

Polls, like comments

Have you noticed, our polls are just like our comments. So very few people access the polls, and very few comment on the posts. I know I have some lurkers (they told me), and others that just visit.

Now I would like to get more readers, but our little corner of the internet does get a lot of action. I realize our esteemed admin would like to get more bloggers, so we have more internet traffic, but that seemed to get more spam like blogs. What to do? What to do? Me, I beg ☹ So this is another one of those posts begging for more response from the lurkers, but in this case all you need to do is fill out a poll. How easy is that? Or you can post comments on anything here that interests you.

I am lucky that I just post here for my own enjoyment.

[poll id = 5]

Funny thing happened on the way to a blog...

Recently I've been trying to respond to one person's blog, and I've gotten errors. Then I try on another browser and can make 1 reply. Then on to a third to make another reply. Then I have to log completely off my computer to make another reply. Just weird. Of course while testing all this out it looks like I'm making very weird comments. Of course, sometimes I do make weird comments, so nobody really notices the difference. ☹

But, I wonder is anyone having trouble commenting on my blog. Am I losing the opinions, views, and comments of others? I can't be sure, unless they contact me in some other manner.

The other thing I notice this past week, I'm getting more spam type replies. Since I do some moderation of all the replies, most don't get through, but I see them. I don't like them, they add no value to my blog. That is important to me. I would like this blog to be a place for me to share, inform, rant and maybe entertain. Both my initial post and the responses to them help with this. Spam replies do none of this.

Then I noticed that some blog themes like certain browsers better than others. This is to be expected, since some browsers handle the coding differently. It is my hope that my current blog works well with all browsers. It certainly works with the ones I use, on the screen setting I use. Input on what you see would help out.

Finally I started using a few polls. There is one poll on this site that I'm guessing our wonderful Admin put on when he was testing the poll plugin install. Here it is for your pleasure, and my education.

[poll id = 1]

Yes, a new Theme

You may have noticed (or not) that this site now has a new Theme. I found the old one just a bit restrictive on what I wanted to do now.

Since I started adding additional pages, I wanted an easy way to get to all of them. And I noticed the two column design was getting very lengthy. I don't like scrolling down the page to find what I am looking for.

So here is the new theme. As a side benefit, you should be able to respond on each page. I'm always looking for feedback so here is your chance.

Tapped a powder keg...

I made an entry on another site yesterday and noticed a spike in my readers. There really was nothing new to this, the other site seems to be a curious bunch and when I post, my blog readership does spike for a day or two

I did something a little out of the ordinary for me, I begged for readers outside of my blog. Spike city, and I also got additional responses!!!

One of the reasons I started this blog, was a chance to communicate with more people. If nobody responds, I'm not communicating, just writing. So I welcome all newcomers.

For anyone new, most of the time I write about things that interest me. My interests vary widely and can be influenced by responses.... I've been into computer communication since the time of 300 baud acoustic modems. I started sharing Dungeons and Dragons hints and stuff like that in the late 70's early 80's. Then I got into it for work related functions and finally with this blog back to fun again.

Pick an interest, and I may write about it.

1) new/old movies tv shows (Things I've seen, or things I

won't and why)

- 2) Books (I like books, do you have any suggestions? I don't read romance, just a quirk of mine)
- 3) Science News, mostly space related, but that is just a starting point
- 4) Odd News the odder the better in my book
- 5) cooking, I like to find new recipes. All sorts
- 6) Family – I have one and I like them
- 7) Friends – They are the family you pick
- 8) Hobbies and other pastimes
- 9) The trials, tears and other feelings about being a Widower and only parent
- 10) Life – thinking about it and living it

Notice I didn't put up anything about religion or politics. I was always taught that it is almost impossible to have polite conversation in those areas, unless everyone agrees with my Father. Since he is no longer around to moderate those conversations, and I'm not in the mood to moderate them, I guess they won't happen here.

Enjoy, and be welcome.

Things I think I think?

