stopped by our going out of business video store where all DVD's MUST GO for \$5 a piece.

I picked up yet another of my childhood memories: *The Great Muppet Caper*. I may watch after I finish watching my boys take care of the Angels.

Rehearsal went very well tonight. Actually, I think this is going to be another dandy! It's a good thing I decided to check the door. I was my usual 15 minutes early, so I got to enjoy the weather a bit more. Unbeknownst to me, Beth and Rebecca were already inside. No cars parked except for mine.

Finally at 6, Dawn arrived and we headed upstairs to the costume room where the other two were waiting.

Our director commented to me how well I have been doing. She wasn't sure (as I wasn't) that I had it in my acting prowess to convey all the emotions that "Tom" must go through during the course of the play. She has not seen me on stage enough to know the full extent of my performance arsenal. To be quite honest, I don't think I know. To me, that is one of the most rewarding things about the theatre... growth and development. If you are not willing to take chances... you never know what you are capable of. Sounds a bit like life.

Maybe I should listen to some of these ramblings, eh? Can you tell I am a wee bit excited... not that that hasn't happened

every show.

OH, YEAH... Jackie Robinson Day. EVERY player on EVERY team is wearing #42 in recognition of the 62(?) anniversary of the breaking of the color barrier in major league baseball.

Wow, the weather outside is

wonderful.

I just can't believe the day we had today. I'm sure the weekend is going to spoil everything, but today is a good day. Now, if I could have spent the day outside to enjoy it all, the day would have been stupendous.

It is a bit funny that even days that I can be outside, I don't always go out. But I do like having the option of doing it. I guess that is the whole point, isn't it. If you have the ability to choose, the day just seems nicer. I'm not outside right now, but I do have an option of going out. At work, I can only look out the window as I get my cup of coffee. Choices make the difference.

Enjoy the day as you can, and hope that tomorrow brings all you need.

I Don't Want To Play Inside

All Day...

But some of us don't have a choice where, or even if, we get to play all day. And it's tax day, and shame on you if you haven't done yours yet! I don't know about you, but where we live, it's oh-so-nice out – I'm talking 80° weather! But you might be stuck inside doing your taxes...

So here is a song just to torture you. I've seen this on Sesame Street twice now, and I just think it's so cute; especially when Elmo sings along! It aired again the other day, so blog time! Sorry if you were stuck inside all day for work or other unpleasant tasks. Take comfort in that there will be a whole spring and summer's worth from where this came from – I ♥ Spring!

Jack of all trades...

master of ???.

As a homeowner, I come across many things that I need to do. Some of them I do well, some of them I put off until they absolutely need to be done. And of course some things I just ignore. ☐

Not having water for my morning shower or tooth brushing session isn't something I can ignore. It also isn't something I can put off. It is one of those things I just have to do.

I live in the middle of nowhere, somewhere in the NW corner of Ohio. And because of where I am, I have a well. No city water out here, so if there is no water running, it is something I will need to deal with.

In my 20+ years of living here, I've had my share of water problems. Well pump went bad, storage tank leaked, water heater leaked, pressure gage/switch failed. And finally the circuit breaker went bad. I'm just wondering what will happen next.

The latest seemed to be bad pressure switch. I had electricity and I could manually trigger the switch. It just didn't want to come on when the tank pressure got low.

I've replaced one of these before, so I knew what needed to be done. Drain all the water and find the right tools. Take off the switch and get a new one to match it. The nearest hardware stores did not have the part I needed, so it was something that would have to be ordered. Hmm, how long would I be without water??? Since I knew I could turn it on, I decided to order the part and put the old one back on until the

replacement arrived.

Before putting the old part back, I decided to clean it up and hope that it might kick in for a while. I was lucky today. So far it is working as it should. I will still have a new part if it decides to go on me soon, at least I will when it gets here.

God's Strong Love For Fools

I came across this article the other day by Janine Dorsey of the Tampa Tribune; it's called "Don't Laugh; It Could Happen To You: Common Reasons For Emergency Room Visits Are Common and Serious"

If that title alone doesn't intrigue you, then go ahead and skip this post. But I found the article to be both interesting and amusing, so I'll share some highlights:

Federal regulators review a sample of those visits for signs a product might need to be recalled. Those records provide a view into the dramatic injuries of Americans who seem able to hurt themselves with almost any product made.

