BlogBooker

From Blog to Book.

ATTICUSSAWATZKI.BLOGSPOT.COM
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My new blog! How exciting!
Technology these days, so amazing that anybody can have a website. In this blog I will be able to easily do issues of Tuck Shop New on the computer instead of being handwritten. I don’t know, but am I the only person that can read my handwriting. The minor disadvantage is that I can’t write anywhere I want; I don’t have a laptop. I think the quickest way to get one, I guess, is to get a prepaid charge card (or a real charge card if you have one) and go to one of these websites, bonusgiftpromotions.com, freegiftcardsnow.com, and claim yours. I’ll do a blog on this sometime soon. So back to story. I can just copy straight from my blog and throw in other good stuff into a document and publish it. I’ll try it for one of these issues sometime. Thank you Mr. NT Fletcher for inspiring me and thank you, the reader, for reading my blog, and have a nice day :)

One Fish Two Fish (2007-03-01 14:07)

NT Fletcher, my model, does reviews-en-passant of restaurants in his hometown of Middletown, CT. He also does reviews of restaurants in New York City. I will take on the restaurants of my hometown, Washington, DC.
One Fish Two Fish- 2450 Pennsylvania Avenue
Asian Cuisine Authenticity: 4/5 Price: Reasonable ( $50. for 4 people for dinner)
Taste: 9/10 Waiting Time: 9 min. Restroom (Rated from the Men’s room): Clean
Service: Good English Fluency: A- Language: Cantonese
Descend down a half floor of steps to the restaurant. Its decor is a mix between a Takey-Outy restaurant and a decent sit-down place. It has simple decorations, the only flaw being the beverage refrigerator sitting in view of the dining tables. The setting is quiet, with not too many diners making din. Even though the fact that there are not that many diners may keep you away, it seems that they have a good load of phone orders. This restaurant has been at this location for over a dozen years. Free Delivery to local college students (GW Univ.) keeps the restaurant owner, once a New York immigrant, in a nice suburban home.
Circulation Dead (2007-03-03 18:35)

If you ever happen to be in DC never trust the tourist-oriented red Circulator buses. It’s a mediocre, slow ride if you take it, although you would fare better in your own automobile, as long as you know the roads, or the Metro (DC has this thing of distinction of calling the subway by this name of higher elegance.) Hint. Never wait more than ten minutes for that bus that couldn’t. I’ve had bad experiences where the bus did not come even after 45 minutes (It’s supposed to come every 5-10 minutes) Just today I sat down at the computer after deciding to do the 20 block / 2 mile walk from Chinatown to my residence. And not a single bus was in sight!
Note: This refers to the K street/ Mass ave line. The 7/9 street line fares better with dedicated bus lanes, and the Independence/Consitution line runs fine when it does in the Summer. Visit dccirculator.com for information on this bus, and note that if you want to complain this is not part of the Metrobus system.

Ginseng Candy is Good! (2007-03-03 18:46)

Ginseng, Taurine, Ginger, Ginko. We refer to these so frequently as American Culture asianiphiles itself. The Chinese are known for mixing exotic and unexpected herb remedies with food and candy. it may not seem very attractive, but there is something to be noted about the American Ginseng Candy, made in China and therefore Chinese. Point: Have you ever seen a large Asian Candy? Ginseng candy contents itself in a gold-colored wrapper with an image of Ginseng on the front. As you pop one of these into your mouth you will notice that this is not bursting with sugar or as being creamy, but you will notice a cool taste radiating from it. It resembles a breath mint, and it successfully does without ruining the earthy, healthy goodness of Ginseng. Had a mild sinus congestion? The candy will help it sure enough. Miracle Ginseng. Available at many Asian supermarkets and at Jangoo. 10 cents each, 5/45 cents. CC-AGC

Our Boston Trip (2007-03-10 18:22)

I sent this sort-of-desperate message last night after arriving back from Boston. The plane trip really should have been less hasslesome.
i just came back from a school trip to boston.
hotel-nice, but i was e-stranded from the computer the whole time- there was a computer but no internet access. It was freezing cold.
’twas zero degrees fahernheit. ’twas a good trip though.
Monday
After being served a surprising dessert of Kasuagi gummies I’m about to take a plane ride! I don’t know what I am more excited about; the plane ride or my first trip on the AirTrain.
This station seemed to have been designed as part of the airport. They tried to be cool by naming their stations with letters; I got on at "D". It felt like I was trapped in a bubble waiting in the enclosed terminal. The trip went at a slower speed than I would have liked it, and the train was overcrowded, even at midday. We switched between the two tracks quite often, having to slow to 10 in the process. Not enjoyable.
Of course we managed to spend a lot of time at the airport checking in. It would have been faster if we would have taken a bus. No complications on the flight; I truly enjoyed that take-off jolt. No problems with baggage claim. We left the airport in an interesting manner; by boat. The trip was not too enjoyable with
the constant rocking of the water taxi. We passed by the USS J>F>K>, the last fossil-fueled US Navy vessel. Mr. Goodwin sure knows a lot about boats.

Our hotel at the Yacht Haven was nice and spacious with a high ceiling and a view across the bay. Nice. Dinner was at Joe’s American Bar and Restaurant, who shared the pier.

Tuesday
This was the science center day. I was so eager to see how their subway was like. It was yet bitter cold. I can’t believe they called trolleys and buses trains! Such like DC’s Zoo Stop, the Science Museum was actually 2 plus blocks from the aerial station. It was cool and the gift store and cafeteria weren’t rip-offs!

To Be Continued

Bus Ride (2007-03-15 08:49)

I took a bus ride on my favorite Chinese bus line (to be politically correct we should call them Budget Buses) It was the average of fast, but there was this woman who had problems with the driver. She claimed that the buses always took a rest stop in South Jersey and that it was inhumane to go the whole way without stopping. "I need to go pee" she said. But there was a toilet on the bus. So when the driver did make a stop just for her he rolled his eyes at her, which should seem to be a normal reaction to someone that annoying. So anyway, she took evidence photos of the bus and the driver’s face and called the Better Business Bureau
en route.
Now this is not usual but it did not seem to disturb the other passengers, who were of all racial backgrounds, FYI.
Eastern Travel- www.easternshuttle.com
PS- I did some reading on giving microloans to people in developing countries. It’s an excelent idea and it doesn’t cost much money, only a dollar a so per person. And it gets paid back too!

Ohio’s Teen Social Problem (2007-03-16 17:40)

Ha! everyone else uses the same news story about the Ohio ‘youts’.
A boy ferociously punched another boy, which started a mass riot in the immediate area. The centerpoint was the two gangsta’ boys. The poor victim of the punch self-defended himself with a .22 caliber and shot the attacker in the cheek, bringing the battle to a close and safe ending. To make the story more sweet the incident happened right outside the hospital. This ensured that the aggressor got walk-in treatment. I have experience with .22’s and it is rare to send someone to the hospital let alone put the victim (or loser of the game, if so) in critical condition, which was reported. The causer of the problem then took an unnecessary and wastefully luxurious helicopter excursion with a personal flight attendant/ EMT to his ’hood compliments of your tax dollars.

1.2 April

April Fools and Vista (2007-04-01 18:33)

The G-April fool’s jokes get more realistic every year. In 2000 they advertised a telepathic-typing device. Who would fall for that?
I tried Windows Vista today and I H8 IT!

Asides from its slothfulness and an annoying color scheme the toolbar is non-functional; the EULA Toolbar screen cannot be X-ed out, and to pull something up from the toolbar you have to pull that EULA screen out of the way as well as pull whatever you worked on or anything else that you did not move to the toolbar. They’ve been working on it for years and what it really is is regression. Stick with whatever edition they have now.

Also, yesterday I was at St. Mark’s place in New York. There is this excellent Japanese market in the basement of 35 St. Mark’s Place. Nice and Clean. Next to that at 37 is the Bamn Automat. It’s semi-revolutionary in the food delivery aspect. Visit bamnfood.com for more information.

I did not abandon! (2007-04-15 15:49)

Sorry. Easter was too time-consuming.

Jangoo did a profit review. The result was good at $6.00 plus $11.00 uncollected. Buy on, investors!

I just got breaking news: Oh how I wish I had an airplane to investigate this atrocity! Hate Crime killing spree against stunned German speaking students occur by a mentally disturbed Mongolian! 35 dead, blood spewed on streets. If you can, I think it would help to give them a prayer and visit V-Tech to support the community. PS There is an airfield with a sufficient runway to land a 33-seater plane.

Of Late (2007-04-22 18:12)

Jangoo introduces a new Ad service. If you let us put a standard ad on your website we will pay you upwards of 15 cents.

Jangoo also introduces a CCTV style news system for its news and the Tuck Shop. Postings to come soon starring Atticus and Augustus Sawatzki, and Massimo Pellegrini as cameraman.

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Coney Island (2007-04-22 18:19)

Trying to go to Coney Island on $20 is tough. First of all, on weekends it is a 45 minute trip on subway from midtown to the Island (On Weekdays there is an express train.) First I did the Cyclone. Even though it is celebrating its 80th anniversary it is still scary on the drops. They must be equal to a modern coaster. Sitting next to this thin fifth-grader there was a lot of room to shift and hence fall out, so that was an extra scare. On the falls you feel like half of your body is being ripped away from you. You should try it sometime for its
heck. $6./ $4/reride. After that I and a few friends dug a canal ( 50’ long!) and a well on the beach. (Free) After that we headed on the boardwalk to brighton Beach, a Russian Neighborhood. More on that later.

1.3 May

Chinatown (2007-05-05 18:33)

Today I went to the Flushing Chinatown. I got some more products for my online store as well as a punchlist of items to include on a short doc(umentary.) Look for more on that later!

Our Progress (2007-05-06 18:28)

I am very pleased to announce that we have had a steady increase in visitors to our website. Thank you very much! Invite your friends to see! Also, we have started a video series. More on that soon including DVD’s

1.4 June

Summertime is here! (2007-06-08 13:34)

Many are excited about summer vacation, and about Jango Online. I tell you, it’s like no other web shopping experience you have ever had before, if so. Our wide catalog allows you to chose from many categories, and checkout is made faster and easier than ever (Soon we are going to accept paypal and put listed auctions on Ebay.) No credit card needed so kids can use it without skeptic parents! Service starts June 11 and pauses on July 4 for a trip. A larger service will then be available July 23.

Now Hiring (2007-06-08 13:43)

We are looking for recruiters, newspeople, franchisers, advisors and idea purchasing for our great name! Qualifications are easy. You just have to be a great person who loves Jango and selling things! A previous order on J!, history of entrepreneurship, location, and a wide circle of friends are preffered. Email me for specifics and items (Samples and sales items, business cards)

Jangoonow Begins Again (2007-06-11 05:21)

I am so excited about this! This project that we are doing is the equivelant of the summer of ’05. Our changes includes revamping our catalog from scratch and create a fun, money-to-all shopping community. Serving you the best!
New Product Solutions (2007-06-13 17:15)

If you are allergic to a certain item, you can tell us confidentially by e-mail so we know. Although we already keep common and serious allergen products separate with care and wash hands after handling, this will help us with the free samples and such.

We are now offering portion controlled items in clean ZipLock bags.

Wasabi Peas and DIY Bubble Tea.

__________________________

Yahoo possibly beat Gmail. (2007-06-21 06:29)

After being #2 since gmail became cool Yahoo did something revolutionary....

UNLIMITED STORAGE SPACE! What that means for you is that YOU can send me large files through Yahoo.(If they can transfer, and no junk, and no LORD OF THE RINGS for the time being.) Just email me to one of my other emails ahead so I know to check. In homage I also set up a direct email link for probably a growing number of Yahoo fans out there.

The question is "Is Yahoo better than Gmail Now?" This can become a controversial discussion!

__________________________

Joe Darby (2007-06-24 16:20)

About 5 minutes ago, 7:33 PM. We have discovered Joe Darby’s place of residence, of which I will distribute. Hiding in fear of Cumberland folk who say he is "a bullseye", he covered his location on National TV. We ID’ed the spot as downtown Winchester, VA. This suggests that he lives in the area. FYI Joe Darby was the revealer of the torture videos and Pix in Iraq.

__________________________

1.5 July

How to deposit $500 of coins (2007-07-01 19:10)

How much does 5000 cents, nickels, dimes and quarters weigh? A ton. (Not quite literally, though.) So after 5 years of waiting, wrapping coins, and having pleasure with the ranks of rolls, I turned them in. It took some thinking. In the end I used a kid’s scooter to transport the small cooler. It turned out that the first bank (distance not given as protection) was closed for the day, so I resorted to the one with the coin sorting machine. (This was at Wisconsin and M street, later that night to be a SWAT team panic/media frenzy) Having to undo years of wrapping, I discovered First Union rolls. What a long time it has been. The total was $569.17 (3 cent rolls were delinquent a penny, unavoidable, and a Canadian Quarter and dime were rejected) So it turned out that this was noting to them. An El Salvadorian man had been saving coins for 4 years and put $4400 through the machine in 2 days.

__________________________

My Trip to England (2007-07-26 09:16)

"Part of the time I was preparing this email I was test-driving a Mac in London. I only had about 10 minutes there, and that was all the computer use I got in England. Since July 6 I’ve been in England on a choir trip."
For the last week of so we have been looking at old cathedrals and singing in them. They look so much the same that I stopped taking pictures of them. Some of the places we stayed were just plain nasty, but there was one super-modern one. Now if you go to the tour blog, [1]www.anglicanheritage.blogspot.com, it will say a lot, maybe but I don’t know, about almost a total of 100 hours of singing, (it’s true! sometimes up to 6 or 7 hours a day) but it will not mention some things.

Our bus originally came with a trailer attached, in which we kept our luggage. When we were going up a really steep hill the trailer snapped off and rolled partway down the hill, however not hitting a BMW that was behind us. About a week later the bus sprang a gas leak. We waited in a parking lot for four hours at night for a replacement bus to come, and that was the end of the travel problems until we had to literally run to make the plane because the check in and security lines were so long (American Airlines). Otherwise the trip was fun.”

PS. The country is totally socialist! The tax rate was a whopping 18 % and I did not get to go to duty free to shop for cheap stuff, neither did the rest of the group. This might have been a good thing, as I got an offer of 2 pounds (approx. $4) on a single crunchy bar on the way home. The milk was disturbingly cheap, and International pay phone call pricing was gouged to subsidize 20p local and national calls. Nessie was cute (Scotland, not to offend) and I recommend Rowan Glen yogurts.

Quotes: ” A Scottish coach with a Scottish Driver”, "They’re all driving on the improper side of the road”, "Lots of crashes happen within the first half hour of the Chunnel because of England’s "backward" driving system" "Even the light switches and power goes the wrong way.” "It’s alright, England, we understand”

1.[http://www.anglicanheritage.blogspot.com/](http://www.anglicanheritage.blogspot.com/)

1.6 August

Canada (2007-08-12 15:37)

What do you call a two-lane road with yield-turns? In Canada that is what is called a freeway. Apparently, Canada has not been using its tax money right. In a nation with a skyrocketed 18 % overall tax rate nothing has been done. Everything is still overpriced. (Who ever heard of spending $15 per person at a Chinese take-out, or $40 for a toll bridge?) So, anyway, the only thing I know that you get is American-style general hospital care. So I collected my receipts to get a tax refund from the place up north when I got back to the nice place. Apparently, they had canceled that program in 2006 and away went the tourists. So then, we should think, would it be too bad if America was made the police of the world? (Or at least make us the bank).

PS: Subway makes this lobster roll sandwich, and I was asked to say that it was no good. And remember, Prince Edward Island potatoes are allowed back into the States/ Colonies, and a good lobster roll is done with Mayo, Salt and Pepper, and a little Lettuce.

Canada (2007-08-12 15:37)

Tuck Shop (2007-08-15 12:00)

Did you really know the Tuck Shop had a website? It does! I have yet to decide who gets access to the password. Traditionally, we have to keep Jangoo and Tuck Shop somewhat separate (Yes, now I can admit it,
Jangoo was doing elicit business, but you may be able to use a common order form for both soon... got to run. More in this later

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1.7 September

DeWired (2007-09-02 15:21)

Last Wendsday, I moved my computer from my bedroom to the living room. I had a logistical issue; my phone plug in the living room was broken! I had to wait until today so I could get the replacement plug. After a wiring mistake that I made about an hour ago (from the outdated home use of the 25-cord system) I was devastated. I was desperate to get back online. No e-mail, no web fun at home. I had to go to the Library to satisfy my needs, not saying it is a bad place, just four blocks away. I was in glee when I got it working a few minutes ago! So my advice, try to stay connected to stay happy!

Who do you call a crook? (2007-09-08 09:04)

Stuck in a residual delay, with the whole train’s A/C system broken, and fog condensing on the windows. That’s what happened just to save one crook’s life. Now imagine a group so inspired as to do that in 10 strategic points in the Metro system. Likewise would we be accomplices to the crime by shutting down the entire system? So apparently the Metro is a popular way to go, and a bus doesn’t hold that many people, American style (Reverse Tokyo Style) and a riot started. Option A: Hit the crook, Option B: Leave many injured as they cause a rush for the shuttle buses, as well as harm the American money and the enviroment (the buses). I got some feedback. ”Who cares (about the dude)”, was the most common.


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If you are concerned about Chinese Candy (2007-09-08 09:21)

Recall after recall, not everything made in China is safe. But we do guarantee the safety of what we sell. After review of our products, most of our candy is made in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, all of whom has had no problems. Our American Ginseng candy is made in California, and that leave White Rabbits, which are of high reputation. On top of that, they are distributed to over 50 countries worldwide, and American imports are closely monitored by QFCO, inc. of California, the American distributor of the candy. As part of our quality monitoring, we sample our candy a week in advance before making it available to you. I never had a problem. So enjoy!

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Bonus Gift Promotions (2007-09-08 09:33)

In March I commented that playing with free laptop offers were the most time-money worth way to a laptop. In fact I still think it is, but only if you have great organization and a big credit card. I did try, and I quit,
after handing my card to subscriptionists (Yikes!) Part of it was that my charge card, which I already paid a $3.95 premium on, was not big enough. Part of it was that I used the worst possible company, freelaptops.com, who made you buy more junk (Such as DVD’s and club memberships) before getting to claim the prize. So as I go, I will try it again- when I have a full time clerical staff.

1.8 October

White Rabbit Galore! (2007-10-02 17:20)

Report from the Tuck Shop: They chartered 10 bags of White Rabbits, much better than previous one-bag purchases. Fresh from the bag, ten bags, day after day. I was about to put an e-order for pickup on Sunday when I realized I had two bags at home! I mean, that would make a great photo! IITYWYBAD? Look it up. It’s a real acronym.

High School Stuff! (2007-10-16 19:19)

Facebook makes me feel exclusive. To register, one must give their high school. You see, it feels like it was made for me. But enough about that. I believe that this is the first blog that I mention school, so here goes. While I still have 16 hours unrelated to school time, it always feels squeezed. First of all, I am forced out of my cozy bed at 6 am by the alarm clock. 50 minutes later, I must be outside and walking towards the Metro. 55 Minutes pass and I am in class. 5 classes in the morning, 1 hour 20 minute extended lunch period, 3 classes in the afternoon. 3:20- run for the microbus for quick transit to the metro. Get home around 4:05. The days pass. The weeks pass. I calculated that I have about 135 more weeks of school until college. And for today’s action
On the train home a typical riot happened. On the opposite end of the train a kid starts shouting. Then everyone else from that school joins in. A few seconds the police come from nowhere and apprehend them. Not everyday stuff, but some action it was. (Just so you know, this wasn’t my school who did the riot. It was Bernie Backus School’s fault...)

Recent Activities (2007-10-19 10:21)

I’ve started to record short movie clips on my cell phone. Why?

1.9 November

Haiku is so cool! (2007-11-02 17:32)

Just about a few days ago some comrades and I started having safe, sane, intellectual fun called Haiku. Haiku is like what you see below
Haiku is so cool
What a week (2007-11-09 18:22)

I took a peek at ntfletch's page and decided to share more about school
An observation-the more school activities you do, the better grades you get. So be busy.
And they say that overachievers have no social life. Really?
So we are doing the Bye Bye Birdie musical the weekend after this one. We just started instrumental rehearsal on Monday, and a dress rehearsal on Veteran's day. But it's coming together really well.
More on this later

Last Week (2007-11-23 15:19)

1. I've been busy with my Facebook account. What I like most about this service is that it makes me feel smart. (You have to register with someone you know in High school or college). For that matter, I nearly had my account deleted when I did not friend someone at my school in a timely manner. But unlike that MySpace, which I suppose I will never get an account with, it does not have the trashy things, and the friends you get are real friends you know and, perhaps, trust. So there. [1](click here to view)

Somebody important (2007-11-26 14:40)

Outside GW Hospital there were over thirty secret service vehicles. A street was also closed to park a multitude of cop motorcycles as well. It being the preferred hospital of the American Royal family and their nobles, that is only a sign that someone important had an medical emergency. We have not had a reason to enter the hospital to find out who is there.
That was my report, and I beat the other news people to it. But remember, it’s bad to rejoice at some politician’s personal misery, but the news like to sensationalize it anyway.

If you want to know (2007-11-26 15:13)

Says Fox 5: It was Mr. Chaney's heart. Nothing major, the hospital said.
Mid-Week Blogging (2007-11-29 15:39)

I would not have usually been blogging now other than by public request. I suppose it is assumed that one should blog everyday like one would journal or diary everyday. I think I should attempt to try to do a blog every day.
But today I got a little word of advice: I did run two blocks after a bus yesterday. I did make it, but it was not worth it. I then was panting all the way to school and until the end of first period. There was also a little bit of coughing involved as well, and I was afraid that I had caught a cold, but I didn’t. Moral of story: try to resist the temptation of chasing buses.
Otherwise I guess my mid-weeks are routine. There is a larger thing I want to say that will have to wait a little. Hopefully I can post my big idea tonight, and if not, soon. You see, I like, and I must, if I want to be happy the next day, get to bed by 10:30pm. By that time I always have my schoolwork done, and sometimes a little time to spare. But otherwise, I just hope the “workweek” goes by fast. PS I do floss every night :)

1.10 December

The worst night ever (2007-12-01 17:36)

Last night was the worst night I ever lived through! This all-youth lock in at the cathedral could have been the fraud of the day. You see: They showed pictures of happy children on their website. The real faces were those of people who did an all day long test. Exhausted faces emerging into the sun for the first time in more than 14 hours. These high school age group leaders just could not manage anything. For example, we had to wait a whole half hour in line just to get a bagel! and not to mention the warm orange juice. The disrespect of the church- how terrible! Sleeping and eating in the nave of the cathedral! Not like I could get to sleep; there were people screaming and stomping all night, waking me up at regular intervals. After all, the light was on over my head all night. Between 7pm and 1am these big children stuffed us with propaganda- they actually did traumatize more than one person about what they said about how there was no justice in the world. That was from 7 to 10pm. Then we had a Woodstock-esque christian revival song event. They can be fun, but I don’t have to tell you about this one. Then we had a midnight mass of the most sacred sacrament of Holy Communion while we sung improvisational church music. In sleepwear on the altar of this high church- How dare they! So with less than 2 hours of sleep in all I slouched over to my orchestra event. These big children destroyed at least half my weekend.
Main problem- too many people! How were you supposed to meet people when there were 440 paying participants? Each participant paid $38. Go figure. The diocese received $16,720 (Nearly all the staff were volunteering.) while apparently the majority of the participants were in misery. I would have happily given 2 $20 bills to support whatever nice mission the church was trying to achieve. This was unnecessary, I thought. A few people, however, liked it and want to go back again next year. It just must not be our parish’s style. Don’t take me wrong- Most Christian sleepovers are great fun and whatever this sleepover was trying to claim they did. For example, I would have preferred watching a DVD in a cozy sleeping bag with people I knew at my local parish over the cathedral’s own movie theater and that rock band that was there.

The Big Idea (2007-12-01 18:13)

I promised on Thursday that when I had more time, I would give my big plan. I read online about these High School Entrepreneurs. Their stories are amazing! But there is a benefit- they also give scholarships for
these people for college. I suppose that this is a limited field and that I may have a chance to shine, and to get pocket change without being dependent on a parent. I’ve done lots of buying and selling and much of the other professional matters like evaluation... This is something that I will think about over the long Christmas break in 20 days.

Ice Day? (2007-12-05 16:29)

Snowball-able snow so early in December? Cool. The only reason I’m here right now is that the mayor decided to take a snow day. You see, the DCYO-JP (DC Youth Orchestra Junior Philharmonic, who is recruiting), which I am a member of, was supposed to perform at the livable walkable community event. This was called off, as many other things were, tonight, for a reason I don’t see. Now tomorrow, I believe that there will be ice on the roads when it refreezes tonight. (Actually, it was below freezing nearly all day- the roads just didn’t freeze like everything else, and the snow would not adhere.) And when there is ice on the roads it isn’t safest to drive and the government says not to go to school or work because of that, even though it doesn’t bother my travel. Keep posted on wtopnews.com for the latest school closures. Rappahanock county in Virginia and The Potomac School, VA have already posted 2 hour delays for tomorrow. My opinion: It doesn’t matter to me if we had school tomorrow or not. After all, it is going to be Thursday and it’s not a bad schedule...

DCYO Recruiting (2007-12-05 16:47)

Can you play a Vivaldi Concerto? If so, great, because that is what our conductor wants. Last Saturday, Mr. Vales revealed yet another ambitious plan for our Junior Philharmonic. He compared us to the other, (top) orchestra and said we could be as good as them, when we had enough people. He pulled out a board with all the available seats, and had us all fill in a chair to represent ourselves. We had 35 people. There are 88 places, which is the size of a full Philharmonic. We were always called the Philharmonic, and now Mr. Vales wants a Philharmonic. "We will fill these seats by 2009". "Three oboes!" someone exclaimed "It’s lucky if we have one!" He said that if we all brought someone to our ensemble, then the rest would take care of itself. according to Mr. Vales, "We can be the best in the county".

Most of us have been playing with this institution for many years. That is testimony to the enjoyability of the program. Timewise, this takes no more than 4 hours of your Saturday, and requires only a few hours of practice a week. For this you receive the chance to perform at high profile events and a great portfolio for college applications. So I encourage everyone out there, if you think you are qualified, or for that matter have any sort of musical inclination, visit this website,[1] www.dcyop.org. All orchestra positions are avalible. Harps and Percussion and all woodwinds and brass and strings, including violin!

Thank you all for your time, and remember, you can be great![2]


Another Post (Happy style) (2007-12-06 18:49)

(insert a phrase from George Horton paraphrasing Greek literature) Because I did my Math homework last night I did not have any homework tonight! That’s a first in a while.
For the record, Montgomery County Schools opened 2 hours late today, and therefore we had a neat-o 1 hour delay, which I used half of for a snooze and half for treading through ice. I didn't have a problem with the trains, but apparently some people did. There are automatic snowmelters on the tracks to take care of the ice. While the temperature barely broke over freezing, parts of the park’s snow/ice has broken into islands in the park outside my window. Likewise certain streets are still in a thick layer of frozen wintry mix, while other (side) streets are melted. Whatever was going on with ice adherence today will not disturb my normal Friday and Friday night tomorrow!
Also: I found my Biology folder back where it belonged. Nice people-returned my exam study material.

Two and a half day weekend (2007-12-07 16:25)

It's Pearl Harbor day today, and nobody told me before TV did. For some reason they forgot to mention that this is the second day of Hanukkah.
The 8 hours of free time on Friday should not be misrepresented. It is the best part of the weekend just because there's more weekend ahead! Intramurals were fun today, because Main house dissed Moore at volleyball- 3 games in a row! In orchestra today, I had the feeling that I was outperformed by a little sixth grader who played a solo maybe better than I did.
I submitted an article for the Press last night after blogging (or as I call it, E-Journaling) I won't spoil the secret until the paper comes out. I would like to encourage more "freshies" to write material for the paper, because good literature comes out of hardship. Not like being a Freshman at this school is difficult.
Anyway, that was so cool how we used the new school lecture hall. Those nice seats are as part of the future as a Segway.

A weekend, a poem (2007-12-10 15:00)

This is highly compressed language, or POETRY
Weekend come and gone
Saturday
DC Youth Orchestra, yep, nothing better to do with a Saturday. Afterwards I went to a Chinese supermarket in Rockville to load up on Chinese groceries.
Sunday
It's already Sunday?
Went to church group
Performed at St. Anselm Christmas concert

Exams (2007-12-13 14:37)

Our very first high school exam. In a mere 15 hours I will be sitting nervously while some teacher, who comes on time, hands us our language exams. I'll fill out most of it right, trip up over the pronouns. Then I start doubting my answers. I avoid changing the multiple choice and it comes out sweet. Three hours later, someone will hand out the Religion Exam and I will miss some part of the doctrine (God is...) or be misguided on an essay. That was based on the last test, but I just have to get the Christian philosophers straight.
In my other life, a girl who I have never met before tracked me down to my Facebook from a piece of apparel.
During the summer of '05, I think it was, while I was at Saint Thomas', the boy's school hosted a choir week for girls. "There I was a hero". Sweet and nice.


The exams went fine, however, I did use all two hours of both exam sessions to dolly some extra credit, in French. What is better? a little kid asked, a half day of exams or a whole day of classes? The two hours didn’t make much of a difference, though. The fun part will be getting out at or before 10am on Tuesday and Wednesday.

O Tannenbaum (2007-12-16 19:32)

Today we got a Christmas tree! A sign of a Germanic dark age ritual. Other than this reminder, I was nearly insistent to take the bus to get the tree, because I was in fear that there would be no parking out front. Of course, it’s only what one would do if they wanted to make a statement, but we were lucky in that we had a parking space just about were we left from. There surely are exams tomorrow. Science may require thought, but the English exam will be jolly. I will do good on the English exam! HAHAHA. Lame joke. Starbucks is irritating me; they opened another new one two blocks from where they opened a new one in June. Worse than McDonald’s, I think. Did you know you could fireproof a tree? More on that later, I got to catch some sleep.

Exams, my life for now (2007-12-17 19:22)

The English exam was simple- completed poet ID and names and an essay on the allegory in The Grapes of Wrath. Science- there were only 30 card questions and about 10 Hardy-Weinbergs. Tomorrow- some Latin and going home at 10am.

Post 50 (2007-12-18 13:50)

Hurray. It’s my 50th blog post, half of which came in the past two months, when I made an attempt at 5 posts a week. Now we had our (“50”/10)th exam today, and one exam only, which let us out at 10am. Since the shuttle wouldn’t come for another half hour, some of us had a nice walk through the community on Michigan avenue to Brookland Metro. Somewhat quicker than taking 12th street. Nevertheless, there are still two exams left and I know the readers want these exams to be over as well! Maybe the 100th post could be on Feb. 29, 2008? That’s a special day. Jack Evans sent us a nice "Happy Holiday” card on glossy paper in full color; the type you receive from relatives. Paid for by Evans 2008, Treasurer, Dennis Black. Evans has been the area councilman longer than I’ve been alive and he’s probably going to be elected again and again.
One last exam (2007-12-19 11:37)

What is in my way before a merry Christmas Holiday break?
Studying for the final final exam
Doing the final final exam
Having a school mass after the final final exam.
Main question- do we get any holiday homework, or is it given to us tomorrow to our discontent, or is it mailed to our cheery homes to remind us of the real world? Or do we not get any at all?
A new cooler of coins is starting to grow. Unfortunately, I can still lift it with one finger. As I sort through the incoming coins to pluck out the collectibles over the coming holiday, I think the bucket will get quite heavy by New Year’s Day. Of course, I’m going to fill it to the brim. Also, I can only guess how much money is in the cooler, for now I have no need, and it takes too much time, to put them in neat little bank rolls.

It’s something important (2007-12-21 14:48)

I don’t have to get up at 6 am until January 7th. Yippee! If you want to know where to buy electronics at half price and don’t have any objections in pumping money into China’s economy, visit the website, [1]www.chinavasion.com.[2] Or, if you are so tech savvy you must get massive quantities of American electronics at a Chinese price visit Shenzhen, China. Says a website, there are hundreds of multistory wholesale electronics shops. I’m planning on going there in, about, 2016 or so, if the stuff’s still cheap.


Target (2007-12-22 15:18)

I enjoyed my first year of Christmas shopping. I enjoy going to the large store and grabbing last-of-stock items off the shelf, the only time one may grab items one after another. But, unlike the news kept on saying, there were no entrancing sales and price cuts that made me feel like I was in heaven. (buy a hot dog griller and get an ice shaver free, eh?)

After that I had a sad time- while I was being nice and filling my daddy’s car with gas. I finished and topped the gas off for safety, and pulled the nozzle from the tank, which, brokenly, splurted 39 cents of gas on the side of the car and on my pants. Ick.

In another pair of pants we went to Rodman’s and bought about $40 of European imported sweets.
The Redskins are fighting for a Wildcard spot after dominating the Giants. No matter what happens, the inspirational-coach-movie will portray the Redskins winning.

Hodie christus non natus est. (2007-12-23 09:39)

Kristmas Kounter: 1 day
It was very foggy this morning, especially when I crossed the street into Foggy Bottom. Hehehehee. I felt like going back to sleep. While I was working on Facebook, I came across this link:
Click on a button and you charge a 19 cent donation from a corporate sponsor. That is apparently enough
to feed a hungry kid, and something charitable to do during Christmas.” If you have a computer, can you save someone’s life with the click of your mouse?”


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**First Christmas, Blogged (2007-12-26 18:57)**

It was a rare day when the computer remained off all day. That’s why I couldn’t say: "Merry Christmas"*

last night to everyone before the special day. Before next Christmas I will have received my Driver Learner’s Permit (isn’t it 15 and a half in DC), had a nice, long summer vacation and experience, Dr. Wood’s Physics class, and a February 29th will have gone by. Lots of things.

Back to yesterday and the day before, I took the Tony bus to New York (Not recommended) via 4 stops and had a lunch in Chinatown. ( $3, Fried Dumpling, Avenue of the Immigrants/Allen Street, Fried dumplings, wonton soup, spring roll and tea egg) I rushed back to a lesson and carol service for the community, and then had an alumni school dinner. Afterwards, we checked in our hotel, Doubletree at Times Square. Nice views from room 1403. Fun to ride the elevator to the top and down for thrills. Of course, time flew and it was time for midnight mass. It was so hard to stay awake while sitting down during the festive music, but I was somewhat awake by the end of Mass. Bed at about 2am.

Later morning, Christmas Day, Breakfast at a little deli east of the hotel on 47th street. ( $3.25, breakfast sandwich.) Rockefeller center had a long fountain which was about a foot thick in pennies and various other change. Got some pictures, will post. Another service at 11, and Eastern bus at 2:30 home. The only store that would have been somewhat appealing there in Times Square, waiting for the bus to pull up was Office Depot. Yes, no better place to play in Times Square. Not too many people. But Office Depot was closed that day.

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**Shopping Rush (2007-12-27 19:22)**

Today I went to Inkstop. I got up at 7am to do so as to get massively discounted technology, but there was a little problem. The ad said the store opened at 8am, when it really opens at 9. So I was stranded for an hour, walking around "Little West Virginia", as the neighborhood is sometimes called, and playing with my cellphone waiting. At 9 I was like a child in a candy shop, the discounted technology on one neat shelf. I got memory cards, reams of paper, a labelmaker, for $27. or so. Anyway, according to my original plan, I was supposed to take the D5 shortcut bus directly home, but that was a rush hour only service and I was stuck taking a transfer trip. At least the D6 was a new bus, which took off some of the pain. Anyway, Inkstop, great values.

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**Not a journal today (2007-12-29 07:35)**

Nothing much happened yesterday. Only a six-mile jog and a museum visit. The museum just happened to have poor exhibits this month. The National Building Museum usually has sweet exhibits.
Last post of 2007 (2007-12-31 16:39)

NOthing cool happened in the last few days, so I reckoned I better not put second rate material on the blog. What was really awesome was that the Redskins are still writing an inspirational story. Dallas can’t play right in the rain- or, they wanted to help write the inspirational tale. Thanks, Dallas. The New England (Boston) Patriots won a 16-0 season, setting a record. Other than these signs I’ve been finding dimes all day. What an omen. Backtrack to yesterday, I nearly left my coat in the same store in Maryland that I usually nearly leave something at. Creepy. Now on Saturday, I enjoyed a long trip to wild and wonderful West Virginia, enjoying big, empty freeways between small towns. We went to an all-you-can-eat buffet, and of course I ate too much...

Happy 2008.
Chapter 2

2008

2.1 January

2008 (2008-01-02 17:45)

Is it a good year?
Oil hit $100 a barrel and stocks were the worst for the first trading day of a new year since 1983. Oil is bound to pass the $102 mark, the inflation-adjusted all-time high. But this year is going to be a good year, says the television psychic I saw yesterday. Feathered dresses are in style this winter, I heard, from the Today Show before I flipped the channel.

Impediments
It’s the first working day of 2008! Of course I would have liked to blog on 1/1/08, the first (no buts no coconuts) day of the year, but here’s why: viruses and a younger brother. No, those did not give me the flu, but that is what made my computer inaccessible yesterday and just about every day I missed blogging since Christmas. Virus program runs for hours on end, little brother is addicted to that game; Chris Sawyer’s Locomotion. Not to attack him improperly, I must also say that he’s been doing online high school applications. So there. While he’s away in New York I take advantage of having a computer so conveniently ready for me. Have to be grateful for those times of uninterrupted web work.

Ron Paul (2008-01-04 16:56)

On this last weekday of vacation a little did happen. Had breakfast at the I.A.D.B. and in the afternoon went to the Tyson’s mall...to buy nothing. Only for exercise.

Now I’ll talk politics
Rudy Giuliani ignoring Iowa was a mistake. 4 %.
Ron Paul managed to get 10 %, and he was not allowed to pass 5-6 %, said the polls.
But he might do something no one would think of, win a state.
DC. It’s actually more valuable than New Hampshire (19 delegates vs. 12), yet DC’s always ignored. I received a letter from the Ron Paul DC HQ, saying the advantage of having him win the Republican nomination in DC.

Publicity
Advancement of Ron Paul
Respect for the DC Republican Party.
Some candidates even ignored to register in DC, we’ll
The Development of Passenger...  (2008-01-06 14:17)

Rail Service in America.
Section VI: Amtrak

It would take too long to type all of Amtrak’s unification of failures together that were mentioned in this short book, soon to be made available by me (as well as the Blog Book 07), but Amtrak hurt me personally this time. To send off my little brother we drove him to BWI (Thurgood Marshall-Friendship Baltimore-Washington International Airport) to meet with two of his middle school friends. Apparently Amtrak has a cruel unaccompanied minors policy which any child’s freedom activist would take an action against. Little Brother will call me tonight and tell me how it was asking "Mother may I" from the conductor. But they, for what I saw, interview the "victim" and wristband him in such a dehumanizing way. (At least day cares give you little neckstring ID cards.) In such a fashion the contract required that we get there an hour early, all remained there, in the waiting room, until the train left, and so on for two pages. And anyway, the station building was overheated. That’s why children take planes and non-Greyhound buses.

Hodie  (2008-01-07 19:16)

Unseasonably warm- a bit humid, like a late August night.
I tell everyone- get as much morning homework done during lunch period and you have less homework to do at night, when it becomes "work at home", and you could have time to have time for yourself. Somehow it’s getting late, and I got to get to bed, else I slice my sleep to less than 7 1/2 hours.

Polls  (2008-01-08 19:15)

The numbers are too distracting! Refresh the screen on occasion and there’s a whole new set of numbers that indicates who is winning. Of course there is not much to say, except this is a "balmy" night, which I haven’t been out in because I had work to do. Remember February 29!

Another Day  (2008-01-09 19:25)

Today is no different than any other weeknight- Time Flies. Even though I’ve been home for six hours the time whizzes by when doing homework, having dinner. 7 and a half hours of sleep. Don’t doctors recommend 8-9 or more? Now in 12 hours it will be 10:27 am, and I think that is Phys Ed. What will we do? Or, more importantly, will Main House win on Friday?

Sweetie?  (2008-01-10 18:18)

I’ve been recommended to check out this eccentric website. A bird named sweetie, a man rolling around on a Segway and films associated with it. What a laugh!
This links you to a 27 minute video of this guy teaching "stupid seventh graders" (My smart classmates)
about everything ancient. No point in watching it in its entirety.


1. http://www.beforeisleep.net/

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Another Week (2008-01-11 18:53)

Finally, this week has come to an end. Main did the "typical", being the loser. For fun people set our score close to the other team to motivate us. Final score 65: 63. Not really, because it was more like 65: 37. Now after that, and orchestra, instead of going to the poet church event in Columbia Heights I went to an free concert downtown at the Inter American Developmental Bank. There was a long line that wrapped around the block for the small theater. Luckily I had special access, we found out. A very popular event. The concert was in an underground auditorium, and the guitar music was very quiet, so I was imagining all surface life disappearing and we all in the three-floor[1] war room[2] were the only survivors. Got to write a book.

1. javascript: void(0)
2. javascript: void(0)

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Mixed Nuts (2008-01-12 19:06)

67. Post number 67. That reminds me of age 67, when I qualify for full social security benefits in about 52 years' time, and that’ll be in the '60's. 2060's.

Now I have been reading about this man named Mr. Tesla. He’s an interesting figure, half practical, half mad scientist. Resonance (earthquake machine) producer? A remote controlled boat built in 1898 (R/C toys became popular in the 1960's)? Free electricity in the air for all? (Coming to a power bar near you, 2010.) He was an Edison, only he used his brain to avoid trial-and-error.

Metro around effectively, using your DC discount card:
Taking a train from downtown to Rockville, rush hour, costs $4.50. (50 minutes) Exit with your DC card at Friendship Heights and re-enter with your SmarTrip and continue on the next train to Rockville. $3.20 (Really?, 57 minutes) I thought it was a greater savings. But nearly anything is better than taking the bus all the way to Rockville, as Little Brother made me do, to save a few quarters. (bus= $1.35, without SmarTrip, 90 minutes.)
Tomorrow: Train Racing; we love it!, and My Take on Coolidge High.

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Vandalism! (2008-01-13 18:57)

Personal News Feed: Record load of homework: had to do lots of it today. Usually I can finish on Saturday. Looking forward to MLK Day next Monday.

Vandalism in our schools.
At my last school, any mis happening was made a big deal. Riding laundry carts, doing homework past bedtime (and for that matter, not getting it done.) Somehow, things seemed to get more destroyed. The cork board grew a hole and some pictures were scratched deliberately with a pin. And when Administration couldn’t find the offender, it was bye bye with ”privileges”.
Now fast forward to early 2007. Some member of the opposing team scribbled on our door, and that made
talk.
While visiting other high schools last year I saw that the New York boarding school was a sterile place; a little petty vandalism here and there was usual. But these places still had a clean appearance. Now here’s the scoop:
My investigative report.
Coolidge High School, DC
The Washington Post did a report on this school, but I don’t think you see the tags.
I’ll post the evidence photos soon. It’s shocking to anyone unaccustomed to dirty places. Graffiti. Inside a building. Relatively speaking, DC is pretty free of graffiti. Has anyone tagged a secret service car, or the Capitol? Metro believes that graffiti is contagious; they remove any within 24 hours. Have you seen any? I guess this is true, because somehow this school can’t keep the walls clean. Gang Symbols. Ritten House Crew, 971 Kennedy Street, Michigan Park Crew. Sounds dangerous?
How many students do not have that Coolidge Pride?
So what will the city do?
More on that later. I got to catch some sleep.
Continued:
Coolidge does offer AP courses including AP Stats, and many go on to college (says a list by the Washington Post.) So it’s wrong to accuse more than a small gang of troubled youth. In fact, the aforementioned newspaper did a list. About half of the graduates (of about 100) went to college, about another half obtained a job. Some were repeating the grade. Then only a handful are left. Three went to prison, two are homeless. Not as bad as you thought? I guess most people are not affected by this.

Soaring (2008-01-14 15:35)

Blog News
I’ve been listed! I don’t know the exact details about this, but this page appears to cite my blog as one of note, listing my post "Sweetie?"
I found that when I Googled myself. While doing this egocentric activity I came across an early mention in the Washington Post when I was 5.
(Again limited on time, I will try to get the snippet of me in that article on here tomorrow.)
Now this morning my commute was awkward. Apparently someone forgot to set the alarm clock and I got up at 6:56am, 56 minutes later than my usual. I was ready by 7:15am (miracle!), but I took a rare trip to school in the car. People were driving slow, for no reason. I guess that is what people are doing, says the news, driving slower than the ’90’s. Hee Hee. Actually, going at 55mph is "efficient speed", NOT 20. Well, I made it in swell time.
Addendum from yesterday; I was apparently mumbling about homework in my sleep. That’s how much weekend work we got :<>
Also, I am trying to post everyday. Of course it’s inevitable that I’ll miss some days here and there, but I’m trying.
[2]

2. javascript: void(0)
Did you know:
that you can buy a profitable coal or gold mine on the internet?
Such a typical week, aka non-eventful week...Looking forward to MLK day on Monday. No train incidents, no its-so-important world events, no catastrophic tests. There is, however, one point. What percentage of students, in 14 classes, roughly, get out early last period? I have been synchronizing my flight from the school building. I never go to the lockers (a time burner) after the last class, and rather bring any material I’m carrying for that last class home. (Wheelock on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays History of the World. Hypothetically, nothing in excess after Biology on Thursdays or Intramural on Friday.) Yet I always end up on the second shuttle. I want to know...
Oh yes, and longer reports that are un-bloggable are in another quasi-publication Jangoomag, which I intend to produce monthly, and to include more writers! (yeah.) It originally had pretty colored pictures, but in current state are unviewable. I tried using Google Docs, but I couldn’t get it to work, so it’s on Freewebs. [1]www.freewebs.com/jangoomag (Click here to view)


IT (2008-01-16 18:33)

As you may have seen, I beat Adobe! Personally, I do not see the point in Adobe at all. PDF’s take such a long time to load! I think HTML (What I did with JMag yesterday by posting it directly on the webpage) is the #1 way to go.
Earlier this evening, I was tooling around with something I saw in the Popular Science magazine. Free easy game builder from MIT. For reputation’s sake I won’t post the link until I actually get a game to work better than...the lame game. Of course, today was my first day with it. I’ll try to get agile with the program.
BTW: I have worked with basic text programming before. I was able to produce a text-line game (Without graphics, just words) (Chose the red path or the green path). Cool in its own way.

Fluffy Snow (2008-01-17 14:29)

Such nice snow today! Big globs falling from the skies like Manna to the Israelites. Makes nice snowballs as well. A wonderful thing it was to see the whole place covered in this substance. It even added up to a few inches! Or at least more than I’ve seen in a while. It was nice up on Mount Saint Anselm’s, but unfortunately it was a thin layer being blotted out by rain where I come home to.
For those who are wondering, I did make it to the Metro this afternoon, before the first shuttle made it, to those shuttle riders’ surprises, having already passed me. I had to explain it twice. “I got on the 80 with my card.” As I have said before, I have everything prepared ahead of 3:20.
But my after school event was then canceled, and coming out, I would have landed on the third or fourth shuttle. There are 4 buses that could serve me at that time. E2 towards Friendship Heights, 80 either direction, B51 special service. So I was at the metrobus stop, and the B51 didn’t stop for me. I expected that anyway, as I think I was the only passenger ever trying to hail down that bus. So I walked down two blocks. First shuttle passed me. Then the 80 bus came around that turn. Nice driver. Stopped for me even though I wasn’t at the stop, as I was running to meet it. There were only a few passengers on at the time, and the bus did not make a stop to until the train station. I got off and converged with the shuttle riders. They were surprised. I considered basking in my glow waiting for everyone else who fared me well in the shuttle line, but that was too indulgent for my tastes.
So as I recommend:
If you are waiting for a third or fourth shuttle to return, and you have a way to get on the metrobus for a reasonable price (do Smartrip cards offer bus-to-rail transfers yet?), why not try the 80 or E2?
The below may not apply to all readers.
(About Room 41 chatter, that’s such a 'sin'! Multiple times a day, nothing better to do? Self -pleasure? Enjoy it!?)