Before cell phones and text messaging, before the internet and email, before the telephone, before the typewriter, people used to write letters by hand. They knew their language, both the writing part and the reading part.

Today in this fast paced world people don't take the time to write letters anymore. A quick email here, and text message their, an entry in a blog or on MySpace are what communication is today. I'm as guilty as the next person, except that I

don't instant message, chat or text. I'm much too wordy for any of those media. It is just too sad that people don't know anything about the complete art of letter writing/reading.

NOTICE!!! I included reading in my assessment of a lost art. Before the advent of all these new ways to communicate, people took the time to read their letters. They were not meant to be a quick read. These were missives that someone took time to write and they deserved time in reading also.

Why am I mentioning this? Good question, I asked it of myself too. It seems that some maybe most people are looking at blog sites, and bulletin boards as direct communication to themselves. They take comments meant for general consumption and think others are talking about them. They have hard feelings when they think something or someone is against them. Now, I will admit that in some cases they may have a valid point, but in others, people weren't talking or writing about them. But they want to take it personally.

Then again, people today don't think before they write. They can write things that could be considered cruel toward an individual or a group. People then get bent out of shape and small wars tarnish the blogs, bulletin boards and myspace accounts. So sad sometimes. Good conversations are ruined by misunderstandings. It happens almost everywhere on the web.

So in this, I asked myself: Why?. I came up with one simple idea. It could be something, it could be nothing at all. We are losing the ability to communicate effectively with the written word, just by not paying attention to what we write and how we read. Is this something we will miss in our lives, or will the older members of society who remember this sort of communication, just talk (write?) about the good ol' days.

Just one word of advice to those who read Blogs, myspace accounts, bulletin boards, emails, text msgs. and the like. If you read something that bothers you, take some time, leave it,

come back to it later read it again. Before responding in haste or anger, make sure you understand what is written, and if those word really apply to you. I've used that since the my very first e-mail, and intend to keep using that practice well into my very last e-mail or whatever form of communication the future brings me.

Cleaning house...

Yesterday, and part of today, I spent cleaning house here on my blog. I didn't see any use to keeping the "Tag Clouds" on my page, I never used them, and they didn't really help me find past blogs. So I threw the clouds out, and put in Categories instead.

Then I noticed I wasn't very good at putting categories on all of my posts. That wouldn't help my searches at all. As I passed 50 or so posts, it wasn't good enough just to go back page by page just when I wanted. So I'm going to be cleaning up my posts, entering new categories to help me find things, and maybe figure out a better way during the process.

I'm open to all suggestions on this.

More on interesting blogs

Currently (as I write this), my top read posts contain two posts I wrote about books. If I look at the posts from the last 10 days, I find posts about books take 4 of the top 10

spots. I just found this fascinating. In fact one of my best few days in blogging (most visitors in a 24 hour period) came after I wrote about my favorite books.

This got me thinking. If I'm not in a play, I tend to read a great deal. Recently my tastes have been stuck in Science Fiction and Mysteries, but I will read different things at different times. Really different at some times, during my high school days I read 4 different encyclopedia sets from A to Z. Ok, one of them was a children's set I read again, but I did read it during High School.

Anyway, I was thinking I need to take my reading in a new direction. So if you have a book you really like, please respond. I'm going to try to read as many as I can. I'm a quick reader, so depending on the list, it may not take too long.

Yes, this is another one of those posts designed to change lurkers into responders....

Recent books I've read

Why did it have to be Snakes (Mysteries of Indiana Jones) Lois H. Gresh and Robert Weinberg

The Early Asimov – Isaac Asimov

Sherlock Holmes and the case of Sabina Hall L. B. Greenwood

and re-reading A Morbid Taste for Bones – Ellis Peters

Back and caught up

Well, mostly. Anyway, I have returned and ~~apparently the site I thought would link to my HPX page never did so~~ (EDIT: there was a post there- I just missed it and so apparently did everyone else!), so there are no comments there. In the last couple of days I have caught up on much of the internet news I read, though I still have several days of newspapers to read. I really should give those up completely and just go to the paper's website for the local news, and comics.com for the comics. I was a little disappointed B.C. finally ended a few weeks ago and was replaced with a pretty bad comic about a sheep and a dog- Deflocked I believe is the title. Of course B.C. had to go since its writer passed on a few months ago. I will meet him once I go home myself, along with other figures like C.S. Lewis and of course the many faithful in the Bible. Not for a long time though, God willing.