One woman fell from a galloping horse while texting. Another woman's bangs caught fire as she peered into a toaster.

More than 818 emergency room trips in the past four years involved "chicken" – dead and alive.

Boxes of cereal (cut fingers), cans of pork and beans (falling from a cupboard onto one's head), wood chippers (yes, people stick their hands in) and trombones. Hundreds of people suffer piercings gone wrong, thousands fall out of

their mobile homes or have objects intractably lodged in orifices.

“Every day, people come in and you just think, ‘You gotta be kidding me,’” said Brian Peckler, an ER doctor for 15 years, now at Tampa General. “I mean, what makes a guy think using a fish hook to clean out ear wax is a good idea?”

Everyone knows by now that talking on the phone is distracting, and now that cell phones have become even cheaper than land lines in many cases, people are finding a variety of ways to hurt themselves while using the phone:

A 19-year-old male, on the phone while lifting weights, drops a barbell on himself.

A 21-year-old male, riding his bike and texting, crashes, scrapes his face.

A 37-year-old male cutting chicken while on the phone slices his hand.

A 25-year-old male, texting, walks into a telephone pole’s guide wire and tells emergency room workers “he might have gotten zapped.”

Hundreds of injuries are blamed on the phone in its capacity as a weapon: They’re used as missiles or as a bludgeon to beat people on the head.

And then there is something that’s become obvious to me ever since I had a son almost two years ago – men are more apt to hurt themselves than women. There are more women than men in this country, yet men account for 56% of the ER visits, according to federal data.

Men suffer injury in 80 percent of pressure washer cases. Nine in 10 injuries involving “mobile home” and “alcohol”

were suffered by men. And 96 percent of “nail gun” cases were men.

“Guys are definitely dumber than women in this regard,” Peckler said.

One 37-year-old man tried cutting branches with a circular saw – on top of a running wood chipper. The saw cut off several fingers, which fell into the chipper.

Having a brother appears dangerous as well. Regardless of who was injured, ER records implicate the brother twice as often as the sister.

And my personal favorite part of the article:

“Demonstrate” appears in no small number of cases where less-than-skilled people tried to show off martial arts moves, wedding dances, pogo-stick skills and cheerleader routines.

Though many people consider themselves expert enough to demonstrate something, Robert Cano at University Community Hospital sees scores of cases that prove otherwise.

“Almost nothing good comes after someone says ‘Hey, watch this!’” Cano said.

Note the 52-year-old mother, demonstrating judo to her daughter by flipping her husband. Torn left knee.

Other cases: The 25-year-old man demonstrating to children how to climb on monkey bars when his shoulder “snapped.” Or the 16-year-old demonstrating a softball technique who stepped on a rake that smacked her in the forehead.

Or the 55-year-old woman showing her grandson how to use a pogo stick – she fell and smacked her head.

And finally, the ER doc’s favorite story:

Peckler at Tampa General marvels at accidents that should have been fatal but weren't.

His favorite case: the man who was supposed to be watching his 3-year-old, but decided to change his car's oil in the driveway. Seeking a safe holding area, Dad put the child in the car and crawled underneath to drain the oil.

The child knocked the gear shift from park to neutral, and the car's tire rolled over the man's chest.

He suffered no major injuries, Peckler said. But how could anyone survive?

Peckler shrugged and said, "God's strong love for fools."

Indeed. Just be careful next time you hear someone say, "Watch this." Maybe you should get the phone ready to dial 9-1-1. Then again, after reading how inclined some folks are to hurt themselves while using the phone, perhaps a better response to "Watch this." would be "No thanks."

The Ring Was The Thing

Opening Day in the Bronx with the added spectacle of a little jewelry distributing. Across the street the rubble that had been the home of the Bombers was little more than a memory of years gone by. I was lucky enough to visit the cathedral in the 90s. World Series Champs for the 27th time! Presenting the hardware was the most decorated Bomber of them all... Yogi Berra (with 10) and former pitcher Whitey Ford (who has a mere 7). Throwing out the ceremonial first pitch... another Yankee great: Bernie Williams. I still have to question the release of two heroes from last season particularly in the post

season: Johnny Damon (off to Tiger country) and Hideki Matsui (MVP of the 2009 World Series at the stadium today as an Angel of Anaheim). However, new stars Nick Johnson and Curtis Granderson (from Detroit) have put an early mark on the team.