Memories (2008-01-18 15:06)

I Can’t believe it. The snow is nearly gone, and it just came yesterday. We talked about this blog in English class today. I guess why people think this is a good blog is because people love to relive time. Only a hypothesis. The play, the twelfth night, was actually pretty good, and the using of one set actually worked well and did not make the play look like impromptu work. Good job.
Via Cellular telephone from New York:
Basketball game report.
Childs School 54, St. Thomas 39.
Overall, how is ST T’s season doing? I’m going to find out.
That above paragraph just brought me back to the Friday night fun night at Saint Thomas.
-Lose or win a sporting event. Our team in my days was "average."
-Run up 7 flights of steps for a mandatory shower. Anyway, being sweaty all night is probably not healthy.
-Rush to reserve a seat. (Much like rushing for the shuttle.)
-Eat "American Food"
-Manage Tuck Shop (That includes "selling that candy junk", charging accounts and beating the local supermarket for the upper school clientèle, and giving customer service, namely delivery (my era) to tippers (old tradition).)
-By April ’07, Show the latest episode of STSN, the video accompaniment of Tuck Shop News, also named JangooMag when not referring directly to Tuck Shop, which was the only student-run media. Film the short episode on digital video Sunday and plug it to the TV on Friday. Whole story of my life will come later.
-Watch a movie
-Sleep over at somebody else’s crib
-Get up at 8 the next morning
"Earlier this evening, I was tooling around with something I saw in the Popular Science magazine. Free easy game builder from MIT. For reputation’s sake I won’t post the link until I actually get a game to work better than...the lame game. Of course, today was my first day with it. I’ll try to get agile with the program."
Two points:
1. Now that I’m starting to have some fun with this program, I’ll give the URL.
www.scratch.mit.edu
2. We were learning about proper grammar in English class, so I decided that I’m going to do a grammar reality check on this paragraph. I’ll complete sentence ID’s soon.
Earlier this evening, I was tooling around with something I saw in the Popular Science magazine.
It was the free easy game builder from MIT. For reputation’s sake, I won’t post the link until I actually get a game to work better than...the lame game. Of course, today was complex my first day with the program. For now, I’ll try to get agile with the program.
A different day (2008-01-19 14:39)

Never take the full-functioning Metro Center for granted. There was major platform work at the most important junction, and trains on 1, 2, 3 lines were single-tracked, letting one train pass at a time, downtown. Getting to DC Youth Orchestra without the car available was different this weekend. It should have taken less than an hour, but with the waiting for the train to pass through the one-tracked section it took 25 extra minutes.

On the way back, it was obvious that the bus was the better way to go. 11 minute train wait, or a 62 bus ready to go. A quick ride to Petworth, where condo construction had scattered the on-street terminals. A crowded 70 bus was there to board, and at the convention center, a Circulator bus was conveniently in sight. Time: 1hr and 10 minutes.

This is atypical of DC, but in New York, they do this type of construction every weekend. This is hardly a big disruption, as there are four tracks on much of the line. So most of the work involves switching trains from local to express, express to local. However, there was one priceless experience. Skipping 10 stops on an abandoned center track. (N-train to Coney Island, in Brooklyn.) There used to be regular train service there, in the 1960’s.

I could go on about all the unique things- the multitude of abandoned platforms and stations. DC just has two plain tracks and 80-something well-planned stations.

A simple diagram: Metro Center

work* - - - - - { } - - R ° Chinatown
to Virginia _ _ _ _ _ _ _ * _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ O/B to Fed Triangle

Artic Blast (2008-01-20 13:32)

I am typing this entry with half frozen hands. The temperature is currently 26F outside at this time, but it felt much, much colder outside. In the car it never got warm enough to take my outside jacket off, nor my gloves. In fact, water bottles which were in the car overnight actually froze over, so basically it was below freezing when I got in.

Now here is an outline of my day:
Went to church, of the 1 hour variety, and a calm Sunday School session. Walking to church it wasn’t so cold, but on the way back I was chilled to the skin within half a block. Then there was Target Greatland. FYI I typically go to the one near seven corners, probably just because it’s just down the street, namely across the river on Rt. 50 and 6 more miles. Not too far at all. Picked up some stuff at discount price. Oral-B Orthodontic floss, 2 packs of 50 at 2.50 each, half the price of the local CVS. Laundry detergent was an amazing $3 for 120 oz, but unfortunately, this Target Greatland does not sell music stands. So amazingly, it was only a 2 mile drive to a local music store for one of those heavy duty Manhasset music stands that require assembly. On the same road I accessed the Kam Sam Oriental Supermarket. Bought some Chinese food. Just out of curiosity, I checked and found that most of the foods at the markets were actually made in the USA. (Is it really cost-effective to send a can of soybean drink across the ocean?) It kept on getting colder outside, which I noticed when filling the gas tank. By the time I de-staticed and flip the pump on, my hands were chilled. Wicked cold. On the Henry G Shirley Memorial highway home, state troopers were handing out $1000 tickets to lots of people. Not us, and if we got one, we’d have to only pay like $100, because the law applies only to Virginia people. I did read that some cities like Front Royal will pardon anyone who got one. So I got home and moved all the plunder from the car into my residence. Hands cold within a few seconds. Now I’m inside and don’t plan to go out until it gets warmer, or Tuesday when I have to go to school.
AM blogging (2008-01-21 08:30)

I heard it on the airwaves. Our family, as well as most other families in America, qualifies for a proposed $1600 handout from the government. There is, however, one thing that would keep us from our free money- who gets it. The money would go to only families with joint incomes of $40,000 or more.

I am not a total egalitarian, but as I calculated, that means $20 an hour, $10/ hour for each parent. But what if... Only one parent works while the other takes care of the children? Single parent households? How many jobs have you seen available for $20 an hour?

All told, I like the plan, but since the money can be used as normal cash, I don’t see it fully benefiting the economy. As someone said on TV, (paraphrase) ”the people who were rich enough in the first place to get the free money would be too responsible with it, and the people who won’t get it need it for day-to-day needs”

My idea- Cash only usable for paying loans or buying things procured by American greed. Things like oversized houses, cars, fancy technology. And give the cash to everyone, so every politician gets re-elected for this populist idea.

And now from our sponsor... (2008-01-22 13:32)

If you want to see what every single currency is worth compared to any currency in the world (even herself/ pecunia, pecuniae f.) visit xe.com. This includes those hyper-inflated ones like Zimbabwe, where one village person who has one US dollar would be worth 29,999 Zimbabwe dollars. (courtesy of a 24,059 % inflation)

Phish stix.

So for MLK day yesterday I did not do nothing, rather I went to a FREE special performance that included a large gospel choir, Denyse Graves, Elanor Holmes Norton, and, with the use of that oxford comma, lots of important people in the audience who will be up for re-election this year. That’s Kennedy Center. For Free? For Free. Then I had a Chinese dinner.

But in the morning...
I had a violin lesson at 9:30 (got up at 8. Ugh!) Then I studied in the Georgetown Univ. library with a picturesque view of Rosslyn and the river. Then I went to KC.

Mr. V. (2008-01-23 10:18:00)

Dear Mr. Sawatzki—

As you seem a bit of a traditional grammarian, I would like to point out that the first sentence of your second paragraph requires a semicolon (rather than a comma) after "nothing." IC ; ca IC(DC). Remember? Know this by Monday!

I do find your blog interesting, however, and I see a nice narrative style developing. Keep it up, and please never name any birds "Sweetie."

Storytime (2008-01-23 13:03)

Since today was as typical of a day I would ever get, (asides from getting out of school 40 minutes early because an assembly went way too short) I would do a special story time.

You probably not heard of it yet, but on my last major adventure I made big history. First off, I already set a record as the first person to time-travel. What is this time-travel device I am talking about? It in fact does not look like a box. It in fact, and is, an ex-military supersonic jet. I bought it cheap online, added a miniature oil refinery, because there was no airplane fuel before the industrial revolution. So this is my time machine. Einstein calculated that time-travel was impossible. I thought so at first, but if you could arrive in
New York before you left London, about half an hour to be exact, on a Concorde, can’t one multiply that and go back a day, more? So I did the test. The following story is my representation. Of course the people talked in their native dialect, but why should I tarry so?

I took my plane and flew it towards the west. I broke the sound barrier over the Pacific and pushed the engine as fast as I could get it to go. By the time I had to land to refuel, I was already a week in the past, said the airport clock. It was working. I was crazy, I wanted to go back as far as I could, even if it meant for me to become trapped in the old days. It was a sincere desire; I sat in that seat, making an occasional fuel stop. By some time, proper runways turned to dirt fields and then landing on some flat plain. My plane nearly got destroyed when I tried to land on the western front. Bad mistake. So it went swell. Past the 1800’s, 1700’s, 1600’s, until the year 1256, according to my hand held gadget that calculated relative time versus speed and all that jazz. My plane just would not take off the ground. Then I realized, why don’t I just enjoy the moment. Of course I landed near a castle, for there was no easier way to find that valued bacon grease that kings eat, so that I might use as fuel. I have never been in a castle before, so I walked up to the moat. The guards lowered the bridge and opened the gates for me to enter to the sound of trumpets. “We have been waiting for you to come for the last century.” said Squiria, the king’s assistant. "Our king wants us to build a time machine, and a whole list of other gadgets. But thanks to you, we can be set free." "So?", I asked. "You’re here. You have relieved our mandate. “Squiria shall oversee that he shall bring a person from the future to our castle as part of project #34, proclaimed as Time Vacuum.” Squiria said; “We were forced here, our people know that this is an impossible feat. That is why. It is so lucky you came, that I and others may return to the outside world.” "But why was that King, so nice to me, so mean to you?” I asked. "He is afraid of the inevitable. About 20 years ago, when he learned about one way that he would be no better than us, he became afraid. He ordered his servants to round up anyone who was conscious and lock them in his castle to build something to protect himself."

T.B.C.

Continued (2008-01-24 15:10)

The King then took me on a tour of his grand dwelling. I asked him, of course in old English, what he was most afraid of. "The end of my reign when I die." He explained that he needed to get an immortality machine so he would never end up like his minions in the grave. We then returned to the work shop that looked like Santa’s. "Done yet?" demanded the king. "Ready now,"said the elfs. The king told his squire to summon his court.

The whole room was filled with the extended family within a few minutes. The king proclaimed proudly about the machine. "No longer shall the inevitable happen to our family." So greedily he tested the device on his beloved stallion and his in-laws. They climbed into the stone box and the king fiddled with colored buttons. A few minutes later, the door opened and out oozed a slimy liquid. The king took a peek, timidly. He then drew his mighty dagger and held it to the squire’s neck. "Now look what you have done. If death doesn’t take me, then my own people are the only people that will. For I have trusted you and your inferior people for years. Now I know, and I was foolish for tolerating you here. Death to you, and away with your scoundrel type." He lifted his dagger above the crowd. I interrupted. "Dear host, whilst you want the impossible for your day, why don’t you come to my time, where there is proven immortality." The king agreed so. He opened the main gates to let his people go outside in freedom to build civilization.

The king opened a heavy door. "Here is my aircraft. I built it myself, with a little help from my people. I think it goes really fast." The King beckoned me into his craft with himself and his dearest family. I pointed the aircraft towards the west, and we sped through time.

In my time, I thanked the king as a courtesy. "Take my royal dagger as a memory of me. I thank you for preserving my empire." I made a little ceremony of it, waived goodbye to everyone, and walked towards my house. After all, I was only away for a short while.
And the best part was that I got some original video footage from the medieval period.

Post 80 Day (2008-01-25 14:30)

80 is a sweet number. Dividable by so many numbers. Just like 60, my favorite number. So today was a strange day anyway. First period, test. Second period, Kingdom of Glory, an awesome film. Awesome like GATTACA, another of my top-rated movies. Third period was actual learning, Fourth and fifth periods, play a game called Circus Minimus. The rules were really too complex to be a board game. It would have worked better as a video game. Also at that time, we saw pre-release footage of a chariot race on the big screen in the theater. We just had to stop before seeing the man be trampled by a speeding cart. Seventh Period, test. Eighth and Ninth periods, intramurals. P.S. Main House won basketball 67 to 49. Orchestra. E2 (frankly more reliable than the 4:40 shuttle) Metro. Home. Blogging. That was my day. By the way, I guess when I make the movie about "My medieval adventure" (posts 78 and 79), there would be a sword fight. Otherwise I would not alter it to make it like Cheaper by the Dozen, which had absolutely nothing to do with the book. Like it was meant to be that way.

15 hours and 7 minutes (2008-01-26 12:02)

It looks like it will snow. The clouds look that way. Remember, this is a normal Saturday so I was at DCYO doing my thing until... I just got home. This copy of Huck Finn, which I was given by the school, seemed different than the last edition I had. Mainly, I don’t really like the size of the book. It’s a little too rectangle-y. Read the first chapter this morning, at about 7am, because I could not stay asleep- it’s the getting up at 6 every morning. Main House will get a website!

Sunday (2008-01-27 15:02)

After making my head spin from jogging in the cold and giving a presentation on God’s people and their fall and return to grace, I dressed in a tuxedo and played a concert. The tuxedo had five parts- special shirt, special pants, bow tie and cummerbund, a cloth belt, and a special suit-coat. So for 40 minutes our DCYO played music. Bartok, Mozart and Copland. Then I listened to the superiors. They played some long symphony. And now I just got home. I have my speech ready for tomorrow...

Freedom of my speech (2008-01-28 15:12)

"Blogger will be unavailable Monday (1/28) at 4:00PM PST for about 10 minutes for maintenance." I think that’s about 8 pm in my world. So I did the 3 minute speech today. I had to switch topics at about 6:30 this morning because I could not stop talking about my subject- running a candy shop, in a first person narrative about the Tuck Shop. I finalized my speech on the train about selling things from the convenience of the home. It went fine at 3 minutes 26 seconds. I want to post the transcript somewhere, as well as the collection of post card from the UK. I never told
about this on the blog. Like the blog, I sent a postcard every day or more. They all arrived in America and they portray an awesome narrative.

Trade (2008-01-29 13:50)

It's official when it gets here- C.E. gets the tie of shame for the week!
I made a speech yesterday about making money from home- I want to pursue what I said. I do have quite a few things to chuck for a fee, such as new, intact-in-big-plastic-case 1 gig memory card for $10 including shipping, $9 without. I want to see how much I can sell by September (mostly over long vacations) through whatever convenient means possible, for now I am quite to busy to do a selling blitz.
Since I do not feel like I wrote enough, I will continue writing my first autobiography, which I started last April. "Memories of a time past." Any suggestions for an alternative title? I think it's fine.
I think I pronounce it on my website. We have a little disclaimer that says "We don't sell candy on school time" That was true- our supervisors never let an eye off of us, most of the time. When the third graders first came last year, they really did bad things for me. Even in the presence of faculty they would gather next to me like squirrels and ask me to deal them some. Then the adults knew I dealt. How could I control them? At our school it was a tradition. Everyone bought and sold from others. There were the buyers and there were the sellers. I was a seller. It was easy to rack 15 in profit in one week for about 30 minutes of work. However, I think I was the first to target lower-schoolers. Before my prominence, everyone dealt with seventh and eighth graders, for they keep secrets. However it was done, the lower school started to buy en masse from me. Maybe because I didn't charge $3 a bar of candy and I gave easy loans. Anyway, my clients and associates kept the whole thing a mutualistic relationship with me, and most of the time it was a success.
To at least finish all for today, I most liked to sell in Central Park, on the water at Choir Camp and on bus and plane trips. Keeping my tradition, I don't sell stuff on school time.
PS I am a supporter of free trade in schools. I will tell you that "the beauty parlor will" not "spawn the Camel Cigarette stand."

Ramble (2008-01-30 14:27)

The February metro pass is... olive green. That just had to be spoiled for me this afternoon. Anyway, my leisure literature called a big catalog came in by UPS today. Nice, free reading material with colorful pictures. I found my recipe collection from 5 years ago. It's called 50 Recipes, and from 5 years ago. Copyright 2003, CM inc. (old name for Jangoo.) Among them, Paradise Slush, the precursor to Shaved Ice. It's a smoothie in a blender. No point in saying that, however. But here is the uncensored recipe, which does not require you to purchase anything from my website.
Paradise Slush
2lb. assorted fruit
1tbsn. assorted spices*
1 cup yogurt
1. Mix yogurt and spices
2. Put fruit in blender
3. Put on liquefy for 30 seconds
serves 2-3
cinnamon, nutmeg, mint, etc.
New York Weekend for under... (2008-01-31 14:40)

Scheduled outage at 4:30 PM PST, again.
Now that you know how to get to New York for under twenty dollars, I think you can also stay the weekend and get back for under $100, inclusive, without sleeping in the Subway. I couldn’t tell you everything about it now, because I would not include all the ethnic places at discount prices. Even if I discouraged you from going to a whole list of these enclaves because of crime, I couldn’t eliminate honestly. So basically, I could toss you the stay-close-to-Chinatown version, but I couldn’t go into detail about, say, Little Jamaica. But it basically involves taking a Chinatown bus, eating cheaply in an immigrant enclave, and sleep in some Jersey City turnpike stop with the coupon you found in the travelers’ hotel savings guide, which you picked up at the rest stop. It can be done, I believe. I’ll try it sometime...maybe in three years.

2.2 February

Snow Hour (2008-02-01 14:38)

I wish I could have blogged this morning at 6:30, when I first found out about the delayed school opening. That was, of course, after I showered and started to eat breakfast. That delay was about the "torrential" rain, perhaps. Rain that kept my socks wet all day, and carved a gully in the soil. So for that we got some extra time at home. Intramurals, EVERY player made a shot on a frequent basis. Whazup widdem? Orchestra, shuttle metro, home.
I’m sorry about having to say this, but I have to show some emotion. I was happy this afternoon, because I totally aced that history quiz! (mine was graded on the spot) Then I sort of lost that glow when Main lost to Austin.

The whole thing (2008-02-02 14:20)

I just finished doing my Bio cards. That is after I came home from DCYO and got supplies for my History project. (I will be writing more on this when I start building my model.) I feel so good getting homework out of the way! And so I wish to get along to connecting my industries in Locomotion.
BTW, how did we do on television today? Unfortunately I was busy with orchestra and therefore could not make it :(

Sorting out the market (2008-02-03 14:36)

Arabic, Hebrew, Persian. Those are the three languages which Blogger is now in. I never knew Persian was its own language.
I went ahead and posted a 1 GB chip on Facebook. I think the marketplace is underutilized. I think part of the reason was that there was no good selection there in the first place. Just Georgetown priced athletic stuff before, 2 pieces.
And so I bought a CVS Scientific Calculator today. I don’t take no stock in TI-83/84, because it is going to be antiquated by the time we actually need it in 12th grade. "Senior year, Atticus will need a graphing calculator."
This month’s Jmag is nearly ready.
"Little Brother" (2008-02-04 14:39)

In my story of my life, I sometimes must make mention to him. Well, he will be back, but his impacts on my blog might show up before. Ever since Little Brother went back to New York in early January, I have been able to blog every day or night. But there may be a break in the chain on Thursday and Friday, when I will be at [1]CUMUNC, Catholic University’s Model UN Conference. That will go on until 10:30 at night. To say the least, there will be a whole pile to write about on Saturday. Then Little Brother will descend upon the city, and who knows how many nights he will keep me from my blog. Maybe I can circumvent him... He will be shadowing someone in section III-B, (the other class), this month. More details to follow. I have been quite generous to his image so far, but, of course, there is a lot that any sibling could say about the other. PS. WE WON on TV! Saint Anselm’s beat the others on a landslide victory against the other It’s academic teams. The NY Giants won the big game against the Boston (New England) Patriots. If I were doing the choreography, I would have let the Patriots score in the last second and upset the game.

Crepe Sale Friday. "French Pancakes" are not for sale. Real Crepes are for sale. Bring your money. 50 cents for a small, one dollar for a large, first topping free, 2 for 25 cents, 4 for 50 cents.


I write this post as I review a small video clip from my cell phone. This clip is of what we call a Paper Fight. In this sport, both parties roll free newspapers and perform a ninja fight. This game is relatively safe, and is much fun, when it is staged. The sport would be great at any unsupervised, responsible, party. Adults and the media may take offense if it becomes popular, but it still would make a great late-night TV show and YouTube material. Also, I have been convinced that the Bio Club does do seriously cool stuff. So I encourage you, even though I have not yet (let’s check my schedule...), to join, as well as get the opportunity to win a Bill Gates XBox.

I nearly forgot to type this because it happens earlier than in a lifetime this year, but today is Super Fat Tuesday, one time in about a hundred years that Fat Tuesday aka Mardi Gras, and Super Tuesday collide. Whatever incomparable indulgences and marked mischievousnesses you do tonight, don’t forget tomorrow is Ash Wednesday.

Who is the winner? (2008-02-06 13:29)

Remember paperfight? I never declared a winner on the internet. Where it stands is that they were both winners. It was a cool game. But in the pragmatic sense, I would have to say that Riley wins my 10-second clip, but Malcolm had some good moments. Of course I must call it a draw (aka you’re both winners), as there is no set way to win. (Fight until someone surrenders? How it looks on screen?) But I would not be typing "write" now if it wasn’t for the generous action of one classmate*, who noticed some thing that I did not. He let me go in front of him (I asked "really?", and I suppose he decided that I would probably go ahead of the communal entourage,) and landed as the last person to board the shuttle. Situational Irony...I guess...

In fact, I don’t take generosity for granted, and, having no need to rush home, studied some Religion on the platform. Eventually the rest of the entourage connected with the stray pieces and traveled to their respective abodes.

Remember... Don’t be too surprised if I can’t be e-present tomorrow. That conference runs late tomorrow,
and I still have to get to school on Friday. I think I’ll just double-post on Friday night after the conference, parts 1 and 2.

As policy, I leave out names unless it’s cool with them (aka requested), it’s necessary (Riley and Malcolm), or it’s someone who I have never met that needs an e-slamming. (The Bush Family)

Backlog: CUMUNC I (2008-02-08 19:39)

(Thursday, after school). I had some math homework. Also, I had to write a position paper- which had been changed in that last few minutes before getting on the shuttle over to CU. "We’re screwed." Nearly. Chris and I had worked on the original paper since Wednesday, and combining the two versions at lunch. We scrounged the details of International Affairs and scrapped together a draft. Luckily the conference had something called the Resource Room with four laptops. So we typed in all the info and had something slightly decent. Then I nearly had a bite to eat. I think it was such a waste, though. Once I had gotten my little plate, it was time to go in to the opening ceremonies. Thus like the real UN, I threw away food without shame. So this is the opening ceremony. There was the worst speaker I had ever heard. He sarcastically said he would keep the talk under three hours. Kahn and Lockes’ world peace. For half an hour.

So then we got started on the conference. Unfortunately, we did not get the upper hand that day, but we did become sponsors- something important for the points game. So it was quite fun for 3 hours (I will elaborate later.) It was 10:30 when we finished, and 11:30 I got to bed.

More later!

CUMUNC II (Friday) (2008-02-09 05:17)

I got up at 6am as usual. My math homework was done. I was fine, until about 3rd period, when sleep deprivation hit me. I was still fine. At 1:30 the Italian started moaning about putting our issue to the side. We, however got that Trafficking paper passed, and our school made sure to be the writer of a working paper. About 2 hours in, the chair had us split our paper, and the Italian’s papers into different topics about global warming. A crisis situation occurred, and it was slightly fun because it somewhat involved our country, South Africa. It was basically less pollution or more good HIV drugs. And so then it was dinner break. Their food court was schism-ed from the Catholic part, basically selling out of any good meatless options for a Lenten Friday. Session 2, we did whatsoever, and time flew to 10:00. I was able to Blog last night as I did not have to go to school early today.

By request, I mention that Tomas received a 103 on his Huck Finn Quiz. An A+++.

CUMUNC III (Saturday) (2008-02-09 17:03)

It was about 9:50am. I was thinking I might become the dictator of the country, as Chris was not there yet. But he came. That was probably a beneficial thing, because we actually pressed our papers through the vote. Good thing for points. That took us through until lunch, which was a boxed sandwich, and a bag of chips, and a brownie that actually tasted United Nations-fresh. As well as a whole table of soda cans to pick from. Some research about the child soldier problem, and a power play in creating a popular working paper. Unfortunately, the European economy crashed when Russia sealed the borders and France dropped the Euro and reverted to the Franc. But, we got our version into the passing process. Then time was up, and following the customs of St. Anselm’s, did not go to the Delegate Dance.
Afterwards...
I was driven by the faculty member to the station in a sweet little car. However, there was surprise track work and the train didn’t come. Until I boarded the G8 home. At least the ride was quick, but I hurt my ear trying to talk on my Cell over the loud people. By the convention center, however, I was the second-to-last person on the bus, and had personal time with the driver for about 5 blocks. Now I was supposed to meet my mother in Farragut Square. Apparently the ride went so fast she had not made it to the square yet. I jumped the 38B to my doorsteps (in the West End). I called my mother and found that out. (P.S. I live 10 blocks from the square.)

It took 45 minutes for the complete trip, nearly as fast as a rush hour train trip.

CUMUNC IV (Sunday) (2008-02-10 14:48)

The wind blew and whistled through the building, the temperature is falling fast. But, I will not speak of that, rather I would speak of one of my best days of my life.
It was 9:50, I had intentionally come in at 9:40. The fellow delegate was not here yet, so I had to entertain the thought of dictatorship. Not necessary, as one could clearly see people from “a mile away” from the top floor of the Przyb’ Center. Everything had to be carefully said and done to be a breadwinner, the whole South Africa-Japan bloc knew. So on the stage we pressed to get our paper, authored by South Africa (Very good thing) through the question session. Unfortunately, the front-row countries such as China and England had a different agenda. By the grace of heaven we were able to merge the infidel’s paper into ours. The conference barely held together as we finally voted the resolution in. A little parade, and the conference went downhill. A militant group took away Singapore and we threw paper airplanes and paper anti-aircraft missiles to intercept.
Lunch was the same as yesterday, and the fellow delegate had a celebratory sk-cub-rats (read backwards) Frappucino. Then there was the closing ceremony, which was the awards ceremony. Our conference group, the SOCHUM (Social, cultural and humanitarian) had our awards first. The outrageous militants (China and Israel), all three being 11th graders, in a corrupted manner, got the two Outstanding prizes. At least a Saint Anselm’s character won the grand prize, a gavel. At least the other awards were given without corruption. A classmate (9th grade), who performed well, won in the 1963 US security council run-up. But there was the big prize. Best High School. Who guessed? We won with a yelp, upsetting McGuniess’ 5 year winning streak. I guess all our people performed do well. “South Africa deserved to win”, and we did. So did Japan. You’ll hear it all on Thursday at announcements. Again.

JustAnotherGuy (2009-01-27 15:54:00)
Hey, I came across your blog when I googled CUMUNC. Its pretty cool, lol. I believe I was in the same commitee as you, SOCHUM. However, there seems to be some misinformation. You mentioned that China and Israel were all three 11th graders. That is incorrect, for only 2 of those were 11th graders, the other one was a 10th grader (me). In fact, that was, for all intents and purposes, my first actual conference. Hope to see you this year at CUMUNC, in like, about a week, XP. And it was true that Solomon, representing Brazil, did a great job and deserved to win the prize he won (gavel).
Sincerely,
-Israel
I did it again (2008-02-11 13:53)

Some people say it’s for personal achievement, but I only do it for practical reasons—getting home fast. Maybe it is sort of the former, seeing if I can make it to be with everyone else. Classmates, and friends, if I may be that bold. I know what it is like; looking at the street below from the Fort Totten red line platform, watching anxiously for the next shuttle to drop off the rest of the entourage before the next train came.
I guess it’s something to see someone come up the escalator out of apparent nothing.
As I am suggesting, I repeated the B51-passes-you-then-you-run-for-the-80 routine. It worked, again. I must mention, this event somewhat resembles what happened Wednesday, February 6. I avoided a mob and ended up behind the benefactor, making me #15. If I would have counted carefully beforehand, I would have avoided the situation and left him in his #15 place. So I did the aforementioned routine.
It was lucky that the routine worked, particularly today, when there was a train delay (Our train repeatedly malfunctioned), which kept me out of home for half an hour. For that matter, it was so bad that by New York Avenue, I was doubting my ability to get off at Metro Center, therefore requiring me to Farragut North it. I got out fine, and I was mighty glad I had the communal entourage to support me through those hard delays.
Now...about after the successful awards ceremony last afternoon
I zipped over to the Cathedral (the place I spent a miserable night on Dec. 1, 2007) to watch a fellow St. Thomas alumnus sing evensong. Went well, got to boast of my recent part in victory, came home and had a nice pasta dinner. And I worked on the history project.

And I did it again (2008-02-12 13:36)

Since there is not much to say...
I don’t cut ahead to "the people I’m going home with” in the shuttle line, as I fear an investigation by the middle school on "why the 9th graders always go home together." Today was an atypical day, judging from the front of the line, some people had intramurals (the other 9th and 10th grade), and lots of classes let out way early. My preparation for the dash did nothing to propel me ahead of the third shuttle. Third Shuttle (sometimes fourth) resembles the 4:40. Anyway, I don’t wait for third shuttles and therefore I walked. For the fourth time I walked all the way from the school to the station (once after orchestra on Friday, once after a concert, once after a half-day of exams-with everyone else, and today.) But this was the first time that I walked to Fort Totten, as no 80 bus came to lift me up. Nothing special walking. Just watched as the first shuttle passed me and caught off guard by a dog, and was pretty tired as I landed with the second shuttle’s passengers at the station. They called me brave and I had to explain that there were no gangstas. Unlike daily blogging, I suppose this isn’t something that I should keep up, eschewing the third shuttle when alone in relation to classmates.

Ice Storm (2008-02-13 13:56)

Valentines’ Day has been tentatively chosen as Post 100 day.
But about the ice storm...
Yesterday as I was coming home, I took a crash-slide on the ice covered brick. That was with my about-40 pound backpack. As a result of the fall, my left arm was paralyzed for about 2 minutes, and later I deduced that my left wrist was strained. As I said yesterday, I had forgotten my keys at home but I got in eventually. However, that was just the start of the ice storm. After I had finished blogging, our DSL internet went down. (Not the phone, not the power.) It didn’t restart until this afternoon. Because of the ice, we got an extra
hour at home, and shortened classes across the board. On the con side, I could not take a quick candy reload mission because it was too icy. Now on the way home today, not to sound too much like Patrick Wilmore, I did make it onto the second shuttle. I would not have minded the third for today, as we would have been on the same boat. "Mom, I’m on the second shuttle.” I did the mission today in 9 minutes. Much nicer than running to the station! PS I think my wrist will be alright for tommorow.

Post 100 Day (2008-02-14 14:50)

Remember, this is a special day for the Atticus Sawatzki’s blog production crew! This is our 100th post. And by luck, 100th falls on a holiday called Valentines day. Unfortunately, I did not have religion class today, and therefore did not re-learn again who was St. Valentine. I was thinking of making the milestone on February, 29, but daily blogging pushed the date ahead. We will still celebrate our blog’s first anniversary on March, 1, capping off our first 366 days. Next year I plan to post 365 posts. That’s tentative, though. As for my other life, I just came back from the Trajan party, a brief little Latin translation brouhaha. Before that, I was doing It’s Academic. I thought it was 4:00 when the party started, but I guess they started a little before, and I didn’t get the first few lines edited. Oh well. I actually did the work before the parties, and therefore did not crash because of missing a few lines of translation. Only one more thing; "Mom, I’m on the first shuttle (at 4:40pm) and it left on time for a change.”
And a psychology question: If you read the post labels, you may have been drawn to the Injury section. Nothing wrong. I understand what people want: Drama. Which brings up the point- what do you look for in the news? integrity, or entertainment and mindless ballyhoo. What we call the news- Tragedies, adventures, romances, dramas, and inspirational coaches.


Atticus Sawatzki’s Blog
100 posts strong
Always something new
Thank you for reading!


Newsflash- Little Brother has returned into the city’s boundaries as I speak. Expect possible minor delays in reporting in the coming week. Since I did not have orchestra today, I reaped the benefits of Intramurals, getting on the first shuttle. Unfortunately, we did not win because we were one point down and our clock was cut 26 seconds short. Yes, it matters, John. Here are my two cents on two books:
Wheelock’s Latin.
Fredric M Wheelock
Scholars have saluted this book the language book of the century. This would be perfect if you want to look bourgeois-smart, but as the book lacks colored pictures and a good story line, it is rather a textbook from 1956. (*)(*)(1/2)( )
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
Samuel L Clemens (Mark Twain)
Is this really a children’s novel? It was at one time. A very compelling story, full of symbolism, irony and
hypocrisies at every turn of the page. However, I do believe that the Norton edition is way different than what I read in the typical edition. An entertaining novel if you want it to be, a 1000 page dissertation if you want to put it that was. It’s a versatile book. (*)(*)(*)( )

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**DMYOP (2008-02-16 13:09)**

Right now, I just finished writing my Bio index cards. After I finish my brisk math assignment, I’m going to Staples to restock on another 500. Of course, I was at orchestra today- a different one though.

District Metropolitan Youth Orchestra Program, the new PG County spur of DCYO. The most attractive parts: Clean building, and exclusively for experienced people. Yes, and many higher-level DCYO people are flocking to it.

However, three teachers were out today due to the flu. The news says it’s a bad year regarding it.

A friendly reminder from SARS guy and The Virus Board; wear your respiratory mask!

Please, Mr. SARS guy! Anyway, just be careful.

Little Brother wants to play a computer game, and I had to let in now on the blog, just in case if I couldn’t tonight.

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**It’s going to rain at 3pm (2008-02-17 14:09)**

There is this place in Lower Maryland, which I frequent about 6 times a year. This is the Chesapeake Auction House in St. Leonard’s right off MD SR Route 2/4. I don’t take too much stock in antiques, but rather we go to stock up on coins. Old US Coins at a good deal, with a nice dealer.

I don’t think I told you yet, but I’m a prolific coin collector. However, I don’t go out there just to buy coins; (if you calculate mileage, this would be extremely inefficient.) but for family time, if you were skeptical.

But I saw somebody famous today- Gordon Peterson, who is on a high-profile television political talk show emerging from his Georgetown home. I will now respect his privacy and not give away too many details.

That’s all, folks, for today.

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**Must keep this brief (2008-02-18 14:48)**

Two reasons- I have to go out and get my haircut, and I just had my braces tightened, so I can’t stay still for long.

I started my day with the orthodontist appointment. I should be getting these braces off before this summer, which was what today’s 73 degree weather felt like. Then we went off to Mount Vernon. The driving was fine until a half mile from the estate, where there was a jam because of the incompetent policeman, who could not functionally direct traffic. In the overflow lot, we had to wait half an hour for the shuttle bus to the estate. There were, in fact, three of them running the short route, but the drivers kept running into the congested circle. So there, it took an hour from the lot to the estate. Mount Vernon was free today, the only day of the year it is so, and therefore it was uber-crowded. The new exhibit building really took a lot of the history away. However, the little IMAX film was pretty cool.

The rest of the day will come later...
Little Brother’s main appearance (2008-02-19 15:54)

I would have blog-told that he was coming today, but as I said, he was busy on the computer. So he was being a shadow to one of our comrades. Because of our early-ending test (I got a 96), and the other class’ Intramurals, we managed to board that first shuttle. He insisted that I must not linger on the platform for the other people, and we got home faster than any other day. 4:06pm. I still prefer being with everyone else, FYI

Yesterday: After Mount Vernon.
It started to rain, and there was this massive line for the shuttle to the overfill lot. We walked, and it was actually not that long of a walk, because everyone was parked in the wrong lot, at a large church, instead of the high school, three-quarter of a mile further down the road. Taking US Route 1 was plain slow, but the beltway to Annadale, through Springfield, was great. Pick up some Chinese groceries, and went home to a good parking spot in front of my residence. Then haircut, and the end of a three-day weekend.

Little Brother! (2008-02-20 19:20)

He was using the computer nearly all night doing homework, and I’m ready for bed now.
Must talk later

He’s Going Away (2008-02-22 04:34)

This Little Brother is going to be going back to New York on the 4:05pm train today, 178 Regional Amtrak. No more havoc on my blog until after Easter!
Other than that, today is a full snow day, and therefore I can catch up on everything I’ve been lacking. Sleep, homework head start, J-MAG, violin, etc.
Let’s reiterate the last few days’ events:
Wednesday night- I had to run out to see the eclipse.
Thursday night- It’s academic- you are lucky if you missed this one. 80 % of the questions were about economics, artwork, or literature. Somehow I sat through it. Rushing onwards, I did find a 1964 Silver Quarter in my change. That’s at least some good luck for that day. (approximate monetary value- $3.25.)
The Panther Paper has joined the 21st century! Visit online at [1]www.panther.angelcities.com
That’s my kind of paper.


Catch-up (2008-02-22 17:37)

"...We had our first snow day today, and I made sure to take advantage of it. (Catch up on sleep, finish this weekend’s homework...)) Sadly, there was no snow in front of my house, but I guess there is a lot of snow around somewhere, and I ended up with a three-day school week.”
Quickly said, but here are some juicy details.
6:05 am- Wake up to the wonderful snow day. Went back to bed,
7:35 am- Had breakfast
Where did my time disappear?
9:50 am- Shower and dress up
10:15 am- Sort coins to send to bank
10:35 am- Build a coin-operated lock
11:00 am- Start doing Biology cards
Watch some more cartoons
12:25 pm- Finish Biology cards
1:30 pm- Delicious South American lunch brought home and enjoyed
2:05 pm- Circulate over to Union Station to drop off Little brother

At Union Station, there was a big line. All seats that were not reserved were filled north of Wilmington. Had to wait a while.

But I do proclaim DC Union Station the best rail terminal in the US, at least. Reports- Philly 30th street- will I be robbed?, Penn Station NYC, actually quite dumpy. Grand Central is just like Union DC, except the platforms are a little grimy. (Granny smiths to Ruby Reds)

4:15 pm- Circulate back home,
5:00 pm- play more Locomotion
6:30 pm- A little dinner

Time goes somewhere...
8:20 pm- Jmag and Blog.

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**Sweet and Sour (2008-02-23 15:55)**

I just got home from scootering for 17 minutes to and from the car to find my cell phone. The phone only took about 2 minutes to find. Therefore you know the car was parked in some way far off land. The only reason in moving the car from the nice parking space in front of my residence to 7 blocks away was to go to the Orchestra, and to buy a violin. With the proper advice of a non-shop violin pro, I got a great-sounding instrument. I will not release the price of the instrument today, but moneywise, it will pay for itself in two years and nine months in place of renting, FYI. Enjoyably, it's priceless because I want to play this violin a lot, to make it sound "better", according to the violin professional, who had the violin design customized for his shop.

Nice new violin, bow, case, and a shoulder rest on the house.
I'm eager to try a concerto on it.

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**Travel with me (2008-02-24 18:35)**

After church and its associated school, we had a little adventure in the car. First stop: Hains Point. They had moved the statue that was there, The Awakening, to its permanent home in Gaylord's National Harbor Resort, just south of the Wilson Bridge. But the thing was, National Harbor will not be ready until April, said a security guard. So basically a statue that belongs in DC is now in PG county and inaccessible? Oh well. Also in PG county- Oxen Hill Farm. There were a few typical farm animals. Sheep, Goats, Chickens, Turkey, Horses, Cows, Rabbits, and real slothful Pigs, to be specific.

Have you tried a computer-free day recently? Just a thought.

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**A different day (2008-02-25 19:00)**

Rather a different week.
Month.
If I may say, next week will be my fourth consecutive three-day weekend. First was the CUMUNC event (almost 3 days off), then President’s day, then Snow Day last Friday. This Monday, our calendar says we have the day off.  
Who knows why, but we do.  
Also, for the next few days we do different attire days. Again,  
Tuesday= Reverse clothing  
Wednesday= House Shirt (Go Main!)  
Thursday= Sports Jersey  
Friday= School color day  
And don’t forget about the St. Anselm’s Tournament on Friday afternoon, as well as It’s Academic on NBC 4 on Saturday Morning. Unfortunately, I had orchestra that day and couldn’t make it.  
Week Easiness Rating: good chance  
Lots to do.

I have noticed... (2008-02-26 13:49)

That you rarely find coins on the streets in New York. However, there’s always a multitude of coins in DC. Why is that? I don’t know, but I would like to form an investigatory committee. Why I bring this up- I’ve been finding a lot of dimes and quarters around.  
Not to mention 35 cent fare cards...  
Anyway, I get to keep my little ego of eschewing the third shuttle. The E2 actually comes at a good time, and I got to Fort Totten about when the first shuttle arrived. I’ll post an easy schedule of the E2 and 80 buses after school on the soon-future Main House website.  
On the topic of Main House, we all get to wear house shirts tomorrow. I’m just waiting for Main House jokes all day tomorrow, but-  
Sticks and stones might break our bones but words will never hurt us,  
or the United States of America.

From the heart (2008-02-27 13:47)

Today, I performed a few cardiac procedures on a sheep heart.  
Cardiac bisection, tricuspid valve trisection, cardiac liposuction, and aortic semi-lunar valve replacements were a sample of what invasive procedures we did in our double-period bio class today. Of course, you can call it Dissection. From the hack-surgeon’s perspective, leaving the semi-lunar valve intact was the most difficult job.  
On the woozy subject of the heart, here is a sappy song from the heart:  
It’s so hard to part from you,  
when we are splitting ways.  
As hard as it is for me to say,  
we must really go.  
We’ve done so much together,  
Been through a lot together,  
We have so much in common,  
It’s hard to let it go.  
The train is coming to take me away;  
When those cold doors shut,
with tearful eyes we see the last,
it’ll be hard to say good-bye.
When will we meet again?
My train has sadly come,
I wish I could never leave you,
but the time has come;
When you’re ten miles off,
I’ll run to meet you,
We’ll promise to never leave again;
I’ll carry you through.
With a dreadful heart I know it’s a while away,
Thinking of you every second of every day;
I’ll text message you, I’ll Facebook you;
Please don’t drop me as your friend.
I know you won’t, I will return,
like a soldier coming back from war;
All the time we have been gone will be forgot,
and we will start anew:
First you’ll see my silhouette,
then you’ll hear my voice,
then the door will open,
and I’ll be with you again!
Atticus Sawatzki —’-

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School Pride Week (2008-02-28 14:32)

Did I tell you that It’s Academic with our people is on television this Saturday? If I did, I misspoke. It’s showing on March 29, in about a month.
Today was Jersey day. I wore a Little League jersey that came from Macomb Park’s Orioles. Remember, this was pre-Nationals. As it was size 14-16, it must have been huge on me at the time, because it still fit over a long-sleeve undershirt. Oh, and did I say that the Orioles most won all the time? Of course all the teams were winners. But the most outrageous outfit was the leotard-singlet for the wrestling team. However, most wrestlers had decency to keep their leotards in the gym.
Yesterday was house shirt day. Yes, the joke did come. "Do you want to hear the biggest joke?""Main House.""Brouhaha-ha-ha." Tomorrow is school color day. They sold out of Wiill Jurith’s economical Abbey Love shirts before I got to buying one, so I had to Cave it and get an $18 Anselm’s shirt. Why didn’t he sell them in the cave to make it easier for everyone?
And is there a "club-level" sport I could join? I need one now to fill in my sport for this year on the college resume.

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Special times (2008-02-29 15:31)

Tomorrow’s post will be our first anniversary post! We’ve been here, to England, back, to Canada, and back with this blog. More sentimental material tomorrow.
If you have not noticed, today is February 29th, a day that only comes once every four years. If it wasn’t for
this, it would be March now, and Christmas would have flown around Easter and back. On the same string, don’t forget, Easter is early this year on March 23, forcing St. Patrick’s green day into Holy week, a feat not rivaled since 1940.

Other than that, it was the last day of Pride Week before the Invitational Tournament. We all wore maroon and silver, and got handy with the face paint. Good job to Y of abbey, the paint was layered on so well to the torso that it looked like a shirt with a Y on it. We won, grabbing our big lead in the 2nd quarter. Washington International School committed 13 fouls in the last half. Our whole school was there, shouting things from "Let’s go Abbey" to "That’s not classy" to "Start the bus". Great fun.

ST. A: 63 WIS: 54 (Please proofread my scores)

2.3 March

One year later (2008-03-01 07:45)

I just got home from a 6 mile jog to Fletcher’s cove on the C+O canal, which terminates just at the Watergate, 1 block from my home. Today is one of my few free Saturdays without orchestra practice. But here is the first anniversary of Atticus Sawatzki’s blog. I said yesterday that today I would say all the sentimental stuff. As I said yesterday, the blog went to England and back, and Canada and back and everywhere in between. But let me do some talk. 2007 I actually did 54 posts in 9 months. I never thought I did so much. But I did, and am on track for 360 posts this year! Woo Hoo!

"Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2007
Hurray. It’s my 50th blog post, half of which came in the past two months, when I made an attempt at 5 posts a week. Now we had our ("50"/10)th exam today, and one exam only, which let us out at 10am. Since the shuttle wouldn’t come for another half hour, some of us had a nice walk through the community on Michigan avenue to Brookland Metro. Somewhat quicker than taking 12th street. Nevertheless, there are still two exams left and I know the readers want these exams to be over as well! Maybe the 100th post could be on Feb. 29, 2008? That’s a special day.”

"May 6, 2007
I am very pleased to announce that we have had a steady increase in visitors to our website. Thank you very much! Invite your friends to see! Also, we have started a video series. More on that soon including DVD’s”

Maybe more later.
Atticus Sawatzki

Sunday (2008-03-02 11:42)

I spent part of last night playing online Texas Hold ’Em. No, not the type that requires a credit card, but the sinless version. I’m sorry, but I’ll be heading right to that Facebook thing right after I finish blogging. I just got home from playing tennis in my community, after church and Sunday School.

Otherwise, It’s 2:45, and I have to decide if the tournament finale will be worth going to. I missed last night’s game, so I don’t know if we passed into this round or are just about to start in the third place game. I think I could be a good sports blog-tator...

We started cleaning a long-neglected closet which has been stacking up like rock layers. The top of the pile resembles 2006, but by probing the bottom you can guesstimate that the bottom was founded in about 1995. Tomorrow I have no work to do. Maybe I’ll go out to the bank to deposit a hefty load of coins, but I really also should go to U Street to apply for a summer government job. Let’s see what they think I can do in life.
Of course, my generation says "that I’m a winner and it’s fine if I don’t fell that I need you to be my boss, because I’m a winner and someone else will want me and spoil me rotten."
So long for now!

