

Late night thoughts

I usually spend Saturday evenings at my oldest daughter's house. This is 1 hour away from where I live, so it is a bit of a drive to get home. We go late into the evening playing all sort of games, the normal game is some sort of 'role playing' game. The games are always fun for me, but that is not the focus of this post.

Nope, the focus is my thoughts on the drive home, and the 45 minutes to an hour I need to spend to 'unfocus' from my drive home. Driving late at night, I push my body awake. Kind of like a coffee kick without the coffee. I can just force myself to be alert, unless I'm really very tired. This comes in very handy on long drives, or other activities that need my full attention. It is a 'gift' I've always had. As with all gifts, there is a downside. It does take some time to unwind.

Anyway after all this, I was thinking on the drive home about where I am in life. I am an only parent, but my daughters are growing up. Two are married and out of the house, one is engaged to be married soon, the youngest is now a senior in High School, just months from turning 18. They don't need their dad as much as they did 5 short years ago. I've been a widower for 5 years, so in most peoples eyes I would be considered single. I won't go into the ins and outs of all the differences with this label, but for me, I prefer the widower label to the single label. I never made the choice to be alone, it was kind of forced on me. That in and of itself is enough for me.

I now know of some people trying to 'set me up'. Dating, while it has crossed my mind, isn't my main concern. I'm not out there looking. If someone falls in my lap, so to speak, I guess I wouldn't mind. But looking for someone to be with is not my primary goal right now. I have good friends, wonderful daughters, somewhat strange, but likable family, and hobbies

that keep my mind occupied. I've been busy trying to find out who I am. For so many years I was part of a well oiled team. That team got split up, and now I'm a solo act. I'm just starting to find out what is important to me. There really hasn't been any time to spend dating. I'm not even sure I want to go through the hassle of getting to know someone again. Never enjoyed that when younger, I'm fairly certain I won't now. My wife and I kind of just clicked together. Not from the first meeting, but within a few dates, it was like we knew each other forever. Spent 20 years both knowing her and getting to know her better, not a bad way to spend 20 years. Now, I'm not even sure what I would be looking for, but then again, I wasn't sure 25+ years ago either.

I was also thinking about my weekly gaming sessions at my daughter's house. Does this infringe on the time I should be spending with the two younger daughter still (at least somewhat) in the 'nest'? Do they need more of my time, or is this a good use of my time. I tend to enjoy the gaming, and it does relax me. Good point in dealing with the day to day troubles/situations my two at home can give me. I'm thinking I should just talk to the other 2 involved. Yep, that is the answer there.

Also thinking about how much time I should spend with the theater. Yes, I'm currently preparing for a show, I'm on the production board, I tend to volunteer for other projects. Am I spending too much time there?

Do I spend too much time blogging? Yes, sometimes I do. (like now) Could I use time better? Sure. Are other interests suffering from this? You betcha. But this is the place I clear my head, so I have more room to fit all the other stuff going on. Doesn't need to be a daily habit, but the clearing is beneficial.

Yes, all this and more went through my brain on an hour drive. Now I've relaxed and I'm able to get much needed

rest. Read through at the playhouse later this afternoon.

Do you wonder?

A day like today was made for wondering. Warm (for January) and very sunny. A day made for quiet reflection. To sit and see the sun shining through the trees with a fire in the fireplace was most enjoyable. With the warm temperature of the day, the fire has now been allowed to fade. The sun is doing an wonderful job providing extra heat to the house. It is comfortable.

So in these times of quiet reflection, I often wonder about the past and future. More of the future now, than the past, but the past does have a place in my heart.

So today I'm wondering what my future holds. What the futures of my daughters' holds. It is enough to wonder. I don't need any answers yet, the wondering and pondering of this is enough.

My hope is that my daughters are happy in life. I had a very happy life for twenty years. I would hope for at least the same for my daughters.

I don't need to wonder about the past anymore. The past is just that, the past. It is over, the wondering is over. The past is a place to store memories of the hopes of days gone by. A place to keep memories, both good and bad.

Do you wonder about your future? The future of those you love? Today, tomorrow, next month? Do you make plans, or just live day by day? What happens when the plans fail? Do you wonder?