Some early naysayers have played the age card. Admittedly, Posada, Pettitte, A-Rod, Rivera, and Captain Jeter are getting up there but they all seem just fine to me (even if it is only week two of the season). The pitching is better than ever. C.C. had a no-hitter going into the 8th inning on Saturday.

Today's game was a dandy. I could not watch it as I had to work but I kept checking the score via cell phone. The last I remember, the Yanks were up 7-1. When I got off at 5, I saw the final was 7-5! It must have been a whale of the top of the 9th. But The Great One dispatched his former teammate to seal the deal. 5-2 Record.. .5 games behind Toronto in the start of the season!

Elvis, Elvis Let Me Be

Tonight was another rare American Idol viewing. We are to start Tuesday night rehearsals soon but nit was ice to be off early on a Tuesday night. This week the top nine took on the task of attempting to channel their inner King of Rock & Roll. For the most part, they all did a great job with two very notable exceptions. I have to say how much I idolize the performer who came from nothing and achieved such a memorable place in entertainment history. Not only was he instrumental in the evolution of pop rock music but he also crossed over to country and sang gospel/spiritual music like no one else. I have always appreciated the religious side of Elvis more than any of the other genres. I think these songs showed a

personal, vulnerable side that few of his "hits" conveyed (with the possible exception of "In the Ghetto").

In what has been called the "'68 Comeback Special" after the Hollywood era of a long list of movie attempts, the King set out to do what he had done best... perform in front of a live audience. Not only did he perform many of the crowd pleasing songs, but also included a montage of gospel songs. I'm not going to post the nine minute section of the special but here is an equally moving piece that closed the concert:

Remember, it WAS the late 60s. If you put the song into the context of the turbulent times, the song speaks for itself. I don't think he was exceptionally vocal about his world view but his music spoke volumes. He may not have written a large number of songs but the songs he chose to perform was his genius.

Changing Tides

Unlike the precision of the tides, you will never know which way the wind will blow. The tides come in and go out on a very precise schedule. They have charts made for high and low tides in areas where that is important. The winds of the day can make the tide higher or lower, but it will not cause the tides to cease.

Life is very much like the tides, it flows in an almost predictable pattern. We are born, we live and then we die. The length and form of our lives depends on other influences. Inland the tides are never noticed, but they can be measured with the right equipment. On some ocean fronts you will see the tides marked on the beaches. In other places you see the marks of the tides on cliff walls. Much the same with our lives. We can sometimes see the tides and other times they are barely noticeable.

It is that way until something changes. Winds blow in, the coast line changes and the tides come in with quick fury. The winds change, and in our life things change.

We never know which way the wind will blow but we must prepare for the tides.

A cold wind blew tonight, and I was not prepared...

You knew my unspoken words. You knew the way my mind worked. You knew things before I knew them myself. You knew my heart, and I miss yours.

Small World

Well, we missed our yearly trip to Disney World this year, so it feels like ages since I've been on the Small World ride. That isn't what this post is about anyway.

13 years ago when we started dating, I met my future husband's mother, father, and grandmother for the first time at his grandmother's house. She lived beside a lake, and I have fond memories of walking their new 8-week-old adorable Cocker Spaniel puppy Murphy around the lake with my new boyfriend, with whom I had already fallen in love. A few years later, we were married, and my father-in-law was tragically diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). The disease is awful; one's mind remains intact while muscles in their body begin to fail. My father-in-law was soon confined to a wheelchair, and one day while his caretaker was taking him for a walk, his beloved Murphy ran into the street and was hit by a car while my father-in-law was forced to watch, completely helpless. Murphy was taken to the vet, and miraculously, she had no major injuries.

After my father-in-law passed away, one of the tough decisions we had to make was what to do with Murphy. My mother-in-law worked all the time and didn't feel it was fair for Murphy to be alone much of the time; she thought my husband and I should take her. I would normally do my best to take in an animal in need, especially a dog as sweet as Murphy and especially back then when I had only one child. But at the time, there was so

much going on that it was impossible. I will spare many details, but among other things, we had a new baby, there was a crisis with our business, and we knew we would have to be moving in the near future – it's difficult to find an apartment (especially in the Chicago area where we lived at the time) with the pets we had – one dog and one cat – let alone with adding another dog to the mix. So it broke my heart because I knew my father-in-law would have wanted Murphy to stay with us, but I said no.