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Again (2008-03-03 10:47)

Texas Hold 'Em wouldn’t load last night, so now I’m playing it now and got to be nimble about blog- poker switching.
I had to go to H street Northeast to hand in the papers for the job program. It required taking the X2 over. I thought I’d be stuck on the street corner for half an hour, as I saw Tic-Tac-Toe and one more, four X2’s in a line in the other direction. One did come before the glob returned, however, so I could return to the computer quicker than not. On the way to H street, I saw a van tip over. More on that later. The H street corridor resembles U street 5 years ago, with this place I had to go to turn in the form reminiscent of the 14th street Reeves Center. Basically, this was one place I did not want to spend too much time in.
I was overly fancifully dressed, and well prepared- I was out in 30 seconds as I had already filled out my form in the comfort of my home. Watching my steps and looking both ways frequently, it was good that a bus was right there to sweep me back to my territory and to my lunch and Texas Hold 'Em. I forgot; the bus coming back from H street was detoured, as the Capitol police were investigating the van, which had tipped over when I was headed to H street, that was on their turf along with ambulances and fire trucks. A witness said that the van was in pursuit by the police. At least one injury was reported. (My original reporting)
Enjoying that free day junk!

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Happy Fruit (2008-03-04 14:21)

I received my second crate of fruit from Friends of the (South and Central) Americas. This time, unlike the civilized supermarket 5-pound box of Clementines I received in December, this big box of navel oranges was not cuddly. Somehow I dashed out, like last time I received a crate, picked it up quickly and got on the first shuttle. Well, this big box of 25 oranges rushed lactic acid into my forearms (aka soreness) in a few seconds, because there were only tiny finger-holes on the longer side of the box. That was not too much. Metro Center was about a cup of lactic acid, but from Foggy Bottom to home, this was a gallon. The box in my arms made my heavy backpack literally feel like a paper towel! So I got home, without losing an orange on the street, and the weight of my backpack came back to me after 5 extra minutes for the walk from station to home.
Be grateful for Clementines.
Sounds sort of like the $500 in coins ordeal from last summer?

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Today (2008-03-05 13:52)

French quiz study X Religion quiz study
Math sheet do X Latin Practice Test X
I got my homework done on the Metro, except for studying for that Religion quiz. How Sweet. Except, I am going to find something useful to do. But before that’s all said and done, I enjoyed a double lunch period today, with Model UN between the two periods. Some people ended up with a triple lunch period- response: I’m finally in class again. (After a 2 hour 50 minute siesta)
Biological Lab Adventures today with Dr. Juniors: Taking blood pressure. I won’t release our patients’
medical info, as well as everyone elses’, as any non-corrupt institution would.

Last week: Invasive Cardiac Care

P.S. (2008-03-05 14:30)

Jangoomag 2008 is ready! This publication was continued in January to add valuable age to a future grand magazine. It’s at [1]www.freewebs.com/jangoomag. You can also request a print copy as well. But otherwise, I have been officially approved for an American Express kiddie credit card. FYI American Express has the tightest credit standards. Any other bank would have let me have my card whenever, but AE requires that I be 15, which I will be in about a month. Of course this would all be wired to my dad’s account, but maybe he’ll approve of it.


It’s Academic (2008-03-06 16:25)

Crushing quizzes are fun, but today was a special day for the It’s Academic Team, because they received all-new high tech buzzers to replace the simpler, older version which have aged out. The new equipment is able to organize into teams, as well as setting answer order, replacing luck if the first answer is wrong. It also sports a timer, which we have not used yet. Also, a laptop-style case.

On the same note, future IA events:
March 29- Round 1, on TV, NBC 4
April 12- Round 2, filming in NW DC, you can be on television.

...1-2-3 (2008-03-07 15:25)

Taking of Pelham 123, good movie.
I forgot to mention that yesterday, we saw Chrysler’s 1955 version of Huckleberry Finn. I wrote a brief report on the movie, and will post the important material as soon as I get it back. Otherwise, it was a typical Friday, until intramural. James Mwombela, I can’t accuse him too much of Main’s lost, but in general Main 10th graders don’t take house seriously enough, as James is on the team I underestimated Tomas Husted, who shot a 2-pointer (OK) and then a 3-pointer with me supposed to be guarding him. Shame on me, possibly costing Main-2 a 3-on-3 b-ball victory.

When will we move onto some sport Main is really good at?

In the excitement of the weekend, my shirt was locked in a “burned” locker (the inspirational coach had to get it out) and my tie disappeared. Now I’m going to come in on Monday with a different tie because someone lost mine, to reminds everyone about the terrible prank someone pulled on me on Friday. Luckily it wasn’t my nicest tie. But still.

Sponsored links:
>Crepe Sale Wednesday, March 12, 2008
The cafeteria, both lunch periods as well as 35 minute period
Crepes $.75, toppings $.25, fruit $.50
Fudge will be available by the spoonful!
Proceeds benefit French Club activities for all to enjoy.
>Main House now has an unofficial website. [1]www.freewebs.com/mainhouse
I can’t spell ”Wednesday” right (2008-03-08 15:49)

I was worried so much about the excess of homework this weekend- until I cut the amount down to studying for the Latin vocab quiz. Why I was so worried- I was out from 9 am to 5 pm playing music down in Suitland (DMYOP) from 9:30 until 1, and taking a broad sweep over to AU for a ! one hour-15 minute! private lesson. Getting home at 5, I was pretty tired, but was able to get to Bio cards at 5:30. Unfortunately, I don’t think I’ll be able to dash over to the play, ”You can’t take it with you.” Oh well, maybe tomorrow.
PS Daylight Savings Time begins early tomorrow. Spring forward one hour, aka lose an hour of sleep.

DST (2008-03-09 12:57)

I had to get up ”early” to get to church today. While I woke up a little before 8 in real time, the Daylight Savings Time debacle sliced an hour off my sleep. But that’s fine. I have to get up at 6 tomorrow. Still, it’s nothing like Scotland (5 hour difference, the sun shines near perpetually up there) Anyway, I got to go out now.
Adventures on a Sunday!

Little Brother’s main appearance (2008-03-10 15:23)

again.
This time, his next four years came in the mail today. There is a likely chance that he will go to th Hill School in Pottstown, PA. This little town is about 30 miles from Philadelphia, and 15 miles from one of the world’s largest shopping malls! King of Prussia Mall, King of Prussia PA. A little more about this elitist private school: the Donald Trumplets go there. Therefore, my parents become fellow school parents with DT. He even probably goes to the school at least once a year.
PS- He got a significant scholarship to go there. Little Brother will also have an appearance on the White House Ellipse when we go there Easter Monday for our yearly ritual breakfast. Will blog.
There are two major events in town that day: that and a zoo event. The history goes back 100 years, but there are 3 types of people who go to these events- the people who call the White House their gent (like me), those who call the zoo their gent, and those who go to both- start at the White House and bus up to the zoo after all-you-can-grab.
More on that later.
>No one’s fired yet.

4:04 (2008-03-11 14:01)

4:04 was the time I got home today, a new record for a 3:20 pm departure. Since nearly everyone was out at some sports activity, there were plenty of open seats on the second shuttle. As I may have said before, I needed to diversify my assets by adding a (voluntary) sport to my list. That would at least make me a High School athlete. Good. I “joined” the lacrosse team last night, but unless Jeremy talks to me and I have to 70
bring equipment, it'll feel too shallow of a sport. I have to confer on a few things this evening to make sure I'm doing a sport for spring.

The latest Priory Press came out today, with my article in it, "Praise for Changes." I haven't had the time to analyze the published work, because I was real busy with the National French Exam as well as "the brain thing" at second lunch.

Update on DT: It's complicated. DT has had fruitful relationships with three different women. Did anyone ever expect him to stay married for long? Anyway, DTJ, the oldest Trumplet (graduated 1996), as well as Eric, the 2nd oldest guy Trumplet (graduated 2002) went to the Hill. I haven't been able to find out if the fourth Trumplet, Tiffany (born 1993), is at the school (product of DT's second honeymoon)


Un Crepe (2008-03-12 14:02)

Congratulations to the French Club today for hosting the first really successful Crepe Sale at the school. Successful because the buyers enjoyed the crepes (thanks to Alex and Chris), and the line never became excessively long.

Because I did not have to rush out to CUMUNC, I got to eat an Alex crepe. C'etais bon.
The Crepe Sale was also beneficial to the French club, as they are now able to purchase a new DVD set for their meetings. Membership is free, and there is no painful initiation rite.

Exact money count is not able to be disclosed.

Anyway, on the way home I was beseeched by a charity. Unfortunately, I did not have much money, and therefore could not contribute much to his cause. I told him I would call back, and I am not a liar, so I will.

I thought that I had to list the guy's name here anyway.

Capital Hill Sports League
202-583-8835
(no website yet)

My time to shine (2008-03-13 16:47)

Who does the world stop for when this person has another heart issue?
Dick Chaney of Observatory Circle.

I was playing tennis in Rose Park when I noticed no cars were on the parkway, at 7 pm. Within a few minutes, a short motorcade as well as a DC ambulance passed by. You know it’s him, or maybe it was his dog. Then the world started to spin again after his motorcade passed.

Yesterday, I came into class to the awe of the plebs and senators of the grade to the site of a student who ironically fractured his hand on his brother’s head, in instinct to an action by the brother right before. It was all Karma, maybe he’ll use P.C. terms when referring to anyone else on the entire planet, whoever they are. Of course my Phys Ed shirt just had to be in his locker when he was out. We were still doing Krazy Kickball today, and it was hard trying not to pay attention to the score, even though this was a Krazy game. And I was not the worst player on my team, I think.

Two periods later at announcements, we all found out that vacation will begin one day early! That was a lot of joy-whoops. Also, we were formally told that The Pope will be in Washington for my birthday (April 17), oh what a special day, and I might be able to spend it with his highest honor at Mass. If I can win the lottery for one of the school’s 40 tickets for our school’s High schoolers. That would be just over a 50 percent chance of receiving a ticket if half of the High Schoolers sign up for the lottery.

Bad syntax- the Pope would have been here regardless of it was my birthday or not. If you can go, I say you
should, to the pontifical Mass.

Something I saw in today’s express made me quite perturbed— a school in Connecticut abdicated the school VP for buying candy on school grounds. This was an offense against their healthy food policy. Why I was perturbed, the day before I sold some candy to a certain student government official, who will remain nameless. We all have our faults. (PS: I did not sell on school time.)

Back to sports, I did my first practice today. Not bad at all- the worst part was the two-lap circumvention of the property- from the courts to South Dakota, “up the hill” to the monastery, through the cemetery and on the 16th street NE side of the school, and back up a hill to the upper parking lot. After that, we had a little study session on the train. The Bio test’s hardest part is that chart of hormones, which I may not take stock in when I graduate from college- if I don’t go into medicine.

Anyway, my Melatonin is signaling for me to study for three more good hours.

(aka: My body doesn’t have to go to sleep for 3 hours)

Thinking about it (2008-03-14 16:44)

People have taken regained interest in the Jangoonow website as an order form. I actually just finished polishing updates, and encourage you to look in the near future. Please do note that I will restock on candy over the looming vacation. The website is harder to maintain than the blog because of time restrictions on many nights, but over the break and vacation I have plenty of time for updates.

A little different afternoon today- there was a special presentation by the debate team about hot political topics, and education. Was interesting, better than intramurals with basketball, on account of really tall tenth graders. Tennis today, my legs are a little tired from the two laps around the facilities. Not much else, except a weekend of studying for two quizzes, English and History, as well as online Bio Cards (they make up one whole letter grade for my pending bad score on the hell-test (Satan True-False, yes-no-maybe so matching, and several roadblock no solution-not the letter E- multiple choice answers), and math. Keeping my thoughts straight.

Money News- buy new stock in bankrupt companies. There is a near-certain chance that its value will rise quickly.* (Reference: Washington Group)

Sponsored Ads:
>Are your outstanding loans destroying your friendships?
>Interest payments creating resentment?
>Save your friendships and money!
>You should consider refinancing your loan with me!

A.S.’ blog is not responsible for your financial decisions. Please consult your professional.

Keeping it real (2008-03-15 18:34)

There are two speed bumps in the way of my Easter vacation called Monday and Tuesday. Actually, Monday is the bump, with two quizzes which require frantic studying and CliffNote cross-referencing. Tuesday is really just the support group for the excitement of the vacation. No test, quiz that day. Anyway, while I’m still on the computer, I’ll SparkNote a little to test my reading comprehension. So that’s why I’ll keep it short tonight, and you’ll hear my freedom ring on Tuesday.
Speedy (2008-03-16 16:32)

It's already Holy Week, and vacation is two days away. But more critically, I have two quizzes tomorrow, and I want to make sure I'm in the total know about all the material. Got to go.

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Tradition and the roadblock (2008-03-17 14:17)

What is Zeno’s theory?
It goes this way- if you go halfway (1/2), then half (1/4), and on (1/8)...you’ll never get there. But there is an end to tomorrow. Why I bring it up- Math quest. Not a fun, joyful computer game, but rather a 30-50 point twiz (no way to spell it). On top of that, there is one tennis practice in my vacation, which is at 3:30 tomorrow. Oh Well. Vacation will come soon enough.
Some orders of business:
X Collect A+ loan from customer YYYYY
Collect other loans
Inquire about EC religion assignment, session 3
X Inquire about tennis practice tomorrow
Finish math practice quest
Now onto my tradition- I completed another online order today, which will be hand delivered tomorrow.
That’s what I do, and like to do. Brings good memories of summer when I do.
Jangoonow- internet shop online since 2004:[1] jangoonow.googlepages.com
I’ll have time to update it by Wednes

1. http://jangoonow.googlepages.com/

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Catch-up, on sleep (2008-03-18 16:23)

I play it cool
And dig all jive
That’s the reason
I stay alive.
My motto,
As I live and learn
is:
Dig and be dug
In Return
(Langston Hughes)
I wanted to include the poem "On hearing the intent of purchasing the poet’s freedom”, which included a jubilee about liberation from the toils of the world, but I lost the packet, and had to settle with the next suitable poetry.
Anyway, it’s Spring Break. It finally came, and I’m enjoying my first few minutes of it, especially when it took a while to get our locker room open. Otherwise, maybe the admin will get the jist of things and realize that locking the rooms during sports causes more problems than it solve. Notwithstanding, we’re finally getting smart-boards, the most attention- grabbing internet-ready digital chalkboards in the world. Yes, I’ve worked with them at St. Thomas before, and they’re great.
Yippee! (2008-03-19 14:42)

It’s my first free* day that will be followed by another weekday free day. I tried to not waste this precious day, but in my mind it started early. My circadian rhythm was "traumatized" like jet lag from being jarred awake at 6 am, which my body refuses to do, mostly. I probably woke up at about 6am, but by 6:30 I didn’t feel like staying in bed. So I got up, had breakfast, showered, and headed out to a mission. First, at 9:13 am I caught two buses (D5 and L2) to T street to drop off a package, en route to Tenleytown (92 to walk across Duke Ellington Bridge to Red Line north) to purchase a music book on Store Credit. At the 400-something foot summit, I headed down to sea level. (N2 to 32, needlessly) BTW, 6 times $1.35 equals $8.10, not $7.10. I guess it’s hard to do math while driving a bus. Eventually, I made it home by 10:38 am. I tried so hard to not let my life go to waste in front of the computer screen, and I partially made it. I practiced the violin for two whole hours, not straight through, as I got distracted from my internet play-along, and started watching random YouTube videos. Now here am I and I have a violin lesson at AU at 7:00.

from school

Day 2 (2008-03-20 13:31)

Last night I had the violin lesson- one-seat ride N3 to American University and a ride in "a shoe", one of the cute little 22-seater buses Metro has. I recommend you take a ride in one some day. From what I know, routes 98, B8, N8, E6 always use them.
I was just working for about an hour on April's Jangoomag. I wanted to get my portions done before little brother comes home for Easter and takes liberty in hogging the computer. At least he might be getting a laptop soon... but anyway, I was at the IADB underground auditorium listening to a "power point reader" talk about filming in Peru, and then showed the 47 minute film. Sort of spoiled the beginning a little, but otherwise it was a cool film. Had lunch at the bank’s upscale food cafeteria by Guckenheimer and Illy. Came home, worked on Jmag, and here am I. I really should play more music...
Reminder: Tomorrow is Good Friday.

My Good Friday speech (2008-03-21 13:04)

Last night I went to DC’s Carnegie Hall- of the sciences, and listened to a Dr. Hau, a physicist, discuss speed control and packaging of light. However, unlike most theories, this was actually performed, and has multiple practical uses- fiber optics as well as dense storage for computer memory. Continuing on the Environmental Film Festival, I was requested to watch a wordless documentary from the 1970’s. Sort of cool. Then I came home and had a meatless lunch. At lunch today, I was cringing at the thought that restaurants were still cooking meat today, of all days, Good Friday. And also, the millions of Americans who will eat a juicy, meaty hamburger tonight, and at least some of those people will regret it, forgetting it was Good Friday. This crossed my mind as I remembered that the IADB’s cafeteria is brave by going totally meatless today, something most companies wouldn’t consider, because it would be "offensive" to some people, even though it really isn’t. Anyway, it’s going to be Easter soon and I’m going to New York tomorrow. I don’t know what I’ll do, asides from going to three or four lengthy services this weekend. (I’ll try to limit myself to 2). There is: Saturday vigil, Sunday 8am, 11am, Evensong 3pm. In other news...
There is this new bus company, Boltbus, yet another bus provider between DC and New York, that will start service on March 23 from Metro Center. Unfortunately, this is Greyhound trying to sabotage private enterprise (The bus companies catering to generally well-off people) by dressing as an innocent. (I can think of
other things as well...) They’re thinking “Well, if we can’t get the government to interfere we’ll do it ourselves, at a big loss.” As a person who has crunched these numbers before, fortunately, their business strategy can’t last long. They’ll bleed too much money by selling $1 to $15 tickets and paying the drivers union wages. The best we can do: Boycott the Boltboy. Please support capitalism, and denounce communism.

Two posts in one (2008-03-24 05:33)

Saturday
I went to New York in the family car. The ride took exactly 4 hours and 17 minutes, including a refueling stop in Maryland and two driver switches in New Jersey, averaging 49.68 miles per hour. That was a long stop, as we were flying at over 70 mph most of the trip to meet the 12:00 deadline for taking Little Brother out to lunch. We were at 49th and 12th at that...

Little Brother is Sleeping (2008-03-25 04:49)

...First we checked into our room on 75th street. Then, we all went up to the Columbia University area to eat lunch at Ollies. Then we took a walk around the campus. On the weekends, there is one main gate open, but all the others are closed, nearly. There was one other exit through the garage. Otherwise, the campus is surrounded in high padlocked fences, making an escape from fire a disaster. Then we dropped him off and basically went back to our room to get dressed for the Easter vigil. Two hours and 20 minutes later, we went to dinner at Lilly’s 57th street, another new-Asian restaurant. The restaurant choice was limited because of the tight schedule. Afterwards, a 2-mile trek back to the guest house.

Easter
This morning, we had to vacate the room by 10 am. Quite an early check-out time. This was a Bed-but not Breakfast, and the staff had the need of going to church for Easter. We moved the car to a nice parking space on 57th street, alleviating the need for a long walk. Since it was already 9:15, all the decent places we would have eaten were crowded, so we set off to 8th avenue and Wendy’s. There was hardly anyone there, and for a good reason. The staff were stingy with the potatoes, and I’ve been ill ever since, on account of the rubbish they fed me. 11am service, was filled to capacity of approx. 2200. The mass took about 20 extra minutes. Not too bad. Afterwards, as with every Sunday, the school had a very nice lunch for us. Now that did not leave much time to get to the church for the 3:00 evensong. Luckily this lasted no longer than the ordinary Sunday evensong. Driving back to Washington was congested most of the way. However, we were able to maintain a high rate of speed for the most part. Let’s see. Car crash holds up tunnel traffic for 20 stopped minutes in the Lincoln Tunnel. Rubbernecking slowdowns on the NJ Turnpike. More of that in Delaware. 5-car accident in Maryland, blocked one travel lane, half mile backup. Luckily we passed through before the police arrived, because one car was on the other side of the road, away from the other four, and you know the police. Investigation.
Arrived at 9:55pm. 4 hour 40 minutes, averaging 45.5 miles per hour, including 2 driver-switch stops. However, I didn’t get to bed until 11pm.
PS no one was severely injured or killed in any of the wrecks.

End of a Golden Era (2008-03-26 18:15)

It’s time to get caught up on the journal. That means time for poetry. But I’m not in poetry mood, however, and the journal will look like a bullet list.
Monday
Got up and breakfast at the White House.
The Starbucks stand refused to serve me a dessert drink, even though they are not ashamed of taking my peoples’ money for a shot of caffeine, street name, "frap".
Wasted the rest of the day in front of computer.
Went biking- hands got cold and swelled up.
Tuesday
Total waste of a day- Little Brother’s fault.
Went biking- The Mall is scary at night.
Wednesday
Priority seating in The Supreme court, thanks to Court Marshall Thongtavee. A very special event.
Didn’t have too much time to waste.
Violin Lesson, AU
Walked from Dupont Circle via West End to Home
Thursday and Friday
My last two days of vacation. They must not go to waste. I have planned a Metro-cursion with Little Brother for tomorrow.
The main item I was supposed to talk about is way too important to be relegated to the bottom of a journal entry

End of a Golden Era (2008-03-26 18:27)

Today sadly ends a golden era for private enterprise in cities. Eastern Travel and Tours is enjoying its last day at the peak of a golden wave. Ever since 1998, a bubble was forming. In recent years, some companies have been, again, riding the wave of prosperity, but it is Eastern that had the upper hand. What am I referring to? The so-called Chinatown buses. Fung Wah started in 1998, catering to the Chinese community, shuttling passengers for $10 between New York and Boston. Other companies soon followed for the same intention, within 5 years forming a network on the East Coast. Eastern took the lead in catering to the "wider population". Low Fares, Friendly People, and by far, Quicker Service and Better Schedules characterize Eastern, as well as others, against the government-subsidized Greyhound.
The bubble was bound to burst. New start-ups such as Tony Coach (blast to the past- has priorities mixed up- chooses quantity over quality) and the tasteless DC2NY, in the past year, proved that the clientele was a bottomless well. Well, Greyhound wanted to be the bully that scattered the people. Their new service, Boltbus, will be a Trojan Horse. The system, starting tomorrow, will run just like a striving company, running buses from the street corner. But it’s Greyhound. The government is sponsoring this non-capitalist act that is on the verge of offending Anti-Trust laws meant to protect the smaller providers. If they were only entering the market, it would not sting. However, they are using their bottomless cesspool of cash to push private enterprise into bankruptcy, or shutting down. Offering tickets that start at $1, range up through the $7 and $10 range and practically capping at $15, someone without a strong conscience will be lured by the outer beauty of the price deal.

Who knows what will happen tomorrow with my friends at Eastern? What do they have up their sleeve? They must not fail, and most likely will not. Due to the drain of up to 400 passengers each way per day, if all comes to worst, several companies will shut down, (Tony and DC2NY top my list right now) and Eastern, the most "American Apple Pie" of the companies will have to make noticeable cuts to service. The older underdogs, such as New Century, MVP/Apex Bus and Today’s Bus, will tweak schedules and tactics to recenter on the Chinese community. Maybe there is some law that Greyhound is violating in creating BoltBus. We can hope.
At least Eastern provides a quicker trip!
Boltbus will then take their tornado to the NY-Boston route. They might have more trouble there, due to Fung Wah as well as Lucky Star each providing near-hourly service between the two towns. Later on that.

**Little Brother is Out (2008-03-28 08:21)**

He left and took the storm away with him. Actually, this is only the eye of the hurricane. He will be back tonight, and wreak havoc on my blog until I come home on Tuesday, when he will be gone until June. I tried to take Little Brother to Rockville, or some other Metro-venture, but he only wanted to play on the computer. So yesterday was thrown in the trash. Nearly. Nevertheless, I did some unique accomplishments. I wrote a sample "Sawatzki’s Note" for The Cat in the Hat, and embellished that story into a meaningful novel with allegory. Today I discovered that people have joined The Banker’s Club. Out of modesty, I did not make myself an officer, which I just discovered how to do. However, modesty doesn’t reign in my "Free gift" group, where I play Oprah Winfrey in generously offering gifts to members. No one has joined that group. Likewise, I just finished typing a meaningful essay for The Bankers’ Club on micro-lending in America. Over one page long, single-spaced. And now I have time to go beyond the call of duty for my Religion Extra Credit project, by reading and essaying about my topic. As I said, this day won’t go to waste!

PS- 10:30 am, I think, tomorrow, NBC 4, It’s Academic. This will be a tale of one small school bravely fighting against Goliaths to win the prize.

**Tales of the Rich and Famous (2008-03-28 08:36)**

Gordon Peterson (?-) is living life out as usual with his wife in Georgetown. He is still a TV star on DC Channel 7, WJLA, with his show, Inside Washington. Barack Obama (1961-) is not home much on Capitol Hill nowadays. He is eying to move from his townhouse on The Hill to a large, white house at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., aka The White House, in 2009.

**It’s Academic (2008-03-29 08:02)**

I just finished watching It’s Academic sans the ice cream and tissues. It was a tight fit making it to my TV, getting to see the show, because I had another violin lesson at AU at 9am. At 10:30, with our Insignia running, our team’s handsome faces were broadcasted over the airwaves from where I was just at, on Nebraska Avenue. Our team was always ahead, although early on our team’s first place position was threatened by Westfield. About halfway though the game, scores reported as: Westfield 210, JFK 160, St.A 310. Before the final volley, scores stood as Westfield 395, JFK 260, St.A 475. St. Anselm’s had a marvelous final volley, even though we lost 40 points to wrong answers then. Final score stood at Westfield 405, JFK 280, St.A 615.

So thanks, Peter, Marc, Daniel (and Matt) for making the show rather enjoyable. And Stephen was there, vying for camera attention. FYI Main House had the best attendance rate.

Technical PS- Soon you will be able to receive JangooMag through Facebook. Our staffs’ plan is for readers to simply join the Facebook group for the monthly magazine, and it will be delivered to your Facebook inbox every month. The cost is free, thanks to our sponsors, who vary every month. Thanks! Saint Anselm’s- The official IA team of Atticus Sawatzki’s Blog.
At Twinbrook (2008-03-30 17:53)

I was practicing at an orchestra rehearsal at a penthouse church in Twinbrook. I rose at 7am to get there by 9:45am, and have time to spare. Due to it being very early Sunday morning, we did a high-speed bus trip to Friendship Heights. Once in a while experience. We got to the rehearsal site at 9:15, after meandering a little around the circa-1980's buildings. At 10:00am, it was time to strike the first note. It felt like Monday morning at school, from passing through first period in a listless state, then cracking down to a test second period. (Sigh). The result will be a concert at Strathmore (we'll talk later about this.) Anyway, the rehearsal went on for another two hours, after which Mother and I had lunch at seven seas. Being in the Rockville area, it was quite easy finding authentic Chinese food. There was also a Kosher Mart, where we actually bought a weighty Babka loaf, a delicate sweet bread imported from...Brooklyn. (see:[1] www.greenscakes.com)

Anyway, it's the last day of a long vacation, and as I said on Facebook, sad that vacation has ended, but that I'm really missing my pals". Something like that.


Hallway Chat with an Internet Personality (2008-03-31 14:30)

A brief post today- I have to find and PC a post, which one of our readers found.
Last night, I watched the infamous "Peeps in the Park" video right before bed. Yes it happened. I had a dream about the stadium. So here it goes: It was night. About 12 of my gradesmen, and I, were driving to the Nats stadium, just as the video recommended not to do. Everyone else parked in a desolate field about 1 mile from the stadium. The others dodged lead as I parked in the empty stadium garage. I woke up. On the topic of videos, this was Metro’s most popular internet infomercial video, by far, with over 30,000 views. The other videos are slightly over 100. Anyway, they did a good job entertaining Washington. You should also see...Depressed choirboys in England, parts 1 and 2. Sad Americans in England. Views are in the multihundreds.

Also, I was tabletopped for the first time today. For your information, this is a debalancing game played by two culprits/assailants and one sorry victim. Can't say all here now. I have grand ideas for the TTAG Facebook group, declined as Tabletopping Awareness Group. Free stuff!

IITYWYBAD?

2.4 April


The Russian government had recently held a contest, with the prize as a trip to the new Russian Space Station, and the first trip to the moon in 35 years. The contest was open to Russians of all nations. I, actually, am not ethnically a Russian, but nevertheless I passed as one, and won with my inspirational life story about how being a great-grandson of an Ellis Island immigrant (that part was true) proved many challenges in our family's recently-adopted country (about 70 % of Americans have an Ellis Island ancestor) , and how expressing my voice in the style of the New Russia has erased the stigma of being a great-grandson of a generic immigrant.

So off I will fly to space from Russia in July 2009. While George Bush has specifically demanded that I not go, it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and the UN commended me on this act, bridging the gap between...
too much mush to handle. I actually declined the offer to ceremoniously remove the American flag, on the 40th anniversary of the American lunar landing, and replace it with the Russian type, because then I would never be let into America again, and, anyway, I don’t want this to be the defining experience of my life. I just want to go on to college like everyone else.

George Bush has finally kicked America’s bucket when questioned on what he will do about the "commies.” He stated "this is a diffurunt amurica then the one i gru up in.” and declared that he would go to war with Russia if they removed the American flag, and offered Russia nothing to quit now. What a dumb donkey, not to mention he has no authoritative power in July of next year. Four major presidential contestants have stated the need to jump-start our space program to be capable of building a space-fort to protect our flag. Hillary thinks it’s better to give everyone on earth socialist health care.

The FBI and CIA as well as the NSO and FDA (Why?) have been given shoot-at-sight orders if they encounter me, so I better watch my back. AFD 2008

April 2 (2008-04-02 13:29)

I actually do not plan on going to space next year, and to the best of my knowledge I am not on an FBI hit list. However, do not discount all of yesterday’s April Fool’s post. The Americans are actually quitting on space for the while being (as I foresaw happening. I saw it in the Express today.) Why I told this tale when I could have given honest truth? Because a) No one would believe it, b) and more likely, I’d be portrayed as a traitor to America. Now I’ll give the April talk.

April is a fascinating month for me. Statistically speaking (based on my possible faulty research) there are a lot of people born in April 1993, and April in general. That means this is a special month for a lot of other people as well. April 2008 will be an even more special day for all of DC, because The Bishop of Rome, aka B-16, as some of is fans aptly call him, or the more proper Pope Benedict XVI, will make a once-in-a-lifetime appearance to the DC people at the new ballpark, which is perfect allegory to Revelations.

So reviewing this month, I have birthdays in line from April 2, today, to April 28, with a straight-shot list from April 16 through 22. Other events include WAMUNC at GW, within walking distance of my home, from April 10th to the 13th. As I have said before, April 17 is both my birthday and the DC Papal Mass.

Another Day (2008-04-03 14:57)

After blogging last night- I had a violin lesson that, like a tumor, killed study time. A little harsh, but I did have three quizzes the next day. It took over two whole hours.

It’s rainy outside, and therefore, no Tennis game to see after It’s Academic. However, there was still a Middle School softball game going on. Couldn’t see much; had to get home.

And now here am I , after just finishing ice cream over sweet bread.

I just got word from a person who went to the FOSE event at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. He stated they had nearly run out of little handout gadgets, it being the last day, but all the exhibits of cool army stuff for sale were still up.

The biggest thing I regret today- not taking the negative root of a quadratic equation on a math quiz today.

40 years (2008-04-04 19:32)

I have just finished typing act 1 of a soap opera. That’s why it’s so late.

But 40 years ago, as The Examiner rightly states in a soul-invoking special report with first-hand witnesses
of the destruction of Washington, which started within minutes of MLK’s assassination
The residence I type in now, was built over a scorched shell.
[1]www.examiner.com - link to the story
Even more dramatic- arriving into Washington National Airport the same night, one witness was able to see the city in flames, unlike the typical lights of the city.

1. http://www.examiner.com/a-1319968%7EThe_D_C__family_business_riots_could_not_drive_out.html

Extraordinary (2008-04-06 18:22)

I played at Strathmore today. The rehearsal yesterday went past 9:30pm, and I got home at around 11pm. No time to blog there.
So Marc Yu, the child prodigy, came into rehearsal in his trademark red gloves. He played excellently, and all for memory, all 30 minutes of the piano concerto. He was the star of today’s charity concert at, I said it, the Music Center at Strathmore on Tuckerman Lane in Grosvenor (Pronounced Gro-ven-or, with the British accent. Been to Scotland, done that, bought the T-shirt as well) in preppy, of sorts, North Bethesda.
And I got hooked onto 99, a crispy, sweet, creme filled biscuit. Will post on Jangoonow for all to be able to enjoy.
The sun has set, and gone to bed, and so must I.
I wish to give a more detailed report soon.
Two links:
I do my blogging in paradise, compared to some of the people who actually do it for their sole living
[1]Writers Blog till they Drop
Morale of story: It’s hard to enslave bloggers. That’s why I’d never sell this baby of mine.
Do you bias? You probably do. Test yourself
[2]https://implicit.harvard.edu/

2. https://implicit.harvard.edu/

Monday (2008-04-07 13:43)

Home in Record Time! 4:05pm.
The NLE (National Latin Exam) has lowered their standards. I received a Gold Magna Cum Laude with my score of 37/40 on Latin II. Compare that with my Magna Cum Laude (no shiny metal) last year on Latin II, I think. Or is it just that the teacher is really, really good? Explaining about .5 % of all Perfect scores, and supposedly, another significant chunk of other high ranks?
Again to Strathmore. The Music Center at Strathmore is a posh 2005 concert hall that looks conformist on the outside, and is only tamely space-age on the inside. In the Marriott hall, as they bought it, the seats are symmetrical. No atonality there. The acoustics are pleasing, for the audience, as there was where I sat until intermission, which, afterwards, we performed.
The performance of Bach’s First Piano Concerto went fabulously, and a little encore (Chinese pop music) as well. Of course, the designers compromised the performers’ ability to hear each other for the audiences' listening pleasure, but it was fine.
The money generated from the concert will go to building a [1]Shriner’s Hospital ( Shriners are the group that wears the fezzes) in China.
Et tu, Attice (2008-04-08 15:54)

Today was as ordinary as a typical day. However, getting up at 6am was not too bad today, as I was in a light sleep cycle. Got to school, after spilling my backpack in a race to the door. Typical day. Tennis in the afternoon. At least the locker room door was left unlocked. I had prepared myself in case the door was locked- leaving crucial items in a backpack outside.

Some Change
Expecting that the shuttle would not leave until late, because the typical driver was at the baseball game, some of us walked towards the station. We got on an 80 bus at 12th street, but there were a few technical details about the student fare system:
PG County school students receive free fare with ID in the afternoon
DC students receive free transfer from rail-to-bus, as well as eligibility for a discount card
Two of the five of us had passes; One passed on school ID; the other two had to pay- one with cash and one with Smartrip.
In fact, our school does border PG county.
But, another person drove the shuttle, and caught up to us. To me that was no matter; However, two people did have to pay.
PS: The barbershop on F street, NW is really slow and gives bad haircuts.

Here is my king-of-the-court winning pattern.
WL
W L L WW
W LW

Sonnet (2008-04-09 13:36)

Tired. I want a nap, but I don't know if I'll have time for one.
First, I'll do math, then study French, then English. And I really have to finish my MUN position paper. That'll be my priority list for tonight.
Tomorrow at this time, I will be at GW with the MUN team. Then later, I'll be fighting all by myself. I think I'm the only person from our school to be in the World Summit on Children. Is Italy influential enough to take the lead to win?
I also got report that a Poland representative had a live chat with the Ambassador of Poland. The two allegedly talked about Poland’s view on globalization. Somehow that’s not a word. But the Ambassador reinforced a popular idea- "let the cultures blend but don’t let the new one then dominate.” OK.
Oh tisk. I have a violin lesson tonight.

Candidates (2008-04-09 13:55)

It’s election time at school. Here is an Atticus Sawatzki’s brief rundown of the candidates.
Tom Zorc- without bias, he is a manager for the Priory Press. He also touches our hearts with compassion and humility. I heard that he transferred his papal mass ticket to a freshman. Great guy. Great material for election.
Travis Smith- was the first person I met on my first real day at Saint Anselm’s. Doesn’t really look down upon the underclassmen. Very nice person to know. Great material for election.

Johnny Carpenter- One of my first Facebook friends. Seems to be a popular candidate, even though I don’t really know him.

Lucas Husted- I don’t know much about his campaign. All I know of his qualifications is Honor Roll. I’m not in his circles much, either.

Debate tomorrow, voting Friday.

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AKA- your classmates know your every move.
It was a lovely Thursday afternoon. The sun was out, and wearing a suit from this time period was way too much. With our victorious leader we boarded transporter 3 to the high-speed metro lines.
We exited downtown, where the sidewalks glittered as with money. The strangers to this land were disoriented-they then soon found out that I was an insider who was in their midst. I heroically lead them to their destination, but the story does not end there.

We met up with the people who arrived in personal transporters. After eating strange retro-space-age dinner inside the HQ, we headed out to constitution hall, that reeked of the early 20th century. I was in a desperate state of mind to study for a Romeo and Juliet quiz, so I was slightly distracted from the insider who ran the government earlier this century. It did not last as long or was boring as the last MUN oration that I listened to.

I was then cramped into another ugly 20th century building that was way overheat, and miserable. I could clearly see that the other members of the council were competitive. I orated more about the events on the other side of this planet, much more than I did last time. The meeting was soon over, and I headed home the low-tech way, by foot. As I was crossing the major thoroughfare to the northwest of the city, a familiar personal transporter passed by. This was filled with familiar carbon life elements. I never noticed this transporter, but the next morning, at the academy, I was informed of how I was seen on the median strip of the thoroughfare. Using my internal computer, I calculated this location, and yes, here is the lesson:
Big Brother is Watching
After the encounter,
I entered onto the world wide web and crammed external study material.

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WAMUNC II (2008-04-12 18:58)

AKA- Crack the whips
Friday after Metro trip meant TGI Friday’s lunch, 441 feet from the WAMUNC HQ. My share of the bill came out to be around $12. However, due to a tax counting error on part of a student government candidate, I had to pitch in $3 extra. But TGI’s actually grilled the chicken just right! A little crispy yet juicy to describe it. Friday early afternoon was spent in a stuffy room watching Uganda Rising. I noted there that there is nothing more disruptive to decision-making than political correctness, and making sure possible security options in Uganda would not be offensive to the Ugandans. I realized that after 1 hour with a representative that I didn’t take too kindly too. Dinner was at Wendy’s. But before that, we were waiting for the people in SOCHUM. I finally went to check their room 20 minutes into recess. They were gone. A quick cell phone call led to the reason. Bobby Beatson. Whatever he did to influence the freshmen to desert. Quote from schoolmate in committee: (with a bit of angst at the SOCHUM people), This is probably the only time this year that I’m eating at Wendy’s this year. Same with me.
Oh, and that SOCHUM. They got out an hour early, heading out to Chipotle while I was forced to listen to a P.C. specialist. Nighttime session, very nice, modern climate controlled room at 1957 E. That was a hopeful session. I collaborated to be a sponsor with Singapore from NJ. Next morning, very soon. Former co-delegate walks in with a Starbucks (some sort of coffee slush item) and a pastry. That would have made a great pic. Anyway, I need to get to bed, and I’ll pick this up later.

WAMUNC III (2008-04-13 14:23)

I just couldn’t find how to get the math problems sent over to me- especially since it is a worksheet. AKA Peer Pressure

SO...It was Saturday at 9am where I left off. Very miserable conditions in the morning. Hot day, humid, no A/C, poor ventilation. And anguish. I watched as the blockheads of the committee trash our (Singapore and Italy) budget amendment. 27% approval. Therefore the other sponsors had a better chance of winning a prize. I was running out of time.

Lunch at M street Chipotle (There are 2 on M street, the downtown one was where the Freshmen went. And Bobby Beatson (Is he trying to run for student council? He is in 12th grade) as well as Presidential Candidate Tom Zorc.

In the afternoon, I was bitter about what the blockheads had done. I was preparing to vote No to the bill that would not include our amendment and totally trash the committee in my voting response. But I voted yes and turned my bitter speech into a heartfelt one. (Google Docs doesn’t work well on my home computer)

In that session, I was able to take a sponsorship.

I made a slip-up.

I said a second-circle item during moderated caucus by saying,"It is said that Michael Jordan makes more on royalties from Nike than all the child laborers in Malaysia combined.”

Next day, last hour, we got our working paper turned into resolution. However, we cut short right before voting (I said "Close Debate", not "Close the meeting") to get to the ’Soulja Boy’ dance-off. Such a debacle.

At the break at 11am, we had ended up in two groups. The 3rd floor people (including myself) had ended the debacle earlier than the 4th floor. We had left and were wandering on Pennsylvania Avenue, interested in not eating lunch then. The other people, with, again, Bobby Beatson, were walking. I decided to play in their circle and return.

After I was done with that tomfoolery, I returned to see that they had disappeared. I tried calling the two numbers I had for those people, but no success. So I was done with them.

They had gone into Johnny Rockets, a Dan Snyder company. I had no need to eat then, so I didn’t. I however, did note that the service was slow, especially since that our group was the only one in the 2000 Penn. restaurant at the time. Enter the older guys. Nazan, as we call him, was absolutely impulsive and a risk to our community. Knocked over Bobby’s drink, and then, in a separate incident, nearly sent my complimentary glass of water to the floor, along with the embroidered glass.

Somehow we survived, and I tipped the waitress $1, who brought me that complimentary glass. We made it back in time for the awards ceremony. This was the most nervous time of the conference. My heart beat fast as the chair ran through the list of awards. ”Monaco from St. Alban’s.” That was a committee that was listed before mine. This was my co-delegate last time, when we did not get a personal award. If I did not win here, then it would be apparent that I was a liability. We got to our World Summit on Children. Singapore, the very influential voice of my work, got a verbal commendation. What was happening? Didn’t she perform better than I? Actually, somehow, despite all the flaws and controversies I had created, I won an honorable delegate award, equivalent to the previous co-delegate. I was out of the hot water then.
What do I say? (2008-04-14 14:29)

Just tired from that weekend. Anyway, the so-called orthodontic operation went fine, except it took a cumulative hour. Not much going on, except for Thursday. I have to get to school (a 40-minute commute) by 7am to get down to the Navy Yard Ballpark in time for the pre-ass show.
Got to study for that bio test gent.

Birthdays, etc. (2008-04-15 15:19)

Two days, One hour, 45 minutes. That’s when I become 15 by calendar years. However...I am 15 now in biological age. Remember, I lived through 4 leap years ('96, '00, '04, '08), each with an extra day. That means I turned biologically 15 on Sunday. Nevertheless, it’s nice to always celebrate a birthday on the same day.
Tomorrow I will have a friend’s birthday every day until the 22nd/23rd
The pope will be 81 tomorrow, and I should be able to see him on Thursday.
I actually do not have any tests to do until Friday.
I have a history essay due tomorrow. I have most of it done, but I have to piece the rest together.

Clearing out (2008-04-16 13:23)

I was so sad...I was beckoned for goods which I did not have...twice today. Moral of story- take your opportunity with my stuff while you can. I do have it, most days, but seek ye first.
You probably don’t know what I’m saying, and it doesn’t matter. The big thing is that when I blog next, I'll be changed. I should have been able to see the pope live- first time ever for me- with some of the people at school. And then by 7th period, everything should return back to normal, except that you can’t forget that you just spent all morning in a sun-filled stadium, which I perceive as still scented of the "New Car Scent", with at least a few hysterical people so excited to see Him. If all works out right, I’ll be out of home at 5:40am and at school by 7am, and in the ballpark by 8:30. And by the time for tennis practice, my arm will be black and blue.
They say the St. John’s kids have to be at school by 5:30am to go. Really?

April 17, 2008 (2008-04-17 17:39)

Getting up at 5:00 am is something that makes me tired later in the day. I left home at 5:45am to make it to school by 7:00am. Surprisingly, by the time I boarded the E2 at Fort Totten, it was already bright out, but still a bit chilly. The 36 of us and 4 chaperons boarded a 3-bus tandem to the Green line, boarding the train at about 7:20. The train was already standing room only- I do remember also that the aisle was already congested. It was tolerable until Chinatown, where Red Line passengers met the train. There was a delay entering into L’Enfant Plaza, where the Orange/Blue cross. It so happened that the train ahead of ours was overburdened and broke down, as I later saw on TV. Waterfront, Navy Yard. The platform looked like Tokyo’s subway it was so crowded. The transit police had it set up so that 1/2 street SE was a walkway to the stadium’s security checkpoint. Seated by 8:30am. Unfortunately, I was unable to see the altar from my seat. However, I was able to see the pope in a drive-around in the popemobile, with window open. I was within 50 feet diagonal of Him.
I have to stop here for tonight. I have a T+Q in Math and Latin tomorrow. And it is my birthday.

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Intermission (2008-04-18 16:03)

There’s some exciting news for our Model UN Team. We were invited to the Harvard Model UN Conference, the one where the admissions officers watch to see who plays well and wins. But, our Biology teacher said that our GPA’s are very competitive, and this sounds something like this. Anyway, happy news. The invitations to the prestigious conference do not go to everyone. I must say that I was ambushed with a group coming home. Not too bad for me, but somebody was hit with a stone sur la tete. (On the head) A little bump it did become. Our prayers are with him. More details may come if cleared.

TGIF

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April 17th Revelations (2008-04-18 16:25)

Where did I leave off? The stadium was relatively new. The stadium, at least the first tier, was very open-aired. Under the shade of the second tier, as well as the surrounding concrete that was still cold from the night before. It was not soon that I realized that my ticket was one of a few that did not give a (Section 138, Row S, Seat 2) view of the altar, obstructed by a speaker tower. I suppose God wanted it that way, and for a legitimate reason. Of course, no one would want to trade their lifetime experience with me, especially when I am supposed to be around for an excess of 50 years. 9:30am, the Pope took a home-run ride in the popemobile, a modified Mercedes-Benz. He nearly missed us by waving to the mass of priests on the field, but he gave us a good wave before it was too late. 10:00am, the mass started. I identified the Pope only by his unique accent, which I heard much on TV the day before. Like my trip to England (It did not feel much different than Canada), it was unbelievable. Although I could not see Him, it was something very special, and the shock will probably come sometime. He spoke Spanish well, as I was informed by someone who saw the Pontiff’s mouth move to the words. Communion was served in our section, not focused at a central point, a thing that I slightly disagree with, regarding to the symbolism of it. Denyce Graves and Placido Domingo sung and brought people to tears. The mass sometimes turned into a rallying cry, with phrases including, Viva la Popa, We love you Benedict!, and, otherwise much cheering and clapping and flag-waving. The service ended precisely at Noon, and a commentator soon commented. I thought; "Why?". Exiting the stadium-turned-church, it was as if the whole world turned upside down. Anti-Catholics protested the church’s doctrine, and Evangelists tried to convert with poorly written novels. By the grace of God, no one was hurt. It was HOT outside, and had been for a while. Staffers rushed water to the priestly people in the field. I did not know why until we got out. I stripped off my jacket, and my sweater, loosened my tie, and still be hot. Note- I'm not whining below.