My plans in life are simple. I want to be content. I was happy and sad. Happy is very good. Sad is not so good. Content is restful. Today I am content.

All this and something more

Did you every have a day you thought would have turned out differently? Did you ever expect one thing, and have something else happen? To answer those questions, yes, I did. Yesterday was one of those days.

It was decided earlier that my daughters and I would go to the Zoo to see the Christmas Light display before it closed for the season. As a family we've always enjoyed visiting the light display. As a family we were members since 1984. The Lights before Christmas started in 1986 and has been our family tradition since that date. We took our small children in strollers, pushed grandfathers (due to health or injury) on wheelchairs. We took relatives from warmer climates on very cold evenings. We even went on cold rainy nights. It was a winter escape. As a family we enjoyed the evenings together.

Since 2003, we have not been able to attend as a complete family. My wife was too ill to take the cold weather in her final month, and I stayed with her. She hasn't been there since that year of course. The years following one daughter or another has not been there as we toured the lights. This year my daughter in Florida was not in Ohio to attend. I am very sorry she missed it again.

So three of my daughters, my son-in-law, some friends when to the lights, on the 5th anniversary of my dear wife's death. I thought a melancholy day was in order. I forgot who much I enjoy the company of my family and friends. I also forgot the

magic of seeing hundreds of colorful lights. A day of memories and togetherness. Not really a sad memory last night at all.

After the evening of lights, we went to my eldest daughter's house and shared a glass of wine and bit of dinner. A toast to her memory and more conversation. A wonderful night. I needed that. It was another healing effect on my life. Family is wonderful.

pass this way

Life is a journey, be it driving down the highway, or sailing the seas. Not always a smooth journey, or the most pleasant, but it is the the path we must take.

For me the journey is made easier by those who share my path. Our paths converge and diverge with others all through our lives. We call these people family, friends, coworkers, associates, enemies. Do the paths just cross, or do they stay together for a long time.

Pass my way, or I can go yours. We can laugh. We can cry. Most of all we can share.

Life is a journey, make the most of it, for we can't ever go back to the beginning.

Look back to see who you are, look forward to see who you will become. Life is a journey, pass this way with me.

What most people don't know

It is amazing how we go through life not knowing. I know somethings about my friends, family and associates, but I don't know others. I know somethings about mathematics and sciences, but there is a lot I don't know. I know a bit of trivia, but again there is a whole lot I don't know. I know a little bit about my corner of the computer world, and there are whole other worlds out there. Even people who know a lot, don't know a whole lot more.

Then there are things that I really knew less about. I wish I knew less about death. I wish I knew less about heart disease and cancer. I wish I knew less about all the hospitals in the area. I wish I knew less about being a widower and an only parent.

There are things I wish I knew more about too. The list is growing everyday. I am sure I will learn more about things I don't want to know about, but I will also learn more about the things I do want to learn about. It seems like a cycle in life. I hope to learn as long as there is life in this body. That may or may not happen, but it is my hope.

I also wish I knew what the winning numbers would be on the next lottery draw, but that hasn't happened yet either.

Miss Kasandra Scarlet Did It In The Spa With The Dumbell

The classic board game Clue is getting a makeover. Sure, there's been lots of variations of it over the years; among

them Simpsons Clue, Disney's Haunted Mansion Clue, Dvd Clue, and Clue Jr. But now they are giving the game a more modern look by changing characters, weapons, and rooms. Here are some of the changes:

- Colonel Mustard is now Jack Mustard, a former football player
- Professor Plum is now Victor Plum, a billionaire video game designer
- Mr. Green is now Jacob Green, an African-American
- New Rooms: theater, spa and guest house
- Weapons: Hasbro replaced the lead pipe, revolver and wrench with a dumbbell, trophy and poison
- Each of the characters has a special sleuthing power

Hmm, I'm not so sure about this. I tend to like things the way they are. I've played both versions of a few board games that have been modernized, like Pay Day and Life, and I strongly prefer the original versions. I guess we'll have to see, although it will probably be a long time before I try the new Clue because I buy my games at the thrift store. The only way the new Clue will get to the thrift store super quick is if it really stinks!

Hiatus?

