

Year One

Because I was born and raised in the Chicago area, I still peruse the online suburban newspaper; I guess it's to get my news "fix" because let's face it – good news is boring. The more serious or tragic the news, the more interesting it is, and my local daily newspaper just doesn't do it for me – I mean, local news is interesting, but not in the same way. So lately as I've been reading Chicago news, I couldn't help but notice these all over the place:



So what is the deal? What is Year 1? It's no secret that the Chicago Cubs are under the new management team of the Ricketts family this year, so I'm sure it has something to do with that. And it's an unfortunate reality that the Chicago Cubs are also the team in baseball to have been without a World Series title the longest... so I guess management figures that maybe if they just reset time altogether and start from the beginning, the Cubs might have a shot this year. Two or three months from now, we will have a clearer outlook as to how the "new" team can really play. But what if the Cubs go nowhere this year, and we fans find ourselves chanting our infamous October mantra, "Maybe next year..." – what then? Will 2011 be Year 2? Let's hope we don't have to find out. GO CUBBIES!

They're Having A Baby

Ok, ok... so the gang of ~~Dun~~ (OK< OK< Sabre) Scranton Branch are a fictitious bunch, but there is an actual Scranton, PA so who are we to say that the company does not exist. We even drove

within proximity to the town last spring. Anyway, two of the characters on the show are expecting and to satisfy my no Office blahs, I came across Jim and Pam's [Baby Blog](#). Here, you can read about hilarious sympathy pains, weird food cravings, and possible baby names (guess who has voiced his opinion multiple times... even suggesting both male and female variants). There are also multiple links to other historic events, including the wedding of the lovebirds.

Brown Hogs

Everybody knows that kids say the darndest things – there was even a tv show or two about the subject. If you go back and watch the Art Linkletter version, you can see him coaching the kids and moving his lips for the kids to see what they were supposed to say. I don't know why they had to do that; kids come up with enough cute stuff on their own. The reason I decided to write this post is because it came to my attention that my 3-year-old daughter Disney calls groundhogs "brown hogs". Just a cute little tidbit I wanted to share, and hey, she's got a point – the critters **are** brown! Makes sense to me! ☐

Homework

Maybe I'm becoming more simple-minded as I get older, or perhaps it's the fact that I spend my days with children. For whichever reason, I've found myself more amused by simple things lately, most notably email forwards. Here is another

one that made me laugh out loud. I don't know; I found it funny, but I did read it at the end of a very long day...

My husband informed me it was fake, but it's more fun of course if you believe that some version of this actually happened. Either way, the author gets points for creativity in my book – and maybe my husband was just upset that he didn't get what the drawing was supposed to be in the first place ☐

A first grade girl handed in the drawing below for a homework assignment:



After it was graded and the child brought it home, she returned to school the next day with the following note:

Dear Ms. Davis,

I want to be very clear on my child's illustration. It is NOT of me on a dance pole on a stage in a strip joint. I work at Home Depot and had commented to my daughter how much money we made in the recent snowstorm. This drawing is of me selling a snow shovel.

Mrs. Harrington

How Far is Too Far?

Besides being a song from a show I was in once, this is a question we ask ourselves over and over again as the government or some other entity does some eyebrow-raising stunt. It seems a lot of such stunts have occurred in the recent decades, and this one isn't going to make you feel better. The question here is, what should a school be allowed to do to keep tabs on their students or the school property they use, in this case laptop computers? A lawsuit has been brought against a school district for remotely activating webcams when the computer is off-site. This came to light when a school had the gall to discipline a student for something that happened at his home using webcam footage as evidence. Now I can fully understand monitoring computer use when the computers are at the school. After all, at school students should be engaged in schoolwork. But at home? It isn't mentioned just what the student did at home, but even if it had something to do with the computer, should the school really be allowed to turn on the webcam? What if the student left his or her computer open in the bedroom while undressing for the night or to shower? I really hope this school goes down for this, but not with some big financial settlement as it would be the taxpayers of course who wind up paying. What a stupid decision, in my humble opinion of course. Here is the article:

[BoingBoing: School used student laptop webcams to spy on them at school and home](#)

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Polly DOES Want A Cracker

I used to think that parrots had a secret pact to make fun of the many asinine humans who idiotically blurt, “Polly want a cracker?” every time they spot one of the beautiful birds. I’m not sure from where the custom originated, but I always thought it was a stupid, albeit irresistible, thing to say to a bird. But that sentiment changed last week when I actually offered our Scarlet Macaw a saltine cracker – he acted like it was the best thing he ever ate! He even learned the word “cracker” and was uttering it by the end of the day. And come to think of it, they have a Scarlet Macaw at a local pet store, and one of her favorite words is also “cracker”. So next time you see a big bird and you feel the temptation to say, “Polly want a cracker?” be prepared to fulfill what that bird probably considers a promise!

Just for fun, here is the earliest known reference to “Polly want a cracker” from 1937 – I dig how the mom parrot is a housewife complete with apron – clearly before the feminist movement ☐

The Next Karate Kid After The Last Next Karate Kid

Yep, you guessed it... ANOTHER REMAKE that does not need remade. Why, oh why can't people be ORIGINAL!?!? I did enjoy the first two *Karate Kid* movies... they went downhill after that. I wonder if Hilary Swank holds her turn as *The Next Karate Kid* in high regard.