Typical incompetent DDOT cops held our lunchtime up, while an amazing stream of over 20 buses passed to ferry riders to the RFK lot. The only dining in the area, Five Guys and Subway and Starbucks, as comic relief, were crowded. We did eat, but they (at Subway) could have been more prepared, and anyway, mis-dressed sandwiches, even to somebody who was allergic to cheese. Luckily, it was not put through the toaster-oven. Cost $7.03, had enough sense to lax the 3 cents, came with medium soda and foot-long sub. Did they gouge the price?
And people did ride the N22 from the mass.
We did not get back to school until 3:10pm. I would have gone to class for 10 minutes if it was important material, but it was not. After school, I finished my stage for the drug webpage, and had to get home to cram for Friday’s Test-n-Quiz session.

Inspired
I had been planning to write an article for the Press, but I just did not collect enough of my own feelings to write a full story. I then thought of asking the more devout people what the mass meant to them. The next day, I did find out, and it meant a lot. A powerful point was the pope in the bleeing of the Eucharist, as well as after communion, when he did a rare standing ovation to Placido, and he kissed the Pontiff’s ring. Unfortunately, I did not get to see it. I suppose they deserved a powerful experience, getting to see the aged Pontiff, at 81, still enthusiastically officiating the whole mass. After all, a lot of them did take their initiative to be confirmed last year or the year before. I was confirmed in a High Episcopal church last year in New York (St. Thomas 5th Avenue is traditional.) There was nothing that could have deterred-like Mr. Schmidt’s temporary shake-off of Model UN by introducing occasional after-school meets- the process. Confirmation class was required, and I don’t think I ever gave a formalized consent to have my name sent to the Bishop. I should try to be more faithful. After all, all I do is attend church on Sundays more often than not, and lead Sunday School with material I learned the previous week in Religion class. Maybe the sprit just moved me then. Let’s see.

And as I say, Happy Birthday to Me.

Time crush (2008-04-19 19:04)

I’m sort of crushed on time. However, luckily for me, I still have Sunday. Our internet has been faulty at times, much like the hysteria that happened in a show I recently watched- The day the internet died. I admit it. I watched South Park on the internet last night.

Thank people for giving me a delightful birthday
Determine if a Facebook buyer is telling the truth to me. (UNICEF deployment in west Africa was what I heard from him)

Yes, I was at the Suitland orchestra today, and I wasn’t afraid, even though statistically, a rock had a chance of striking me there. But it never did. Here’s to DC for raising some wild beasts!
"Uncle Globey" learns about emotions in A millionaire on the South Veranda
Why were we treated different? Was it because of the way we dressed? What we talked about? I don’t see why people are so hateful.

TV de LCD (2008-04-20 01:33:00)
Hello. This post is likeable, and your blog is very interesting, congratulations :-). I will add in my blogroll =). If possible gives a last there on my blog, it is about the [1]TV de LCD, I hope you enjoy. The address is http://tv-lcd.blogspot.com. A hug.[2]

2. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pwmqv/4564410156

Smooth Criminal (2008-04-20 17:13)

Newsflash!
I was reading about the Blogger in Draft items, and I’ll add some of those cool trinkets onto the page eventually. Rotating bars, RSS Feeds (I think this is basically A.S’ blog delivered straight to your e-box), etc. I verified that the guy who was interested in buying my item was legitimate, and that he had UNICEF
friends in Western Africa. However, the identity was STOLEN, as I compared the typing to Nigerian (Fraud) Bankers’ writing samples. Terminating the transaction there was a timesaver. After all, why would such a well-meaning guy be up ordering things at 3:55am (Indianapolis time)? Some telltale indicators: "I hope you had a good night” as well as other trigger words such as "deployed”, and "That we should arrange”, but otherwise it would have racketeered much of that American empathy. So let this be a warning to the Central Nigerian Bank: You ain’t gettin’ any of my technology fo’ free! Yes, and if I when I go to Africa, I’ll make sure to take a turboprop aircraft onto a dirt runway, and head to the trailer that serves as the terminal, to hire a personal bodyguard, and head to the address which the N(F)B gave. Just like in the movies.


Last night, I reported that I was almost hit by a smooth Nigerian wire-fraud criminal. But I never got the chance to tell the compelling story of my weekend adventures. Saturday was Suitland orchestra, then around on the Beltway to Annadale to Chinese food shop. Looping back home, I forgot what I did the rest of the night, except I did do tennis in the park. Sunday was spent partly in church and in Ponticus, the fancy name for high school church group. It was raining and thundering, but we still went to the Earth Day event on the mall. Thereafter, it was home again, but only after navigating through the urban renewal complex called L’Enfant Plaza and the HUD. Monday, it was still raining. Crushed a French quiz. Received my shiny gold NLE medal.

Quick (2008-04-22 19:08)

At tennis Chuck-U chicken party until 7. Got home @ 8. Romeo+Juliet quiz on the morrow. Bio card quiz, too. Readers will have to bear with me.

Delli’s Post (2008-04-23 15:38)

Delli Priscoli
Will have a Cappuccino now
Has a whacko bro
(December, 2007)
Who is this Stephen Delli Priscoli that deserves attention on today’s post? Well, he is a special person. He drinks an espresso every morning, and sometimes in the afternoon, and the espresso is homemade. Delli, which is the person’s popular name, denies that espresso makes him late in the morning. He goes on to explain that it was Metro’s fault, which, statistically, can be up to 9% of the time on the Orange line, which he takes regularly to the "posh hill” in Northeast Washington. However, the local community (in Northeast) sometimes does not take too well with him. It is said that the general consensus on city buses, about admitting him on is, no. Also, he has been made a victim in rock attacks. It is not surprising, as he dresses for success, and not just that, but modeled after posh Italian modelers that one frequently sees in catalogs.
And one of his dream jobs? Hand modeling. Unfortunately, since he broke and temporarily deformed one of his hands, he does not think, at least for the time being, that he can model with that hand. Controversy. With his high-action visibility, there’s a lot of repercussion that follows his thunder. For example, some have claimed that he is a you-put-it-here-ist. From his political statements that are often mistaken for terrible humor, to drawings of the UN in traditional dress, are often not taken well. However, how hateful can he be?

He is talented— he frequently scores high on tests, most of which I have not taken myself, namely Advanced French, where he talks French like a Francophone with some of his high-cultured friends. I haven’t found out yet, but he may also dream in French. He also will be the future leader of the school orchestra, and wins victories for the Soccer team, and reels in medals and awards like a fiend. Orchestra is not his only musical talent; Delli, as we affectionately call him, can put most any name into music and sometimes add extra lyrics. Or even if there is no name involved, recalling the "3:20 song." It goes like, "It’s 3:20, time to get on the shuttle"/ "You stand in line waiting for the bus, you get on and pay, It's only a quarter!". He also made a speedy recovery after a hand injury, which held him out of the Tennis team for a while. But since his return yesterday, he made himself a king of the court.

So here’s to one of our blog’s entourage, Stephen Delli Priscoli, future world power.

O Fabulam Miseram! (2008-04-24 15:56)

My three textbooks are still missing. French, Bon Voyage 2 and its workbook, as well as History’s World History to 1800. I hereby pronounce them stolen from my desk, because the prank has gone on too long. I know our GPA’s are competitive, but this will most likely cost me an Honor Roll title, and $30. Not just that, but now my Math notebook is embezzled. How can I live like this. Add to that the fact that I didn’t eat lunch today, because of my Experimental Design project. I’m most near starved by noon, and then tack on 31/2 hours to chew on a sushi roll- misery. But 2 good things. Others loved my Mother’s mercury-free sushi rolls, and after Tennis, some 'them' left in a car with the Vice President Elect to Brookland Station. Of course I did not go with them, but rather was left to make my own way to the station. I was never expecting to catch up to them in their car, especially with the southbound 80 catching every red light. But I did make it, setting a first for metro-racing private transportation to Brookland (remember, I’ve done Fort Totten multiple times). A remarkable feat, as there was no communication between I and them. I never got to hear if they gave me a head start- like a daddy who lets their toddler win in a race against himself- because they went to Ben and Jerry’s at Union Station.

Dies Irae (2008-04-25 17:09)

Things went from terrible to the abyss of heck when I discovered last night that my Math notebook was missing, too. I suffered to get as much of the math done as possible for homework, but I nearly skipped dinner, after missing lunch. But I can’t stay miserable for over 24 hours. 8:55 am, books found being filing cabinet. Mike Higgins was the real writer of the “3:20” song. Stephen only made it a tune for your daily activities, and the song became famous with him. 18 days until my first classmate is capable of receiving his Learner’s Permit. (aka drive with your mother) That was because of a loophole in Virginia State Law that allows 15 1/2-year-olds get their driving permits regardless of educational attainment. That’s going to be a whole 11 months before me, because DC doesn’t
trust freshmen behind the wheel. Some people say that they know other freshmen that are legally permitted to drive. I don’t know any other.

How did it get so late? (2008-04-26 19:22)

I was just reading Zachary M. Schrag’s The Great Society Subway on GoogleBooks. Surprisingly, Most of the text is there, even though this is a preview. Good book about the planning and building of the DC Metro.

Rascus (2008-04-27 18:42)

I was just finishing up Part 2 of Rascus, Ben and Jemima. Of course, this is something that 3 corporations and 4 different people could claim as theirs by right, so, at least, I have to get the peoples’ permission to post it.

We had a spring school concert today. Our part went swell, so did the jazz band’s. Two hours 10 minutes. Lots of songs. I even played the book 5 Gavotte in D Major by Bach. Harder to find on Youtube than the book 2 one.

Delli can drive countdown- 16 days!


I gave the 10 minute 37 second caffeine talk.

So we found who the book thief might be. I’m going to watch the internet to make sure he doesn’t try to make a quick $75 off of victim #2’s book, after taking my own (probably because he lost his own).

I set a new speed record for home. 4:00 on the dot- a mere 40 minutes- because the shuttle left on time, 2 minute wait for Red Line Train, direct connection to Orange Line- foot got stuck in door. It’s OK now. Lost about 5 seconds to pick up $2 that I found at the gate. But it was worth the time. ( $2 x 12 x 60= $1440/hour)

Still room for improvement!

Now: $/hour of other coin pick-up activities: based on 10 second pick-up time. Penny- $3.60, which is not worth picking up because of the cost of washing your hands. Nickel- $18, Dime- $36, Quarter- $90, Half Dollar (sometimes I do find them on the street!)- $180, Dollar- $360.

Delli-can-drive countdown: 15 days.

Maybe Coming Soon to the Jangoonow: Delli sings. Includes hits such as ”The 3:20 song”, ”It’s ______”, ”Christopher to the song of Shape of Life” (I refuse to market the song because of political incorrectness issues)

Ora et Labora (2008-04-29 17:55)

Oh No! A Latin vocab quiz tomorrow that has lots of tricky words!

Now after school, Ben and I went to Ben and Jerry’s at Dupont Circle for a free ice cream on Free Cone Day. Nothing in particular, except that they auctioned line cuts (It only made it up to $5.) As I said, it was just a 25-minute line. So now I’m here and was checking the cheapest ways to get to California by Jet Blue, which is very New York-JFK-centric, and Boston-centric as well. However, there are still cheap IAD (DC Dulles)
flights. Amazing- it’s cheaper to send up to 5 or 6 people by plane across the country than to drive them. That, there, is a recent phenomenon.
Delli-can-drive countdown: 14 days.

Time is running out! (2008-04-30 18:24)

Double quiz next day
Violin lesson tonight
No time for long post
Delli-can-drive countdown: 13 days
May is on the way
Now I go to bed tonight
Quiz grades to be dropped
May, a new month now
Pull out a new month farecard
Exams really soon

2.5 May


Safeway at Watergates
Starburst, base price $.90, up from $.80 last week
Store-brand yogurt, base price $.60, up from $.50 last week

and

So...if Jangoo staff don’t get up to the 34th street Safeway (where prices are noticeably lower), Jangoo soon won’t be able to afford the $.75 fair sales price, which I suppose has been standard for at least the past 10 years, and probably for much longer, and that makes me sad.
Delli-can-drive countdown: 12 days
PS: Call me what you want, but I’m not a candy seller, at least I don’t think.

Yaw’s Post (2008-05-02 16:48)

Yaw Oteng-Agi
Pong hunting on Savanna
Gotta take it all
There is a myth that Yaw hunts animals on the African Savanna in his free time, with his bare hands. This is unverified, but he’s cool, even if he doesn’t. So here are a few of our favorite quotes of him: “I want that”. People say he’s not quite American, but that’s totally American. Americans want it, whatever it may be, and Yaw simply sums it up. If he doesn’t wrestle zebras and lions, he wrestles big men, and win. Never thought anyone who said “I want it” wasn’t that smart, think again. He’s on the honor roll, and that’s Yaw for you. But Delli can’t avoid having another paragraph. Three things- He is one on the top 10 French placers on the National French Exam in the area (including the French Embassy kids), and got a no-RSVP necessary
invitation to his awards ceremony. And, he makes great videos on his ipolomac43 account. Five of them, and some of them are superb, including the hilarious [1]Dancing Christmas Tree, as well as the spectacularly synchronized film, [2]Me and My Friends Being Filmed by Chopper 4, Not many people get to use helicopters in their cinematography.

Delli-can-drive countdown: 11 days

1. http://youtube.com/watch?v=DzuC3E5teTY
2. http://youtube.com/watch?v=ZDKx3vGlTwO

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**Time Flys When... (2008-05-03 19:36)**

You have work to do, including Romeo and Juliet study, speech perfection, Barry prize submission, and JMAG.

So therefore, I am an internet cop looking out for the big, bad Mike Higgins Blog when it comes down my street. When will it come? Soon.

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**Live from New York City (2008-05-04 18:27)**

Breaking news live from JMAG New York (9:21 pm)-A subway train apparently derailed near the 57th street/7th avenue Station in Midtown, New York. According to witnesses at 5:30 pm, an hour after the incident first began, police, fire, and ambulance vehicles swarmed the streets. The station serves the "yellow lines", N,Q,R,and W. According to the MTA, N and R services are disrupted through the area, north of the station on the sharp curve between 7th avenue and 59th (Central Park South) streets. Q service, which terminates south of the incident area, is not disrupted

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**New Path-Cinco de Mayo (2008-05-05 14:13)**

I challenge you to...set this blog as your homepage.

As I have recently found out, Metro has recently reorganized the 16-series (Columbia Pike Line) so that buses come every 7-1/2 minutes off-peak. Great news, because this is actually the most direct path from my house to Annandale and the Oriental grocery, Kam Sam. Trip planner never says so. Little brother still insists that 3A, which loops around and comes once an hour, is still better. Nope.

Delli-can-drive countdown: 8 days

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I know some people are thinking "why doesn’t He use a little more effort in his posts?” Yes, I try. It’s just a compatibility issue. For example, on my Facebook account, I wish I could load at least a photo album to the account, but all I could move were individual pictures for my profile picture album. That also applies to JangooMag and the Blog. As you may see, other blogs manage their pictures well. Luckily for us, a new computer is coming our way this summer...listen up for details.

Now a blast from the past...

For $7,500 in 1989, you could buy a real-live robot called Newton by the Synpet company. It could do
anything you could put into your 1989 computer. Call chess moves, do trigonometry, call 911, etc. It’d be nice to own one.

Delli can drive countdown: 7 days

Let’s Buy a Boat (2008-05-07 16:09)

Once we build up our internet empire, we can start our earthly empire with the raised capital, and, well, buy a boat. More details will come as appropriate, but we plan to start to construct a transit and retail empire as well. As I say, this is 10 years from now. Just thinking.

So let’s build our web empire to grand heights over the summer. Yes, and once we procure a videocam, we will take advantage of Youtube to promote the Empire. We may also go into web advertising... but not much time to think about it. Thursday-Biology quiz, Math work, French test. Friday-Math test. Monday-Speech.

Delli-can-drive countdown: 6 days

Math Test (2008-05-08 19:05)

After 16 hours without sleep...the brain starts losing higher order functions. Math test tomorrow, and I have to print my prize submission

Withdrawal Symptoms (2008-05-10 13:29)

Yesterday, I went a whole day without using the Internet (I suppose to the disappointment of our viewers). Of course, I would have been lonely without it if I had not gone to Saint Anselm’s athletic banquet. Yes, I researched about creating a crew team/club, but the only setback was the cost of obtaining the shell (that’s the 54’ long boat). The golf club sounded like a much more feasible idea. However, the school will still not have any water activities. Maybe a marine club, where we go and sail Sunfishes?

I was filmed yesterday doing a ’50’s dance to a new song by an editor of ipolomac43, about blasting into space. You’ll have to hear it to know. I’m watching out on Youtube for that film.

Remember-
my memory card on my cellphone is full

buy your discount-priced stamps today before the price goes up
i think there is free Haagen-Dazs ice cream on Delli’s half-birthday, May 13.

Delli-can-drive countdown: 3 days

Sleepy (2008-05-11 18:38)

I was in a happy mood until two minutes ago, when somebody in the house at the time washed a glass containing my orthodontic bands, as I was flossing, sending them down the drain after wearing them for less than an hour.

I was at the banquet on Friday, and I have a speech to do tomorrow
And a history quiz right after
But then, I still don’t have any memory space on my cell phone.
I don’t remember what I was going to say about it. 
And in a sour mood, I’m going to bed, after I hit the ice cream and mango nectar and chips. 
Delli-can-drive countdown: 2 days

New Item (2008-05-12 17:48)

I finally got videos to load onto YouTube!
I want to add more when I have the time, which I think might be tomorrow, but have a pretty good feeling that there’ll be work. So the weekend looks pretty good. I can also add a link to the jangoonow.googlepages.com site, and set up my webcam, and see if it’s compatable with Windows Movie Maker
Crocky the movie Trailer
Parkour (2 views, not on my account, in 30 minutes. Promising. I was too nice to the dial-up)
Next- Digg!
Delli-can-drive countdown: 1 day

Sick Days Are for Adults (2008-05-13 17:42)

I woke up at 5am feeling that I was extraordinarily hungry. I ate a little, and settled back into bed. At 6am, I got ready for school with my body half-slumped over, and it feeling extremely cold in the room (72 degrees-I was sick!) I took a few bites into breakfast, and, again, felt sick. It was 6:45, and I was lying in bed with a bucket.
I let it out, and felt alright to go to school (This was 7:15am). So my mother and I scurried to the Metro, and arrived at Fort Totten at 7:45am. Being sick as I was, I had motion sickness that I would have otherwise not have had from the slight movements of the train. Luckily, I was carrying a bag in my pocket. Yes, I felt fine, until running up the hill to make it inside the school building by 8:00am. In a lethargic state, my stomach was in pain, and I just stared at the clock. Again, I let it out after class into another bag. I knew doing it too much would hurt my electrolytes, but I felt normal, and gave a Smartboard presentation. I was even able to participate in football. But I took my normal felling too far. During French, I stared blankly at the vocab list, and, eventually it was lunchtime. I still didn’t feel like I could eat. I French Clubbed, watered the plants, and Neuroscienced in a state which I felt that I was legitimately dying. Math class, I was so knocked out, resting my head on the desk while appearing green. I got a 20-minute reprieve in the place called the infirmary, and rushed out to Religion class. I had a little more brain, and was able to scribble legible notes in my notebook. I wondered if I had made the right choice to attend that class. I was truly starving, and that was good, because that was normal. I took a few bites of a granola bar in history class, and walked in a trance to the shuttle. The mental agony had worn off; the stomach was still dealing pain. So I made my way home, and survived the 4-block walk home from the station and took an hour-long nap, and was ready to eat. Of course, I’m overstuffed now, having skipped two meals in a row.
And Delli can drive today!
Delli-Can-Drive (2008-05-14 19:28)

Our lil’ man will be attempting the written test tomorrow afternoon to receive a learner’s permit. He claims that he can see above the windshield, and I’ll take his word for it. I have no plans to file an injunction against his capabilities to drive. Anyway, he’d never forgive me if I did :(

TGIF? (2008-05-16 17:50)

AKA: Fried rice to go with this?
An absolute speed record! 37 minutes from the shuttle line to my computer. Got home 3:57pm, first time under 40 minutes.
Now why did I not blog last night? Because my internet was 50 % down, and the Google Empire had died. That made me sort of sad, but I did have an English quiz this morning, first period. I did swell; I think I scored in the 3-digit club. Sweet.
And sour: I left my gym clothes at home. I offered $20/hour to anyone who let me borrow a spare set (which was a 1-minute job). I did get a pair of shorts, which was all that really mattered. I will spare the assailant in this instance...
Intramurals Final Score: Krazy Kickball: Atticus Sawatzki’s Blog team: 21 , Class of ’10: 15.
Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the Gonzaga Mixer. More on that later...


Oh how I wait for summer...Big Daddy was surfing the web last night. So I went to the picnic. Did not go to the dance. How disappointed were they! And how uncool I dressed. ”I really have to come to your house every day for a week over the summer to dress you.” A quick fix- roll up sleves, go without the hat. And get denim.
This morning I read the whole Genesis story in church. 5 long minutes, might have made two mistakes. And the rest of the day was a blur.

Haiku Today (2008-05-19 19:30)

I have a Haiku contest to excel in tomorrow. So that’s that.
If I had more time, I would type some of my dysfunctional haiku right here-but that’ll have to wait a few days until I post them onto the Jangoo Haiku Page ([1]www.freewebs.com/haikuissocool)
As a point, I have a list of websites to create, such as I Love Latin, West End, way to travel, etc, etc, AND the Jangoo Videos page (links to our favorite youtube tethered to the main Jangoo page. Centralization is the key, NOT like AOL, who is decentralizing and disintegrating. If the current parabolic equations of both companies, AOL and Jangoo occur, we can estimate that Jangoo will receive more new market share than AOL by the year 2013 or ’14. Neat? Let’s see it happen!

Haiku Tournament (2008-05-20 13:30)

8am, Tuesday morning. 35 contestants vying for a prize. The typical winners fell fast, and even Ian fell in the round-robin to be in the semi-finals ([1]alphabetical discrimination...[2]and again...)*. It came to Yaw and Chris E. Chris played his cards well, and won 5 ec points. 
Mr. Sh. (full name withheld for identity protection) was an OK case; he had a by’ from a previous round-robin. But Mr. Ri. was victimized, rising through the normal bracket for two rounds, then having to round robin. Now if they were minorities...)


Subway (2008-05-21 19:06)

That’s a tag for my latest Youtube video, Riding the Staten Island Railroad, and it seems to be working. On the theme, here’s a cutie: Subway ([1]1970’s vintage Sesame Street song)
A critical analysis of the head2head Haiku contest:
I used depressing Haiku about closed factories and dying soldiers to make it to round 2. Terrible that I had to do that, but I lightened up on Round 2, with a sure-to-win haiku about a Panther victory. No match for Ian’s fire- he used his best haiku round 2. And probably a mistake- one about the internet portal to a whole universe. Same result, and I was finished.
Hey, anyway, if you don’t have a physical mansion, why not build a virtual one, like I did?

1. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkPh8As-y6E

Higgins of the world (2008-05-22 15:46)

Today was the last day of classes- four days until the Western Civ. exam. Today is when we say good-bye to the much beloved 35 minute period which has graced our days with 80-minute lunch periods, which provided cram time and club time. Also a bygone product-the mad rush for the 3:20 shuttle. I don’t know the details, but as I left of the Frieshuttle at 3:30 at Fort Totten, that may have made history, as we may be able to leave (some days) from school before 3:00.

In other news, I was fussing about with the Vivitar, the budget digital camera. Works well for its size. Works well for you if you don’t need to do anything fancy, and will go into non-conformity to set settings and convert pictures. There is no sound, though, so I’ll have to wait for my real camera to come back from New York next month to make more film!

so...
I identified Mike’s latest antic, and it’s his blog. I must say though, that it’s pretty cool’. 
RE: Mike Higgin’s Blog ([1]http://critanydisc.blogspot.com/)
"So here is where the rivalry begins. Don’t worry, we’ll just have a friendly fight like b-list celebrities vying for attention. Anyway, there’s enough space in cyberkingdom for both of us to have mansions and live in harmony. I’ll add a link to this blog from mine."

Main Day (2008-05-23 15:26)

8 am- an awards ceremony. 9 am-on the basketball court. The way we lost- it was sort of "laughs as he loses", quoted from Coach C. Final Score: Main 23, Moore 97, just shy of 100.
10 am Kickball over the "grand canyon". Coach C gets a name from this: Many runs, successful pitching, and great catches, and a little league coach's attitude. Main 20, Alban 3. 11 am, he retained his name as our sub-house (Main-2) took our team into victory for football...but...we failed to Austin, Main 4, Austin 5. Lunchtime, and we were in second place. O.K.
1pm- Krazy Relay Race. Six graders destroyed our chances of taking anything but last place. 1:45pm-Capture the flag, territory marked with little red flags. Alban 3 flags, Main 1 flag. For all I know, we did not lose a flag, but Moore did. Good. I must mention that I was improperly briefed on the Alban team flag, stealing their jail flag instead. But, 2:30pm-Relay Race, 25 runners each house, from sixth through tenth grade. Our little Main kids slipped behind, but we used 8th graders with long legs to catch up. The freshmen helped increase our lead, and then, sophomores boosted us to second place. But...a controversy brewed. Our team was accused of cutting our number-but psych nah! Austin, who was third, miscounted and added an extra runner, scapegoating the underdog. We were put back to fourth in the ice cream line, but in our half-hour wait, we replayed the runners, and got back our glory, but not our space in line. So in the meanwhile, I took a space in the whipped-cream pie eating contest. Pure whipped cream laced with chocolate syrup. I slurped and slurped. But, what defines 'finished'? So that didn’t count for points, but it was fun. SO I then went to the French party, and made crepes for the first time. Tried once, failed, tried again, and succeeded in making something sort of decent. So then, we watched the Futurama movie (2007) in French. But before we finished, I had to get on a shuttle home. When I did get home, I was a little tired, and saw that I had obtained a first-degree burn on my neck (ie typical sunburn) like everyone else. A little sore, but I put some Aloe Vera gel on it, and I considered what had happened. Main House had won, I have heard, by four points (1%). But not yet verified, so I'm not too celebrated, yet.

New York City Teaser (2008-05-25 19:12)

Got back from New York 3 hours ago. Did some studying on the road, some math tonight, and a lot for tomorrow. So I'll have to tell y'all about my latest trip up there soon. I was taking a little peak at the 2004-model BMW X3's...I actually went to their factory in North Carolina back then when only the rich could afford them...today they cost about $20K, (with 40K miles). By next year, the price should fall even more, good news to all who want to be bourgeois without spending too much. That’s not me :) - I don’t have anywhere to keep one even if I did get one- people seem to love to steal them when you’re not watching your blue or silver German baby.


* Oh Dear! Two more exams tomorrow and the day after that! I'll talk later!

199 Posts so far... (2008-05-28 19:28)

So far, three of the four exams I’ve had had taken no more than 90 minutes-or 75 % of the exam time. However, Latin was the punisher; due to all the synopses, I went 1/2 hour over. Anyway, I must go and imbed more 96
math in my noggin, after a 3 hour jam session at school, and 2 more at home. I also have a good outline for
my English exam.
Good night, mike’s blog. Good night moon.

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Exams 200  (2008-05-29 19:33)

I don’t really know why I’m wasting my 200th milestone post on one that isn’t really high-quality. So it was
only on February 14th that we hit the 100 post mark. So there is still one French exam left, and so be it. I’ll
make it up tomorrow.

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Post 200, Again  (2008-05-30 18:40)

A finish to a year at high school. In retrospect, it doesn’t feel anything like the first day of Easter vacation, I
think because we were eased in, not having a full, real day of school since last Thursday. So the last exam
but Sean still has my calculator—not his fault, though. Maybe I’ll see him at some graduation event this
weekend. I’m supposed to be receiving a job assignment by Tuesday, from the DC government. If it’s good
(i.e. I hardly do anything and get paid for sitting in their crib rather than mine), I’ll take it. Otherwise, I
might have better things to do. But I still have orchestra tomorrow. (Sigh) Life goes on, but there’s always
Monday. Anyway, I wish I already had my summer homework, so I could finish early, but I guess I have days
to do nothing, yet I do not want to waste them. Little Brother will be at Camp Incarnation, CT for the next
week, then in England; I’ll be home without him, and therefore I have computer rights! Just as long as the
internet doesn’t fail like it did it this afternoon; it was a stressful event.
Thank you, blog readers, for giving me so much to type about. "Au revoir, we’ll see you again"
(from Nixon, 1974)

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2.6  June

KA-BOOM!  (2008-06-01 15:03)

You wonder why I didn’t blog last night. Well, the computer crashed. Not an electronic crash, but a physical
 crash. The table, which held the monitor, fell and broke, taking the input/output functions to the ground.
That was late on Friday night. The next morning, I had to go to orchestra. Daddy, while I was out, reset
the computer, albeit with a new, lighter, wide-screen monitor, which he bought at Best Buy along with
a vacuum-cleaner. By 2pm in PG county, it was pouring and thundering at an unprecedented rate. That
was when we had a bowling party a short 2-block drive to Parkland Bowl. Retro, let’s say. We, however,
completed only one game. I scored an 88, with a great spare+9 tenth frame.

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Discovery  (2008-06-02 18:44)

I never knew that DC had a trolley museum, until I was fooling around with a map this afternoon. However,
I don’t think you’re able to ride them like you can in the Baltimore Streetcar museum. Trolleys and streetcars
are just so cute. I wish DC would just build the platforms, and bring their already-purchased streetcar from Czechoslovakia (The first DC streetcar is planned to run along a railroad right-of-way from Bolling Air Force Base, past Anacostia Station, and terminate above Pennsylvania Avenue, for a junction with the, ohh...30-series!)
But, this morning, I went to the Supreme Court, again, fortunately, by insider’s access. Today was like our final exam days to them. In June (simplified), there are brief reading sessions, on Mondays, that well, are when the decisions are read, and then an admittance to the bar. Not exactly sure what it means yet, but it sounds important. I’ll come back to you on that.
Way home, nice, 1st class N22 ride, then Circulator has door problem, get home soon though.
Rest of day, blur.
National Capital Streetcar Museum
[1]www.dctrolley.org

Day 2 (2008-06-03 18:11)
my bad. You can ride trolleys at the DC streetcar museum!
Anyway, time was limited again. I was put out to jog at 8:15, and then go food shopping. Adding breakfast, that took us to 10 am. Then an hour later, I had to prepare for going to lunch with mommy, and then fetch her special-order newspaper from one of the last authentic shops in Chinatown. That was after I traded coins at the Mint Shop. And then home, and soon afterward, daddy came home and took me for a walk. Then, Trader Joe’s, and here.
9 am tomorrow- orthodontic appointment. Some major work to be done.

DEAR (2008-06-04 18:55)
FYI, the orthodontist removed the top row of braces with a nifty little plier-jigger, and cosmetically improved the appearance of my teeth, with filing and polishing, and took a mold for a retainer. Additional work and final adjustment of the retainer will follow, 3pm, tomorrow.
Drop Everything And Read. Heeheehee.
Because I was close to burning my eyes out on the new computer screen (which I probably used for 2 hours, cumulatively today), and the TV was off-colored by the storm, I had no choice at 8pm than to cuddle up with a quality book.
The lightening really was lighting up the sky. Based on CGI’s by WUSA9, two or three waves of storms have passed, and, if the other storm pocket follows the same route, another will be arriving shortly after I succumb to slumber. Just as long as I’m not waken up by it, it’s fine with me. I was actually free-reading (hm. that was so last millennium.) John Hersey’s Hiroshima, another intriguing war-novel that was well-written. Shame on Uglies for turning off my interest in reading.

Day 4 (2008-06-05 18:04)
Today, I was again put out, like a dog, to do jogging. This repetitive routine consists of a few, fairly easy steps. 1. Access Pennsylvania avenue, and jog westbound. 2. Scurry down cloverleaf ramp to sea-level, and
jog along waterfront path to Lincoln Memorial steps. 3. Up and down the 40-something steps, 12 times. 4. Return on path to Kennedy Center, and follow gentler path northbound to home. Took and hour. At home, I ate breakfast, languished, took a shower, and went out to buy household stuff—stereotypically called "women’s work."

Had lunch, headed out to the Ortho-man for picking up the retainer, as well as adjustments to the lower jaw’s teeth’s braces. The nurse explained the retainer. Wear it always, except when eating. It costs $235 to replace. What? Three years ago, during my first round of braces, it was $150. Then the nurse fitted the tight-fitting retainer into place. Then the big dog came in, and tightened the wire on the remaining set of braces. Then he lowered the mirror, and I saw. The retainer was one of the invisible types. He gave instruction on how to remove and replace the retainer. Yes. I did. But the thing is—the retainer resembles invisalign. So was it invisalign used as an orphan drug? Maybe. After all, he is one of the most prolific seller of invisalign. Anyway, these invisible retainers are much cooler than the wire-and-mold type. Now everyone will think I have a lisp (onomatopoeia for lisp) . I say, let’s start a Facebook support group. Early this evening, I was put out on a LONG walk, up to U+14, and back. More on than midcity adventure later.

g’night, y’all, is ‘bout time we’s o’t’ bed.
Ortho update: It’s not really the tightening that gives me pain, but rather more the retainer.

Want a Street Sense? (2008-06-06 16:42)

It was a hazy early evening, and it was probably bad for my noggin. I was headed to Georgetown to buy a 12-pack of Pepsi Pop. A homeless guy asked me "do y’ have some foo’?" Instinctively, I said, "I wish I had some to give you," and that was while I was holding food in a bag. Then I remembered. So life went on, I bought the caffeinated smack, and headed home. Now my brain was back, and remembered that, yes, I did have a canister of raisins, as well as a leftover Babe Ruth bar. He was 75 % there; he talked about ice cream a little, as I prepared his hor d’oeuvre. But he came to, and asked if I went to the nearby. No, I went to a Catholic school, I told him. "dey’s one of ‘em giz’ who stay’s at me ev’ry day." So he then asked me, truthfully. I like people who speak their ego to me. "Do you have a speech impediment?" Not exactly proper social etiquette, but I expected that someone would, at least, think that. It was the retainer. After I shook out some raisins, I had to go. So long. "May God blez’ you." Food. He asked for food, not money. Respectable.

The art of Begging (in America)

It has been known that a few entrepreneurial crack-cocaine addicts (and some who are not addicts) come to Georgetown, make big bucks from the uppity sympathetic, and then take the 30, at about midnight, back to East of the Capitol (a direct trip!) and buy their smack.

History of Begging

Begging has generally existed since the first development of cities, and it continues to this day. Prior to the development of periodic welfare giveaways, begging was a critical source of livelihood for its partakers. However, in more recent times, begging has become non-essential to the life of those involved. As a matter of fact, much of the historical begging class, which, sadly, has always existed, no longer actively begs, but rather, does not engage in productive society. (It is not always their fault. Drugs and bad community influence are a big problem.)

Begging today, therefore, should be regarded as a form of respectable entrepreneurship, and beggars should be regarded with some respect, above that which just about every human deserves, anyway. This activity, with deep anthropological roots, has recently become an "extreme" competitive sport, in Russia, commonly played by millionaires and billionaires there. As it is, millionaires are addicted to money, l;ike a drug addict to their drug.

But, as your first-grade teacher said, don’t give cash. Give food, or you have a pretty good chance of being an accomplice to the American crime of Drug Addiction, which, today, plagues a significant portion of the homeless, and begging class. Anyways, many of the homeless, begging addicts, including the Georgetown profiteers,
can be rehabbed, and experience social mobility in the upward direction. An example is the StreetSense vendors. Visit the website- rehab (not necessarily drug, mind you) works! [1]http://www.streetssense.org/


New York, Again (2008-06-09 09:06)

It was a scorching 90 degrees, Fahrenheit, on Friday evening. That was when we would have left, but there was too much traffic. So we went for a daring plan- leave before sunrise on Saturday morning. 5 am Saturday morning- much cooler. With bags packed (and Pepsi ingeniously hidden under bed), it was off to New York, at 6 am. A record 3 hours, 40 minutes travel time, including a gas stop, averaging to 59 mph. To put it in real terms, for the time we spent moving, it averaged to a barely legal 70 mph. No major traffic hold-ups. Having left at 6, we arrived at Little Brother’s middle school graduation ceremony well ahead of time- 9:40am for the 11:30am event.

The ceremonies went on for an unprecedented 2 hours. By the time we got around to having lunch, it was 2:00pm. This meal was at a Peking Palace, or something near that name. 5-star Zagat restaurant in Food and Service. The restaurant seemed to be empty. Well, until you turn a corner into the main dining room. Bill for 4- $56.50 (+ $8 tip), hot towels, priceless.

I then was walked from 58th to 75th street in the 93F heat to check into the room, and back downtown (my parents are such cheap-stakes!). Cocktails were served at 6:30pm, and dinner was served at 7pm. Appetizer was a fragrant green salad with a pastry topped with a tomato slice. For an entree, Fillet Mignon was served (a $45 value, says daddy), with veggies and an exotic pasta product. Dessert was chocolate soufflé, served properly with a tiny bowl of ice cream, a mango chewy, and fresh-from-East Boston macaroons. Such a lavish feast.

Sadly, I couldn’t fully enjoy the Fillet, because it was too rare. I know it’s supposed to be medium rare-to-rare, but mine was near raw. The fumes emanating from the “still alive” piece of meat was nauseous. To eat as much as I could, without throwing the prime steak away, I had butchered the fillet in a grotesque way. I had to make it look better, so I chop-sueyed the remaining meat, about 50 % of the original, into three hunks that looked more natural. Luckily, the course finished fast. I hope the older folks at the table, who remembered rationing and the great depression, forgave me for this.

It was a hot and sweaty night, with lightning, but no rain or thunder, as we walked to the room on 75th street. I had a rough night, I later realized, due to the extreme heat, and lack of A/C.

We finally took a taxi (it was $6, $4.90+ $1.10 tip) back to midtown, and had breakfast at PAX. A guy, who was obviously drunk, or on some drug, looked at my food, and slumped to sleep on the fire hydrant behind me. Disturbing.

Went to church. The Puerto Rico Day parade was blaring all throughout the mass, and even after the 2 hour liturgy finished, they were still singing about chihuahuas. Little Borther insisted on eating at Subway, and we did. The car was packed, and we took this little brother to Teaneck, NJ, for the night. He flies out to Italy this evening, with the rest of his class, on Al Italia. Getting home was a bit slower. On the NJ turnpike, I promptly fell asleep at 4pm, which is very unusual for me to do. Notwithstanding the heavy luggage reducing the car’s power, we took a 20 minute driver’s break in Philadelphia’s suburbs. 4 hours, 20 minutes home, and no parking spare for across Pennsylvania Avenue. A little slowdown entering DC- A dysfunctional Greyhound bus narrowed a lane on the heavily-laden parkway.
We should all learn something every day. As I wait for my Amazon.com shipment to arrive by Friday, laden with my summer reading assignments, I learned that the name 'Jamel' is less common the 'Jamal', even though I hear 'Jamel' more often.

In the doohickey filed of anthropological nomenclatureology, checking the Social Security database, I was able to see the rise and fall of the eternal Madison, John falling into disuse, and Atticus made the top 1000 list this decade, holding title 958, above familiar names such as Arnold, Dwight (the '50's never die), Forrest, as well as Amare (never heard that name before- it's Latin for the infinitive 'to love'), the more basic form of the best-selling hit, Amanda (I forgot the name of this tense, but it means 'that must be loved'). To put a scale on such things, 6.1 in 100000 received the name this decade; or 1034 kids. But you're more likely to meet a Fidel than an Atticus, touche. But only by a minute chance, though.

Anyway, I expected Washington, DC's state naming statistics to be skewed, as with everything else. But not too much. In 1992 in DC, Ashley was the most popular girl name, Jasmine #2. Jasmine was the typical statistical misfit; nationally Ashley and Jessica topped the list. For guys, Michael was #1, Christopher #2, which was statistically accurate. In 2007 in DC, Ashley was #1, Sophia #2, for girls. Boys, William #1 , and John #2. Nationally, Jacob, Michael, Emily, and Elizabeth were tops. See!? That proves DC may be divergent from reality. Additional research may be needed to prove conclusion.

Historically, John and Mary were prominent from back when to the 1960's. 70's come, Mike, Chris top the list for 3 decades; Jennifer comes, shares the '80's with Jessica, and Jess prevails one more decade until the 2000's really destroy nomenclature unity.

Breakdown of the Status Quo
Madison? Doesn't even break the 1 % mark. Only Emily does. Back in the day, Marys made 6 %.
A few boy names barely break the 1 % mark. Back in the day, Mike+Chris had 6 % market share, together.
Even further back, mighty John had 7 % market share alone; William had a similar number as well.
What has society wrought?
There'd be a lot of pointless linear stats if I went on, but you got the point. here's the site with the treasure chest: [1]http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/babynames/


Don’t Bank on That (2008-06-12 11:08)

The internet never felt so good. It crashed again, yesterday, and I didn’t have time to reconfigure and reset.
So you guys missed me, because of a faulty DSL connection.
I went to the bank, and banked on a big payout. But the 1/3 filled bucket only reaped $128.43, not the mighty over $500. But nevertheless, I deposited the money into my thirsty bank account.
Last night I...
Oh now what!? My computer is going into countdown to reset itself automatically for updates! I’ll talk again soon.

Friday the 13th: What does it all mean? (2008-06-13 18:39)

Yesterday, after the computer threatened, and did reset, I didn’t have the time to get back to blogaroo.
Yesterday for lunch, I was at the bank for lunch. That afternoon, I was at the DMV with dad to get the car inspected. Then, it was time for a Japanese movie event. The films were the foreign type, and of the genre that you only expect to find in the west side village. Nevertheless, some of them were cool.
Today, I was on the Lincoln Memorial steps again. 25 roundtrip reps, and drenched in sweat. Home, breakfast, a phone call from Dad. "Power out in Downtown. No, I still have power here at the metro building, Shaw, Dupont, Chinatown stations are on emergency power", he reads from WTOP, I think. Before I could switch the computer on after my shower, a key wiggled in the door, and mom walked in. "Power out at the bank." It turned out, however, that the Bank made a decision at 11 to cancel the day. I was at the National Geographic, a really 19th century elite science-club. There was a special documentary about China's pre-Columbus super-fleet. The lights came on, and there was mom.

A kung-fu demonstration from a legitimate Shaolin monk. They asked for kids to come up to the stage. A few 5-year-olds went up. "Anyone older?" An 8-year old came up. Older. It was up to me. With the monk, I was skirting shame as I kept up with the rushed spins and slaps.

After that, I had to fight with the DC employment services about my :O summer job assignment via X2, again. And conveniently, on the way back, we took a little shopping trip in the Chinese remainders of Chinatown. A lucky break from being lectured about Ocean City '68. A scandalous $3.65 bubble tea, and a Circulator ride home.

Now tonight. The transfer was still valid from this afternoon. We (mom and I) were brought to the Italian embassy’s gates. The gates were opened 20 minutes later, and we were filed through typical euro-secrity. Into the large villa-resort style atrium (it smelt like one!) we all went, and we were seated in the posh, yellow-leathered auditorium, lacking exit signs! Anyway, a lot of the films were pretty good. Some of this is still village material. But, excellent stories about 'crossing borders', the theme of this Asian-European film festival. Afterwards, a reception of international foods. If anything, DC is the place for kleptomaniacs (a medical condition in which a person takes stuff for no apparent reason), and free-thing addicts. No other city can you expect free dinner. A huge glob surrounded the table, the real sushi in particular-and talk to Washington Post people as well.

The Italians made lots of their buttery pastry, and still, an hour and a half later, its buttery taste lingers in my mouth. Of course, the freebies took the sushi, and anything of potential monetary value. That’s the way it is.

My parents have the TV onto their favorite show, NBC news. I heard the piano and saw Tim’s face. A telltale sign that something was wrong. Before the 10:00 news started, I wikipediaed him, and I found out.


"Filegate, travelgate, whitewater” (Tim Russert, '96) I’m not sure what this all means, even though I’m the '90’s fanatic. Anyway Tim Russert is like the fifth member of the family. Whenever I was not watching second-rate 'news’ at 10:00, or on the internet, it is usually him, because I tend to not watch TV until 6pm or so. Now who will take his place, whenever I flip the TV on to not-rubbish? We'll see what they decide to do tomorrow. My condolences to the NBC family.

Dah Dah Dah (2008-06-14 18:49)

Again, the internet has never felt so good. What do you want from a computer whose internet performance is currently about 66%?! This morning, I tried the employment services office. What I found there was not what I had seen the previous two times: The line stretched one block on H street NE, and to the back of the behemoth building. Not going to waste my time there; we’ll call tomorrow morning @ 10:00- the line should be a little short then; it’s God’s time for lots of people.

It was then out to St. Mary’s city in Southern Maryland, home of The Public Honors College, for no apparent reason other than to turn cash into exhaust fumes. It was a ridiculously hot 93 degrees, again (my typing is falling into temporary dyslexia), and it was all sweaty. Chinese food, and then a walk around campus, when we finally got to the tippy point of Maryland. The historical things, on the University grounds, included a replica statehouse, and the pile of original bricks from 1676 that were reused...into a church. (See! I’m getting too tired to type!). So then I got home at 4:45pm, nad (and) I read Cicero, the first homework book thast (that) I’m trying to read.


I got Digital TV today, and it works nicely. As promised, there are the fractional channels (such as 7.2), of which most are lame, especially with eternal radar, and lousy reruns. I got the converter box... anyway, only a few channels are on DTV as of now.

Analog in a valley doesn’t come out good, so I’m hiding back in the internet. It’s true; I don’t have cable, and the internet is the closest thing that comes to high-quality cable or satellite programming without our poor reception. Tenleytown broadcasts at 400’ elevation, we’re at 60’ here; most of the DC area is around 150’, and I suppose that the engineers designed TV to work with them.

Too much babble. If and when DTV gets good shows, that will be the icing to the digital cake. The reception is much clearer; FOX 5 is no longer stripish, NBC 4 is no longer tinted green, and the few channels over 9 that we received in blur are now ‘all here’. At least channel 7 (owner of decimals between 7 and 8) had some decency to use the new channels. An example is 7.2, also called Local Point TV ([1]www.localpointtv.com), a really low-cost production show (they said; send in you videolips to be on TV), but it was better than nothing.

Digital isn’t ever far from the internet, though; when the reception has a blip, it stops just like the internet films do, and pixelate like a low-resolution picture. Love that technology, and let’s get digital!

TBD (2008-06-16 15:09)

Yesterday, I saw it. WMATA finally put up signs for the new 37 express service, which has absolutely no use for me. M’kay.