My life is so uninteresting I am seriously considering a hiatus right now. I am a bit depressed that there is such little interest in my blog. True, I don't exactly advertise it outside of a link in my signature at a site I don't post much at, but I would have thought some would post here outside of the three regulars (and one irregular). I am also disappointed in myself at not going after a new job. Subbing

has barely paid the bills, and now I am one month into no income. At one time I had hoped to supplement subbing with some sort of computer-based business like an ebook or computer repair, but it's looking like that end is not only dead but rotting away...

Maybe I can think of something to post every now and then, or maybe something will happen that will give me something to post about, but until then it doesn't look good for this blog. However, I know my mood is down right now so I won't make any decisions until it improves.

I know I used to post school news, but all I have really read in the last few months was so-and-so teacher has improper relations with his or her students and so-and-so gets in trouble for showing their Christianity. In other words, nothing worth posting, at least here. This kind of stuff is just too common and too sickening. Maybe retrogaming news? There was a new release of [Gamebase Amiga](#) recently. Get this package, [WinUAE](#), and a few Kickstart ROMS and you're all set to go with playing old amiga games. Another package for Amiga if you want to do more than play games is [AmigaSys 4](#).

So, until later.

EDIT: Hm, this new post seems to have broken the embedded video from Friday. Even though no one showed any interest in it anyway here's the direct link: [I Pledge Allegiance to the Lamb](#)

EDIT 2: Video looks to be working again.

My life as a play

After watching "Little Women" from the light booth for a about a week now, I was wondering what kind of play my life would make. I know right now, if the author of the play knew me at all, it would not be a musical. Then again, some twisted mind would do that, just to get a reaction from me, or think of me rolling in my grave.

Anyway, would my life make an worthwhile play... That may take some thought. First off a good play needs many different features. A good plot is almost essential (there are a few exceptions to this). Engaging characters are required (my life has that). Some humor, maybe a bit of tragedy helps round everything out.

In my life, you can usually skip everything that happens at my place of employment. Yes, the characters there would be wonderful, but the plot, or day to day happenings are not going to engage an audience. Who in there right mind would want to watch people sit a computers all day. While I've worked in a number of offices, they are not like the sit-coms. To watch would be boring.

Now, on to the rest of my life. For most of it I am a father of 4 daughters. I'm thinking the play could be written around the marriages of each. While only two are married, I think if the weddings progress in any way, there may be a story to tell.

So for this I've developed a cast of characters...

Father

Daughter 1

Daughter 2

Daughter 3

Daughter 4

Son-in-Law 1

Son-in-Law 2

Son-in-Law 3

Son-in-Law 4

GrandMother

GrandFather

Various other family members needed to round out the story (I'll let the writer worry about this, and any directors worry about the huge cast size ☐).

Act 1 – Wedding 1

Widowed father joins rest of males of the wedding party in wearing a Kilt. Is the groom late? Will the bride ever calm down? Will the music play? Will the wind blow and we find exactly what is worn under Kilts? It was an interesting day.

Act 2 – Wedding 2

Widowed father drives across many states to get to second daughter's Florida Wedding, in AUGUST!!! It is hot, and muggy, and the wedding is outside. Will the alligator in the pond climb up on the dock! There is no electricity by the dock for the wedding. The batteries in the boombox are dead. Play the music from a Car? Who will pass out? Who will get a sunburn? Who gets bitten by the gator?

Act 3 – Wedding 3

Not sure on this it hasn't happened yet. Star Wars theme and the Wookie Best man trips on his own fur? Lord of Rings theme and the Orcs attack during service. Take your pick, or it may be something else.

Act 4 – Wedding 4

Let's leave this one in the future. Dream like. It hasn't happened either, but as the father, I can't think of my baby girl getting married just yet...

And then again maybe the play of my life would not be these weddings/future weddings.

Maybe a play about my married life? The fun and warmth of the early years. Kids growing up, the bond between two people growing stronger. Tragic death, grief, and finally growth continuation of life.

May be too much of a downer for some...

And lastly, my life as a member of a community theater. The follies of live performance. Things not working in the light booth, problems of set building. This may not have a wide audience, but any person who ever acted in, directed, helped put on a community theater play may get a kick out of it.