I guess there are changes in the plot line: Work causes a single mother to move to China with her young son; in his new home, the boy embraces kung fu, taught to him by a master. Well.. single mother forced to move, kid embraces martial arts taught by a master. The fact that the master is changed to Chinese and not Japanese changes little. The fact that the stage goes to the Orient in the first movie instead of the sequel... well, maybe we will be saved from a sequel.

Looking at the cast list, I was shocked to see Jaden Smith (son of Will and Jada Pinkett-Smith) at the top of the list. I then looked at the creative geniuses behind the endeavor. Imagine my astonishment when I saw both of the Smiths listed as two of the **FIVE PRODUCERS?! Really... do we need 5 producers to make a remake of a 25 year old movie? Oh... and if you have been wondering what has happened to the long-forgotten (at least by me) Jackie Chan [look no further](#).**

So, lets see if Hollywood can bring us any good movies for the summer.

It is that time of year again...

I noticed that I was getting hit by a lot of search engines today. They were all finding the same post. Last year around this time I started to review all of the fast food fish sandwiches in our area. Guess what, there is a big search going on for fast food fish. A new fast food place opened in our area, so I may have to review the Sonic fish sandwich. But for now, I'm going to go in a different direction or TANGENT if you will.

Eating fish during lent? Why?? I did a quick search and found out it was more out of 'eating from the land' than skipping meat. Apparently (I'm not sure about this yet, the web is full of useless information too), eating fish derived from fasting. Apparently you could eat the food you gathered during a fast. This included vegetables, fruits and the like. It also included fish, since anyone could catch fish. Meat from other animals was the province of the well to do or wealthy.

Other sites have said that this developed to allow the working people something to eat with a high level of protein, just to keep their strength and let them keep working the fields. I'm not really sure about the why's yet, but I will continue to work on it. That question just got me curious.

And one more tangent... Easy fish recipe. Works for most firm fleshed fish (Salmon, catfish, ocean perch, red snapper, walleye, ect.)

- Aluminum foil
- Fish fillets
- Tomato slices
- Onion slices
- Salt

Pepper

Sliced garlic if desired...

Oil of choice or butter

Layer on foil (one serving per foil pouch) from the bottom up onion slices, tomato slices, fish fillets, salt, pepper, garlic, tomato slices, onion slices. Drizzle with oil or add butter pats. Close up foil. Cook...

Over hot coals 10 -15 minutes per inch flip about halfway through cooking time.

(open one and see if fish is starting to get opaque on the first side, flaky on the second side.) Or use gas grill, or cook in oven preheated to 375.

Wonderful stuff...

The best gift of all (non-religious)

Every year my darling daughters ask me what I want for Christmas, birthday and Fathers' day (or any other occasion where they feel the need to get me things), and every year I have more trouble coming up with things I want or need.

So I decided I would put it into words once and for all time. If you see one of my daughters, suggest that they read this. IF you are one of my daughters, pass this on to your sisters. If you don't know or never see my daughters, maybe these words can be used in your life.

What I want most from anyone, especially my daughters, is the gift of time. This can be given in many ways. A call to tell

me some special news in your day. Or a call just to say hi. Time spent putting together a project that you think I might like. Time spent with me doing something or nothing at all. I cherish all the moments I get to spend with those I love.

Time is something we never get back. Once gone it is gone forever, that is why I think that it is the best gift. It has no price, but immense value. You can not buy it, but you can give your time. It is a gift of the heart, and that my friends is a very good gift indeed.

To quote my last show (probably the only 'good' quote from the show) "Our time here on this earth is short, shorter than any of us can imagine." And that it is, spend it wisely, but please spend some with me.

A Voice From The Past

Usually when an unfamiliar caller pops up on the caller ID, I let the machine pick it up. Unless of course, the caller redials then curiosity rears its evil head.. Tonight, a friend I have not seen in four years phoned me. Mandie (I swore it was with no -e) and I worked together at Wal-Mart and along with Karen, were inseparable. I even confided in Mandie about my attraction to our other compadre... but, alas. And she even **shared** the same last name of the most attractive employee at Dunder-Mifflin (now Sabre) Scranton Branch.

Apparently since I left WM about 3 years ago (she left before that... even before the transition to Supercenter), Mandie has been asking about me from time to time (don't get any ideas... she is attached and we were never more than really good friends). Former co-workers have told me she has been in and said... "Where is Jamiah?" She does have my home phone number.

Tonight, she phoned and we talked for like 2 hours catching up. Her four boys are no longer the little ones I remember. Her oldest is now **14!?** The youngest, Ashton, whom I remember seeing a day after he was born is now 4! She also works with Squirmy! Small world!

Even smaller world... she lives in an apartment above a pizza shop very close to the Quarterline Cafe where *He Crossed That Line* just wrapped. So... we made plans to get together and have a movie night soon along with her four boys.