Today was the first day of my first summer day. I never actually got my file completed; I was filling in
for Little Brother, who is still frolicking in Italy. I was getting giddy about leaving home at 9:00 for the
10:00 start time, so I left a little before. I immediately caught the 32, and was brisked up to Tenleytown,
where the job was located, in the Baptist church up there. I entered at around 9:30. There were about 25
people, so I was not exactly too early. My dad worked with this citywide job program in previous years,
and said to expect low expectations. Anyway, most people were there by 10:00. I signed in, on Little Brother’s
name. I, after all, didn’t have the chance to explain. During those lazy sit-around hours (from 10 to 1) of
doing absolutely nothing and being paid for it, I was interrogated by one of my co-workers, as he called
himself. "Have you ever done it with a lady?” No. "Why not?”; "Have you ever smoked weed?” No. And I
was trying to act not-so-uppity. Unfortunately, I had to spill the beans about living near Georgetown. And
they guessed that I went to private school, because of how I dressed. Primed shirt and khakis and loafers.
This particular young man even stated that "he should come to see Georgia Avenue and go buy some kicks
(shoes)”. I explained that I’m not into shoes, but he said "do it”. Some people would love to hear this: I got
a girl’s cellphone number. OK. So I also changed my wallpaper.
As I languished in the pews, I had only my cellphone to entertain me (and the three girls and the aforementioned
guy), and eventually, it was lunchtime. Pizza eaten in a hurry, so that I could sign out, in Little Brother’s
name, and reuse the transfer before it became invalid. I saw the signs. 31, 32, 36 on the red, white, and blue
bus stop signs. Routes 30, 34, and 35 were soon going to become history. An old lady also noted this change
to the bus driver; it’s typical to have a schedule change on June 30. In the sake of preventing bus bunching.

Day 2 (2008-06-17 18:41)

As I was saying, the route #30 has been in use for over 75 years. It is, therefore, an atrocity that the number
will be discontinued. If this were a building that were 75, it would be let to survive, but psych nah. 30’s basic
functions of serving Wisconsin Avenue to downtown is being derelicted to the new 31 shuttle line. The same
thing happened to routes 40 (now 42) and 50 (now 52, 53, and 54). Survivors are 70, 80, and 90, a surely
dying breed, it seems to be.
Second day of work. That in the morning, and downtown to the convention center to listen to a charismatic
speaker speak about how Nobody wants your child.
I’m totally tired out now. I’ll type tomorrow’s about my great soda adventure.

Little Brother! (2008-06-19 18:43)

I’m being haggled behind my back by... Little Brother. Yes, he came home, and yes, he literally hogs the
computer all day, to the point where I cannot get my blogging done. He came home on Wednesday. Yes, I’m
being a little harsh, and he is moving the mouse towards the delete button.

To Market (2008-06-20 19:52)

Out to the summer employment assignment office, again. But this time, the place was swarming with $5.85
an hour chatterboxes. Apparently, not everyone gets Fridays off at their site, like I do. And sure I like those
3 day weekends. Of course Little Brother on the computer to this late hour. At least now he’s marveling at
the DTV.
Yes. BIG SALE at the 14th street (DC) Staples tomorrow. Store opens 9am!
To Baltimore (2008-06-22 19:01)

'John, there were more like 22 D’s on the history final, not like 27. Based on my final semester score, I had to have scored in the mid-to-upper 90’s, therefore, getting all these D’s wrong is not a logical conclusion. This makes me totally sound like a geek that I remember something like this.’

Little Brother went out on a shopping trip, and gave me a slight reprieve to check my email, blog, etc. I have to push our small staff to finish July’s JangooMag. But not much. I needed to practice the violin, and he just walked in. M’kay.

I went to Baltimore, and since it’s so close to DC, it was not too critical to do everything to do there. This was about visiting Johns Hopkins’s University, as well as neighborhood whizzing (driving on local streets for 'alternative sightseeing’) and free looks at the B+O Locomotives. Then a leisurely drive home via US 1.

Tisk (2008-06-23 19:11)

This will be a shortie post- I still haven’t flossed yet, and it’s already 10:20.

Little Brother finished his orthodontic treatment today, and likewise got a bag with a King Size Snicker’s bar, popcorn, and tootsie pops, all on the orthodontic no list. M’kay. So I should be getting that sometime relatively soon as well.

I finally got to sign in as my real name today, after being hassled at the Convention Center on Saturday. Little Brother’s first day of work should be tomorrow. Will blog on that.

Tuesday Again (2008-06-24 17:41)

help im a prisoner trapped inside of a fortune cookie

Little Brother came to work today, and he was really, really bored. I went on, reading Cicero, and I’m nearly done with it- 9 pages to go, I should finish it tonight. After an overtime group lecture about respect at the workplace, there was a slow ride home on Wisconsin Avenue. It was 2:00 when we got home. Little brother then went to his follow-up appointment to pick up his retainer. he got home at 3pm. He played Locomotion, 20 slow years to 6pm as I did work- violin, etc. After supper, a long bike ride to The Mall, and he seemed to try to rid of me in front of cars, but I made it home, albeit tired.

COPS! (2008-06-25 19:04)

Today was another day of work. A Pennsylvania businessman talked to us about entrepreneurship. Something bad happened recently with a few of the supposed co-workers; intelligence reports that police were involved, but that might just be a rumor. I’ll watch the crime reports in the Current to see if this rumor was true or not. Nevertheless, as a result, we all had to eat in. It was crowded. The bus ride home was crowded. But I did not get off and go home; I had to go to the H street office- for the fifth time. The X2 was again, crowded, and it was a mess at the site. Well, half an hour later, I was out with a badge-card, but no debit card yet. Home, and get ready for violin lesson. I had a good night there. NOW I was tired, and now as well.

As I said, I have 60 cans of soda in the storage room.

I’m seeing to see if I can vendor them without paying licensing fees. I don’t think so.
Did it come yet? (2008-06-26 14:03)

I should have reported this before the 5 pm news, but I did check the Supreme Court database prior to 5pm. There are no gun stores in DC that sell to individuals, according to ABC 7. Most semiautomatics are banned, they also said. Of course. However, the news-people were making the decision seem more unpopular than it really was. According to a poll, 2/3rds of the voters supported the decision. Of course, non-DC could have voted, but DC is the nation’s issue, not its own.

A joyous day, but I’m not going to buy a handgun, quite yet, and maybe never will. But after watching a film, which will not be named, I think I’ll build a misfire-safe range somewhere, and have fun with it.

PS- I was so excited to write this post that I turned off Locomotion to do so.

Busywork (2008-06-27 18:30)

For work, today, I was sent to the Employment Service’s H street office. To get the best deal on the ride (as Little Brother insisted), I used the 30 bus to transfer to the X2. Great idea, but it didn’t really work: I ran at par with the bus for three blocks, sort of gave up, then picked up the pace. Boy, was I tired! Anson (A Little Brother’s classmate from Pre-K) insists that I don’t jaywalk to catch buses, and I kept that in mind as I went downtown in solitude. I made it, 7 blocks from the origin. Lafayette Square, the park in front of the White House, was the transfer point. No bu for a while. Fear: bus would get very crowded. Reality: It was only ‘standing room only’, not too bad for this route. What busywork. I knew that the item I was sent to collect, my debit card, was not there, yet I was sent there. I got back 2 hours after I started, on the Red Line after X2.

This afternoon- pool and storms.

Anson is fighting to keep his Wisconsin Avenue position as he was listed for transfer to 16th street.


This Washington breed of exercise-sport, bus chasing, always takes a toll on me. I was real sweaty; it was a hot and humid day, and still is. When I got back, the work gang was watching This is Marshall. Soon, it was lunchtime. I was so thirsty that I drank two of those little milk cartons- that really filled me up. On the way home, I hopped (saying ‘jump’ might mean something radical to my readers) off the bus, and got a free M &M ice cream bar handout. Awesome! Home, I watched up on Canadian television on YouTube- Mayday, about the Marshall plane incident (sometime in the ’70’s) , as well as the Aloha flight 243 (Apr. 28, 1988) - amazing survival story- all the passengers survived.

People updates, from Facebook.

c. is getting ready for the Potomac Life tennis tournament(L5).
al. et fr. are coincidently going to Maine soon, on two different vacations- so will I!

Weekend Basics (2008-06-29 18:35)

Saturday-
Tilghman Island was the destination. En route, we would stop at Annapolis. Then, we got back on ’route
50', but there was a 17 mile backup- 3 lanes just wasn’t enough. Change of plan- North Beach, the old-time bayside resort on ’our’ side of the peninsula. It went OK- there was so much to do that I didn’t read a page of the Cold War history!

Thunderstorm at night, very loud, distracted me from the Mayday.

Sunday-
7:45 am early mass. Went to Mc D’s for the free sandwich, bought something small to not cause trouble in the big line, got $2 bills in change. West Virginia, microbrewery root beer, multiple crossings over the Potomac, long trip home, got lots of the Cold War History read.

I must shower now.

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**Week 3- Really? (2008-06-30 17:52)**

Monday, Week 3 of ”work”.

Weekday One of the new 30-series metrobus schedule.

It looked pretty good heading uphill to Tenleytown. Buses popping up at regular intervals, and the 37! Wow! Limited service downtown for the taking. The naturals of bus bunching and the punctuality of the new routes made the scheduling work, contrary to what I thought would happen, on account of treating the 31 as a separate line from the 32 and 36. Home, and Little Brother did his best- 14 years on play mode on Locomotion. Pool late in the evening after the storms, and home again, contemplating on the new square-shaped gallon milk jugs that Sam’s Club now makes.

We’re finalizing Jangoomag July. Look online soon!

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**2.7 July**

**Tough day at the office? (2008-07-01 19:19)**

Waiting for NTFletch’s next post. I am one of a supposed many who eagerly await the next spoken word- unlike in this part, a post is a sweet treat that is built up to- not a daily of bi-daily given. Nevertheless, I sojourn on, gathering steam, as they say.

Today, we worked on our mayor project- choose a candidate from your group of 12, and, if he/she wins against the other two, their team wins a prize. Does the team I am in have a chance to win> It lays in my hands. It’s true. For whichever intervention came, I was almost unanimously chosen as the candidate. Pressure is on me.

I plan to finish The Cold War: A New History tomorrow afternoon, after I give the make-or-break speech for the model-mayoral bid.

Caveat Emptor:
Still not done with your first book this summer? Don’t worry- I still have to take a week or two in August to skim the readings, again. But pretty good progress, though.

PS- I got up and left early to go to the Convention Center to pick up my Debit card- And they had it! I’m so happy!...

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**A new chapter (2008-07-03 18:17)**

Yesterday tends not to be a day worthy of a blog post. But- blogging was on my mind yesterday as I swapped between Facebook, gmail, and Blogger as I e-sent the Jangoomag, as well as the new PDF version- get the
Today is July 3, tomorrow is that big day. After work (whence we wrote model resumes), I gave my swimsuit a chlorine bath (in the pool- I could have used a household cleaning product to do the chlorine scent trick), and that was it, until the Ballston Safeway shopping trip. So that sums up the first part of the summer break.

Seemingly fitting, I finished the Cold War novel today- on to Hell’s Angels.

Part two- the ambitious teen-millionaire striver.

Not Quite Night (2008-07-04 17:10)

I’m about to go out into the crowd, headed southbound on 23rd street, probably surrounded by ‘people with a high tendency to stand on the left side of the escalator and make you and everyone else miss their train(s)’. Yes, today I was everywhere. Morning tennis, midday walk to Folklife festival (again), and a train ride through the desolated Smithsonian station (it’s a 4ofJ tradition to close that station). Later swimming, violin Frisbee, and now I’m here. And I suppose at least one of our readers will be somewhere on the mall as well, watching the same firework show. It’s just probability.

A day in motion (2008-07-05 05:12)

5:30am. Little Brother took me out on a bike ride to find mall treasure. But, there was only a quarter to be found. Pretty early to blog, eh.

Saint Michael (2008-07-06 14:35)

Well, I’ll be. I didn’t have the time to type after the early morning post yesterday! After the coin hunt, I discovered that I did not have a violin lesson that day, and that we were headed to the Eastern Shore-St. Michael MD, and Tilghman Island, to be exact. A lunch stop in historic Easton, and a drive down MD 33. Through the she-she of St. Michael we went. It was much like the Hamptons (Long Island)- I still remember that time the faculty at St. Thomas took us to Easthampton- they came at us so enthusiastically with their shopping bags. Never mind. We came to the ‘bridge which connects Tilghman to the rest of the world’–Drove to the end of the road to the army station watch tower. Last Saturday, we had been directly across the bay, at North Beach, 11 miles from the end of Tilghman Island. There is a bridge that opens about every minute to let the boats go underneath- the one in Tilghman, south of St. Michael, which connects them to the rest of the world. Returning home, we parked in the St. Michael’s ‘interactive’ watermen’s history museum, a.k.a. the boardwalk. They had this seafood place, a lot of boats, and a museum that they charged money for. More pictures- the memory card almost full.

g2g

Alexey! (2008-07-07 18:34)

Work and a very long walk- all the way from Cleveland Park, through the zoo, and Adams Morgan. A long walk. I’m thirsty and tired...
I was intrigued by the free sample of Tetris on my cell phone. Likewise, I did some Tetris of my own. 5720 points-up to level 4.

[1] www.freetetris.org

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg/pwmqv/www.freetetris.org

Tactical Error (2008-07-08 16:04)

I read a savory ad about the new National Harbor at the Wilson Bridge. I harken back to the Streetcar days of DC- A destination place at the end of the line. Glen Echo remains as an example. These days, 1920’s theme parks are conceived as ‘lame’. So enter this 2.1 billion (USD) resort, luring (monied) city people to beefen revenues and profits accumulated from the lured tourists.

There is no way to get from Downtown to the ‘resort’ easily (sans voiture)

Options include- direct ramp access from I-95 and the Anacostia Freeway, which leads directly to Downtown, a $14 roundtrip ferry ticket across the river to Alexandria, or, as implied, a bus from a Green Line Metro Station (Southern Avenue) for staff. Great planning, Gaylord. I’ll laugh when I read that you’re in court facing a discrimination lawsuit. Or I’ll file one myself.

But, I wonder, is the parking free?

Not Choices (2008-07-09 19:20)

A. An unsteady finger clicked the DVD-reader power button twice in on-off-on fashion.
B. A swinging ankle hit the dormant computer’s power button, turning the beast on.
Both happened, but for A., the consequences were short-lived. I got the knack on the third, successful, attempt. For B., however, it put me here tonight to Blog, albeit an accident. And after I go to bed, somebody in the family will be typing away for the next hour or two. These consequences were not so short-lived. Other than this, I collected free money from Facebook online ‘virgin’ Texas Hold ’Em Poker, and looked up cruise vessel prices. Not the ticket- the boat. Sounds like a possible lucrative business.

Just some food for thought.

Weekday No. 4 (2008-07-10 19:27)

I read Ernest Hemingway’s The Old Man and the Sea in less than 3 hours’ time, between breaks at ‘work’, and the commutes. An interesting book; set in Havana in the old Cuba. Most of it is really about an old man and this one fish. I won’t spoil the story anymore. However, I could not help but notice that Hemingway has a tendency to skip punctuation. So be it. (****/4)

After the trip to the pool, there was a little President’s Own Marine Band concert on the mall. With dying batteries, the digital camera managed to take great shots at strange angles of the Washington Monument, and that truck.

I got to now: a. Charge cell phone, b. Reward the camera with a fresh set

Addendum: Dido.
Sorry for not telling you sooner...  

I'm watching a Brazilian film about something- it's a foreign film, so I'm uncertain about what the movie is about. It's called Black Orpheus, as translated into English.

Work today, got evaluations. I think I'm perfect, jobwise, but they paid lip service to improvement. Apparently, I'm 'only' very good in Creativeness. Anyone who enters our internet empire knows that is not! O.K., It's Free Slurpee Day at 7-11 (get it?! It's 7/11/(08)). They gave us 7.11 oz. cups of the fluid, icy substance. Good. Pool, and then, the film.

A little sidetrack led me to read about the Nixie tube, an early LCD type device. Here's the link to the Wikipedia article (it was accurate as of today).


Car Trip 

Let me recall what I did today....
Out to tennis,
Then to a Chinese restaurant that moved up to a snazzy buffet (Top's China Buffet)
A long trek in the Shenandoah near Front Royal
And back to tennis to test out the new rackets. Went well.

DST- It started a while back

Right now, I'm checking up on some of my internet mansions- Youtube Empire, Facebook Land, and typing away at Blogger Spot.

Today, I got my first inside look at National Harbor. It was a little disturbing how exclusive the place was- most people came right off the freeway, and tourists came by tour bus or pricey boat. Anyway, the resort town was still under construction, but that did not keep us from the waterfront road, which was mostly finished, made up to resemble 'some California Oceanside town'. The inside of the main attraction- the 18-story Gaylord Resort, with sleek windows with perfect, iced edges, and a village under a skylight, and 6 glass elevators. Sadly, I didn't make it to take a fantastic ride into the air. (Our nearby Embassy Suites has a 9-story glass elevator)

I never told our readers about the digital camera. Well, it was broken yesterday before the hike, and a self-repair brought it to OK condition. If I had the say, I would have straightened the plastic pushbutton- an e-scar remains from Little Brother's hastiness. Oxon Hill farm was too hot- left quickly. Pool- very crowded, didn't stay long. Kennedy Center free concert- great playing, and now here.

Tomorrow- work.

Monday Again

Another day in the subterranean zoo, paid about 10 cents a minute being there. Yeah, not much going on, except that I inadvertently received government aid- the sub-gourmet food which we were served for breakfast and lunch were part of the Summer Free Feeding program. A lot of people have pledged to themselves not to
receive these (ie foodstamps, free food, etc) governmental aid items. I thought I’d do that to, but I guess not! How’s that for breaking the stigma?


Some facts about environmental issues: Nuclear energy is a very effective, renewable energy source. What the environmentalist told us at work today: There’s controversy about this, but Wind is better. You can power entire cities with wind farms. Fact: Not so. At work camp, we do thing like this, and otherwise, we do more camp-like subjects. Another thing is professional-oversighted business planning. Something nice and productive. Every few days or so, we go deeper into our business plans. Let’s see what we have at the end of summer.

Our Idea
Complete IT and technology company
Other Ideas
Jamaican Catering
Women owned and operated Auto Repair Business
"High Life” shop
Designer Car manufacturing
And this afternoon, we (Little Brother and I) took an uphill bike ride to the Van Ness Office Depot- 1 cent office and school supplies- maxed out at 32 cents. I paid in a quarter, a nickel, and 2 cents.


Only through fsx (fantasy stock exchange) did I realize that oil prices are falling at a clippy pace. More UNO (the card game:0) today- survived two elimination rounds as of now. It’s the strategy that matters; Maybe I’ll win tomorrow. I mean, if I’m no good at online wrestling, I have to be crafty at some little game-yes, I also do well in online poker. The Doctor was at 2:00. Not more needs to be said here. I’m fine; there’ll be more posts. A 37- Limited ride was awesome as I headed up to AU for a violin lesson. Yes, silently roaring up the right lane of Mass. Avenue. As fast as self-driving. Why am I writing in monotony?

(2008-07-16 19:25)

Only through fsx (fantasy stock exchange) did I realize that oil prices are falling at a clippy pa

Pay Comes In (2008-07-17 19:17)

So today is Thursday, and tomorrow (probably at midnight tonight) I should be getting about $360 in my account for being at work- payday, as it is called. One more day of Whupity and then it’s two days off. What
a life. I was out since 6pm-biking, tennis, cosmetic bike fix- my thoughts are a little unorganized, and sorry. But some of our readers did want to know- How much does it pay? About $6/hour- a good value for what work we do (If this program wasn’t about real-life job skills, we’d be shelling out $200 or so a week for it!)
PS- I was eliminated twice in UNO today, but it never happened when I held my deck to the end- if I yapped about it more, I think I could control my fate. Noontime round (one where I was ousted from)- that was dq’ed because of hidden cards!

Richmond (2008-07-19 18:58)

"i don’t watch much CSI, but i did watch the episode about the photoshop job"
Yesterday, I was out on a walk, after the swim (sounds like some other day this week, eh)
Today, when I should have been enjoying the only day of the week without a wake-up tome (M-F 7:15 for 9:00 reporting time, Sunday @ 7:00 for early mass - as they say in Washington the State, hunter’s mass, translated to ”convenience”- I was out for tennis- and man, it was hot. Illusions, loose muscles, chemically altered tennis balls, you name it. And then the long trek down south to Richmond. The freeway (95) was only good until the express/local merge in Dumfries (fyi the other one is in Cranbery, NJ). Then it was old rt. 1 for the next 70 miles. At least that went fast most of the way. We entered Richmond via some affluent suburb, and crossed into the stereotypical image after crossing one of the many railroad tracks. Daddy made 2 consecutive right turns, and it was yuppie-ish stage 2, then back to stage 1. Lunch was obtained from the City Diner (not the first one I ate at; I remember the one in WVA- not a chain, though). A zig-zag led us to Monument avenue, with all those Confederate generals line up on a New Orleans-esque boulevard. However, we did not take 2 lefts to go downtown; we kept straight at it, leaving the city limits, and took a turn to a place where only Little Brother and I had been before. At the Choirschool, we sag at this All Saint’s church on River road, a River Road that resembles DC and Potomac’s River Road, with trees and nice houses and country clubs. A left turn entered us into Richmond University- a posh, liberal arts college with tones of York (England) styling. It was still very hot, to say the least, and the memory of it sends sweat down my back. There, luckily, was an abundance of modern, air conditioned buildings which were open, to relieve some of the nasty heat and humidity. There was a lake, and a building over the lake, as the aforementioned York College had. But we did not head back down after returning to the car. We headed onto a roundtrip loop across the James River and back, barely visible of downtown , and headed back North on 95, until Mt. Carmel. The Stonewall Jackson shrine (or some other important Confederate general, I’m not exactly clear about it) by the RT+P railroad was to be seen, but, there was the traffic jam again. 70 miles on route 1, again. But we made it in three hours.

Where’s the Blogger? (2008-07-21 18:38)

Appetizer-
I snoozed until 8am, as we were going to go to the 9am mass this Sunday. After that, it was about 11:15am. Time to shop for ‘stuff’. Tysons was too crowded- a diversion to Leesburg’s strip malls, were we bought a bike, pillows, toaster, etc. How American. And what a view! From the Dulles Greenway, you can see planes land- large ones, larger than those at National Airport, and the mystery of which country the plane came from. Flight to National only come from the States or Canada, in general.
The Show-
I was at a John Williams (the movie soundtrack composer) concert at the Kennedy Center last night. It was part of the Marine Band 210th anniversary event. It was FREE admission- I actually did not know that I was going until Sunday morning; otherwise, I would have given a FYI in-blog notice. Awesome show, included
some clips of Star Wars, ET, Harry Potter, and JAWS. I would have snapped a photo of the event if it was not prohibited- not only by the House, but by the Department of Defense. I don’t remember seeing many illicit cameras out, either.

Monday-
Not much to talk about, got a group raise, but no more lunch hour pay. In all, we lose net $1.35, including travel fare (working only 3 hours means that we can get a blanket transfer that is still valid after work), but gain a precious hour of lunchtime. I still treasure that moment, grabbing a packaged meal to go, swiftly getting on the 32, and being home in 25 short minutes. Then there was the forgettable bike trip loop between the bridges (I-66 and Arlington Memorial), and the Walgreen’s back-to-school-sale fiasco, and the pool.

Midsummer’s Night Usual (2008-07-22 18:43)

I brought my notebook to work, as usual, but, the second thinking to write a long story for JangooMag about the last few months. But I didn’t. I played more UNO, and won the matches we played. After work, a bike ride to the airport ensued. Watching planes land barely 60 or so feet overhead, I wondered how bad it was for one’s health, to watch planes like that. After all, airplanes do pollute a lot- rather, concentrate the exhaust for all those passengers in 2 or 4 engines. And Tennis. The end of another summer day.

Not much today (2008-07-24 18:54)

I’m reading through Little Brother’s ”The Encyclopedia of Aircraft” (UK). It’s surprisingly thorough, including one-of-a-kind aircraft. Otherwise, there’s not much going on, other than tommorow is Friday, and I have to figure out what to do with the weekend.
Ciao.
PS- Boy, was that a tropical storm last night! The bus felt so nice and warm it was so saturated and wet. You could hear rain on the roof of the bus there was that much rain.

Airplane! (2008-07-25 16:10)

Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services (more commonly known as QANTAS, had an incident similar to the one on Aloha Airlines Flight 243. (according to AP) As of now, no one on board has perished. Somehow, as of now, the fact hasn’t made it to Wikipedia yet.
In personal news, Little Brother had us bike to the Airport again (3rd time this week), this time, keeping a timetable of points. Surprisingly, it only takes half an hour, with crosswinds, as usual, to bike there, and a little shorter back (no crosswinds, as usual).

Baltimore (2008-07-26 18:38)

I was informed that the Baltimore Coin Convention was today- in Baltimore, about 45 minutes away. We went, but first, we stopped at the ‘world famous’ Lexington Market- less touristy than one would think.
Yes, I had a great Philly Cheese-steak. Some distance downtown, we went to the convention center by the twin stadiums. Yes, we made it there, but no coin convention. We were the third group to come the wrong date. Apparently, as I found out, my source was misled by the Washington Post (the people with the link to the Onion) when they did a non-conforming format issue. But, daddy met one of his firefighter friends from Brentwood (in PG county), and they talked a little. Next I found out that we were going to see interpretational dance at the National Business Museum. The building-and us were part of the dance, they said, Home and a bike ride to the Capital- now that tired me out-a lot.

1/4 of a way to a 1000 posts (2008-07-27 18:12)

Do you get a special thing on Blogger when you post 1000? Anyway, I was out for a long time doing one of those superbikes- to Alexandria and back. it was hot...my legs were still tired from yesterday... it started to rain, but Alexandria seemed to be awesome- those free shuttle trolleys seemed to be popular. And back- 5 hours. Then soon- we went to another free concert at the Kennedy Center in the concert hall- it was popular. How many times did I say Free in this post?

Your Big Boss in the News (2008-07-28 18:45)

It turns out that our host was in some pretty bad news today. Some briefing; the company runs three sites; the one on Wisconsin, one on 16th, and the other in Southeast. The Southeast site was in the news. According to inside sources, the site did nothing for 4 weeks or so; that’s what they said in the papers as well. The paper went on to mention pay issues; my site seemed not to have the problem too much- they managed to get the pay for those whose pay fell through by Western Union. I guess our managers- our instructors, as they have themselves known by us as, cared more about us than the other site managers. The Geek Squad staff would call back later...

Not much today (2008-07-29 18:38)

Tuesdays always go like like this: I must play lots of violin for tomorrow’s lesson. But, let me say, next Wednesday, I’ll be in Canada. More Details will soon follow- if I find a Canadian computer to blog with. Last year, I believe, I did it once. After watching another episode of ACI, playing violin, going biking, playing tennis, and coming home to read about Ted Stevens, I’m sill air-violining to be super-sure.

I can’t spell ”receive” (2008-07-30 18:15)

Blog time now! Even though the violin lesson went 20 minutes over, I still got a lot done. With luck, I caught the friendly neighborhood 31 home in no time, after walking 5 blocks, or so on Mass Ave. At work today, we worked on our business plans, and dry-ran the performance. This Mr. Haus commented that our idea was pretty lucrative- versatile, full-range technology company- Cherry Point Technology Group of Northern America- or CPTG.
Lunch was fun— not lunchtime, but the food—Bologna sandwich, that, when microwaved, smoked liked plastic; the carrots were on their way out, in their little bag; fruit jello running down the side of its cup; A cookie that tasted rather like styrofoam. I happen to know that the food we received was served on certain airlines. If I ever flew on that airline—

The Penultimate Day (2008-07-31 17:06)

Until holiday to Canada, that is. Tomorrow might be my last day of work with the Edusmart cronies, but it’s sometimes been enjoyable. Very enjoyable, considering that today, we built and launched ‘model rockets’. I call them ‘little missiles’, considering that we blasted them in the little green space next to the church. The launch was spectacular—there was even a rocket that went into flames—apparently, those rocket engineers mistakenly used toilet paper as flame-resistant wadding. Our team’s 2 rockets went pretty well. The fat, prefab one launched far into space, and only recovering the engine section after walking all the way around the block. The little one, which we did up as our CPTG rocket, was less successful, on account of the amount of nauseous rubber cement that we used, but was fully recovered. Awesome!

The Penultimate Day (2008-07-31 17:06)

Until holiday to Canada, that is. Tomorrow might be my last day of work with the Edusmart cronies, but it’s sometimes been enjoyable. Very enjoyable, considering that today, we built and launched

2.8 August

to go (2008-08-01 18:06)

I’m in a rush around here; you see, Little Brother wants to leave at 4am tomorrow to go to Canada. But I think 6am is a better time. Work was relaxed today; however, we did not launch the rest of the rockets. Oh well.
I better get back to packing.

Canada, French Canada, and Beyond (2008-08-09 17:38)

As you may have guessed, I haven’t stayed at a Raddison* in the past week. Yes, no internet access, or even computer access for 7 days. (*or for that matter, any out-of-lala-land guest friendly hotel, such as HI express). Now let me get reorientated with the mouse, the keyboard, and I’ll give a synopsis of the trip to the best of my recollection.
Day 1- Saturday
Little Brother made sure to set the alarm clock on his cell phone to 3:30am, and the parents’ bedroom clock to 4am. When I was half-awake and incapable of dozing back to sleep at 4:30am, the thunderstorm which Little Brother forgot to tell me about came with wind and rain, but it soon went away; we all reluctantly
moved the bags to the car, and drove off at 6:14 am, a little later than LB kid wanted, but still a little dark. Passing through the nitty-gritty Shaw neighborhood, we saw ladies dressed in swimsuit-like short shorts (after a hard night shift on the rounds), but they just didn’t look like they were headed to the YWCA. By 7am we entered Baltimore at sunrise. Normal workers and businesspeople were fiddling around outside the convention center. Enter I-83, and we sped north past Harrisburg and thru to Wilkes-Barre (PA), where we made our first fuel stop at 10:45am. A little sidetrack off the interstate was necessitated by roadwork. Quoting CAD, “It was good”. The first destination point was Cornell University, where we just ‘walked around’ the sprawling campus. Lunch at the Ithaca Mall, a gleaming, shiny place, compared to other malls. After eating our fill, I noticed green liquid leaking from the underside of the car. For certain, this was a radiator problem. Under the hood, the fluid was a bit low, so Daddy filled the reservoir with a pint of water. Driving on. We crossed the US-Canada border, on I-81, at 6:40pm.

TBC

Mo Canada (2008-08-10 19:06)

This morning, I woke up at the luxurious 8:20am, and heard about the incident on the Bay Bridge. Long backups as one span is closed due to a truck that went over the edge. Nevertheless, life goes on here, a bike ride, and reading the recommended book. Now I talk about the last week;

Day 1, continued

The border crossing into Canada was easy, passing over the 1000 Island bridge into Ontario. Soon, we entered Ottawa. Because all the hotels were full in the City, from the suburbs into downtown, we crossed the river into the francophone Quebec, in Hull, and stayed at the Holiday Inn there.

Day 2

The car was in the underground garage, next to the laundry room hot air outlet, resulting in a buch of Canadian linen lint on the car. Traveling northeastwards, we (Kids eat free at the Holiday Inn, but not everyone) went to Tim Horton’s- a Canadian favorite- comparable closest to Dunkin’ Donuts in the USA. By lunchtime, we had arrived in the metropolis of Downtown Montreal, and had a chinese lunch, after skipping Mommy and Daddy’s formerly favourite place, now under new control. After the scrambled lunch, we went to la vieille-ville and took nice pictures, before heading further Northeast, after stopping at another Tim Hortons. On an Autoroute in the northeastern suburbs, while the coffee was still hot, smoke was flaming out of the engine. This was disaster that was bound to happen (you see, we’re going to get a new transport when this one dies, and it’s high, high mileage). I grabbed my bag of valuables that I had placed strategically in the event that it happeed now. We pulled over on the shoulder and watched. We waited half an hour for the engine to cool a little. But, a tow trick shark came along, and its moneygreedyness was evident. The car, which had cooled down to movable levels. Daddy put 7 pints of water in the radiator, and the car started. He prayed as we moved the wounded car to the next exit, and into a residential neighborhood.

Musicals not related to Canada (2008-08-11 18:56)

I have been commisioned (pro bono) to write my first script soundtrack for a skit, called the Big B. You have to start somewhere. To be fair, Little Brother did arrange some tunes for the piano part. If I’m lucky, I’ll be able to get a video of the production. And back to the adventure of the Canada trip.

Day 2, continued

Again, after escaping the wrath of the tow truck, the car needed to recover from its last lug. On the other side of the ‘freeway’, there were a bunch of shopping centres. We crossed over, after dilly daddling on this side. For too long, we found out. It turns out that Canadian shopping malls tend to close at 5pm on Sundays,
as well as most everything else. Of course, that included auto repair shops. For some reason, we headed towards the direction of a hotel. A 20-minute walk from the suburb to the end of the road, at Rue Sherbroke. Block after block we walked, until we finally met the street at the Metro station. There was a demi-upsacle hotel, but it was sold out for the night. The 'Receptioniste' had mercy on us, and called ahead to the next hotel down the road. I forgot to mention that Mommy was waiting outside with 2 gallons of antifreeze! But, we headed back to the car to give it a calculated shot at making the 2 1/2 mile move. So we made it back to the car before darkness fell. It was, again, 5 blocks from the exit Daddy thought,"Why did I do this, parking the car so far away?" The car was carefully monitored as we slowly took it to the Hotel Augbernes.

It made it, with temperature at normal. We checked in to the hotel, notably with only one slow elevator in the lobby (serving 10 floors).

Day 3

We found out that we were only 7 blocks from the Volvo dealer and shop. We were also bamboozled that that the radiator hadn't leaked overnight. But we still wanted to make sure, as the fluid level (of the radiator) had fallen a bit. By 9 am, we were at the dealership. Then the car let it out. Lots of green fluid poured out of the underbelly of the car. Apparently, Volvos are popular in Canada, and there was not a mechanic's slot for 2 hours, at 11. And we were advised; "Don't think of asking before 1pm." That gave us another day in Montreal.

Oops, with respect to Brittany (2008-08-12 15:57)

Today was a wild one at work today. The lady from Richmond made a surprise pop-in at 11:30 am, again, and let her 110 miles of emotions gathered on I-95 in 1/2 an hour before a cold turkey lunch.

What a difference from a week ago.

Day 3, continued

We first walked along curving roads to the local Tim Hortons. It was so crowded with Montrealians that we went across the street to Mc D's. About 10 minutes later, after getting orientated with the directions, we had headed in the wrong direction. We reverted back, and took a long hike to the nearest train station- St. Michel on the Blue line (or, in French custom, St. Michel-Snowdon) We paid 12.00 for 6 tickets to ride on the rubber-tyred metro. Soon, we were at Mc Gill- and walk around (my pinky's hurting). And that was basically it, other than a picture at the Parisian "Metropolitain" station entrance at Square-Victoria- Daddy tipped the 'doorman' $2. After a DC-style transfer (pick up the paper transfer on the way into the station, and show it to the driver when boarding the bus. If going from bus to train- shell out some cash) from the train to the connecting bus into the suburbs- the 141. A short walk under the highway, and the cell phone rang. That was a first- I never knew they worked in Canada. Anyway, the car was as good as Saturday Morning. It was already 3pm, and we headed fast to the campground straight north of Trois-Rivieres.

Day 4

The campground at Riviere-a-la-Peche was beautiful in the trees at first sight, but that was only the beginning of nice campground- We were spoiled so much that that one became 'forgettable'. Breakfast at...not Tim's...I'm checking the travel log...oh. It was Mickey's, again. Again, we sped north. Fuel was a remarkably low $1.29 per litre- $4.90 a gallon. It was sheer wilderness- a wilderness like he Pacific Northwest, with lots of evergreens and lakes. Feeling the car window, it was cold as if it were on an aeroplane. By lunchtime, we were at our destination lake, after the omnipresent one-lane work crews worked to mainain the wily road. We had a picnic lunch at a beach in Robertval, and took a toe-dipper in the cold, iron-rich water. Continuing around the circular lake, we spent the night in a campground at Doubeau-Mistassini, in the northwestern corner of the lake. There was a grand waterfall, and an isle-mignon (cute island). It only gets better. Dinner was definitely forgettable- canned stew and lots of crackers and cracker topping. I did fill up fast, though, on the marks that malstereotypes camping.
Day 5
In the morning, after breakfast at the Bonnet Rouge, and a chat with some Torontoneers, we had to cross the 49th parallel, since we were so close. At 10:13am, in the small village of St. Stenislas, we reached our northernmost point. Afterwards, the family headed up to the Trappist Chocolate Factory. No, there was actually not a factory tour, but a gift shop that sold lots of sweet treats. Apparently, the shopkeeper spoke abut no english, so Mommy had a great time practicing her French. The family picked up chocolate covered sweetmeats and bluets-aux-chocolat for ourselves, and Mommy picked up a variety box for the office. Yes, she frequently enjoys an exotic treat from a co-worker who went on vacation, or on business to exotic places. This was a little thing to return the favor. And we continued around the lake for the road to Quebec City.

Down to the Ground (2008-08-14 18:12)
I came to my senses after a combined amount of 3hr. 15 min. of hunting for my wallet that reckoned it was in the lost/stolen category. What I was really worried about was the debit card, loaded with gas money (most valuable thing to be bought w/o pin). There was a company picnic, which we rode our bikes to. The bikes were the 'junk'. And the usual violin lesson.

Day 5, continued
Heading South at the junction in Alma, a town grown rich off of hydroelectricity and aluminum and logging, the road was more used, and they were widening the highway to 4 lanes. TBC.

Why? (2008-08-16 19:55)
Tragic. My debit card won’t be in until Tuesday. That means I’m unable to control my $ until that day. More importantly, we headed off to the Hollins Hill Farm in Delaplane, VA, (doesn’t this roll off the tongue- I have a little place in Delaplane) where we picked peaches off the trees, berries off the bush, and ate a ton of peaches- there were 7 varieties today. A merry day, 2 pecks of peaches= $20, 1 pint berries= $5. We headed back to the car to head to our favorite buffet in Front Royal, about 20 minutes farther west-about time too; it was 12:45pm Oh Agony! after pulling the car partway out of the grass parking area, the gearshift came loose. Daddy, who was busy cleaning the house, was summoned. In the meanwhile, while waiting for Daddy to arrive, we sat, and we picked and bought some more fruits and veggies- tomato, corn, potato, carrot. But while Little Brother and I were picking carrots, some kind soul with a mechanical mind decided to check under the car to see what was wrong with the transmission. A loose bolt. Some twine would prove to be a temporary solution, as we waited for Daddy to arrive with a rental car. He did come, at 4:00, and Mommy gingerly followed a series of gear-switches to get down the mountain and onto the highway.
Now let me say two things- Hertz does put you in the driver’s seat, and it’s bedtime.

A Title? (2008-08-18 19:12)
A 20-mile bike ride when I least expected it leaves me here tonight. It was a trip up the rail-to-trail prototype- the Capital Crescent Trail ([1]www.cctrail.org) A history-loaded trail with some sites of its former days. Connects Georgetown to the Palisades to Bethesda, and Silver Spring. And home via Wisconsin Avenue, up the hill to Tenleytown, highest point in DC, and speeding down Mass Avenue on the way home. Now we reached Quebec, the only walled city in Northern America at rush hour. We didn’t stay long, although we got quite a few good pictures from the old citadel. Now I remember- it was raining profusely.
Heading towards Vermont, we spent our last night in Canada at Parc National de Frontec after a superb supper at Normandin. Arrived at around 9pm, Quite wet- rained all night and into the morning. Pretty place, too.

After Brunch at Eggsquis- which we later found out to be a chain- but in a positive light- also served great food. We crossed the border back into the USA at the remote crossing onto the road into Stowe- the Adirondacks of Bostonians, and not too far from Burlington. It was 3pm when we arrived: we decided not to visit the factory tours until the next day, but to do some cooking over the fire- and get started early on that. Some hamburgers, chicken legs, and a duck leg were grilled up (where else can you find a duck leg at the supermarket?) It turned out that the lean-to was a good $7 investment, as it started to rain-again. But let it rain- get the most out of the lean-to.

Happy Music (2008-08-19 18:38)

Not much again, except that I was able to pick up my debit card, albeit farther into the ’hood than ever :) School’s going to start next Monday; tomorrow, we go to the scientist’s delight science museum- the Koshland. Never heard of it? It’s run by the AAAS.

And then, after the big rainfall, we had some cereal in the trusty plastic bowls, and packed up alongside the group from Baw-ston. First place- Cabot’s creamery- delicious cheese and dip! It’s a shame that it doesn’t get to DC fresh enough. Then quickly to the Ben and Jerry’s tour. No pictures of the plant floor! again, more delicious samples, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters and their only retail store, and onto a cider plant, and a cheese+sausage plant- Daron Farms- another great selection.

Then it was straight south, heading down the I-87 Northway past the Lake George Ferry.

Format, Format, Font (2008-08-20 18:53)

I haven’t been on Microsoft ie in so long! I’ve always been using Firefox, but it’s being goofy today, so now I’m here. At work today, we took the tour to the white-labcoat science museum, and found out: Kennedy Center tour tommorow.

At ’exit 24’ near Albany, we tried to find the really good deal Best Western- but, there was no ramp to the street at that exit- go figure! So we headed south into the darkness. At Newburgh, home of Stewart Airport, New York’s fourth airporet, it was hard to find a room, but we found one at the Ramada. The Olympic parade in Peking (Bejing) was just getting underway. It was already 11pm by the time I dozed off; I missed the spectacular flying spectacle-I caught a rerun the next morning, though, before heading to the rather rationed continental breakfast (I’ve always felt that hotels that didn’t give you free breakfast are sort of scammy) But, there was a reason we stayed no further south. Daddy’s surprise maneuver sent us onto I-84, not the Thruway, rushing to the Jersey Turnpike. Instead, we were headed westward. Soon, though, we arrived in the formerly industrial town of Bethlehem. A rusting steel mill sayed it all. Lehigh University was the attraction, though. Nice place, though with quite high hills. Digital camera card filled. Now I cringed at the though- fresh air and Segway tours. Since when? as I later learned, the mill closed in 2003, but the gentrifying Bannana Factory opened in 1998, and the University had been there for over 100 years. How nasty and dirty did it used to be?

Now we sped home, past Harrisburg, Pennsylvania’s busy capitol, and onto I-83, arriving home at 6:27pm, with 2352.8 miles and a nice parking spot out front.
Lil’ Update (2008-08-22 18:28)

Now, last Saturday, I recall again, the twine-transmission fix had no effect on the car’s performance getting home, as Daddy and I followed in the Ford Edge rental car from Hertz. On Monday, Daddy took it to the shop. It was ready on Wednesday- $5 clamp part, $78 in labor, plus a quick brake pad fix (labor as prior). If the Northern Virginians had not ventured under the car, we could have been charged hundreds of dollars frivolous, said Daddy.

On Internet Poker (Facebook and MySpace combined), I reached 50,000 chips today, which should put me in the five-star Shark ranking, up from the four-star Big Dawg.

I got my first ’motivational work award’ at our last day of summer work- Leadership award- I guess it goes on resumes hitherto.

The Caboose (2008-08-24 18:17)

The Closing Ceremonies are almost done on NBC. And on Tuesday, school starts. But today, I went on a strenuous climb on my bike up to the W+OD trail, and when onto the rail trail, which was a smooth, although hot ride. (Unlike the Capital Crescent Trail, the overhead ROW is occupied by powerlines, not trees). Some interesting railroad artifacts remained, as Little Brother turned around past the newer Citizen’s Bridge in the proud city of Falls Church. A stop inside a railroad caboose museum, fitted with small photographic exhibits about the railroad’s past. What concerns me most, though, is how many of these railroads are being converted. But that’s just a fleeting thought. The exhibit hall provided cold water- something I hadn’t had in 10 miles. Now we headed down the sparsely used Bluemont Park trail. into Ballston and over the Orange Line for a quick downhill slide Little Brother set a new record of his, 32.7 mph, entering Rosslyn.

First Day All Over (2008-08-26 18:26)

What did they expect?

Was it this:

Oh, I’m so anxious about seeing them again-it makes my stomach drop- I mean, 12 weeks, I haven’t seen them in 3 months. And the social anxiety- when I enter the hall and I’m there being unsocial-it’s terrifying. Of course not! I was busy grabbing things to go last night. I woke up at 6am just fine, with the little IKEA clock- still works swell. Trip over- not too crowded. Awkward silence- not too bad. Opening Mass- went swell. Orientation and all- fine.

Seems there is nothing to worry about, right. The year’s getting off to a great start.

PS- I rediscovered the joy of [1]www.nycsubway.org

Great historical insights and pictures of the NYC Subway.

Quick Little Post (2008-08-28 18:29)

Just sneaking a quick post here- In the first two days- and this much work. I wonder how the rest of the year will be. A little image into my busy world.
An inspirational story (2008-08-29 18:53)

Texas Hold 'Em let me down today- but I knew the creator's algorithm. Since all you readers read and always bear with me, I'll break it to you- stick with the game, and you'll get a good hand- eventually- but remember to fold regularly. The chances of getting a high hand is much greater in online poker, when green cash isn't involved. The creators want to keep you interested in their game, you see. This evening, some chap pocketed 75 of my chips, in two occasions, due to my misjudgment of who had a higher hand. One pair, bad call. Three-of-a-kind + high card should have done it- but, two pair! So after losing 120 chips, and not succeeding for over 10 hands straight, Pacific Avenue style, I almost quit. But no- just one more, and I got this bonanza- except I didn’t have enough chips to maximize the opportunity- A straight or a Flush- remember, Texas Hold 'Em, it happens. And I took a rebound.

\There's always tomorrow\"

Let's Go (2008-08-30 19:39)

I was out shopping- about all day at that. But that was after the buffet; I was thoroughly stuffed on crabs and sushi and what not. But Potomac Mills- that was a crowd. Picking up stuff for Little Brother. From IKEA to Steve and Barry’s to JCP, it was a steady stream of shoppers. But why? The fatal flaw was last-minute shopping for Virginia school. Oh well. But Pentagon Cty wasn’t too bad. And I’m trying to learn how to use the TI-84...

2.9 September

A Guy with Big Glasses and Mustache (2008-09-01 18:02)

I'm trying to get my TI-84 to do tricks. But, you can't teach a new dog old tricks, it seems. I have this book in my lap, called Programs for the TI-81 and TI-82 Calculators, by Stuart W. Ball, copyright 1994. It mentions compatibility problems with the TI-85, a problem from the early days of computing. But TI-84 is in the same family. I caught the problem, the Division by Zero issue. I need to find how to insert the clause to the division in the hand entered code.
But back to real life, I need to know whether there is such a thing as negative tension?

On TV (2008-09-02 19:26)

The Republicans are having their convention on TV now, and Ron Paul is having an event nearby, reportedly tickets were sold for $17.76. Get it? And not much else went on, except that today was a particularly light schedule- only 5 classes, one of which was a double-period Physics, and then Intramurals. I have a good feeling about Main this year. See why soon.
A Day in the Life of Me (2008-09-04 18:42)

I got a little reprieve on the homework tonight. This specific physics problem about the guy chasing the train really got me thinking of literary fiction, which we mentioned in English class today, today which has Chorus, where we studied Music Theory, an artes libertatis, which we learned about it Humanities and History as well. As such, we talked about the 2/0 time signature. Not possible, because it involves division by zero, like in math, and applies to how we learn French; not just counting, but discussing and resolving. It all mixes together. Whether it makes sense stays in my head.