The cabin I had was quite young and in some cases difficult. There were two who were prone to distraction and I feel the small group time I had with them following lessons was not where it could have been. Mine was the only cabin in fact who did not even make it to the final flag raising on Saturday morning, still cleaning the cabin. We took over an hour to get ready, and even then I still had to go back and finish following breakfast. But enough of the bad. No one likes to read about that.

Every year there is something new at the camp. The first year I was there they were finishing up the lodge where we have meals and lessons. They had a big tent set up outside instead that year. The second year the lodge was finished and they had a new instructional- rock climbing. There is a small room on the bottom floor of the lodge with a rock climbing wall that extends to the roof two floors up. That replaced disc golf as an instructional. More importantly, the lodge was air conditioned, and so were the cabins! Ahh... The third year I

was there they added a zip line. It is fun to go down it, but unfortunately after one got to the bottom there was a long hike around a lake to get back to the top. They also added an amphitheater for outdoor worship. This year's addition was small, but it aided the zip line immensely. A bridge over that lake. No more long hike around the lake to get back. Next year, who knows for sure, but there are plans for a baseball field and zip line improvements in the future.

The zip line was the general favorite part of camp for the kids in my cabin, but canteen time (where they could buy food and drinks, as well as have (guided) free time came in a close second. The day was quite organized and there was much to do, including lessons, worship, small group, games, instructionals, meals, etc. This could also be somewhat stressful as getting the kids to where they needed to be in a timely fashion when they all had needs like going to the bathroom (constantly!) and changing clothes wasn't easy.

In the end it was nice to hear their thoughts on what they learned and enjoyed when handing out their dog tags at the end of the week. My team was air force, so I "promoted" them from cadets to airmen. Too bad I didn't have wings to give them, but I did use some of my stimulus check (which I will receive soon) on t-shirts for my cabin. I still have one left too. Maybe I'll take a picture of it and post it. In fact, I will have to post some of the pictures I took at camp. It should be relatively safe as I will not be identifying them, or the name of the camp (or my church for that matter ☐). Besides, too few people actually read this thing anyway. Look for those soon- I have well over 300 pictures and 90 videos to sort through to find some good ones. Well, I have some more catching up to do- like reading my friend's blogs. ☐

What makes an interesting Blog

I've only been blogging for a little while, but I've been reading blogs for longer than they've been called blogs. While I won't say I created the internet, I've been on it since for a very long time. So now I'm asking the question what makes an interesting Blog? Of course, since this is my blog, I'm going to answer that question too. At least in my opinion. ☐

The first thing that draws my attention to a blog is the person who writes it. I don't hop from blog site to blog site looking for blogs to read. My personal preference, but to each their own. The second is content. Here I will do searches and sometimes find blogs that fit my search. If they have good content, I will read them. Are they accurate if it is an informational blog? Funny if a humorous blog? Clever, fun, easy to read, catches the eye, interesting. All these play a role in the content of the blog. Finally, blog personality. How does the person writing the blog 'sound'? Do they seem like a person I could get along with, or get in an argument with (I like a good argument every now and again)? Does the blogger seem real?

That's it one paragraph on what makes a good blog for me. And I have found them. Check my blog links, they are some good ones. Unfortunately, one of my favorite blogs is no longer in existence. My nephew wrote a blog years ago, but for some reason gave it up. Some of the most interesting reading I've ever seen, from a person I only thought I knew. His blog was everything a good blog should be.