Well, it was fun thinking of this anyway. There may not be a play ever written about my life, but I know that everyone's life is a stage. We perform live everyday. We are the actors, and the audience.

Give it your best, people are watching...

Parenthood

After all this piñata talk (found the ñ symbol!), we had to pop in the movie [Parenthood](#) the other night. Along with the hilarious piñata scene (ok, now I am over-using the ñ a little bit), I had actually forgotten how entertaining this movie really is. It's a really good blend of comedy and drama, and it's not just another silly comedy – it actually has a valuable life lesson. I highly recommend it to anyone who has kids, but I do not recommend it for the whole family since it's rated PG13 and can actually be somewhat crude at points. It has *great* directing and acting and 2 academy award nominations to boot.

The movie revolves around the Buckman family – elderly, empty-nesters (sort-of) and their 4 grown children and their families who are all facing regular life problems of their own. [Steve Martin](#) plays Gil, a man whose own overused stress responses to everyday life are mirrored in his son, and that situation only stresses him out further! He is such a worrywart that he has lost all ability to enjoy regular life and its trials and tribulations, and my favorite part of the movie is when he realizes this; thanks to the wise, if confused, words of his very elderly grandmother. This scene is hilarious and heartwarming at the same time, and if you're anything like me (someone who tends to be a worrywart, sweats the small things), a movie like this really helps to keep the small bumps of life in perspective.

Watching this movie again as a parent made me appreciate it so much more than I appreciated seeing it as a teenager. Again, I'd really recommend it to any parent, and if you've seen it already, I'd say try it again if it's been awhile. That's what I did, and I would have to say that it's now one of my favorite movies!

Bored

One thing about my life is that I don't easily form relational ties, as in friends. This does make it easier to live on a substitute teacher salary since I don't go to social events, but it does make for a boring life. I have strong ties with my church, particularly children's ministry, but outside of that I don't do much. I occasionally visit with friends I have made, particularly those now in Ohio, but making new friends? Really just acquaintances I only see at church and usually nowhere else. Is it any surprise then that I am still

unmarried? Anyway, when I'm not teaching I am usually on the internet or watching TV. Tonight I came home, surfed the net, watched a few episodes of [Everybody Hates Chris](#), a hilarious weekly comedy loosely based on the teenage life of Chris Rock, and am using the internet again to write this. Unfortunately this is how just about every night looks. I have filled nights in the past with more schooling and musical theatre, but it has been awhile since either one so now I am just reflecting. I pray to meet someone I could eventually call my wife, but that requires social work on my part which just doesn't seem to happen. I really should make sure to get out tomorrow night to singles group at my church. It is a prayer and worship night, but it is followed by fellowship. Unfortunately I am in my mid-thirties and still socially-challenged. I often say really stupid things among people I don't know (and sometimes with people I do!). Also, after this month the singles ministry is breaking for a month to revamp the ministry somehow. I do know I filled out a questionnaire on this about a month ago so I guess this shouldn't come as a surprise. Well, enough about this.

Today I had 5th grade again, only this time it was an ELL (English language learner) class. Mostly Hispanic, but other nationalities were represented as well. This was at a school where I have had problems before, so I wasn't expecting it to go as well as in my home district, though I tried to not act as if that were true. Expectations are important. I don't know if this is a true story or not, but in one of my classes in college we learned about a new teacher who was hired to teach a class, and one of the first things she noticed were numbers by their names. These numbers were in the lower to mid 100's, but all starting somewhat above 100 (120 maybe? I don't remember). She assumed these to be IQs of the students, so knowing that smart kids would easily get bored with a standard curriculum she prepared a challenging and engaging curriculum which over the length of the school year tremendously grew her students. She ended up with a very

successful class with top grades. After it was over her principal (I think) asked her how she was so successful and she pointed out to him the IQ numbers for the students which made her try hard to keep them challenged so they would better learn. To this the principal replied that he was very happy with her teaching, but those were their locker numbers not their IQs.

Anyway, the day actually did not go as badly as I had feared. Sure, there were a few incidents involving a desk falling on the floor and a couple of boys getting hurt by slapping and punching each other, and also some strong-willed kids, but they did their work and they learned. In the end it wasn't a case where I just wanted to be done with it like some days.

Tomorrow: 7th grade language arts