As you all have learned (by now), I have violin lessons on Friday. I also went and auditioned for a chorus part in the Fall musical. The piece was "God Bless America." We sung first as a group, then as solos. My range fared better today than last week, and I think I did pretty well on the words and notes, except for a little anxiety stumble towards the end, and missing a non-existant cue (like everyone else- cues help!)

Soccertime (2008-09-05 15:46)

Two-ball soccer creates a great workout, requires great coordination and concentration, and provides the best fun. For example, I scored three half-court shots to the big, 3D mat from a defensive position. In comparison, one shot is good for me in field soccer.

A valiant effort by CB’s team while 3 down with 1 hour to go lead to a victory. In the final 5 minutes, an effort was made by the losing team to produce 3/4 court shots, absolutely none of which succeeded. And did we all sweat! CB’s team 46, MC’s team 24.

Player KN wishes to say to Coach CB that he was ‘skooled’ at End-10min. It’s probably one of longing for a victory.

fyi I was on CB’s team.

About 6 hours later, I was covering the DC tournament (more like the Northwest league). It was St. Anselm’s vs. Wilson; I knew players on both teams. DC United’s mascot, an Eagle named Talon (closely resembling the National’s Squawk) was there. The game started at 4:30; I left at halftime to attend to packing for the trip to Pennsylvania- this is why I have to miss the Mixer, fyi. The difference between gym soccer and this game on the new Astroturf field was that there were dire consequences that were to be taken to the end of the year, at least. At halftime, the score was 3-0, Wilson Tigers leading. A small flicker of hope exists that the Panthers pull off the victory.

Photographs, Photos, and Pix (2008-09-08 19:00)

I’m hopeful about the microSD chip that I’m going to get soon for my Motorola Razr cell phone. It seems that Verizon lets you have mercy on this- downloading pix to your computer via the card, but not the cable, as I tried last night. And it surprised me to find out that LOTS of color photographs (note- not Colored/ tinted, but actual color) exist from the 1930’s. Life back then was not totally in black and white. In fact, the first color photograph was made in 1872 -it isn’t that complex of an invention- 3 or 4 color filters layered on one another.

And Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii, in 1907 and onwards, used new technology, based on 3-layer technology, to make really nice color photos- high resolution. Of course, we all know about the WWII color photos, but it would make logical sense that there be WWI color photos! ([1](http://www.worldwaronecolorphotos.com)) There sure are! They were shot by the French Army, the proprietor of early color film.

And contrary to what Hollywood wants you to believe, The Wizard of Oz is not the first color film. Many color films were made in the 1920’s, but were converted to B/W for TV, and film destroyed, in the 1950’s.
Wine and Cheese bars didn’t exist back then. And digital photography was first commercialized in the early 1990’s. It looks like a Polaroid camera, another obsolete toy, but without the ears. It wasn’t until the digital cameras became palm-sized earlier this decade that people started to buy them. And hail to the SD card!


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**Swiss Nuke (2008-09-09 17:34)**

Stephen Hawkings made a $100 bet that the Swiss machine won’t destroy us all. But think of this- if it did destroy us, he doesn’t owe nobody! This black-hole spawner (its most acute side effect) is its fault. It’s more deadly than a nuke- or a nuclear war- or the whole world’s nuclear arsenals fired at once. If you have not heard of a possible impending disaster, look up CERN and what a black hole is- it would swallow up the entire solar system in less than an hour.

There is a chance that nothing deadly bad will happen, other than bogged down internet speeds, but remember, not even a will will save us now. Sorry I couldn’t write a nicer mortem post as I wanted to, but thanks to all the people I know, as well as the rest of my anonymous readers.

My parents want to use the Internet now.

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**A Miracle (2008-09-11 19:15)**

We all survived something potentially much more dangerous than a all-out nuclear war. We have entered an age where blocs of nations compete for black-hole superiority. It’s a dangerous time.

It turns out though, that the Swiss were only taking it on a test-run, and letting everyone bemoan their fate now, before Big Bang II. Real tests will start sometime soon, lest we forget.

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**Friday to Bed (2008-09-12 19:36)**

The refresh button at last restores a failed load! Typically, the refresh utton is good only for minute-by-minute political tracking, but it worked today.

And here’s to the first 5-day week of school, and for that matter, the only one in September. (The next two are an activity day, as well as House Day.)

Reporting from an earlier game- MC/CB 11, JB/AG/YO 22; 2-ball soccer. A scared defense was incapable of fending off high-powered shots. As a matter of fact, I suffered a hot white flash with a ball straight to the cerebrum. It’s safer on offense.

PS- I can’t be on the winning every time, hint hint.

Thanks, Delli (who featured earlier this year in his own post), for couriering my violin to me between downtown and school! Your greatness is something to be admired.

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**It makes me look so 1999 (2008-09-13 19:13)**

The School totally redid the website- It’s totally amazing- its rolling maroon colors nad pictures of the scenery does it up. And now I can get to Moodle wihtout straining eyes over uv purple over red. A new website for a new—presidency?
I can’t believe I spent 4 hours doing HW today after coming home from the orchestra in Suitland—first day this season.

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Nats (2008-09-16 19:32)

The Nats won against the Mets last night, 7-2. I saw about 3 innings live, due to the fact that we got free last-second tickets, but, I still needed to get homework done. When we left, at the top of the 7th, the score was 4-1. There was just a feeling of Nats victory in the air.
(But, I just couldn’t find the sushi bar at the ballpark!)
Today’s IM’s felt the same way; Main had plundered Moore 49-28. A glorious day.

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Blaze in PA (2008-09-19 15:51)

At least four houses are on fire in an outer suburb of Philadelphia, Pa, in Pottsville PA. Many fire crews and news helicopters are in the area, reports our correspondent. Ironically, if at all, there is to be a demonstration by a foam company in this small town, tomorrow, by Sprayfoam ([1]www.sprayfoam.com)

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pwmqv/www.sprayfoam.com

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Calleva is not liable for anything that happens (2008-09-20 17:04)

"After being knocked in the head from behind, the perpetrator was dragged from the cloakroom at a fine Italian restaurant downtown, his belly full with a meal with a group of corrupt mafia congressmen. He was tucked into the trunk of the Ferrari by Guido and driven off to Great Falls, not more than a mile from where Mario, the master of DC, had a nice estate with a vineyardette and horses. He threw the wenches body down, down the falls, and sped back to New York without.”

About 7 people a year die in the Falls each year, with many more daring rescues. Most of the time these people don’t die in the Falls, for it just doesn’t happen, and anyway, the rescuers can find you, easy. Where the people die, though, is in Mather’s Gorge, the steepest rapids in the eastern U.S.

At about 8:15, we boarded the ‘watermelon bus’, an old school bus painted green, and looked like one in Pennsylvania which watermelons are sold from. The clutch didn’t burn up on Chillum Road, but I was a little nervous; the ancient engine roared and creaked along in heavy rush hour traffic across town to Sangamore and the one-lane bridge. After crossing the Potomac on the Legion, we were driven down Georgetown Pike, a nice, countrylike road that rolled around nice mansions with horses in the green yard. Like a wilderness bootcamp, we pumped up 7 rafts with a broken pump, a demonish contest that emphasized tough love.

For lunch, we had pitas and hummus. Yes, what if a pita was your last meal? We got briefed at a scenic overlook overlooking the great falls. "Wouldn’t it be fun to raft down that?" Actually yes. It has been done intentionally. Soon, we were down the steep crevasse with a rusted pipe down the middle(?!) I was careful not to get wet; I don’t want my clothes to get wet, but what. There has to be a situation in every adventure trip. This one was a suction hole in the floor of the raft that let in water. I was in the ‘sweeper’ boat, frankly, not the funnest of boats. All we do is tail and make sure everything is OK. Neither did we have a peer captain, responsible for steering the craft as the others obeyed commands, which is part of the teambuilding and mutual trust thing.

The first time my shoes really got wet was when we went down the first rapid. I was so worried about falling out and getting wet! But, the puddle on the floor grew. As we came around a bend, it was preplanned
madness; ship hopping and mutiny! Again, as the sweeper boat, we came in late, so we had some forced fun- Captain Taylor pushes us into the water. So what with it, I thought, I was already so wet. The class III lifevest, with the headrest kept us afloat, but made it practically impossible to reboard without assistance. Soon, we had our first rescue mission. Captain Reed had grounded his boat on a protruding rock by being different. They didn’t seem to understand the concept of friction, but whatever, they were ‘scrubs’ (rookies). Pulling over past the last set of dandy rapids, we were tested to swim across the rushing water to the Virginiae side. Yes, with all clothes and shoes on, and, of course, lifevest. The current had a vector force of 40 degrees. Being instructed to swim at 45 degrees, we had barely moved upstream. Then came the endurance part: Swimming straight upstream for a length. Made it, so did everyone else. Then we just floated back downstream, after a bit of socializing. Was our team built yet? My watertight Swiss army watch said it was 1:45pm, a little time left. It was cliffjumpying time. Sometimes, I dislike the feeling of freefall. So anything over five or six feet, it’s a challenge, and that was the theme of the day. Peer pressure made me do it, and that was the theme of the day. I analyzed the decent; just as long as there were no protrusions, I would be alright. Luckily, I didn’t think twice before taking the soothing plunge.

The lifevest and all took the rushing wind out of the equation, and it was enjoyable. But I wasn’t alright, I was informed; I had fallen within one foot of the rock surface, and it was ‘fortunate’ that I didn’t hit anything on the fall. When asked about this, I was like :“Oh dear” “Oh dear on your life?” Now it was some time for Physics in Motion. How would I have been damaged if I would have hit the tiny, rounded outcrop? Not time for this. We were all inadvertently shivering. We continued on the final stretch, dumped out the boat, and carried it over, and across the canal. Th watermelon bus was there, and I got out of the soaking shirt and shoes. The ride home was surely forgettable. It was 3:30 when we arrived back at school. I threw on my subway pants, and got an E2 home to shower- I was itching a little. Was my team built? I’m not sure, but for others, they were built, probably. But it was never a terrifying, death-defying experience. We can’t all die young.

I took a nice sip of Potomac water from the tap before writing this. Cool to the taste. No wonder about the shivering.

I hope you’re feeling better, A.J.! (He had a carrot mishap)

Out dis mug (2008-09-20 18:02)

I used the pejorative term "scrub" in the last post in its proper context.
For all your slang needs, rep [1]www.urbandictionary.com. Provides explanations for all the common terms that might slip in the blog, on occasion. Remember, I do use the term “regatta” on occasion.
Scrub is a term from the 1990’s referring to a person who don’t know the rule of the game, and is restricted by it. We throw it around in MUN (don’t be a scrub!), and it’s interchangeable with "nuub" for newbie.

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pumqv/www.urbandictionary.com

On TV 2 (2008-09-21 17:46)

Channel 4.3 is repeating August history again- Mike Phelps (of nearby North Baltimore) won his sixth gold medal. The woman’s volleyball team just came on. What a creative use of bandwidth?

Lest we all forget:
Mike Phelps, sadly, at 19, was not in a kiddie’s driving program when he got an underage DUI in 2004. If it had happened in DC- if and only if so, Mikey would be in a massive mess with his license! He repented, though, in compliance with MD state laws. Celebrities...

It seems that the Form Rep (IV) position is not going unopposed. The glory of such a position is to be contested, to let the people choose who would represent them best.
A.J. is a formidable contestant for the position, and CB (the Mainmeister who led the blueshirts to intramural victory two weeks in a row) is highly considering opposing him. But, I, Atticus Sawatzki, have submitted my name to the President to have a shot.
There are many reasons that one should vote for Atticus in this race. They include:

- Previous experience
- A maverick of reforms (Priory Press, 21:2)
- Promoter of technology (look!)
- Consistantly brings home the bacon (wamunc X)
- Will represent YOUR desires, hopes, fears and dreams!
- Make the choice you won’t regret on HOUSE DAY!
- Vote for Atticus!

That Lame Duck! (2008-09-24 19:36)

George Bush made a rare appearance to a national audience tonight, and begged us for our $2333 each ( $700bil. bailout). What do I think about it? hmmm... giving lots of money to rich people... if I were one of them...
What I do have to say is that it may be unnecessary; a shares swap could work like it did in Sweden. Or the Bush I bailouts of $150 billion wasn’t too painful? That amount, inflation adjusted, and doubled, is about $400 bil.
The tax plan
Now suppose next year I got $1 million in income. According to the Obama plan, I’d have to shell out $35K more. Parting with that dear cash! That’s the price of 1) a cabin or small house somewhere 2) a new semi-luxury car 3) a pre-owned aircraft.
But if using the McCain plan, I would pay $6500 less, but it would put the USA into more debt...
too many numbers?
If it applies to you- VOTE 4 ATTICUS on House Day.
You’ll get your value for your buck.
(WSJ)

Micro SD Life (2008-09-25 19:31)

I rectified the recognition problem with the chip, and now can save to it, but how do I ever get the pix to PC? Is Verizon really that scummish, making one buy their software!? I think so. Anyway, big scary physics test 2morrow.

Internet me (2008-09-26 19:58)

As I have said before, a faulty internet connection has caused me much grief since we moved the internet-ready PC to the auxiliary phone line (It’s DSL). I finally think I got to the root of the problem- a faulty box with a
loose connection.
Solutions. That sounds like Atticus Sawatzki. Vote for Atticus on House Day.

Don’t Copy That Floppy (2008-09-27 18:47)

I watched this video from a rap’rboy about floppy disks- nowadays, rapper’s wouldn’t talk about their floppies- neither do they of CDs, MP3 (they should care!)- just Escalades, etc. That’s why I don’t listen to hiphop. Anyway, a rapr’ dressed in suit and hat tells these kids in a 1992 setting (I had to check fashion-era.com to put words to the lamenity of ’90’s dress)- yes, it was the fleece and trousers for all! Luckily, we have this thing called the internet and You Tube (yootoo’) to watch this informative film. Boy, am I jealous of YouTube. But, Don’t copy my bloggy! (Hey, bloggy’s a word)
A choice that is never out of style- Vote Atticus Sawatzki on House Day

One Day to Go... (2008-09-28 10:17)

I nearly forgot to tell you all about the cruelly funny thing that happened to me Friday afternoon. You see, I had orchestra at 3:00pm. Due to our new schedules, we usually end quite early before the 4:30pm (note-it used to be 4:40pm) shuttle leaves. So I go down at 4pm with the I attend some business about the campaign, you know, and I pick up my heavy backpack as well as my AP-edition (what a selling point!) Western Civ. book, and miss the E2. I head to 12th street and board the Brookland-bound 80. Once we go through Downtown Brookland, and pass an 80 in the other direction, I realize, Duh! I left my violin at school. My mother warned me about this, if I had an outlying book. And boy was she right. I try to use Michigan Avenue’s hypotenuse action to catch up with that other 80, but it was no use. I continued along Michigan for a while...I knew that turning up 14th would lead to the lower building, where the violin was, so I found it, and ran it. I saw somebody waiting at the E2 stop. I added speed, and decided that up around the hill to the upper building, a thru sweep, and out through the parking lot would be swiftest. So I did so, grabbed the $2K apparatus, and got to the E2 stop. I waited. No bus. Physics teacher comes. I try to gather my scattered belongings in a way that made me presentable enough. The E2, it was running late. Then down comes the 4:30pm shuttle. I get on, and we head out with the first-time shuttle driver. It was an experience worth waiting for.
Sort of Higgins-esque?

Recourse (2008-09-28 10:40)

I looked back to Jan. 2, 2008’s post of whether it would be a good year or not, according to the TV psychic. The psychic is smarter than you think. While the universe is falling apart, and black holes are being made, and Cheney makes another billion, people are going to look back at Christmastime, and say, ”that loony was right”. For this one reason- A new president of the ’10’s. While the best effect would be the O-man, the McSame would be a slight improvement over the same old. Have at thee, people who believe psychics have magic powers!
Intelligence. A great trait for a great leader. Vote Atticus at 8 am!
After 1.8 hours of being in the auditorium, we got out to the playing field. Remember, we were in four groups—our group was skewed to the younger side—I was the most senior—and lots of Aussies—I never told you about the holidaymakers? They thought we did it proper—no, we do it bulldog style. Pull a victory against Alban, lose to Moore. Protect-the-wall. We did well. Krazy Dodgeball—double dodging from both front and back. It took a while to get the strategy right—get balls to your prisoners—fast. 1st-Austin, 2nd-Alban 3rd-Main, 4th-Moore. Trivia. By halftime, after current events and ‘the real stuff’, Main was up by 30. Then comes Andrew of Austin, and totally serves me. 210 him, 80 us, 50 Alban, 30 Moore. Austin was the formidable opponent.

It all came down to the race again. Main 42, Moore 45 after lunch. If we beat Moore, then we win the day, if we do not come in last. (Austin=40)

Relay happens, I get some good flicks. Little kids in Main—we are losing. 9th and 10th grade picks up the pace—noting Connor W. for his superb passing skills along the 1/4 mile track. Then, by 11th grade, we lost the place—it was not our fault, though. It was that they had a totally awesome runner. Then we picked up the pace at the end, but no pennant. We had to settle with second. But not too bad. Main was a far fourth at Christmastime, and also lost Field Day to you know who—Moore, and we still came out victorious. Revenge will be ours!

Tomorrow—some intramurals that COUNT!

This Little Box (2008-09-30 19:00)

is causing me so much grief! It’s called the modem. Holding in the wire sometimes is the only way to get some internet flowing. Yes, I should get a new box. Now that was an electric storm earlier this evening. Otherwise, Main plundered Moore in an inconclusive victory.

Sound like I should be off in bed keeping my head to myself? Sure thing.

Thank You for all your support in our campaign!

2.10 October

The Green Slitherer (2008-10-02 19:50)

This describes the DC Metro’s Green line as it weaves at high speeds under the most spectacular, and most violent view of the city (13 and Clifton Sts, NW, but don’t step out of the car). Taking the Red Line to the OB is usually quickest, but today, Red Liners were stacked up at every signal. Therefore, it was Green Time. I can’t believe I’m doing this is such little time, but Fort Totten—Lower platform is half on and half under the cliff. Train speeds up to a 65mph cruise to serve Petworth and Columbia Heights, cut and cover resumes south of Shaw in the 1991 section. Pass the lower level of Gallery Place, under the mall and popping up in the HUD area of L’enfant plaza, a ’60’s urban renewal area. At the south end of the station, a set of escalators lead to nowhere, perhaps a future entrance. Get on OB, lower level. Note the glass-paneled escalators. Sorry for not having enough time!
Fretting about the Future (2008-10-03 19:25)

Here we are, stranded five workdays away from Columbus Day. But we still have two weekend days, but I have a lot of typing to do- lab reports, etc. Otherwise, History class will be the first thing Monday morning. Remember how I said that I maintained in the mid-90’s last year? That system gave me A’s all year, balanced with a little HW-grade boost. But I had a little slip-up, and scored an 86-on a 100 point test that made up 2/3rds of the grade. BUT the great thing is, the points are easy to move around. If I score a 93 (28/30) on a DBQ (AP-style Document Based Question), then average goes up to 88. Now if a test were 96 (as frequently happened last year), then average goes up to 91... Yes, I should have made a proper guessimate regarding ’inclusion’- D is usually the best choice when lists are involved. But in the great scheme of things, the ‘real’ grade doesn’t balance on two multiple choice questions. Yes Yes. It’s the first advisory time already. And not to get started about the Physics grade of C...

Don’t be Hateful (2008-10-04 18:45)

Bienvenu Mbutu Mondondo, a Congolese who is in Fatherland Belgium, is filing a suit against the publishers of TinTin. This is what makes a mockery of the justice system- wasting people’s valuable time, and threatening freedom of speech in Europe, just because Herge was being historically accurate. If you can get this boy’s adress, I’ll refund your postage stamp. Yes, just try to sue me for blogging.
I f you don’t know, Tintin is a Belgian colonizer (approx. birthdate 1910)- yes, Belgium has colonies in Congo, with a dog named Milou (in english editions, it’s translated to Snowy) who endeared the world in books by cartoonist Herge from 1929 into the ’80’s. Now just look at what this unpatriotic college student is trying to do.
So, as what Rat is doing in Pearls before Swine this week (tip-off- frivolously suing billionaires in an attempt to become very wealthy) is not as bad as the symbolic guilder (euro).
And please don’t sue people unless it’s for due recompensation!- and not because someone drew a picture that offended you. t’s partiotic to pay a just amount of tax, and it’s patriotic not to desecrate a national symbol. [2]Here’s a link to some TinTin cartoons:
Same thing goes for all the other cartoonists over there.


Tandy Center (2008-10-06 19:28)

After some technical difficulty, this month’s JangooMag is online. Remember, you can also get it via email or Facebook inbox! Soon, we’ll make it easier to get a free subscription.
Anyhow, I was waiting for a day like this to write about the Tandy Center Subway- the only privately-owned subway in the USA at this time- 1963-2002. The little subway connected the shopping center to the riverside parking lots. The ride was free, and, after the 1974 rehab, the trains looked so ’70’s, or, like a computer from then. Remember, Tandy was a computer company, and parent company of Radio Shack (tm). The subway sadly closed in 2002, as the site was redeveloped, and the trackage put to Fort Worth Transit use. [1]Click Here.
BTW- Tandy started out as a leather store in 1919. Then they went high tech.

Texas Holden (2008-10-08 19:45)

Catcher in the Rye. A fascinating mid-20th century novel that fits well in the pocket. It is said that it can be read in one night- if wanted to, or be prolonged into a page-by-page adventure. But, some says the books turn people into psychopaths. Mr. Hinckley, who was an attempted assassin, read this book shortly before the ambush at the now-historic landmark Washington Capital Hilton on Connecticut Ave. John Lenin’s Grimm Reaper had the pocket-sized book on him as he took the legend down. But like the generic kid named ’Jamal’, the reading of it is not a cause of insanity, but could be a possible indication of a psychopath. Just thinking.
BTW- Holden is a depressed kid, possibly suicidal, but never dangerous to others.

300, but not the last stand (2008-10-09 17:16)

Alternate Title: All Eyes on Iceland
Is it just because I traded Northwest Airline miles from 10 years ago for a Wall Street Journal subscription that I found out about the monetary crisis in Iceland? Well, the value of their currency is not half of the Euro, or 1.10 of them for a greenback. SO, I looked up the cost of an Expedia vacation package to the chilly island. Airfare from Boston, roundtrip, pre-Thanksgiving rush is $546, or a mere $273 each way- direct-purchase saves $5 per flight. Or, my little itinerary from DC would include Eastern Bus fare ( $20) to New York City, lunch in Chinatown, and a Lucky Star bus to Boston ( $10), and T fare to the airport (under $2) for an overnight. Or throw a night in Boston into the sojourn. Then, follow your Expedia print-out... in Iceland’s deteriorating currency, the hotel rooms come out to a mere $40 a night!- Holiday Week (Dec 20- Jan 3 this year) is a different story...
Yes, yes, international travel for under $1000 (and that supposedly includes taxes and enough food)
Celebrating three times one-hundred posts!
Long live the Blog, even though Sparta fell.
I thank everyone for the support of our JangooVision Productions. It really means a lot.

301-555-BLOG (2008-10-10 18:27)

That was bad. After I filmed the sub-vertisement, I put my cell phone into a shallow pocket- while still seated, because it was a crowded train car. Bad idea. When I do my usual scan of the seat area, it was a newspaper mess, by the last person who sat there. I get up and leave train car. By escalator I notice cell phone not in usual pocket. It usually happens this way: I put cell phone in bag after use. But no. The chase was on. Not much to do other than call mommy and daddy, until after school, where I chased the phone up to Glenmont, where they would theoretically clean the trains. But that’s only in New York. SO I came home, hoping for a sign. I filed an online report, and now I’m just waiting for Tuesday morning to see if they got it- and not someone else.

Put on a happy face (2008-10-11 12:25)

Gas prices are crashing down (like the stock market), so let’s all put the little hybrid away and pull out the Humvee. And throw the bikes on top of it, even though you won’t use them, but just for the sake of wasting precious fuel. Leave the lights on, as well as the computer, because it’s time to celebrate. Yes, it hasn’t been
since the ‘90’s that the media used the cute factor of Socks (the Clinton’s cat, now age 17-1/2 (a good 90 in cat years) as a prime attractant. Remember, the news is like any other business. But, especially Fox, loves to use the scare factor. Economy Crashing. Unemployment. Misery. Great Depression. Yes, part of it is George Bush’s fault (and his dad and brother), but the rest is mind-altering exaggerated fluff intended to make us cringe at the purse string. Darn, I gave out the secret.
Anyway, go out and spend some $ this (racist*) holiday weekend, and enjoy life to the fullest!
From the producers of JangoVision
I’ll explain tomorrow.

It’s Columbus Day (2008-10-13 07:25)

Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1492. According to many, he discovered America. Yes, the Natives who crossed over the isthmus amounted to nothing, and the Vikings meant nothing as well. So be it.
He didn’t even discover Florida. And yet, we fly Italian flags next to the red, white and blue to commemorate 516 years of the commencement of traditional and biological warfare against the Natives, and exploited our natural resources.
Yet, 16 years ago, at the 500th anniversary in 1992- in that corny year (see my Youtube channel), no one was abhorred by the weneration of one arbitrary sojourner, who barely made it. And even today, in our ‘integrated’ world, it doesn’t cross everyone’s minds. Yes, Yes, let’s salute a racist (Have you ever read what he wrote about the friendly Natives by 1597?). Happy Columbus Day!
PS- the MoCo kids, and other jurisdictions got the recent Jewish holidays off as neccessary, but considered this holiday as too offensive for lots of people. They are in school right now, maybe learning about the Italian sailor or not.

It was Tuesday (2008-10-14 19:31)

A decisive victory today for Main House- 91 to 56 over Alban. 100 would have looked great, but this is good for now. Before faculty intervention, Main had scored 7 TD’s.
And PSAT’s are tomorrow. Good night.

California en Fuego (2008-10-15 19:26)

The PSAT’s were fine, but by regulation, I can’t tell you too much about them, other than the three afternoon classes- a little tired, but that’s OK.
Anyway, I was terrified by the headlines in Tuesday’s paper- Calif. on fire. Then, there is California allowing ‘different’ marriages. Yes, in the old testament, the angry God smote the Sodomites. Is he angry with California for being so...progressive? And then- we must not forget the New Testament’s compassionate and all-loving God. and then, has Oregon ever been punished like that?
Just a prophecy.
Wasn’t that a week ago? (2008-10-16 19:18)

Like a cartoon character chased by personified steel nails, I can say finally can tell you about last Saturday night. Homecoming. I promised people that I would go. I get a little pep talk about attire- 'semi-formal’, so then I look it up. I selected style based on the explanation that, if no further word was given, such as 'suit-and-tie’, this implied smart casual, or something. Yes, we love to dress up whenever we have the chance. It was a black-suit, shoes, and tie event, I was informed when I got to the gatekeepers. I was not the first. Yes, they would let me in (for a fee), then run the chance that I be chased out by disciplinarian. And anyway, it was part-over, and I was pretty tired. I tried to come, so what can they do to me? At least I didn’t become laughing stock of the town on Tuesday morning. Zut Alors, I have a physics test tomorrow. Gotta dash!

Halfway There (2008-10-17 19:01)

Yesterday...that was a top-ten of this year post. But let me tell you- It is my half-birthday. I am 151/2. I do not know what this means for me, but in some places, it does have some significance (Virginia is an example- minimum age for LP). Time has been passing so slowly that I already feel 16. Just imagine if this aging continues, I’ll be 80 before I know it. And anyway, if we make too much of a deal of this, we could be be having our monthly parties!

Weather it matters (2008-10-18 19:26)

It’s finally getting a little chilly, for good, I think. No more chilly morning/hot afternoon combos. Those really get annoying, after a while. And this year is the first fall to have a later DST-end date. Boy, will it be dark in the mornings. Yes, I got that take-home test done. Awesome, but it was matched up to our advantage- it still took 45min to an hour. And I’m off to bed.

Pursuit of Happiness (2008-10-19 12:03)

Have you ever seen a little crab at barge fishmarket that escapes the live bushel into the water? No, the crab does not have real emotions, but it has a basic sense of want, direction, accomplishment. So we sometimes feel happy

Don’t you know how it feels when you’re really happy and all, like when you got the Hail Mary test answer correct, or when you find your lost cell phone (ahem), that is, or when Main House beats archrival Moore or formidable opponent Austin? And then there are those times when you have momentary nirvana on earth, like when you find your lost cell phone (ahem), the Redskins go to the superbowl, Main House wins the trophy, or, as last night, I pulled off a Texas Hold-em comeback.

You see, I was playing the hypothetical penny slots. I was up by 100, but this sinister lady took me down to zero, and everyone else. I was torn to pieces. I didn’t have any major success until I went into the nickle-and-dime league. Yes, I pulled away a full house on the first game. And got about 3000 chips for it, putting me in the 100K-pro category. Awesome.

PS- I do not endorse gambling, and this isn’t playing with real money, but it’s real practice for Vegas or AC. And when I edit posts, I do notice some spelling errors. Bad me. Don’t worry, just be happy.
Three Days of Thought (2008-10-22 17:20)

Important emails were being sent from this peripheral unit last night. So that brings me to Little Brother’s laptop. A $1.5K outfit behest by the Hill School. Nothing too extraordinary; none of our neighbors have free open wifi. So, that’s what a starbucks is for. Or an Eastern/DC2NY/ Megabus for Internet four hours straight, between DC and New York, if an electric plug is provided.

Now an important topic that I never brought up to you. It was one of those metal mixing bowls, with two round latches on the side. So, to melt the butter, I put the metal thing in the microwave for ten seconds. I take it out with paper towel. It is cool to touch. Then a finger touches a round loophole. Yoken Yikes! I suffered an annoying second degree burn on the finger. It sure made writing tough for a week- and it could have been worse. So don’t do it. Take the time to transfer the butter. Somehow, the loops attracted radiation, because that’s what metal coils do. Same with dark, round tattoos in an MRI, as I read a scientific paper on. Same goes for putting cell phones in one, too.

So then, I come down to freewriting novels. Namely, the long-term novel. I am capable of writing pages in 10 minutes, but I cancelled those pages from the master plan because it could be better. Anyway, if I had the time, I could theoretically write cheap novels in a three-day weekend. But I don’t. Yes, and when one becomes a good writer, people expect the best. JK Rowling had a writer’s bloc/block. Yes, every word has to be good. Same with my lit, but I haven’t yet set the bar for myself, yet. An experience today made me think of Opera. Two JV soccer players come by. One wants to chat with me. The other cares less, especially since I started the novella which portrayed him as a flawed character. We three are dudes, so I decide to switch the dualist’s name to Delora, which already resembles his common nomenclature, but in dame form. And here we can go in a typical Bully lover serves tough love to dame. Dame looks to the darling guy (who has more dough and charm) And we go on for two hours as Delora the Soprano sings high above the guy-fight. Happy ending. The End.

BLOGGY 3*1*1 (2008-10-23 19:20)

There is this little replication of Mary, Queen of Scots, being beheaded in an Edison video production from 1895- since it’s so low-resolution, and with a distant viewpoint, one doesn’t mind the lack of blood and gore. But was that one music class- a double-booked sub resorted to letting us play two-ball soccer against (not just with) the sixth graders. They’re small. But we were outnumbered 2-to-one, and we had to be real careful... final score 6-4 us. Yes, and we had a little 2-minute water break halfway through the 30-minute game. Yes. That’s what being little is all about.

Building Tall (2008-10-24 19:46)

Check my facts, but America maintained the homeland of the world’s tallest building from the turn of the last century up until 1998. It’s time to bring it back. With what the oil money are doing in Dubai makes formidable competition- breaking 2K feet isn’t good enough- I think the next building will be 1/2 a mile tall (2640 ft). At least Chicago is building her Spire. But I do believe that a new city should get the honor. On my behest, the JangooCorp will need a new home. What about the capital city, DC? By law, height is width of adjacent street plus 20’, not exceeding the height of the capitol. That’s only like 28 floors. By permission, recess from the curb can be added height, as the National Cathedral. By FAA request, Rosslyn is restricted to 490 feet above sea level, anything taller gets in the way of planes trying to land at National. Bethesda? Silver Spring? Crystal City? Wherever the land prices are high is where the Corporation wants to build a tower. Completion date- approx. 2035.
Spiffy Little Job (2008-10-26 19:06)

I couldn’t find the school right off the bat. Among the towers of Bethesda was our destination. That was yesterday, when there was a concert called “Dream Tour around the World”. It was a Chinese production, portraying Chinese music, as well as Asians and everyone else performing music from all over Europe, and then, authentic Latino music, and some African drumming. But I only got to hear half of that- I had to go backstage. This was at B-CC- for those who don’t know, Bethesda-Chevy Chase. Nice 2002 everything, from classrooms to expansive 1000 seat auditorium, and very, very clean- totally unlike a typical DC (or even PG) public school. Somehow, most people there are well off- there was a sign boasting a guest speaker from ‘da hu’ making a presentation about ‘DC poverty’. What a foreign concept!
It had a feeling of an All-star school. In fact, it is America’s Best High School- in 1960. 2005- it was tagged as #29, and now, #63. Cause- Ranking system gets skewed; Magnet schools are included, and the ratings are ’unbiased’; that means that the $ factor is excluded- none of the fancy toys came cheap. But Newsweek doesn’t feel the need for keeping it real. I need to write my own rankings. It’ll work better. Anyway, that explained the 2015 target goals posted up and down the hallways.
PS- Wilson High, situated between high-lauded BCC and Arlington’s even higher-ranking HB Woodlawn, is given #386, even with the School Board’s listlessness, deteriorating facilities, and violence- although not as bad as ’DC Poverty Place’. Still, it’s a reductio ad absurdum.

Donkey (2008-10-28 19:20)

Foreword: For the past year-and-a-half, you all have been reading about my superficial life, with some cool stuff in it. Now, I write like I am Truman of the Truman Show. A very popular movie from 1998. For all those who had access to the internet back then, you might be having flashbacks to the good old days when the internet was ‘pointless’, that is, not worthless. Some cool stuff. Personal accounts w/o much emotion. But then...
This cute little donkey is all the hype in this featured blog, [1]http://donkey-dreams.blogspot.com/. No, it’s not internet 1996, and there is a deeper meaning to this blog, like a lot of blogs, than the ’90’s. This donkey is on a donkey farm that provides emotional support for people who need it- free of charge and supported through the sale of artwork. What a touching story, it puts off my Elvis ”in the ghetto” prophecy, but the donkey, and the cause, deserves it.


In the Ghetto (2008-10-29 19:10)

The politically incorrect, but strikingly true story of a po’ baby born in da’ hu’, and gets killed. Yes. The broadcast news loves to turn these tragedies into dough, and scare you into turning you into a ten-o-clock news addict. The effect is especially pronounced when the broadcasters do it in Tandem. So as those tragedies unfold on the TV screen, Elvis Presley’s offensive song goes well on the computer.
Which reminds me to tell you all: Stayin’ Alive, the little disco ditty, is a good song to listen to while performing CPR. It puts you in the right rhythm to do it. Just put in on your MP3 player, it’s a cool song anyway.
Getting the Best of Us (2008-10-30 16:41)

I started off on the wrong side of the pillow this morning. You see, the pillow was pretty flat, and that doesn’t make my day. I get on the E2 to go to school from the station. I get into the Pearls Before Swine comic, and I get off on the wrong side of the street- that is, two blocks down from where I wanted to be. Luckily, I caught it early. An unfortunate lad was once left on the bus all the way to Vincent Gray’s office. That was about 6 blocks. I’m not even sure if he made it to class on time. I only realized the blunder on some of his schoolmate’s faults when I saw he had not gotten off, before doing the dash across South Dakota. I could only get a little glimpse of the pain. As you can see, there are two stops to get to school. One leads to the ”downstairs building”. Everyone gets off here. The other one leads to the ”upstairs building”, up a long, inclined road. So most people don’t bother waking you from your paper or nap.

So, mid-morning, we had this assembly for debate. It was uber-boring- of course watching inside Washington and Washington Week and McLaughin Group really destroys reality, until they could see that we were a little turned off. Then they gave us what we wanted! For the last half-hour, it was engaged, and sly comments were thrown. But none was more personally damaging that of the Tax Plan- Obama’s plan to revert taxes back to pre-Bush cut levels on hard-working families making over $250K/yr. Earlier, a Democrat representative had stated that lowering healthcare costs were, indeed, important for him and his family, personally. So, not five minutes later, we hear about this microdynasty’s holdings across the globe, and a slightly shrinked disposable income of... I won’t tell...nah... $50K. So now, there’s this 5-foot circle around him when people talk to him. I sort of feel sorry for him, unintended consequences, wrong side of bed and all.

The Darkest Commute (2008-10-31 20:24)

The last weekday in Daylight Savings Time, and the first one this late in the year. How dark it was as I emerged from the Union Station portal. Anyway, I was wearing a Main Hose shirt with matching A-Team hat. Got some support, but didn’t win. It’s time for bed. I’ll talk later.

Have a spooky Halloween.

Next up- keeping Georgetown straight at night.

2.11 November

Halloween Duties (2008-11-01 19:41)

So for last evening, I dressed like a plastic cop. No, not really, but I did make sure to take note of suspicious people who looked out of place. You see, Georgetown has a lot of rich people, and ones that aren’t afraid about flashing their wealth. But the problem is that, people come across town on the bus, and take bags of candy away with them. So I noticed that the people who were in place (neighborhood kids and some friends from Arlington and up Northwest). They tended to have more success with candy-milling. But I tell everybody now, Georgetown people are getting tired of giving candy out to the whole city.

Mile for Life (2008-11-02 15:26)

It was a surprise. I would have brought my running shoes if I were had been forewarned. But why now? It had to happen before it got too cold. The ground was wet, and the temperature was chilly. I wondered about
if the reduced friction would help our speeds. My heart rate was fast, considering I had run a democracy run to fetch mock ballots, stuck in the upper building, an hour prior, plus all the anxiety of the next 8 minutes. Seconds after the ‘go’ was given, I had taken place halfway between the front runners and the laggars, having not sprinted. Yet, after the first half-lap, of 3-1/4 laps, I was already panting like a dog. Hypothesis wrong. Wet grass is a detriment. Friction helps propulsion, I thought for a brief second. "2:12"- first lap. It’s all a matter of breath control. Pags (freshman) does this well, I was informed, and managed a 5:40. I don’t. "4:55" end of lap 2- I was pacing, keeping Joey B. within view, while the head runners were still dashing. We were separated by half the perimeter of a soccer field. Lap three- even the head runners were losing steam over the wet turf. I gave up chasing Abe, he had a sizeable advantage. 3/4 through the 3rd lap- Abe was slowing down a little, perhaps tired. I saw Joey B. coming up from behind. I rounded the last corner, into the final segment, now in as best of a sprint as I could furnish. Joey B.’s longer legs propelled him past me for a two second lead, as I could hear him call out Abe’s final time of "7:02". Joey’s time was 7:09, mine 7:10. The coach was distracted, or maybe my brain was running time slow. So close to breaking 7, I was. Then I think of Abe. At the end of the 3rd lap, with a little clock, he would have mustered a full sprint to make it under 7. It’s all relative. I had cut 1:05 from my previous time, averaging 8.4 mph (I’ll recheck the sheet- yes, photographic memory), up from 7.1 mph on ideal conditions. What a difference one year can make. The leader, at 5:45, averaged 10.5mph. Impressive. I tried hard not to collapse to the ground. I had to lean on the soccer goal to stay up, as I took shallow breaths and felt delerious, and watched the trailers come in. Yet, 6:30 was the average time. Everyone was like that, 6:30. Anyway, the kid who I sent to hell in my Dante paper, he proclaimed that he knew CPR. I wouldn’t let him become the proudest fellow, so I didn’t pass out. Lots of replenishing water, and some indoor 2-ball soccer. Yes, we won. And yet, afterthree hours, my heart rate was still in the 110 range, definately aided by candy. But by Orchestra, another hour later, my cardiopulmonary had recovered, and my legs were starting to get sore.

So, I don’t want to do that for another year. Make that "I’ll never have to do it again in my life", because this is my last year of Phys Ed. So be it.

Then today, I come across a pair of handcuffs, made I never tried them to see if they were legit or not, but they looked like they were, even though they were made in China. Yes, EST is keeping us up. Even though I’ve switched my clocks, it still feels as if I were always given an hour by mercy- I have to get used to 6pm sunsets. Before I stay up until 10pm, or my body’s 11pm, ciao for now.

668-2008 (2008-11-03 18:56)

Go out and vote tommorow. Vote for and, most likely, somebody at the state level as well. Even if you are not qualified to vote, and you have nothing better to do, cast a provisional ballot. Whether Remember, I don’t want to become a commie subject because of some irresponsible 20 year olds’ choice to be apathetic. First thing to go- freedom of speech, and this website will disappear. So please do exercize your right as a citizen of the free world and I’m not- by law I’m too young, but I’ve been making sure that the barely-legal crowd is going to do so. Boy, do I feel sad for the arranger of the mock debate. Almost 18, but not quite yet. Take away votes from the people who don’t need them (those apathetic 20 year olds who don’t understand why they got a day off from college) and give them to 17 1/2 year old leaders of CSO teams.

Now a word about afrimative action in the Mr. Obama is poised to lose up to about 5 % of potential votes on the single factor of race. Do we add 5 % to his tally and give him a sure victory? Or do we give McCain several points because he has 72 years on his back? In the world of success, you don’t need AA, so what’s the big point of it then?

So go and vote for Obama/Biden, McCain/Palin, Nader/Gonzales, or for yourself. It should be your right not to vote for anyone, but it shouldn’t be your right not to show up, though.
Vote or be shunned (2008-11-04 15:41)

Have you voted yet? It’s still not too late.
I’ve been intently watching the LCD screen as the incoming results from some states come in- NH, KY, IN, (Obama leading in all but KY) in a trickle. Much more info will come in shortly after 7pm.
I’ll give more of an update later- just wanted to get the word out.

Memo (2008-11-04 20:00)

At 10:30 pm
By current events ongoing in the electoral college, we will announce that Barack Obama will most likely be president of the USA.
(put this in J MAG)

Delayed Delivery (2008-11-07 19:34)

11:00pm

to all
With pacific coast tallies in, Barack Obama has most certainly been elected by a wide margin for president

Obama, 44th President (2008-11-07 19:35)

Why haven’t I been around for two days? The internet broke- really, on Wednesday. The internet box (modem) showed a red light or a blank from the point of failure onwards. It was sad. I was totally isolated, and couldn’t get some work done, either. So last night, we got the tech support on the phone, and reinstalled the internet. It works swell now, and somehow, the search history didn’t disappear, either.
Tuesday night, 10pm, I was down by the White House. A group had gathered, and they were all so excited about Barack, as if he was a celebrity. So NBC was geopolitically correct, and waited until the Californian polls closed to declare victory for the posterchild. And you never know. Until it’s over it’s not over. So then people start cheering, and dancing, and everything, more than New Year’s and the Fourth of July combined.
Wednesday, 7am, I was handed a piece of history at the train station- the full-page cover of the Examiner showed the victorious man on the cover. We also got hold onto one of the first-run copies of the Washington Post. Yeah, yeah, I had a French quiz to think about, but it wasn’t too much of a damper.
Gotta get some shuteye. Oh, J MAG is out. Follow the link to the main page to it.

Lifeline (2008-11-10 19:28)

I flopped on the Physics test from last Friday, I found out. Now take a picture of the mess I made, print it out, and show it to the world. Yes, I get disturbed when I flop on tests, but especially since I was trying to make a recovery. Anyhow, I made one basic error, had it triplicate, and lost lots of points. That’s what made me sad all day, and giving me a psychosomatic stomachache plus fatigue. Now about the picture. That is the final grade going into the progress report. If I am fortunate, I will have been saved from utter failure, if
not, I am a sucker. Remember- no matter what goes around internally on a piece of paper, it’s only 6 weeks to exam. Scary yike.

My Hair Might Turn White (2008-11-15 13:27)

Last published Nov. 10, or, as I recall, last Monday. Today is the 15th. The last time I left such a large gap in time is the trip to Canada’s <> . You might have thought I went on vacation or something. Only if you call play rehearsals that. For the matter of fact, the last time I was on a computer was last Tuesday. So what has been going on? Monday/Tuesday was Veterans’ Day. I didn’t have the opportunity to thank all the little people who do the big job of upholding democracy, so I do so now. Armistice Day was Nov. 11/ Tuesday, some people got Monday off instead/too. But 11/11 is the real deal, 3 day weekend or not or 4. Yesterday was the first of three performances of the conceived musical, I Love a Piano. In Humanities, we got five e.c. test points, or half a letter grade, for going to a show. Ditto. Now I must go on with the show.

The Play (2008-11-17 18:43)

Irving Berlin lived to a remarkably old age- 101, as I remember, dying only 20 years ago. Then these arrangers come and arrange some of his music into a chronological from 1910 into the 1950’s. I still have not found out when the play was arranged, but probably sometime in his lifetime. Anyway, "He would have been proud of our chorus arrangements" Now, its over, and there’s a big hole in my time, that I will fill with HOMEWORK! Yes, we got dressed up, made up, and had fun.

The Snow is Snowing (2008-11-18 17:57)

The wind is blowing, but I can weather the storm.
Whadda I care how much it may storm?
Yes, it got really chilly this afternoon. It got real windy, too. So then, it was like a real winter storm. Clouds were encroaching on the aura of sun that lied above our heads at the hill in Northeast. Then the snow flurries came, although none stuck to the ground. Yet with proactive defense, Main shut out Alban, 50-0, on this tantalizing day.

Lin’s Authentic Chinese Restaurant (2008-11-19 18:50)

running fru’ da’ lil’ dawg? runnin’ fru’ da’ cops’? runnin fru’ da’ Main-dawgs?
u din’t run’ fru’ da’ punches - happy birfday, Ben-dawg
I never had the chance to tell you all about the lovely Chinese banquet I enjoyed two weekends ago. This was hosted by the WAPO- the asian orchestra who has a lot of clout with the Montgomery county admins. I still haven’t figured out who financially sponsored the event, though. But does it matter?
Introductions by individuals
1. Traditional Chinese appetizers- sliced bamboo and meats
2. West Lake Soup
3. Peking Duck

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4. Chow Fun/ Starch Pork Dish
5. Bok Choy with Mushroom
6. Fish Dish- delicate!
7. Desert- Sweet Rice with Red Beans
It was as authentic as it gets outside of New York Chinatown.
Sing along- America the Beautiful, two Chinese folk songs, Oh Susanna
Just to think how some people call Chow Mein Chinese food !?
(****/****)- all things considered
Here’s the reference
Tony Lin’s
Montrose Crossing (South Building)
Rockville, MD
Just off SR-355/Rockville Pike- 3 blocks to Twinbrook Metro
NTFletch would love this place, I bet


No, passengers will not appreciate being sent from their local airport to the Dulles (VA/DC) passenger sorting facility and back to their final destination. This is not overnight mail. People want to reduce their time in the air, no matter how luxurious it may be, to spend more time on the ground. Anyway, three airports got new runways today- Washington Dulles, Chicago O’Hare, and Portland. DC’s strip was the most economical, at $350 mil, the cost of 6 Boeing 737’s. The Portland runway somehow cost $1 bil. How did that happen? Anyway, cheers to the future of air travel from these smart cities.
Sponsored by Northern Express Airlines. Coming to an airport near you.

