

# Elementary Chinese Proverb

So after mass tonight, I took two lovely, entertaining young girls to watch me niece in her elementary school's production (not program as the director informed us before the curtain rose... the distinction is the mere formality of budget) of *Mulan, Jr.* I was really impressed by the entire production, the set design and costuming (for nearly 80 3rd-5th or is it 4th-6th grade... WOW!) was very well conceived especially for an elementary school show. The backdrop was a very impressive painting depicting Chinese mountain scenery. But the costumes were one of the highlights of the show. I'm not sure how many tailors were used but we were informed that they were all handmade.

For such a young cast, I was really impressed by some of the performers. My favorite was the evil leader of the Huns, Shan Yu. A tall, imposing figure dressed in black with his small entourage. His voice was also quite commanding.

I also thought that the young lady portraying Mulan had a very nice voice.

I must have been trying too hard to locate Elizabeth, but I still think the costuming was so well done that it was difficult to spot her. Taylor actually pointed her out to me. Oh, yeah... that's her in the purple robe!

There were also some miscues that were not entirely the cast's fault. A few times the miked performers were not heard because the sound tech failed to have them on. However, one young man must have been delayed in his entrance because I heard someone on stage whisper, "Where's ...?" Ah, the magic of live children's theatre. Overall, I really thought it was adorable and Taylor and Sammie seemed to enjoy themselves which made it even more worthwhile. Plus, they even brought a gift for our star. The Huber Opera House was filled to

capacity (well... the main level) which was something I had not seen since *St. Louis*. I guess it is true what they say about audiences with children on stage, but **80!!!**

I also got a very early Christmas present. A blast from the past, actually. I know someone in my family had the Parker Brothers [Six Million Dollar Man](#) board game. I knew as soon as I saw the box that I had played it years ago. LOVE IT... **THANKS!** Plus we had time to play a quick game or three before the night ended.

---

## Another Thespian In The Family?

On Tuesday nights, my niece Elizabeth and nephew Noah come to the house while their older brother is taken to Boy Scouts. Last night after returning from rehearsal, I asked Elizabeth when her school play is going to be. I never got the dates but I remember last year's was sometime in November. I was able to drag out that she has the title role in *Mulan, Junior*. I was excited for her and even had to ask again to make sure I heard correctly. How awesome is that?! I asked if Joshua got a part... forgetting that he is too old to be in the 4th and 5th grade show.

I must admit... and I don't know why... but I have never seen the movie. It must have been because I lost track of Disney movies in the years following *The Lion King* up until Pixar joined the studio with *Toy Story*. I do remember that Lea Salonga was the title voice with Donny Osmond and Eddie Murphy also voicing roles.

Another aspect of Elizabeth that amazes me is her voracious

reading. For her birthday, I gave her two books: a mid-level edition of *Marley and Me* and a Peter Pan prequel (it had Disney's stamp of approval for whatever that's worth). I thought the first book looked a bit simple for her (she has read all 7 Harry Potter books) but, eh. I was right because I asked how far she had gotten in them and she finished the first and started Peter Pan earlier that day and was already beyond the first 100 of 500 pages.

Apparently, school children are rewarded for outside reading far more than I was. When I was in elementary school, we received a coupon for a free personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut after reading so many books. Today, children can read a book go onto a website, take a quiz, and earn points which they can build up to obtain all kinds of fabulous gifts. I had no idea there was such a thing until my cousin asked if I made sure the books were on the [AR](#) list? I think it is a neat idea but for one thing: The points do not carry over from year to year. I really don't have a problem with rewarding those who enjoy reading and I don't believe that the incentive is connected with the classroom.

Not trying to take anything away from the fabulous news of Elizabeth's first lead role, so CONGRATS! Break a leg! OH... my brother came in the store tonight and he had no idea of the news when I asked him about the show dates. And I was informed as I walked into the house last night? Priorities.