We did our best to find her a good home; we spread the word, and my mom put up fliers at the school where she worked – someone heard about the story of Murphy's "dad" and was interested. So she took her home, and months later, we heard that she had been made a part of their family; even getting her own professional Christmas pictures taken.

All was well, 10 years passed, and from time to time, my husband and I would think about Murphy. The woman at my mom's work moved on to another job just a year or so after taking Murphy, and they fell out of touch, so we often wondered what became of them. It had seemed like we had made the right choice and that Murphy had found her family, but you just never know...

And then today I got this email from my mom:

Hi Lisa,

Thought you would want to know....Murphy (Vince's dog) passed away last week. She was with the same family all this time. They are very broken up as she became part of their family. The way I found out....their son came in to school for a conference on his 6th grade daughter. Small world.

Love, Mom

Of course I am sad to hear that Murphy passed away, but I am also relieved to know that she was part of someone's family all this time. It's a relief to know that her getting hit by that car didn't have an impact on her long-term health. I

have closure knowing that she lived a long and happy life, and I can finally say that I know we made the right decision all those years ago. I think Vince would have understood and been happy about Murphy's new family.

Finishing Out The Wonderful Weekend

After our fun Friday game night and awesome anniversary celebration on Saturday, Sunday after church we decided to take the kids to Chuck E. Cheese. We decided to bring along Sammie's little 5-year-old friend (the one who is moving to Mexico – the new one, or New Mexico if you don't speak 5-year-old), and that turned out to be... an *interesting* decision, for lack of a better word – more on that later...

We had a blast at Chuck E. Cheese – we don't live really close to any like many people do, so it was kind of a new experience for my kids, and they had a lot of fun. We found some great internet coupons, and we were able to escape with minimal monetary damages – plus the kids didn't blow through their tokens nearly as quickly as I had expected; thanks no doubt to my husband's brilliant token allocating. My son, who will be 2 in July, just loved Chuck E. and called him "Mouse" pronounced "Mow" like rhyming with "Ow". He kept saying, "Where Mow"; it was so cute! Here's a video; he's saying "Right there, mouse".

And luckily I didn't capture any of this on film, but I have to give a bit of a public service announcement here. Sorry if it gets graphic and disgusting, but just remember we had to witness it; you just have to read my blog about it. If you go to Chuck E. Cheese or just out in public in general, please keep your pants on. I know it sounds obvious to most of us, but you would not believe how many, er, how much we saw that we did not want to see. I guess those low-rider jeans are in style, but I don't like them. And I especially think that women who have small children should not wear those at all, especially at a place like Chuck E. Cheese where you are constantly bending down to talk to or pick up your kids or squatting to get tickets or whatnot. Use your imagination if you don't know what I'm talking about because I certainly don't feel like describing it. Thank goodness we hadn't planned to eat there or appetites would have been lost – YUCK. Enough said.

We had a great time, except that my daughter's 5-year-old friend was extremely hyper and by no means a good listener. She was the kind of kid who made me truly appreciate how well-behaved my own kids are, and I'm still working on un-doing some of the bad habits they learned on the hour-long car ride to Chuck E. Cheese – like putting Mike & Ike's in their noses and spanking butts. At Chuck E. Cheese, they have a kid-friendly check-in system, so we wanted to let the kids roam a little bit, but this was next to impossible since our little friend was the kind of kid who was constantly climbing on the outsides of rides while other kids were on them. Then, she came up with two little finger rings, and my husband asked her where she got them. She led me to someone's table, and I was horrified to realize that she had taken the rings from the table. Could have been an honest mistake, but I could tell by her face that she knew she didn't really "find" them – at least she was honest about where she "found" them. Luckily she had no trouble putting them back, and kudos to Hubby for being so head's up. Maybe it sounds mean, but we high-fived

each other all day that she is moving. Don't get me wrong, she's not a bad kid and she and my daughter get along great, but our 5-year-old is our biggest challenge behavior-wise and having a friend prone to misbehavior would not be a good thing for her. Besides, she's only 5, and she will make other friends – friends that will listen to their parents as well as to their friends' parents.

Overall, a great day to finish out a fun-filled weekend! Even though it will probably take me all week to recover sleep, it was well worth it! ☐