MonkMUNC I (2008-11-21 18:07)

We started the MonkMUNC- model un conference, today. The speakers from the real UN gave intriguing speeches, and we had nice chats with three girls for one guy- reminds me of the 2:1 ratio at elementary school. I represented Angola, an oil-rich recent ex-colony in southwest Africa. Sarah Palin couldn’t get that one. Committee session- went a bit slow to start, but gained momentum, especially after the observer sent a message that made our lives easier. Afterwards, there was a psychedelic whiteout- dress in white and enjoy blacklights and strobelights. But my helicopeter-parent mother is so concerend that she does not let me go to the usual dances- because they go to 11pm. At least the cast party shouldn’t go so late.
And for the irresponsible ones, please do not cough in my face, or anyone else’s face, because spreading illness is not a good thing.

MonkMUNC II (2008-11-22 19:28)

One thing that amazes me is the fact that modern automobiles can have a cold start into drive. Yes, a non-remarkable chilly drive to the conference. Three short hours
One-third of the delegates were absent- because of this, we had to made two of us from sponsors (a more exclusive club) to signatories. Yeah, it sometimes hurts like that. Gee I’m so tired, I should stop typing now.
Triple Three (2008-11-23 18:08)

It’s a little surface transit website that doesn’t stop growing. Last year, there were just a few destinations along the NEC (I-95) and in Washington the state. Now, at least 15 states are rostered, with many destinations, and they keep on coming in. One day, the state gets colored. Next day, the destination in that state shows up, and soon, you can book a ticket. It’s pretty incentful for the companies- you can be like a real bus line now! Then, this separates the MBA’s from the hacks. Until today, the little bus- I have never seen it, but I was told it was an used job- that runs from Ohio to New York, was hiding. Now it came out online, and it’s quite clear it’s one driver and a bus. And there’s the well-managed Eastern, 12 trips per day DC-NY, flashy website. Yes, yes. Then I can see that six companies work together to have a departure from DC-NY at least every 1/2 hour between 7 am and 7:30pm. Sort of neat. [1]www.gotobus.com

Oh, and Little Brother’s back.

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pwmqv/www.gotobus.com

Balt 57 (2008-11-24 18:59)

One of the best thing about staying in hotels is the indigenous TV news! Montreal somehow gets the Detroit news- how exotic- I haven’t been to that part of the country in years. Watching local news that isn’t national. News that is not recession-proof, and the reporters don’t fake about financial tragedies and the audience can’t say, "what people". Reporters who aren’t invincible, smart, or even rich.

Detroit news- more closing factories, the stun-session of robberies, slaughters, and fires.

Baltimore news- a shock session of a straight line of 6 murders, not even mentioning attempts and near-fatals. Then it proceeds to national news that DC people balk at, then back to the good stuff from blue-collared Baltimore, sister of the gold-collared DC. This is what we started to get over HDTV recently, in pure color, and perfect picture, except for the occasional breaks by large jets at BWI airport. I hope that this is a permanent change- some news that makes one understand the real world.

The Eternal Copyright (2008-11-25 19:26)

Anything before 1923 has eternal life. That’s when the first Mickey Mouse was First it was 28 years, then doubled if requested, then 70 years... now, it’s lifetime plus 70 years in America- scenario: a 15 year old writes a book- lives to age 95. Copyright doesn’t end for another 70 years, so the kids can get some dough. That’s 150 amazing years- imagine- pre-civil war material still under copyright. Amazing. Corporate copyrights are up to 95 years now, and as Mickey gets close (as it did in 1998), it’ll be renewed. So don’t copy this bloggy.

113 x 2 Thanksgiving (2008-11-27 16:29)

I totally felt like a tourist. After getting off the and trying to figure out whether the express or local would come first (unlike most stations in the NYC subway, Penn Sta. blue line lacks a crossover), and dashing to the business dinner. We got on the local, and shuffled to the express at the next stop! Having had the NJ Transit train arrived in New York 1 hr 15 min late, we missed cocktails and part of dinner. Afterward, after a long delay, as a group, the younger St. Thomas alumni went out to in an effeminate style to the 68th street theater, ten blocks north. Duane Reade, Starbucks, theater closed and locked. How could this be? It was
therefore necessary to go back downtown to 42nd street. Since all of us were cheapskates, we didn’t take a taxi or a subway. When we all got to 58th again, somebody got hungry. Realizing that the last show was actually at 12:45am, and that no one really wanted to see Quantum of Solace that badly, we headed over to Bella Vita- the slices went up to $3 each! Anyway, because they wanted to rid of their pizza, they cut us deals. Some late-night supper with Chocolate News and Futurama before realizing that it was 1:30 am. By then, this was the most wasted I had made myself to date, surpassing the Dec.1 lock-in at the Cathedral last year (refer to a post around that date). So we got into bed and all. Truth and Dare with Stefane, nothing too weird, though, and we set the game into a logic loop (I dare Stefane to stop doing this game). So we all fell asleep. Or that was what I thought.

I had a good long sleep until 8:57 am, according to the clock on the microwave. I felt totally refreshed. Surprised not another soul was not awake, I looked at my own clock. It was 7:57. The clock had not been reset since the organist-in-residence left this posh midtown apartment (approx value 3,500+/mo.) in July. So I put my head back into bed. Some time later, I remembered that I needed to watch the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade pass by on Broadway, for I never had the chance to do so.

Got some good shots. But where was Kermit? I had vowed to see him as a float while in New York. Well, I at least I saw the parade, I thought, as I got dressed for church. I took a wide look out the window. Some Escalade and a small dirigible. Then I heard loud applause. A green head. Sure enough, it was Kermit, and his dominating minions holding him to ground were dressed in florescent green jumpsuits, as I had been informed. I got two awesome shots, and jolly-lept to church.

The service was quite enjoyable, with good company. Sitting in the wide, dark, balcony of Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue that was unknown to the hoards of tourists let us rest in peace. I pulled out two knit finger puppets I bought in a hurry for $5 on the way over. A lion and a giraffe. The crocodile would have been nice, but they were sold out. Yes, I had meant to buy them as a gift for someone all the way back in sixth grade. I lost one brief window of opportunity, and he was gone when I returned from church then. So I vowed this not to happen again and all. How’s that for rewriting history? Some greetings, nice to meet yous and all before taking the walk down Avenue of the Americas, cutting to Seventh and Times Square perpendicular to Radio City. With the grand avenue closed, Little Brother and I alternated taking touristy shots of each other as we rattled to Penn Station (at 33rd, not 34th!) past Macy’s Herald Square. I didn’t get to see any large floats being deflated of helium, though. They were probably done at 28th street, a larger street than the others. Looking for a cheap lunch took us around the large loop under Madison Square Garden, and out to a falafel vendor outside, who sold those lamb gyros for $5. Coupled with two cans of 99 cent Arizona Iced tea and a $1 bottle of water, we faced the train departure board. Twenty minutes delayed. The only one out of 20 trains on the board. Oh well, the train could catch up time. Better start late and fast, rather than on time, go fast, then wait for the schedule to catch up. We looked for our unaccompanied minor friend, who might get us bumped into business class. Eating the gyro on the floor in the coach section of waiting room wasted a little time. Just looking into the sparsely populated First Class waiting area... 2:25pm. The 169 was supposed to be here, with the delay. Instead, the message went vague. ‘Delayed’ I was in so much anticipation of my first Amtrak ride.

Not present for our class was NTFletch and his co-partner and twin brother, Zak. The school board thought that Thanksgiving was a racist holiday, so they had school until 3, and band practice, too. ?!

Even with your stock fund in the gutter,

We all have to be thankful for gas in the $1.– range. That’s what matters most.

Oh, and yes. I found out that three of the brothers went out to the 24-hour Apple store at the GM building (59+5th ave) to seek out internet. Why? Facebook.

After the fruitcake
After the turkey and pie
I need some sleep now
Ten hours of good sleep
It felt really good to me
Time to repeat that

Winchester (2008-11-29 19:41)

The town that could
Nestled east of West Virginia, this industrious little town is also the wine capital of Virginia.
There are yuppies and factory workers, and it’s pretty... Can't believe it’s so late

Typing (2008-11-30 19:14)

First Blogpost on a laptop. The late Mr. Henderson let us use his spiffy job, but as close as I came to blogging on that laptop, NTFletch would do it first. Anyway, Little Brother is going back to Philly. Boy, these laptops are only good for looking at websites, not typing.
So I’m getting my blast off this laptop when I can...

2.12 December

Let’s pretend it’s Monday morning (2008-12-02 18:29)

Oh how I hate to get up in the morning
O how I wish I were still in bed
For the hardest call of all
is to hear the trumpeter call
(Wah-wah-wah-wah-wah)
(This is the Army, Mr. Jones; Irving Berlin)
6:07 am. The little 99 cent IKEA alarm clock goes off for the first time in four days. I was sooo sleepy and loathed how Little Brother would still be in bed during Fourth Period. I take shower, eat some meal, and find that my clock went beserk- it was doing its self-tripping motion. I shook the clock a little, and it caught back its momentum. Usually, I get some work done while on the 6:58 Blue to Largo and sequentially, the 7:10 Red to Glenmont at Metro Center. But I took a nap...
It’s going to be Wednesday tommorow. I have to teach a brief lecture at 12:45 in the afternoon. I hope my listeners are engaged. And to think that one week ago, I had started the journey to New York as I was liberated for several days from the cycle.
YouTube Down (2008-12-03 18:57)

I just got a message from the man who runs IT that a very lethal virus is running rampant on YouTube. The forwarded message came from the design manager of the minor wonder, JangoVision News (under atticussawatzki’s channel on YouTube). Youtube is the internet home of these newscasts, so episode 203 will have to wait until the virus blows over. That’s some sad news for all of democracy.

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The Sawatzki Report (2008-12-03 19:04)

The virus is making national news
"YouTube users in virus panic"
"Youtube Virus? Actnsswift"


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1 billion for Great Society (2008-12-05 18:51)

Money has been approved from congress for the Silver Line towards Dulles Airport- for the first segment to Tyson’s Corner. This will provide easier access to the supermall there, and should spur development. Some groups even say that the area will become DC’s skyscraper district. (I know it’s Fairfax; Rosslyn is unsuitable because of the 300’ height limit due to National Airport, and the feds probably don’t want a building towering over the Pentagon, if located in Crystal City. But will it be above or underground? It still has to be decided. Even if it were overhead, the cheaper alternative, the architectural drawings do make it look not like an eyesore.

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TFS (2008-12-06 19:47)

Long chat...a phonecall from a distant slumber party...more chat...bed

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The mystery caller (2008-12-07 19:27)

Tonight, I got the second mystery call. Last night, the first had sent me out into the street looking behind the "little green tree". Tonight was more civil: The caller identified herself and the previous caller, with some background information. Pretty nice, though, talking to people. Of course, for the respect of privacy of others, I won’t disclose aliases or locations. But they did say about how they liked what I did in the musical. So, my cellphone is starting to get a little workout.

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Test and Quizzed and Examed (2008-12-08 18:24)

This is my life
Monday
History, Quiz (Post-Reformation Europe)
English, Quiz (CH. 9, Great Gatsby paragraph)
Geometry, board assignment (Congruent Triangles)
Physics, Quiz (Waves)
French, Test (Crime, Subjunctives, Double Object Pronouns)
Humanities, some had a 10-min Presentation (Post-Renaissance Art)
Latin, Test (Infinitives)
Religion, Prepare Essay (Marriage)

Tuesday
Latin, Quiz (Verbs)
French, Test, cont.
Physics, Quiz (?); Lab Rpt. Due

Wednesday
Physics, Test
Religion, Essay Due
A little nervous about Physics- very comprehensive test.
I got a great tip from a classmate to write out those physics equations on paper- and memorize them cold. As for the other 10 Q+T, exams are next week. Thursday, Friday, hard review.

Not too bad of a day (2008-12-09 19:19)

Good things like to happen on Tuesdays
Another run-over day in French Class
I got through over 10 Physics problems in less than 1-1/2 hours
I didn’t make big mistakes on the French test
Main House dominated Austin
I broke the YouTube hiatus after determining it was safe, loading episode 3!
I performed 5-hit streaks, only to be ended by victory
Yes, I was ostracized for being #15 for the shuttle, but the 80-bus came and delivered me JIT (just in time) to say: “Ben (gasp), you thought you could get rid (gasp) of me!”
Learned the proper pronunciation of "Grosvenor" (in the local Northwest vestige of the Mid Atlantic Pure Dialect)
Found out how great I was at photography as I printed out some digital pix at Walgreen’s 30-minute photoshop.
I looked up a self-esteem chart, and it’s here:


It’s called a retrocession (2008-12-10 19:10)

The Northwest Current is getting up and at the issue of DC statehood again. The main issue is voting rights. Currently, there is the proposal of the addition of new Congress seats- one for DC, and one for Utah. Whether
Other options do exist. There are the people who want a state of their own. That requires big stuff—constitutional and all that. Or, what may be the second option is retrocession- the Port Town of Alexandria did it over 150 years ago, so did Arlington. Everything except the National Capital Service Area (That’s just The Mall) would be given back from Maryland. It’s actually pretty simple- state-level approval and Congress. I mean, it’s already been done before. Of course, Maryland could decide to take only the good stuff (Downtown, etc), and leave the rest behind, but I’m getting sleepy, so I’m not going to think too much about Amendment 23, which explains it all.

Or if you want to vote for Congress in 2010, just move to Virginia or Maryland, two self-sufficient, all-American states. Golly, the media is so biased.

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Lots of Videos (2008-12-12 19:40)

By popular request, I started putting more mundane videos online to YouTube. But, then, after on a Metro ride home, a static ensemble of producers asked me to do "Animal noises", noticing that I was unable to do the oink of the pig. Along with that came some videos from our e-library that were never placed in a JangooVision episode, and the definite cancellation of the "Dari" series, it being an epic failure. So I had to craft the Animal oises film carefully so I would not be humiliated. Well, it has been relatively sucessful, being spread around Facebook and all- 62 views the first night.

"never give up"
-iropolomarco43

To see JangooVision and all the other e-films I produce, look up atticussawatzki on YouTube.

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The Multimedia Journalist (2008-12-13 18:39)

Post 350, a lot of videos online, and the news comes down to meet me
Picture the sort of fascinating journalism I do. Now imagine instead of you clicking to see my world, you turn on your TV and see me. That is what WUSA 9 is doing- the least viewed news channel around here. They are throwing out the specialists who film and do the lighting and all, even eliminating the sucker interns who do all the work when everyone else is on vacation. What is replacing my aspirations is self-reporting. After ten years of improving e-journalism that now involves real crews, these reporters are going to film themselves. Now I consider how on the film Animal Noises, I left out the usual lighting scheme by accident. I didn’t want to redo the whole ad lib show, so I uploaded it it anyway. That is the future of Channel 9.

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Crime fits a Punishment (2008-12-16 18:58)

Over the weekend, a boy who was unfortunately hacked by an ice pick managed to get on the train, and ride it to the next stop, get out, and flag down the cops, causing a CSI on the tracks. That amazed me. But that was not the only fantastic crime that happened recently. Ponzi scheme- worked for a long time. Apparently, you must have enough cash on hand to pay all creditors back, if you wanted to play that way. Then comes "Pay to Play", and then, the shoe. Wow.
All that and four of seven exams down.

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Little Incident on the Tracks (2008-12-17 09:01)

That was one tough geometry exam.
But, I heard of a person getting hit by a train.
This serves as a reminder to be careful when doing stuff near railroad tracks.
And when driving a train, be careful.

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Time Keeps on Ticking (2008-12-18 19:07)

So my little green alarm clock that likes to alaram me at 6am started to stop ticking when I roped around
the clock to turn it off. Reseting the clock would get it back in motion. Then, yesterday, I find that the clock
would not respond. I spin, I hit, then I think of the little Energizer Bunny- The battery! Replacing the
Rayovac with another off-brand got the clock back on beat with a snappy rhythm.

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Sort of Tired (2008-12-19 16:40)

Yes, it’s finally Christmas break
but it didn’t feel like it with the rainy bike ride
I shot some nice videos of ducks lapping water, and planes taking off- but boy was it wet.
Did you ever know that an airport had bike racks.

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An American Way (2008-12-20 19:10)

So Walgreens was selling cans of Progresso soup for $2.99. Sort of outrageous. Well, they had a sale that
brought the price down to 99 cents, and Little Brother found a coupon for $1.10 off the price. Therefore, we
could earn 11 cents by purchasing the soup, as sometimes happens. So we did, along with some other stuff.
We got home, and I popped the lid. Well, well, it so splattered everywhere in a terrific fashion. Why? A
mild dent in the rim. So cleaning was pesky.
But, it was still worth it to take advantage of American Consumerism!

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Pooks Hill Station (2008-12-22 06:37)

Grosvenor Station. Grosvenor. The least American metro station name after L’enfant Plaza. I got schooled
on its pronunciation about a week or two ago. Is it gros-ve-nor, grovs-ner (as the conductors say it), it
actually is Gro-venor, with the Norman French silent ’s’, according to a native. Since 1984, the name has been
tripping everyone up. Pooks Hill, the name in the original plans, would have satisfied the American desire of
easy. Then the station had Strathmore added to its name. Unlike such stations as Woodley Park/Zoo-Adams
Morgan, or U Street/Cardozo/African-American Civil War Memorial Station, people actually use the new
part of the name.
Well, that leads to what Little ‘Borther’ had me do yesterday. He had me ride the entire Metro system. We
boarded at 2:10pm, took the Orange Line out to New Carollton, doubled back to the Blue to Largo, headed
off to Green to Branch Ave, reversing towards Greenbelt. But, by then, it was 5:30pm, and Mommy called
146
us to come back home for supper. On the Red Line from Fort Totten home, I asked whether he was still
recording the train times, as it pulled into each station. "No, never again on Sunday". Indeed, we spent well
over an hour waiting for trains, as it was Sunday. We put our farecards through the exit gate at just about
6pm.

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PTSD in a school setting? (2008-12-23 12:16)

It occurs in soldiers, police people and fire people. But I keep on having these recurring dreams and perceptions
of school- 5 days or more per week, four months nearly straight at 6am. It’s being nervous of something,
something. Report cards don’t come out until Jan. 6, but for now, it’s relax and do some history.

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Id Faciendum Est (2008-12-24 19:13)

Twas the night before Christmas, and I had a reading at the 6pm. Went totally well, watched Charlie Browns
Christmas Special on VHS, played some e-poker with the cyberpals, and will go to bed, to see if presents
appear under the tree tomorrow, perchance.

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A Little Holiday (2008-12-27 16:41)

Blog all of three days in six minutes?
After the balmy day of Christmas was half-gone, we headed to Virginia Beach, checking in to a hotel where
we had frequent stay points. Pretty nice place, glass elevator.
The concurrent light show was swell, the bike path smooth as always.
Second day, it turned out that one night was not enough. Stay another night, go to the MacArthur Mall and
Museum, see Mommy and Daddy’s former residence and running grounds, Chrysler Museum.
I’m not that much in the Blog Zone.
I’ll save day 3 for later

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360 Around HOT (2008-12-28 19:32)

It was hot I was in short I felt like I was melting I turned on a fan when I did tennis I was loose like a heated
piece of taffy

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Water and The Working Girl (2008-12-30 15:45)

Working Girl. A great movie about an aspiring secretary (Melanin Griffith-never heard of her name) from
Staten Island (supposedly) who speaks with a Brooklyn accent. A ski scene, she becomes ‘da boss’, plays
the Wall Street game, wins over the respect of men in the workplace, gets Harrison Ford and dumps Alec
Baldwin. Then she gets a secretary, and they have coffee together. Which reminds me about how important
proper hydration is.
Having gone all morning and afternoon without a drink. On a bridge while biking, my head hurt a lot for no reason. I thought I would faint—but soon, I found a water fountain that Little Brother noted. I pushed the little button, and nothing came out. I pushed harder, and ka-bam! Now if someone caught a video of me lapping the water (from a shiny, brand-new water fountain) like a dog...

New Year (2008-12-31 12:57)

If one has been following my blog all year, the reader would find its length as long as a novel. It really is. While throughout the years I have been struggling to write the noel (ie taking various writings and tying them together) Somehow, 2009 is now labeled as the most disastrous year in a long, long time. And since I’ll be up until 2009

Last Post, 08 (2008-12-31 20:56)

Under three minutes until the New Year. If I do not type fast enough, then this will be my first post of 2009. But I do not intend for that to happen. As a matter of fact, Luke Russert is hanging around the high profiles on TV, and all eyes are in Times Square. Do you know the words to Au Lang Syne? Get ready. Ah, 45 seconds...35...

First Post, 09 (2008-12-31 20:59)

Mission Acomplished
...8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Happy New Year! Right on the dot. Now what must I do this year?
Jan- Issue J MAG
See inauguration
Win big in school
Sometime later this year- start looking at colleges
Yeah, it’ll all come into place.
Blog Book 2008 will be out soon- hot off the press!

Not quite done (2008-12-31 21:05)

Oh, yeah, Blogger runs on West Coast time- it won’t be New Year for a while, on their time. Yes, and did we all enjoy our extra second too? I can’t believeq it made so much news- not much happens at this time of year.
Chapter 3

2009

3.1 January

For those who love to eat and see chickens (2009-01-01 19:42)

It’s about 7pm in Silicon Valley this waning first day of 2009. In 19 days, the popular president elect will actually become president, and we will plant a bush back in Texas.

Sorry, the rest of this is not too vegetarian-friendly The fact that I acknowledge this is a good thing on the step to so-called ending cruelty.

On the subject of the day, chickens.

The chicken at Chick-Fil-A was quite superb as always. TGIT, and not Sunday!

At the quite new Dulles Town Center, I saw an unusual take on a calendar- Chickens

And I saw a chicken at the last farm between the Beltway and Leesburg.

Trying to find a BP (for which we have a rewards card valid until Saturday), we stopped at Boston Market to pick up dinner. The second chicken came for just $1.99. The chicken was indeed superb- the nicely browned skin and all. I recommend them too.

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Journalism in Print (2009-01-02 19:17)

The print version of Jangoo Publications. I’ve been toying with the idea of a free publication. Yes, all the daily newspapers are failing, but some are succeeding. Anyway, with the new newseum, it’s sort of inspirational. Actually, I was in a very creative mood today. Planes and aeroships and the whole works. JMAG is coming out soon.

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(2009-01-03 18:40)

It totally sounds reminiscent of the classic blog post of the $500 in coins going to the bank, in my younger and more vulnerable years, but I had to relive the past. So when Walgreen’s came out with the awesome offer of 10 cents per print, digital or old-timer film. Well, since it got so expen $ive in recent times ( $6.95 and such), a lot of rolls of film, dating back as much as 5 or 6 years, got stacked up on the shelf. Eventually, we would get them printed. Now the chance had come. At 10 am, we sent over 13 rolls of film. With one hour processing at the rate opf $2.40 a roll, this job was done quickly, and with excellent prints, considering
the age of the film, we sent another 20...this afternoon, another 11. In all, 44 rolls, adding up to the grand sum of $105.60. Blue folders That’s just the price of procrastination in photography.

Link from JMAG


**Film Day (2009-01-03 19:12)**

It totally sounds reminiscent of the classic blog post of the $500 in coins going to the bank, *in my younger and more vulnerable years*, but I had to relive the past. So when Walgreen’s came out with the awesome offer of 10 cents per print, digital or old-timer film. Well, since it got so expensive in recent times ( $6.95 and such), a lot of rolls of film, dating back as much as 5 or 6 years, got stacked up on the shelf. Eventually, we would get them printed. Now the chance had come. At 10 am, we sent over 13 rolls of film. With one hour processing at the rate of $2.40 a roll, this job was done quickly, and with excellent prints, considering the age of the film, we sent another 20...this afternoon, another 11. In all, 44 rolls, adding up to the grand sum of $105.60. Blue folders filling two large bags...It’ll take a long time to admire those last generation of film prints. That’s just the price of procrastination in photography.

Link from JMAG


**Tommorow is the day (did I spell it right?) (2009-01-04 19:19)**

Fact: School starts again in less than nine hours.
I get to find out a lot of the exam grades, and get a lot of assignments. But, going through the big, heavy bag, I realized that I would be bearing that burden as I will run in the dark towards the station. Well, well, to get to sleep earlier than recently.
Oh, and I should review again the History reading- the socioeconomic conditions at the Enlightenment.

A lonely CD (2009-01-05 19:33)

When sending big files just won’t work... we have to revert to IP over messenger disk. The technology existed in the late, late 1990’s, but the fun has never been greater. In our new times of broadband internet, and those mp3 and sd cards and stick drives, the fun of sticking in a CD -and maybe it self-ejects when done, is lost. Yet, it can be recreated relatively easily. Copy your files. Make a music video. Trade the freedom of press around. But... don’t copy my bloggy!
My Escalator! (2009-01-06 18:49)

I am happy to report that the central exit escalator at the Foggy Bottom Metro Station is now back in commission, as of 5pm, serving streetbound passengers with a smooth ride. For some reason, this specific escalator has drawn attention from the press from sources such as the Northwest Current to the Washington Post Express. Now will there be freezing rain as promised tomorrow, specifically in MoCo land? Some of us sure do. (That’s Montgomery Co, MD- it doesn’t pop up in the search engine)

So in the mild chilly rains this afternoon, I frosted my hands and dirtied my suit as I measured water levels. This lab better come out good for the toils of dedication:

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Wet Socks and Lots of Essays (2009-01-09 19:42)

It rained a lot on Wednesday. In fact, it was just so wet it was a downer. Not to mention it was just above the freezing mark- exactly. Terrible news for drivers- patches of black ice rather than a day to avoid all ice at home...in simple terms, a snow day would have been better for society. And then lots of essays that took me away for the past two days...

So then, after burning out, I took the 80 all the way home from school- it was a 1 hour 5 minute ordeal...it went fine until New York Avenue on North Capitol. Just a lot of red lights. So I arrived at 25+Virginia and sort of regretted it, until I found out about the Red Line- just a minor track dinky that broke camel’s back...I do applaud Metro about how fast they do resolve these problems when they happen.

Blue skies for miles tomorrow, I think.

Here I am posting on random forums

"Is this even constitutional? While congress has full power over DC, I don’t think that they have the authority to close roads in Virginia for this purpose. And anyway, Rich Joe wants to get from McLean to a party in Palisades. He normally would use Chain Bridge, but now he must use the American Legion, wasting let’s say a gallon of fuel and lots of harm to the environment. PS-Metro is not an option for Rich Joe, yet.

But on the upside, Congress wanted a transit-oriented city by the early ’70’s. In the chance that forcing people out of their cars at the suburban stations and onto the one-day BRT and Metrorail works, we might have an utopia. However, it won’t work for the long term. DC People are Americans at heart."

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Travel Around for Cheap (2009-01-11 17:27)

Before I get to what I did last night, which will take a while to explain, I want to get these points off the top of my head

Skybus failed about 14 days too short. At that later date, what Skybus shocked the world with (no free checked luggage or pillows) became standard practice. That’s just bad timing then.

Gishigo really doesn’t work for squat. I tried on multiple occasions, but ”it don’t work”. If you want to actually find a ride somewhere in America, Craigslist is a good place to look. You can get trips to the ordinary busable distances (under 500 or so miles) with people who do not want to be hit by a barrage of surcharges on a plane or several when riding a hound (Can’t sue me, hee hee). Or you can go all the way to Canada, California, or Mexico (just see what pops up under the nyc craigslist). I suppose most of these people selling
seats are normal, but as a prudent law school grad student said: I’m not promising anything, but no drugs or
minors or anything else illegal.
One caveat: bring plenty of cash (or a simple credit card) for airfare home!

My Awesome Church Adventure, Part 1 (2009-01-14 18:50)

Just a briefing:
Pop Tarts for those 5-minute lunches are great.
On such a meal, it was a Main House supervictory - undefeated in every qualifying game in volleyball. Well,
we did falter on championship game 2, and it was looking sad, "If you don’t want to hit the ball, then don’t
be on the team". The tough love that was used surely secured victory rather than the normal rotation that
forces good players out as often as the bad. Main pulled off the 3rd game to be #1.
So Saturday, 2:15 pm. I just got back from orchestra as I ran and packed bags. I said I would be there at
2:30 pm, so I had to rush. Well, I got there at 3 pm, but that was fine anyway, as I had the alibi of having to
scour the church for the group. Yes, they were already hard at work in the kitchen. After some stop-and-go
moments, the kitchen was at full swing for two hours, poaching 220 eggs in six small pots, one at a time.
So the survivability rate rolled around 87%, much better than the previous 50% of 2007, including breeched yolks, and one-eyed monsters that lost their albumin in the pot. The time passed quickly by...

Miracle on the Hudson (2009-01-15 15:42)

We interrupt the regular programming to bring some inside details about US Airways Flight 1549 -
Lower heights of buildings north of 96th street allow planes to take the U-turn described on graphics. The
plane did not come perilously close to the GWB at 181st street. LGA is located at about the place of 125th.
The most famous water landing disaster was the 1982 AirFlorida flight 90 on the Potomac River. The
Florida pilots did not understand what ice was—it actually happened about this time of year, 27 years ago.
Only 6 people survived the wreck, 1 of them died before leaving the water. The bridge that was partially
damaged by the plane was named after him- The Arlene D. Williams 14th Street Bridge.
Differences exist- the AirFlorida pilots were incompetent and lacked much brain ("regulations and deicing
are just regulation"; "We don’t have enough thrust", Nah, we’ll dodge that bridge”). The USAIR pilots
were attentive, and understood geography- Teterboro, with a short but salvageable runway was an option
they crossed out in 15 seconds- they judged it to be too far, and executed a rarely successful intact-fuselage
water landing- as commonly seen on those safety cards. A full aircraft SunCountry now flies from Dulles, a
no-brainer beginner’s airport with ample space to correct mistakes.
With by-the-card evacuation and a rapid rescue, an unprecedented 155 people escaped with the most serious
injury a broken leg.
Miracle on the Hudson seems like a plausible name for a new ACI.

My Awesome Church Adventure, Part 2 (2009-01-16 19:47)

Over supper, which was a snazzed up frozen lasagna, with those brownies that make life worth it, we were
fed a pop quiz on what we learned over the past five months- indeed, I got the second highest score, at 60%
top was 65%). Since we all talked, we all zeroes, and the curve brought us all up to 100. Then, we got to
expend our breath on blue and white balloons while having a kitchen reality show to see who could make the
best hollinadase sauce. Blowing balloons - gotta remember to blow from the abs. My sauce came out just by
the book, until the yolk started to turn into scrambled eggs. And I never knew one could burn butter. The
thing didn’t come together correctly- lumpy texture. Burn.

Somehow, it was midnight.

My Awesome Church Adventure, Part 3 (2009-01-17 19:34)

With 200 balloons, we had to do something with the 150 that weren’t strung on the wall or placed on the table. So we threw them down in the new, just-varnished atrium, and played slow-mo volleyball with them. That burned enough time until 1am, when we then pulled out a hardcore gamer’s X-Box. I had again surpassed my record on self-wasting.

I can’t remember the name, but I was like HALO- totally violent, but it’s the type of raunchy material the Army loves to hear about- Can you believe that the point and shoot techniques in HALO actually help real-life gunmanship? So curfew was 1:45, then 2, then 2:15. By the time I was asleep, and small-talking about sometimes hateful people at school it was 3.

I Saw Him (2009-01-18 18:06)

Receiving a call at 12:35am must have been a traumatic experience. But someone had to answer that 3am phone call. Yes, I did speak coherently for 2 min 24 sec, and regretted not turning off the cell phone before sleep. Then, I wake up, and didn’t really remember that I answered the phone during sleep.

And then, today, I saw Him. It was at the concert on the Mall, and He came out and spoke to us. It was another fresh speech of change. And I was there live, and caught it on video. He was The Barack Obama, and I heard him live, and saw him over the jumbotron.

And that brings me to last Sunday. As was religious duty, it was church at 7:45 am. That meant being woken at 7:30am, just with a mere 41/2 hours of sleep. Then came the task of cooking the eggs again. Soon, it was time to serve. The mimosas offered some comfort to the diners, but we were running slow. But we caught up, and I was transferred to the unglamorous task of dishwashing. And you get paid < $6.50/hour for that!! That’s life, I suppose, as a comfortable desk job rakes in 3x as much or more. So I had to deal with the unwieldy equipment, and the cumulative amount of spray soaked my outer shirt. Well, the job was done by 1pm, and I had the chance to join the others and dispose of the balloons, i.e., shove them into the new elevator. Our church, like many others, joined the fad of building new buildings. Ours was completed only about last month, and the rooms were still unoccupied. I felt like an explorer roaming the winding staircases and sloping halls and mezzanines, untouched to suited men. Since we had done so much, the rest of the mess was cleaned up later.

Boy was I tried come Monday Morning. TG for tomorrow’s holiday.

Wine Cooler (2009-01-18 18:26)

I have no use for it. Neither does the family. A neighbor decided he/she did not want their barely-used “Wine Enthusiast” in the potter’s field. So that’s when I adopted it, only on the fact that it isn’t a worthless thing-about $250. So, since it’s out of the box, but otherwise unused, I concurred that $95 is not a bad price to get it off my hands. Now I have to get to ebay...
PS- it’s a 28 bottle model with stainless steel trim, and there is no law saying that people under 21 can’t own one- it’s just that they don’t/

MLK Day (2009-01-19 19:47)

In the "90210"- stereotyped county of Montgomery, there was an official county MLK day concert, as all pc places have. Dr. Samadari’s Orchestra, the DMYOP from Suitland, was one of the performing groups. That was me there, too, and just before the happy clappy Chinese performance. I missed out on part of the action, the awards ceremonies, but got back in time for the Howard Univ Choir- great soul.
Yes, there were a lot of county-elected officials there, as well as the House Rep for the area.

Obama and The Bad Song (2009-01-20 18:42)

I might have been hunkered at home, with the viral online video attributed to the GOP (not necessarily Republicans or Conservatives) running. Barack the Magic Negro, playing in a repeated fashion while re-washing the wall, lamenting the butterball cronies who are losing their jobs today. Turning off the TV at 11:50am to not see change.
But I got down to 7th street, the demarcation for the non-ticketed zone (after 6:30am), at about 8am, and waited a long, long time until the concert started- the replay from Sunday. But it was something to kill time on the Jumbotron. Then, at about 10:00am, the choir sung, and the dignitaries for life piled in (that is Capitol Hill- if you get elected one and don’t do something too stupid- such as b.t.m.n., you have a job for life). So then there were all the retired presidents that still breathed- Carter and Bush HW(ages 84), and Clinton and Bush W(ages 62). at just before noon, Biden was sworn in. A few minutes after noon, Obama was sworn in. I thought it was to average the time to noon- but it was just that my watch was off.
Another great speech by The Man, after which exit was of utmost need.
As the Governor (and Barack pal) pronounced, Old Virginny is Dead. Yes, that song with racist connotations, sort of like the "Magic Negro" incident, was removed as state song about 10 years ago. But Cheney is moving to his new ranch in McLean. Of corse, it takes a while to wipe something out completely.

Obama and the NPS (2009-01-23 18:54)

So the magical moment came, and before the poet spoke, people left. Or at least they tried. All the people encaged from 7th back to 12th were routed through one open gate link. Riots? Against Bush for supposedly stealing the election? Yes. Incompetent management? SURE!! Not against Obama, though. SO the 12th street gate was locked and deserted (It was supposed to be an open station at Federal Triangle!!!!) and there was the arduous task of getting to the 14th street gate. It was crowded, to say the least. We got around the johns, which were being used as barricades. However, the line was stopped solid. So reverse, and come around the other side, where people were sliding through the crack to the Washington Monument area. Stationed cops prevented access to the 14th st. bridge, and all gates to Constitution sealed off by IMF _grade tower barricades. So at least it opened up at that point. Getting through the next gate at 17th- no access north, though. Past that point, there was easy egress towards the Foggy Bottom Station. Well, by the time I got to a Metro Station, I was already so close to home.
WHEW! Time to warm up those chilly hands and toes.

Well, I’m sort of tired now. But I went on a ski trip to Whitetail, one of three resorts around here. The cost was covered, less $40, by that brunch about 2 weeks ago. The place is 17 years young, with major improvements fresh for this year. The facilities were very nice, but holding a near-monopoly grip on the lucrative DC ski market (did you know lift tickets cost < $100!?). There’s only 2 others. Well, we split into two groups- those who have skied, and those who haven’t. So as a morning treat, we went up to a blue trail. Soon, after frantic weaving slowing measures, I lost control and performed a whiteout to avoid serious injury. The leader was on me like a hawk. So I was saying that this was not my morning coffee, he nevertheless had me come down, occasionally slipping out of the skis, and tripping over the pole. Somehow, I made it down, and headed for the relaxing bunny slopes. There were two lifts- a quad and a u-me double. For some reason, the quad was frequently stopped for the twinkie who left the lift the wrong way. Actually, it was poor exit design. But there were no problems on the intimate double. So that was fun. But quickly, it was lunch time-packed- would I pay $4 for a soda!?!?! So then it was up to the advanced greens and easier blues on a quad. Yet, it was sort of icy, and the weave-slowing, a time and energy consuming process, was required from losing speed control (as what happened on the shock starter in the morning). And it was 5pm, and time to go. Somehow, in the dark at 6:30pm, I fell asleep. And conveniently, I woke up inside the Beltway. PS- I recommend the slope for snowboarders- they seemed to thrive on the rough conditions and steady downward gradients.

Aftermath (2009-01-25 19:18)

My legs are tired, and my head is tired. My gait has gone awry, but some sleep should do the trick. It has to do with all the weaving, I think. Well, it’s off to bed.

Presidential IQ (2009-01-26 19:10)

It’s just too bipartisan- ranges for Bush the 2nd range from a paltry 91 (low-average) to 125 (above average). And many presidents were over 150- which should be a rarity- Nixon at 155, JFK at 174, and Clinton at 182–or, according to some, a significantly lower 137. And everyone’s been wondering at Obama. The staunch Republican put Obama at 116 based on his LSAT guesstimation- an IQ just above average. Actually, many think he is the smartest president ever. The thing about Bush Jr. having exactly 1/2 of Clinton’s intelligence may be just a political hoax, according to reports. To my knowledge, no official data or records have been released or sleuthed.and IQ’s don’t measure performance-Reagan measured in at 105. It just doesn’t work.


Whups— what bad journalism. Based on scientific fact, his IQ is probably between 105 and 125. He just didn’t act it. I said these #’s were biased!

Snow Day (2009-01-27 18:56)

SNow Day- and a texas hold em day just now. Buffets and such.

MARC it to the Market (2009-01-30 20:07)

What did I do with those two snow days? Well, Tuesday, I was just about at school by the time I got the news- it only started to snow around here at 9am. But I continued to school to see if I could get some work done. Concerned that the train might slip up, I took that 80 all the way home- seeing no H1. Yet, we went out to the Fortune Star buffet near White Flint. An easy 30-minute Metro ride, and just around the NRC complex- 1 block. Great food, Great price.

And on Wednesday, after a nail-biting minute or two while turning on the computer, I found out I was redeemed for another day. So what do I do? Take a MAryland Rail Commuter train to Baltimore- a little of a rush to get on. Nice conductor, did not charge $3 surcharge. I guess that’s kept for the bumps on a log who just lounge inside the train for 20 minutes. SO monstrous thuds were heard as peals of ice came off the roof. Seabrook was the first station outside the DC Metro. In less than an hour, the train pulled into Penn Station, and down the little stairway to the lightrail. Nice, clean, and pretty empty. Lexington Market for lunch. Nice place on the weekends. Sort of sad on weekdays. After 20 minutes, a lightrail came to take me downtown. Camden Yards en route to Cromwell. Very icy and cold. Stopped at two hotels on the way to the harbor. Harbour iced and frigid, and all was for $ $ $ Balt. Tower? $5, Aquarium? $30. Exactly. But at least Barnes and Nobles at the power plant was free. Mother did not like the place this time of year (she thought it was a clone of Norfolk), so we got out of this town on an earlier MARC.

So... when one travels to Baltimore, free entertainment is spread out!

And when school was back in session, I was told, "Snow days are for you to stay home!" Whatev.

Snow Forecast

At the unbiased mercy of an egghead in Rockville, snow accumulated and frozen water on Monday night will ensure a closing on Tuesday. That is, if the weatherman is right.

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3.2 February

It’s Worth the Publicity (2009-02-02 19:15)

"Down there, you can find a church sandwiched between two waffle houses". But not around here. Denny’s restaurants are few and far between, so you might have to hit the locator to find the nearest one. After all, there’s only 1500 of them. But why do I mention this?

Because they’re giving away FREE (no strings attached) breakfasts to all who come between 6am and 2pm. Just pay 99 cents to supersize it, and however much for a drink (can’t take pancakes dry)

If there is a snow day called- I’ll be blessed.

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Cautiously Pessimistic (2009-02-03 16:32)

The Denny’s disaster of a nationwide dusting of snow, significant enough to close school, but not enough to scare drivers from driving, did not happen. And a snow day for the central DC region tomorrow, according
to my books, may not happen tomorrow. Let me tell you- a lot of the weather tonight will be what a lot of kids call dismal- the weatherman(or woman)predicted wrong about a major snowfall.
So then, my forecast for tonight is wishy-washy. According to the national data, a significant snow is falling from Minneapolis south to Raleigh east to Boston, and north into Canada. Somehow, all this snow is to dodge the Chesapeake? The local meteorologists are calling a snow tonight, although a brief one. However, NOAA is differing. Or maybe there’ll be the yink of an hour delay. After all, I do want to see little brother off.

CUMUNC X: I (2009-02-06 19:45)

This would be my second run at CUMUNC- the Catholic University Model UN Conference. Well, maybe I could snatch an award this time. So yesterday afternoon, we got in the trusty steed- actually, just your typical SUV in a school bus form. I never knew that the buslets had a little PA system. ETA- must have been under 10 minutes.
Unlike last year, I did not have any frantic research to do, and a greater appreciation for this fine arts was show by the teachers, who did not pile on homework. Naturally, there was an opening ceremony. So there was the I was quite impressed with the brevity of some of the speakers’ speeches. Straight to the point is good. This was after multiple plates of cheese cubes, crackers, and cheese-laden spinach provided- oh and some delectable cookies. and some strawberry punch. Session One- went quite smooth. I kept a lot to myself; but did not miss out on anything, as I prepared the drafts for the working paper. Quickly, it became 10:30pm, and time to postpone work for several hours and 2 class periods.
Over the first two days, we came across two SAAS alumni- I guess the Pryz is actually an everybody’s place- or were they just trying to come our way?

CUMUNC X: II (2009-02-07 19:29)

Get that resolution passed. We were pummeled with crises, and we knew the international community might turn against the state of Eritrea (which I represented) and Somalia in a battle against Ethiopia. So in a whirlwind and with special maneuvers, a resolution solving Sudan’s problems in one page was passed. As we were then sponsors (Cameroon went far out of their way to make sure we were justly represented), we could then stand the hits of page after page of our leader’s belligerent attitude and love of sarin gas. Then this whole conference becomes eastern factions vs the west.

CUMUNC X: III (2009-02-08 12:46)

It took only 15 minutes to get there, so I had some time to burn until an ally came and briefing on some of the other countries’ blunders. I then prepared my final speech, which, if done right, could make a victory ours. Before I could contemplate on running my card through Starbucks, it was time for committee session 6, the last. I sorted through my bag and found my bottle of water, important to ward off illness, and my ceremonial blue folder as well as the manila folder of press releases and personal messages. And how did it get in there? An award frame, similar to the ones that they put those 81/2x11 motivational awards in, or a MUNC award in. Somebody in my family must have been sending me a subliminal message, but I didn’t remember having a loose one of those at home, though. M-Dogg kept the confidential releases.
After more press releases and more threats of gassing and the reality check that gas masks cost $200, not $2,
the committee was totally partisan. But after much stalling, the final hour fell. I had not yet given my grand speech. Now tt was goofy time, and we did every imaginable loony thing in one hour, but thanks to that hour, Ethiopia had to clean up the floor singlehandedly. Purposeful success, compared to nuking Godzilla or the internet (which the dais had already proposed in a previous MUNC in high school). Lunch in a white gift bag, and we found the hideout of all the bruthas in Starbucks (I did not see even one of them with a Starbucks cup, but I guess at least one of them bought one). Grab a few bottles of water for the people next to be satisfied while I sipped from mine during the long ending ceremony.

There was a slideshow, with lots of pictures of the informal dance. Sort of glad I didn’t go to it: a lot of guys were sidelined. Then came the intense part: the awards ceremony? Would I be able to slip one of them in that frame that I happened to have?

In short, I did. It turned out to be Best Delegate, good for M-Dogg’s first run at MUN. But what to do with the unwieldy gavel which we had to share? I get to put it on display at home. M-Dogg, after the ceremony finished, asked to do a switch. So I pulled out the frame. The little congregation proclaimed at just about once: You brought a frame!?

But I’m not that type of person, though, so I wanted to find out really what the deal was about the frame. Nevertheless, as I had that frame on me, I got the paper instead. I could just imagine the uproar if that had been the person (CB) who won two awards at once. Sort of like being hit with two penalties for one crime. Sure, I was so confident that I would win an award, the population acclaimed. But I would have brought a half-dozen, a whole dozen frames if I thought like that, for everyone’s awards!

It turns out that the shop where mommy got the bag was giving out free frames. To save a plastic bag, she put the frame in the bag, but forgot about it, and it came to conference with me.

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Caught Something (2009-02-10 19:46)

A twirrling in my noggin, a running nose, stomachache, joint pain, rampant ears, what does this all mean? The aftereffects of CUMUNC

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A Rock and a Hard Place (2009-02-12 18:18)

I woke up this morning feeling somewhat not so bad at 6am. Maybe it was those extra 20 minutes (Which, for once, let me sleep over the 7-hour mark last night). Getting out of bed was not such a headache, and getting out of the shower wasn’t such a miserable cod experience (even though I had my water set for the usual temperature) Plus, I wasn’t burning so many tissues.

It was a windy day, and, just a few degrees cooler with precipitation, then it would be blizzard-time. Nevertheless, there’s a 3-day weekend.

Which leads to my hard place- getting in papers before Tuesday. Religion, Physics, get it all in. I better zoot off!

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DC Artifacts (2009-02-13 20:50)

I got a part-roll of DC ‘Statehood’ quarters from the mint. The text seems to be greatly different than the previous 50, sort of like if DC became an all-out state. While I don’t give it any art award (it’s a simple portrait of Duke Ellington, with the toned-down slogan of ”Justice for all”- taxation w/o representation was rejected).

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There is also the issue of Capitalsaurus, the unique dinosaur of Capital Hill who is a legit dino. I want to catch up on this. Also—the former marshiness of the Potomac Basin and Southern MD lead me to believe that there is oil under my feet. I'll go follow up on that, too.

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**A Normal Valentine’s Day (2009-02-14 19:40)**

Getting back to normal was pretty good. No more unnecessary late nights, at least for a day or two, and getting home during daylight. Yes, there was orchestra, and yes, there was tennis with mother, but I got time to research the zoning of Moco (in regards to skyscrapers), and get started on the History take-home-test. PS- I suppose if I had a prepaid texting plan, I would have sent lots out, as I thought about today being Valentine’s day.

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**President’s Day (2009-02-16 19:30)**

President’s Day. I was out this morning without the coat to my green jogging suit. It was definitely colder than last Tuesday. So I got home...and did some tennis. And after lunch, it was some serious homework time—lots and lots of typing and number crunching. And that’s how one President’s Day goes through. Looking forward to Pride Day Aftermath in two Mondays.

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**RIP Peter Samp (2009-02-19 19:42)**

A Facebook friend has gone to the greater glory. But I have a physics test tomorrow, and I do not think that I will be able to pay right tribute, however, I had already started:

- He spent his last seven years with his high school friends
- He had only one year after that
- Left no mortgage payment, left no college debt
- Had no wife or kids
- Didn’t have a sip of alcohol, not much if he did: I suppose he never smoked either
- In his last year he was on it’s academic; hillary clinton
- Death so peaceful, something to accept when it comes
- Never again will he roam at home
- Was he an only child? What tragedy would that bring to the parents?
- The cyst from childhood: Was death always near?
- Besides, an innocent life and death can’t be held against you at Judgment.
- Now, there’s an empty place at Harvard, who will take it? One of our own? Someone from Asia? No one?
- I knew him a little: We were in the It’s Academic team contemporaneously, and he was always winning awards that makes a school proud to have you. Otherwise, I lack details.

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**Socks (2009-02-20 20:23)**

The White House cat, while definitely the first, made his fame by being the first one online- from the White House website to the beloved "Good Willy Hunting" app game from the ’90’s, has passed to kitty heaven.
I think I wrote about him before, and the only reason he gets his space here is that- well, back when nothing happened in the world, he and Buddy would make National News headlines. So long for that.
20 years of cuteness and cuddliness.

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**Fast Snow, Delaware Roads (2009-02-22 19:20)**

Somehow, I did not have much homework this weekend. I got just about all of it done yesterday, so that left me with 'nihil faciendum esse', not much requiring to be done. Sort of sad for a three-hour each way trip, but I laid my head down several times. The trip to Pottstown wasn’t that bad, except for Delaware, whose government thought that understaffing the I-95 toll booth was A-OK. By the impingement on interstate commerce legal doodah, it’s probably illegal and sue-able for the DDOT to do that. Well, we have EZPass, but the Cash people still cause a bottleneck as they groped for the single open Cash lane. Pottstown diner lived up to the crowd- a large place where the whole town, or so it seems, converges.

As for Bye Bye Birdie at the Hill School, a free extravaganza that the school let the neighborhood in to see. Spectacular and time-expensive props, interesting use of the electronic orchestra. Rosie played her character; Daddy MacAfee played his part much more violently than I thought anyone would allow- lots of slaps between the characters, now I recall. Ma did well over-dramatizing the mother’s role, and Al kept the show rolling well. The screaming hoards of teen girls (and boys) were perhaps played by the young faculty kids- an interesting twist that I haven’t seen before. Overall, it was worth seeing.

I then handed over the poker set to Little Brother, and took the return trip home to see the big thing on TV.

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**Recovery (2009-02-26 18:02)**

That talent show was great. Lots of legitimate talent (a heavyweight wrestler holding up another big kid, who is juggling to "there might be giants"). Then there was lots of faux-hip hop imitations, and Abbey Boys Gone Wild (The beans killed you; to the styles of "oriental", "opera", "country", "ghetto", and "Abbey" (nerd). But today was when I started to recover from last night’s food poisoning misery mystery. I didn’t get any sleep until 2am, got up for school at 6am. And that was after lying in bed since 7pm. Near fell asleep in class 12 hours after 2am. But the sick is all but gone now, and I’m happy, because I can eat solid foods again now!

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**Tourney I (2009-02-27 20:48)**

Big ball in the air
Goes swooshing into basket
Panther Victory

After a mad, quick pep rally prior to filling the stands in maroon, St. A’s outdid the newcomer Avalon school. There were a few hairy moments, though. St A’s was down by 3 after an awe-full 3-pointer to start, and a closing of a lead to just 2 points. Final score: 51-45.

Next gametime with St. A’s, 7pm tomorrow- longest running invitational b-ball tournament in the known universe- 62 years.
Bedtime.
No 29th (2009-02-28 20:24)

When I looked up 'how to start a cell phone company', the result came back for how to start a cell phone website company. Now think about this: I have only had to use such a site once- the first cellphone was a freebie.
Now there are those people who like to or just happen to lose their phone all the time, and the sassy who always need a new phone every whenever. And they frequent these websites. So there you go.
Why did I mention this? Because I’m reminiscing about the soon-to-be two years of posts, and still wonder at the ability of millions individuals to make e-cash- just like me, except I don’t do it for the money. I do this (blog+web empire) because I like to, and it brings joy to the world.
When I look at tomorrow, it’s March 1st. Just three months until another summer vacation. I’m sort of happy that after 11 years of being schooled that the time begins to fly...
Panther Victory- Champs game 4:30 tomorrow.

3.3 March

2 Years and 405 Posts (2009-03-01 18:23)

I do not do professional sports reporting for a living, but the hold was tedious. Championship game. They beat us in the same situation twice before: would this be a third defeat? Panthers down 1 point at the half, up 7 points at 3rd quarter, soon we were down against St. Mary’s by 2. Then a lay-up racket ensued. One by one until a tie at 39 with one minute, with St. Mary’s at the advantage and with possession. They stalled. By 30 seconds, this was very obvious. Yet the Panthers did nothing but wait. An attempt at 5 second to ruin us failed; at the buzzer, it went in. 39-41 Panther loss.
It was very cathartic with all our team spirit. Some people believed it to be a bad call, but it was a straightforward textbook stall. A lot of people left before the awards ceremony.
I said one thing before leaving:
Panthers!
The snow isn’t that great this time around.
Two years of Atticus Sawatzki’s Blog:
From March 1, 2007, to Victory, to Another Day, and The Big Day, we’ve been there.

Square Root Day (2009-03-03 19:12)

Take 9. What equals itself and multiplies to 9? That’s 3. It’s big news, as it happens not so often, increasingly not so towards the end of a century. I mean, it’s not a yearly like Pi Day or Mole Day. 4/4/16 sound good?
Past Square Root Days in recent history
(09/09/81)
01/01/01
02/02/04
03/03/09
Lost (2009-03-06 19:36)

I sort of blanked out about what I was to be writing tonight. It’s 11pm, and four days until spring break. While I’m not planning on going to the Gulf of Mexico, I digress with the media, and do believe that it’s still safer to drive to Mexico than...driving is always the most dangerous thing to do that is compared to. Flying-safer than driving, nevertheless, just lock your doors, and don’t stay out after dark...

This type of talk always makes it to be a quotable in the Express: "It should have gone much faster, but all the taxis and double parkers on Columbia Road were major hazards...why can’t people just pull to the curb...a taxi driver decided to stop in the only lane and converse with another driver"

Next up: The Half-State of Columbia.

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It’s Academic, 48th Season (2009-03-07 20:19)

Entering the nondescript driveway off Nebraska avenue, the unmanned gate was approached. The keyword: It’s Academic, and it opens. Then, one drives past the neatly-kept circle with an American flag in the center to park next to the 242-m tower.

Luckily, the taping began on time, and competing were T.C. Williams, multichampion Richard Montgomery, and St. Anselms. By all accounts, St. A’s would falter.

But St. A’s took an early lead, but was contested before halftime, and overtaken by the champs.

I forgot- the show hasn’t aired yet. Don’t want to spoil the ending.

Show airs on May 16.

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My Hour Gone (2009-03-08 20:10)

I felt that hour disappear. On this warm weekend, I did a lot and a lot of homework. Nevertheless, I got out, but I sure miss that hour. It used to always happen during Eastertime or so, but not in the new plan. I’m tired- I actually had somewhere to go this morning- church doesn’t wait.

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On Money (2009-03-10 19:13)

A double or nothing bet. On my tennis skills. It’s on the Tuesday after next. So whatever has been going on, little brother has taken an interest in buying collector coins on eBay. Yes, I come home and he’s there with his account card and coin price book. So yes, he just started this on Sunday, and he expects to start receiving deliveries from across America- tomorrow.

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The 411 On Vacation (2009-03-12 13:46)

I was already having vacation-itis. As usual, I was up at 6am. Quite a bit tired, with a mild cough that wasn’t contagious. So therefore, I would make the attempt to get to school. Hours slowly passed by, and it was 2:50. For the first time in a while, the Chess Club had brought boards, and I played past 3:20. Awesome player set up 6 powerful pieces aimed right for my king. Somehow, I survived 10 minutes like that.
It was sort of like going on vacation, preparing for spring break. Did I need this? Yes. No. Well, time for some rest!

Virginia, not Florida (2009-03-14 19:50)

Friday. First day of extended vacation since December. Little Brother had us go...west, but not too far. I-66. Exit 73- We enter from the Key Bridge. By Exit 64- the highway expands to four lanes each way: Much traffic joins from Beltway. Just prior to that point, Traffic to the big shopping mall and the airport split away. Why am I narrating this drive?! Anyway, past wherever it is now in Gainesville, it becomes a really pleasant country road- there’s farms, Chapman’s Mill ([1]champmansmill.org), and mountains. Front Royal and Winchester, a short doodah. Front Royal was a stop for lunch- Top’s China converted last year from a chinese takeout to a more authentically Chinese buffet (there is real Chinese music on a non-region 1 disc!) Winchester has gotten more upscale with the proliferation of wineries in the area. Thai? Haute French Country? Surprisingly, I didn’t notice any really upscale hotels for these winery types. But, the goal was to not spend a lot of time.

According to the official state vintner’s guide, the climate is similar to the grape growing regions in France and Italy. Nevertheless, I’m not going to be 21 for a while, so what can you say about something you haven’t tried.

All in all, an excellent thing to do for day 1 of spring break.

Top 100 Blog?! (2009-03-16 20:22)

On the website "temporary attorney", the one that infamously rants about the miseries and deceptions of law school and the law profession, was a little emblem about it being a top 100 blawg. It turns out that blawg is a pun. b-law-g. Sorry if I killed the flow. Then people make these lists about the Top 100 blogs? Based on what? I guess readership or revenue. Now there are news blogs, specialty blogs, neighborhood blogs, journal blogs, and rant blogs, and lots of other types of blogs. Some get higher readership than the others, by ad placement, real-world connections, and KEYWORD PLACEMENT- that’s how a lot of readers found this blog. Other than these, I suppose that blogmasters register with an index. Nevertheless, I read a stat that 25 % of all college students have a blog- now that’s a lot of blogs. Some are well-written, some creative, but the point is- bookmark the ones you like, and the ones that people you affiliate with edit.

And 25 % is just a statistic- most blogs are dead—the owners never had a real passion for it, and luckily, they don’t show up on top of a web search.

Leprechauns (2009-03-18 18:52)

The shoemakers, cookie makers, luckifers (bringers of luck), and bankers. That’s right- your banker is a leprechaun. Luckily, this is only in fantasyland. Last time I checked, there is no widespread elfism in Ireland, either.

Nevertheless, tradition and the liquor companies of the world make St. Pat’s day into a federal affair. Yes, and yesterday, we dropped Little Brother in Pottstown. If you need to know, I was wearing green- the little loopy for the ski tag on my coat. Pennsylvania food differs from hoity toity city haute cuisine- desert in a tablespoon?! Anyway, it’s more German than Irish, and so is the mood. The Columbia Diner did not mention
the day, and for supper at the Charcoal Pit, it was a sidenote by a nice waitress to a festive family.

After getting back home, the other three of us rushed to the White House to see the fountain, which was dyed green, a Chicago tradition. The same thing that was done on the Chicago River- dye it green- was brought over by the First Family. It had a tint of green, but not a lot. Naturally, what nation would want a green monster in front of their president's residence? But it was surely festive enough. The large crowds of revelers would dissent.

And naturally, St. Patrick's Day (if it's on the 17th) marks 1 month until my birthday. So the countdown begins.

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**Funk The War** *(2009-03-19 19:40)*

March 19, 2003

Six years to the date? According to plans, this war is set to end by year 8. So therefore, we can start packing away the protest stuff for a while. But this was not the case for a group of re-creationists. I passed by the affair when it was just starting to gather at Franklin Square. Nothing much, but there was raucous '70's music and lots of collegiate and high school types, retro style, and lots of coppers in blue shirt and helmet.

According to the independent press, various symbolic targets of last year were targeted, as usual. Lobbyist’s row (K Street), a recruiting center, and the GOP HQ, which had "too many cops around to break (the doors) down." So if you come by the Farragut Square area, check out the plastered signs. If things go faster than expected, next year’s Funk will be dilatory.


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**Spring Again?** *(2009-03-20 19:08)*

There was no green monster and there was no funk music today, but surely spring came today. And for some reason, I was up at the time, around here it was about 7:30am. I actually set my alarm clock for a different time than 6:05am, which is not typical of me.

SO what was the big deal? To get studying for the next 6 weeks done. I thought I had finished it all Wednesday morning, but, golly gosh, no. Well, I did some work at Georgetown Library, took breaks, daydreamed, had lunch, and soon it was suppertime. I suppose the lethargy came from the unexpected cold drift that passed through temps in the 30's in spring?

Nevertheless, its Spring, and by the time this season in over- It’ll be summer break. Always a time for the strange and unexpected to happen.

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**Coins and Coffee** *(2009-03-22 19:09)*

The right coin show for you is a excellent experience. If you did not know, I’m an avid collector of five years. I hadn’t been to one in a while, so when I saw that this event in nearby Annapolis was coming up, I decided to go. Knights of Columbus Hall, Rt. 2, just off Ocean Gateway. Quite convenient. A mere 18 miles from the Beltway. So it really didn’t take that long to get there- I was so indulged in composing a choral piece. But it was great- not too many dealers or hard sellers, just talkative people and lots of well priced merchandise. The budget I was put on wasn’t all that bad: Always could use more. Nevertheless, I was abe to get a selection of fillers, as well as a 1889 New Orleans Morgan Dollar ( $16) and an EF (aka really nice) V nickle from 1883.
Sorry if you don’t know coin lingo. I’ll try to explain the hobby (and, for some, career) in layman terms sometime on this blog.
If we were just 2 miles from old town- why not go there too? As usual, others came to that conclusion as well. The town was bustling, but not to the point of New York maddening. Lots of ordinary folks- If you took a survey, about half of them were from Baltimore, some from DC, and some from wherever, USA, and some Navy students and their friends and family. It was sort of like DC on a state level- there were the lobbyists; the teacher group and the Maryland Banker’s Association were two I saw- the State House (which is on MD’s quarter) was prominent in the skyline.
And what’s a trip without Starbucks. The one on the harbor was the first east of the Mississippi, I heard from an uncle. He was around when there were talks and murmurs about the novelty coming to town. Well, Daddy never thought Starbucks would last around here: The Seattle people were depressed by the bad weather that they needed expensive caffeinated drinks. So, the shop did not become part of the family. The meter lady was giving out parking tickets on a Sunday- this town was serious about their parking revenue. So before two hours were up, we were back in the car and going home.

MD the Song (2009-03-25 19:18)

And yet another state song is coming under fire.
I don’t know how it happens, but some of these songs are goofy, hateful, inciteful, and downright archaic. The year is 1939, and somebody or some group in the Maryland government decides to approve the Secessionist Civil War Song, with the tune of "O Tannenbaum"- an easy-to-sing job that frequents taverns and the like. Well. The legislators in Annapolis are looking at this.
But for now,
"The despot’s heel is on thy shore" (aka Abe Lincoln)
"With Ringgold’s spirit for the fray,
With Watson’s blood at Monterey" (who are these people?)
"Dear Mother! burst the tyrant’s chain,
Maryland, My Maryland!
Virginia should not call in vain!" (outright obvious)
Huzza! she spurns the Northern scum! (wishful thinking)

1. [http://www.50states.com/songs/maryland.htm](http://www.50states.com/songs/maryland.htm)

WAMUNC XI: I (2009-03-27 19:55)

WAMUNC is the great apex of the year. Unlike CUMUNC, this event is in the supposedly nice days of spring, with the smell of flowers and bustle of tourists and feeling of the end of the school year. That’s a particularly April feeling. And that was last year, after the mental barrier of Easter break. Nevertheless, I have been so tied up in school, schoolwork, and school peripherals that I forgot that there were only a few weeks left before the egg drop (Apr. 14) and exams (May)! After school Thursday, we did the familiar drill of shuttling to Fort Totten, ride the red in a semi-private car, and have our leaders hide at the other end of the car. Quick to supper at Chipotle’s- a whopping $9 for dish and drink, after the decent intro at Lisner (Obama would speak there tomorrow...). Comittee Session 1 at
Gov’t Hall. Plenty of competent OPEC players who knew their thing... not that easy to take all. But form your position, get up and at it, and do well.

"National Weather Service has issued a Dense Fog Advisory for the District of Columbia and surrounding Area until 9AM. Visibilities may be reduced to a quarter mile. Area of Fog is expected to develop overnight into the early morning."

That was today, just like yesterday. But cloudy skies don’t dampen me. After 3 classes (excluding gym), we were back down at GW. Now I (like that as I was the sole Panther at the OPEC party) had the opportunity to have an indoctrination session at the API’s 12th floor HQ at 1220 L st.

If the event was placed the week after Easter, well, that would get in the way of my pending DMV adventure (My right birthday is April 17, a Friday, and I expect to use the time after school and before the place closes to take care of business). But saving the world is more important than self satisfaction.

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Earth Hour (2009-03-27 20:55)

Saturday, March 28. 8:30pm-9:30pm, your local time or your. If this works in the ideal situation, electric consumption will be cut by about 2 % for the day- in the macro scale of things, that’s a lot. And if 8:30 doesn’t fit you, adjust the time.

[1]www.earthhour.org

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pwmqv/www.earthhour.org

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WAMUNC XI: II (2009-03-29 19:47)

Saturday. After staying up past midnight, it was sort of hard to get up at 8am to go to the conference. Anyway, to my surprise, just about everyone from school who was supposed to be there was. Again, the OPEC got a room at nearby Government Hall, and got to work. So I supposed that it was time for me to be a sponsor. So I swung my weight and called out how Australia was the USA’s BFF (fyi at this point in simulation, had increased oil production) and that we’d have to justify why I was subsidizing OPEC purchases by Australians. So I was sponsor. Now, if I just had voting powers

Meiwah’s at 22nd and M. Never had considered eating there. I don’t really know why I never have. So as we were waiting on the food, some really tall guy in a hoodie walked past our table. I instinctively pulled my belongings within arm-reach of me. Soon came an entourage and a coach. It was Rasheed Wallace of the Detroit Pistons, another high profile diner in this restaurant. Yes, the food was good (otherwise how would you get every politician to visit and have a picture taken?). And the price tag lived up to a comrade’s stereotype of $15 Chinese food. There is also a Meiwah’s in Chevy Chase. I guess that’s how everyone knew about it.

So we were about 2 blocks from campus and 6 blocks from where I wanted to be. I got back in time, though. The OPEC resolution clearly passed, the non-OPEC clearly failed. Finally, we got onto the topic of renewable energy. Why was I so harried? The NGO NRDC was asking me about kangaroos. That went through well. Because I wasn’t getting much attention, I decided to change my persona and talk about the rouge funding by oil money. The talk was interrupted as news of a revolutionist takeover in Saudi Arabia came in. "Should’ve listened to me". Then they took over the UAE. "Let’s get them". For this day, it was 6pm, and the conference, in all desires, was done for.

The Delegatefest. A highly guarded event with blaring music. As loud sounds disrupt homeostasis, I got thirsty. No snacks and drinks as promised. Not in the ballroom or in the geeklab, or in the adjacent battle of the bands. It was alright to socialize with people, but the music really started to hurt my ears, so I tried to leave. According to Physics class, that’s 120 decibels. So I got parental permission to leave. Well, maybe not
with the hounds. Three guards at each staircase, and a person watching each elevator. I positioned myself near the least guarded one, so that I’d be able to mix in with the crowd from the Battle. But no. More student guards came. So I remembered that there was an unobstructed exit from the roof. After crossing some groups of smoking children smoking cigarettes and who knows what, I gracefully opened the door, and twirled down the steps. And the stairway put me- outside on the alley halfway to the Metro. I had made it out. It turns out that others had done the same.

3.4 April

AFD 2009 (2009-04-01 16:45)

National News
A California based company has build a new freeway, known to some as "DC’s Third Beltway". The road cuts through parts of Loundon and Fairfax counties in Virginia, and the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Howard. There is direct correlation, claims advocate for the poor Melissa Pauvre. These four counties are on the top-ten richest counties list. Not just that, she claims, but the company wishes to charge $50 per car to use the new road.

Now talk about Lexus Lanes. Company owner Mr. Alfredo claims that this is just an example of the free market. "If there is a need, people will use it. Now 50 dollars is much smaller than most speeding tickets, and I remind everyone that there is no speed limit on this road. Using this road is like buying a Lambourgini or a Ferrari. It’s mostly for show. Anyway, it’s a small luxury for these tough economic times.” Mr. Zhou, a Potomac, MD resident who had part of his yard taken away by eminent domain, was asked in an Asian language what he felt about this road. He replied in a way that resembled "Ching-Chong”. It was later reported that he disapproved of this "evil devil”.

So, if you want to use these lanes, Mr. Alfredo recommended following the signs with a suitcase of money on them. Or, as he added, "to follow the Lexus ahead of you”.

International News
The Iranian government has condemned the Model United Nations program. For those who do not know, students play roles as representatives from countries assigned to them, and often consume much Starbucks in the process. This came after a closing ceremony video was released showing a delegate representing Iran admitting that he was a "fat, ignorant, intolerant, drunk pig at a recent conference in Saginaw, MI. The Iranian representative said that he "did not drink, and has no resemblance to an American pig such as that boy”. The boy has issued an apology by proclaiming that he will never run in his life, so he can’t say "I ran”.

From Italy and Japan (2009-04-04 19:19)

Since i had nothing planned for this morning, I decided to go see the cherry blossoms on and near The Mall. It seemed like a fine day to do so, as the namesake festival was in full swing. Well, that and me and at least 50,000 other people, as I think it was. But I found my space to photograph the blossoms and tulips (Morning star in February, Daffodils in March and Tulips in April) and film the seagulls and pigeons. Oh, and it was mad windy. Great kite flying day. And I’m sure tomorrow will be like today, if I’m correct.

It was almost a perfect day- I had a little sore throat this morning from last night. Yes, Goergetown Visitation’s Masqueraders put on "Crazy for You". No to give away the Gershwin story, but its about a banker who wants to sing and dance. Great large production, must have taken lots of blood sweat and tears to put on. In fact, it was a full house, and GV even sold standing room tickets. Sorry if I’m being a
whistleblower, but. Anyway, it was unabridged, ran about 3 hours. That, I’m not used to- St. A’s has a
tendency to shave the dance scenes to save some time. But great show. Ends tomorrow.

Not quite warm (2009-04-07 19:09)

A Beautiful Mind, a great movie. Since I haven’t finished watching it (I see tomorrow as a feasible day to do
so), I won’t write a whole review. But it got me thinking: Commies putting codes in American magazines like
Life and Vanity Fair? I doubt it- only Newsweek. And the radium diode- it may have perplexed some, but it
makes total sense. The implant reads the decay of the radioactive element, and when that number, visible
only under blacklight, is typed into the keypad- the simple computer verifies that number. Neat security tool.
Just wondering if those tiny 7-bar displays existed back then.
So- I’m just waiting for Easter- the final divider to the end of the school year. Amazing. Yet I can’t believe
it’s April on account of that brisk air...

The twitriest thing today (2009-04-08 19:42)

Raise income tax on everyone making over 40,000 a year.
Luckily, it’s a city quasi state thing brought up by an urban district (Zone 1) councilman, the infamous
Jim Graham. Now this is twitty, because it’s relatively easy to change where you pay for income tax. If
not, there’s a nice house across the street with a lower income tax-says the logical Jack Evans (Zone 2) of
Georgetown.
Mr. Graham always making the news.
Sorry for being so political :)

A Technical Note: Good Friday (2009-04-09 19:57)

JangooMag- the place for everything that doesn’t belong on this blog, which is not much. Nevertheless, the
winner is in the monthly details. [1]jangoomag.webs.com
As a reminder, tomorrow is Good Friday. If you are a meaty person, enjoy yourself now. While I’m not
pressing any religious belief on you, I must say that some people take their beliefs to the general public. Short
words: Don’t forget to not order meat tomorrow.
Little Brother did this by mistake somewhere in Alabama (although not on Good Friday), and there was a
legitimate ordeal about what had happened.

1. file://localhost/mnt/ext/blogbooker/tmp/fg7pwmqv/www.jangoomag.webs.com

Holy Saturday (2009-04-11 18:48)

I almost forgot what a rain shower was. Anyway, one came today as part of the ritual to of wiping away the
Cherry Blossom flowers. Despite this rain, there were sill busloads of tourists in and around the mall. After
seeing some of the Smithsonian art galleries- Asian and African collections (I tell you some art has meaning,
and some does not at all), I saw Daddy’s sprucy office with a key- can’t believe plants live better in there
than at home. And since it was 2pm, it was lunchtime. Chinatown Wok was the first choice; however, on

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weekends, the entrees are double the weekday price. $13.95 for an Americanized Chinese dish worth $7. No way. Seeing the better deal at authentic Full Kee, there was a long wait to get in. So the only way to go is...hop on an 80 bus creeping up behind you and go grocery shopping. You can really get a lot of delicious grocery food for $40. So, then the day falls back into doldrum. Not too bad for a 3rd day of vacation, especially one that’s wet and wet.

As the idiom goes:
April showers bring May flowers.
Except I don’t like high pollen count days in May and June.
But I like summer vacation.

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**Egg Drop, I** (2009-04-13 19:23)

I know I should get twitter if I want to do this, but egg drop tomorrow. I did my first full height drop from a bridge this afternoon, and it made a complete mess. When it hit the ground, I could see yolk flying from the vessel. Not a 30-point survival. Checking only confirmed these results. Indeed, it was such a terrific crash that shell pierced the bag. That’s how it spurted. Dooo. Because of the damage, I couldn’t infer a thing except that- I have to redesign this ship. So I did, and a much safer vessel protected the egg at 10 feet. Let’s see at 20 feet before turning the craft in to the eggsperimenter.

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**Lost and Found** (2009-04-15 19:38)

National Harbor- the environmentalist’s nightmare- please arrive by car or limo, or cruise ship. But bowing to the county, limited-stop bus service was provided from Southern Avenue to the resort. For those who don’t know the area, this is a lipspeak for the resort workers and mass transit advocates. So what I did not know was how ‘rough’ Southern Avenue was, or at least according to what I saw. Hoodlums staring gaped-mouth to the station manager’s booth, then hurdling over a lowish gate to evade payment. Time constraints- it was almost dark outside- had us then the desire to take a $16 boat trip to our local ferry stop in Georgetown. But the last one left at 5:10pm. It was 7pm. But the time flew anyway, having fun in the glass elevators. So on the way back home, along comes a train marked Yellow and Greenbelt. Silly train. We got on a train. As it headed deeper into the suburbs, the riders were more clean cut, and we happened across a young woman reading a book- a relieving sight. Suitland!? I didn’t remember passing by there on the way to Southern Avenue. Then it hit. We were on the wrong train. From that platform at Southern Avenue, it turned out that the goofy mixuped sign did display where we wanted to go. I and Little Brother did not read the platform signs one bit. So, remembering the Dietrich Bonhoeffer quote about trains from my planner, "If you board the wrong train, it is useless to run along the corridor in the opposite direction". So in the 13-minute layover, we got to see train cars disconnected. A loud, subtle movement separated the cars. It was not that bad after all.

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**Considered 16** (2009-04-17 20:25)

A little chilly for a great game of outdoor Capture the Flag, then, it really heated up. Every April 17th, warmer than the 14th.

OK, so I got my Library of Congress card. Somehow, I thought I could get down from Brookland to Capitol South in 1/2 of an hour. Not possible. So therefore, I’d have to give the trip a little more time- like 15
minutes more. After a long run with a heavy pack, I got on the train for 3 stops- then took a 6 block walk. This is supposedly faster than riding 24 blocks out of the way to Metro Center. Sweaty, but made it 5 minutes short of the 4:30 deadline. Getting the card was a simple matter- fill out a simple form, and- government photos- I looked organic, and not done up. Well.
To avoid an innumerable amount of punches, I kept it on the lowdown. Anyway, anyone who really cared about goving me punches would have asked or done research.

Ferrari Freeway (2009-04-18 14:20)

Seeing a Ferrari stopped at a stoplight and accelerating to 30mph only slightly faster than everyone else looked sort of sad. So I decided that there needed to be a place for a supercar to use its speed in a practical purpose. So from DC-NY, for example. Those roads are crowded, railroads still take 3 hours minimum, and planes involve time at the airport. So a nice, straight roadway for cars rolling at over 150mph would be nice. DC-NY in an hour and a half. But, of course, the proposition would be expensive. To have a safe road, there would have to be a pretty large shoulder for steering errors. That’s a lot of space for only a few cars. So then I thought, a high speed railroad could do that in one quarter of the space. The rest of the world does, but America is just a little different...

Pepys (2009-04-20 19:37)

The resident blogger, except from about 400 years ago. Recorded many great English events through the Reformation and the Great Fire in London.
I wouldn’t have known that he had ever been if it had not been for a faithful reader to point out that ”I may be the Pepys of our time”.
More on him later come tomorrow and May’s JMAG.

DMV Rant, #1 (2009-04-24 17:33)

It’s been a long while (at least for me) since our last post. So I’m here to rant about the DMV.
So it was Tuesday, and I was on a break between two parts of a test. Since it was my first opportunity that I had to try to get a Learner’s Permit. So I went. The line was not too bad, actually. But there was a complication. Proof of residency did not include your daddy’s utility bill if only mommy was with you, or your HOA statement that said your parents were not two random strangers to each other. He was on lunch break, and I had to go. Postpone.
But I must say that they were giving a plan B. Not the meanest DMV people. Yet they had much bigger problems. As the only DC DMV that processed foreign applications (being Georgetown and everything), handling proof of residency shouldn’t be an issue compared to seeing if a Madagascar License (if one existed) was at par with America.
So then I found out the Georgetown DMV’s new hours- Open on Saturday. SO I’ll try tomorrow.
DMV Rant, #2 (2009-04-25 19:46)

So I got up at 6:30am today to beat everyone else to the DMV. I mean, I got up at 6am anyway because of whatever reason I don’t know. So I get to the place 45 minutes early. There are two people ahead of me, 8:00am, 15 minutes to opening, a line forms and stretched pretty far. So it goes sort of smoothly. By 8:45 I had (barely) passed the new + updated test- 10 more questions and an 80% minimum grade (up from 75%)- all since the last time I visited- the lady next to me did not. Ouch. After a while of waiting and thinking smiles for the picture, I had the vision test. Pretty simple and straightforward. I read the two columns of numbers with flying ease. “Read the third column”, growled the impassable dmv’er. There was a third column!? So I read to the best of my ability. The I got handed an eye exam form for my optometrist. I do not have vision issues. I can see what a traffic light is being across the river. Last time I checked, I had better than perfect vision in one eye, and dmv-acceptable in the other- even when the tin can eye testing thing used by non-specialists say that I don’t. If I didn’t have to go to orchestra, I would have had a chat with the manager about seeing well enough.

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Neo-Luddites (2009-04-27 19:15)

That article. It’s been on the wall for over a week, and I’m speechless (in a bad way) over it. Protesters, strange bedfellows and Sysmantece. A measly but important post: Somebody write something. A luddite is one against technology, especially cotton mills. So I’ll think about it next time I see it.

Nevertheless, it was hot, hot, hot. Almost makes one believe in global warning. When was the last time we’ve had a record cold day? So It was so hot hot hot that in 10 minutes my chocolate melted.

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School Elections, Again (2009-04-29 19:47)

On Monday, we had a speech. We got to see what these candidates were. No candid togas, though. Some spoke with the eloquence of Obama, and some spoke downright like Bush. as usual, they gave us each 5 minutes of pander. Please, we are not electing a social chair! Four teams arranged like cliques, almost: superjocks (who played the more well-advertised sport), the wrestlers, the people just like us folk, and the people who dressed to make a statement- red suit-jacket on one, and all-black for the other. Student power, the prettiest pander ever. This year voting was online, and, as it turns out, pretty reliable- no double-votes. As a social experiment, the jocks won, even though they were not the best speakers, nor the most pandering to the student body. However, following his brother’s lead, they did go out and do meet-and-greet, as well as the ‘survey’.

All this makes me want to get into this whirlwind of constituents, dirty laundry, and promises of better school dances in next year’s cycle.

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3.5 May

Course Selection (2009-05-01 19:53)

We only got the packets Tuesday night. Then, on Thursday, we turn them in. Juggling four semesters in a few hours of work. Well. Get as many requirements out of the way, make it so that there isn’t too much AP
in 12th grade. So I’ll see how it comes back in a few weeks. Italian ducks— they look sort of different than our American variety. More slender. I have to ask Little Brother more about those ducks. Were they mean like Australian squirrels or what? And the sound they make. So I’ll ask him sometime.

H St. NE (2009-05-03 19:47)

Get this. Private industry has decided to run an express bus service along an existing transit corridor (street cars and all to be started soon), and right on top of an existing line. There really shouldn’t be such an uproar. I mean, Alexandria did it. No, the real fear is that the general public and not the bar crowd will start taking advantage of free rides, making the X2 bus the elite mode of transport at $1.25.
I just don’t get it.

Cinco de Mayo (2009-05-05 18:16)

Back about 20 years ago, Canada had a $2 bill. You may have gone there multiple times and never come across one. That’s because it was replaced (not just ‘phased out’) by the bimetallic tooney. That won’t fly in America regarding $1 coins. For some reason, Americans love the Washington greenbacks, even though they aren’t very pristine after a few transactions. Green with Envy? Or is it just that coins are all heavy and everything in the pocket.
Think of this: 5 dollar coins versus 20 quarters. That’s what DC Metro farecard machines gave out as maximum change. Half a roll of quarters. Positive change?
And anyway, it makes one feel more international. Few countries have bills for 1 unit of currency anymore. At least $1 coins make it through the wash pretty well.
Now is that a $1000 Mexico coin worth $10 or a cash cow at $100?
Now about those half dollar coins and two dollar bills...
Now onto more serious and pertinent business:
Let’s Find Atticus Sawatzki’s 1 GB USB Plug-in flash drive.
It’s a classic. And there’s a $5 cash reward fund to find it and compensate the returner, thief or not.
Taken from a computer in the early afternoon hours of 5/4/09, and being handled like stolen property— no geribund piece of technology deserves to be treated that way!
So, let’s find it!

KFC (2009-05-06 20:08)

Memory card may have been found. Hold for update.
By the way, www.unthinkkfc.com is giving away free KFC. Get to it now or forever hold peace!

DMV Rant, #3 (2009-05-09 17:50)

I got up at 7:05 am on a Saturday, again, to again address the DMV. I got the eye exam done yesterday, left 6 people out of a class of 18 for religion class. And, my eyes are fine. So guess what DMV did? Lost my
papers. Fortunately, they had an electronic copy of the knowledge test results, that new enhanced thing. So in good time, I submitted all the documents in a pile that resembled the federal budget. Nice Lady did it. They typed it in, and soon, they took a picture. Nice guy too. Not too bad, I must say, and gave me the card. So I don’t have to deal with them for another 6 months.

After that, I finished the big history project on the Cold War (that’s top secret for now!). Happy to have a legitimate, G.I.’d portable form of identification.

Six Flags; Largo, MD (2009-05-11 19:20)

Dan Snyder charges people $15 to park in his parking lot. Then he charges $50 per head (1/2 price at $25 if you’re aware of your surroundings). Then, you enter into a place where there are no water fountains, rather water can be bought at 17 1/2 cents an ounce, or $3.50 a bottle. Or get a hold of a $15. Personal Pizza from Papa J’s on site. Is it the epithet of capitalism? Hopefully not. But other than the cash drains I tried hard to avoid (I got out at $6.51, $6 on 3 games of skill and 51 cents on a flattened penny). At least it was not the $22 a comrade lost trying to get that PSP. But the rides were great. We started with Mind Eraser, a bottomless upside down type. Kept my eyes closed. No sights to see. Roar a wooden coaster, Joker’s face, a maglev launch type, 0-60mph in 3 seconds that gave a mild sensation for that time but none else other than thrill. And I didn’t loose my hat, although I might have lost some change on Batwing, a prostrate- ridden coaster. Three rides on the massive Superman: Ride of Steel. By this time I enjoyed staring down at that angle. Got soaked in Nantucket on my boat. Now I come home with red arms and nose. So I use aloe vera gel, and some papaya. Worked well to ease the mild discomfort. Take a C-series Metrobus from Addison Road or Largo? and keep your parking money for yourself. And don’t buy food there, either. Oh, and there were no lines at all- that was the best part...can’t stand those things.

Turandot (2009-05-13 19:58)

A fascinating opera with love and sacrifice, with the added spice of China. Mr. Ping, Pang and Pong, lovable magistrates provide some action as the emperor comes from the sky on occasion, and the princess and the lover have it out as his father the deposed king and his loyal slave look on.

Phantom Tollbooth (2009-05-14 19:51)

A Great production with movement and props! As a person who has never read the book, it was a thorough boggling experience. Great job Tock the dog.

Jiayue and Her Friends (2009-05-16 20:23)

Over the creek and winding through the woods
to the Church of LDS we go
The signs point the way until we pass under the beltway
Then follow the pinnacles to the gate and find a parking spot
and read the book of Mormon through
before watching this concert sponsored by the munificent Sid Foulger, local real estate developer from the 1960’s and beyond.
Beautiful songs in Chinese, arias in Italian, and songs from The Phantom...and Over the Rainbow. Great singing. Midway through, Sid, who looked about 75 or so was introduced, and on went a film of his exploits at the age of 83. Climbing through the rugged terrain of China. He sponsored a school and road, and stimulated the villager’s well-being. Amazing. His age today: 89. And, on short noticed, he played some song on the piano ”This is really not on the program”, announced the MC.

2 Days+ 4 Day ’Weekend’+ Exams = Summer (2009-05-19 17:28)

For seven weeks now we have gone without a progress report. That is, I haven’t kept up-to-date numbers on numerical performance, a figurative bridge being built without a pillar on the other side. From daily testing in Latin to a Geometry test in advanced precalc on the grading block, it’s a mystery. But things can be pulled together in the end, like I successfully did last year. Thanks much for the 3-day weekend plus house day. So if it goes well, I’ll be able to have a pretty nice feeling vacation, if things come out as the apocalypse, it’ll be a 12-week dread. Colleges are looking at this sheet of paper. More A’s :), Less B’s : &, One C in Physics :( (Honors, unweighted). And kudos to the 10th grade year of horror - ’too much work’ as it is put, to a year of forced free periods and class choice privileges. So two more days, two papers, a quiz or two,a Humanities final, a weekend of hard-core review, four days of exam, and Little Brother arrives within 4 hours of when I get home.

Per Se (2009-05-20 19:54)

I know of only one person who has patronized this ultra-high-end mini restaurant in New York at Columbus Circle, and it was a business expense. Now here is a 15/16 year young from the Philly Area who made the reservation precisely at 10am from the bathroom, and paid for the trip on his own cash, thrice.
To put this in perspective, my most expensive plate was somewhere around $40, on a business card. For me, Per Se would be an experience at the $298,000 income bracket (even so, that’s 1/1000th of your yearly budget), possibly at $149,000, it’s so tantalizing.
"Why would I spend half of my yearly income on a restaurant? Well this is no ordinary restaurant. I would not even degrade my time at this restaurant to the title of a "meal.” Experience is much more appropriate.”

So, here is his site:

Field Day Tradition (2009-05-21 20:09)

(In a singing way)Field Day I don’t know what’s in store
Whether it be tag foot ball, pickleball, capture the flag, or dodge the ball there’s a high level of intrinsic fun that can’t be removed.
Main House does it again (2009-05-22 19:13)

Call it "Harry Potter", but house is a big matter here.
So consider the first Main-3 kickball game. Holding a 1-1 tie, until the last inning. 1-3. We keep untamed softball field. Next game, we advance to the real field. We win, and stay. Last game, top of the third, last play. I got a call to run on anything. A good kick to far right as I was on first. I found 2nd base (a tiny orange speck on the infield grass), but after turning 270 degrees, just could not find third base. I think I reached the runner's path as turned towards home. Skipped a base!? By some rule, the other guy was out (a sacrifice play, I presume), so I could not back to third, even though I was not tagged. Anyway, it should not have mattered as there was no bottom of the inning.
Dodgeball. Main wins again. second game, a last-second save by freeing all prisoners by making a half-court shot. (Victory was done by prisoner count after 12 minutes)
Flag Football- a giant heads towards me. I fend the quarterback by retreating to a side collision than head on. In retrospect- it might have made me look queasy. "Atticus it’s just a matter of collision", says the physics teacher.
So our group of mostly little kids fared well. We supposed the other two teams fared even better. They did. Whole-school activities- not for Main, in general.
Super relay. Greased watermelon, chair hop, wheelbarrow, and our grade’s (virgin)’jello shots’. All tied up until this point. Our four chuggers, in relay, spun around a bat 10 times and jogged to the 2 cups of jello, each. The goal was to get that done, asap, and dash and tag your house head so he could cross the finish line. Some of our guys fared well, but some guys weren’t able to chug. I mean, as a moral supporter, I chugged one or two myself. No biggie. As I asked and received, it turns out that the spinning really made it hard to swallow. We did fine.
Capture the flag. Four quadrants for four houses. Objective: Nab as many of the other six flags as you can, w/o losing your two. More complex tough, with lots of cheating. Strong defense was key. Main one one game out of three, with super defense and an administrator to monitor cheaters.
Relay. 5 of each grade, each house, except for including every 6th grader (in Potter speak, form A). It held us back quite a bit though, throughout most 29 of our runners. But Mikey really pulled us far ahead to third place in the relay...
Ice Cream and results.
It was really, really close (suspense builds)
Fourth Place- Austin- 195 pts
Third Place- Alban- 198
Second Place... (Main or Moore?)-199
Moore, (therefore), Main won with 208 points.
For a third year? Special vetting rules take place for consecutive champs- no one’s won three in a row. Nevertheless, it may be time to make up for 13 years of lost time.

Vanilla Mint Listerine (2009-05-23 19:54)

The first time I came across it was at St. Thomas Church, and the only consideration I gave to this priest’s mouth freshener was to potentially light the thurible with its alcoholic properties when there was no WD40 accelerant for the charcoal. But the Verger insisted that the concentration was too low. But, I came across this last weekend while doing the occasional task of choosing mouthwash at the store. I chose it because P+G (or is it CP?) gave a free little bottle with a liter purchase. But it’s now my favorite. Mild and cleansing, tastes like vanilla.
Memorial Day (2009-05-25 19:59)

I am indebted to say thank you for those who defend our free world freedoms. 
In a world of oppression, I and many others would not be here today.

End in Sight (2009-05-28 18:41)

Why do my most recent posts look as if I twittered them? Final Exams. And yes, one more (long) exam to go, then off to the broad summer. 
Average time per exam: 1:46
1:20
2:10
1:30
2:10
1:45
2:10 (cut off)
(>2:05)- Tomorrow’s physics exam- it always takes me a little longer to do it.

Summer Early (2009-05-31 19:14)

4:45 am. That’s when I’m getting up to go to work with the Park Department as a entry-level Lifeguard tomorrow. This is going to be a great, exciting adventure. So to insure I get my 8 hours of sleep, I should go to bed at... 8:45pm. But I always function on 6-7, so, not a big deal. Now this harkens back to last August when we left on vacation. I got a 3:30am phone call- from Little Brother’s alarm clock. A thunderstorm was rolling by. I dozed off. I got up at 4:30 when my alarm clock went. We left at 6am to go up I-83 to I-81. What a memory.

3.6 June

Back when I was little, there were 5th anniversary events (2009-06-04 18:29)

As I was thinking of Finnegans Wake, whose genre is called “Sui Generis”. This is purposed to be a very interesting and creative genre of writing that has appeared in the past century. Or, in simpler term, a style of its own: creative. If I come across a copy of this book, I’ll read it. And maybe I’ll go and try to get my own sui generis. 
Don’t forget to give 3 quarks to Mr. Mark.

My Life (2009-06-05 19:19)

I got into typing a biography. I was inspired by Zak’s writeup of the inspirational buildup of BFFK (refer to jangoonow.googlepages.com and click on affiliates). I started it back a while ago, but I only started to get
comprehensive
I even put words to describe this decade: A trying time that shows the whole range of humanity. Yes, I give a cheery view for the next decade. But year by year, I recall events good and bad.

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**Found It (2009-06-08 15:07)**

What is in your bed? Mosquitoes, not bedbugs, two pillows, two sheets, a bathrobe, a heavy blanket that hasn't been used in two weeks except on cold mornings. And what about a digital camera? By four mornings of early waking and two other wake-ups, I did not see it up there. Last Sunday, May 31, was the last time I had it. I possessed the wonders of ready-baked chicken and its lusciousness on a bed of lettuce between two pieces of whole grain bread, with some mayo. Then, after not bringing my camera on the bike ride, it went missing for a week.

I missed filming more JangooVision, and a shot of summer rolls with shrimp and cellophane noodles (no, it’s not plastic). Other than that, I held up pretty well.

So as I was searching for my Lifeguard shirt on Saturday, I came across it. I found the shirt at the bottom of a hamper, and the camera, in bed, as well as my Smartrip card, in the bottom of my backpack, along with a bottle of water and muffin, date, May 29.

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**Sunday Drivers (2009-06-08 15:15)**

After six days of work, I came across a Sunday. But I had a prior appointment for that date, and thus, did not end up in New York for old schoolmates’ graduation. So I was in a Fire Room again, ten minutes prior to mass, and being given the directions: Follow the Thurifer inside the gate. Boat bearer. At St. Thomas, that was the job of the portico ledge. But the job was made easier by the MC, who is being seen off to West Point the Military Academy (just 45 scenic miles north of NYC). Enjoyed wondering whether the smoke was bad for my health or not. After that, listen to the webcast of the St. Thomas service before getting some mountain air, where I drove about 4 miles on Skyline Drive. Would have driven faster than 30mph except that there was a steep incline. The double solid center line is actually quite helpful to stay on one’s side of the road, to help avoid collisions on that narrow road. But we descended to the vineyard plains and passed through (Little)Washington, no stop on go, finding ourselves on a scenic byway and somehow on I-66 in Prince William’s County.

Congratulations, St. Thomas class of 2009!
Massimo, Matthew, William, Danny, Aidan and James

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**L’Hippo Lemonade (2009-06-09 18:21)**

As I was going to finish I never did a lemonade stand before, in real life, that is, so I thought I’d do some ‘entrepreneurship’, as it is called when older kids are involved. So since it was not raining yesterday, I went out. It didn’t net big with soda cans and water bottles, probably because it wasn’t that typical Washington summer day, everyone else got their drinks from the vendor near the Subway entrance, and the low-visibility cooler didn’t help much. Maybe once I find the big blue one I’ll try again, but the main point is that I finished L’Hippo the comic book- 7 years after Santiago and his Adventure of the White Blood Cell King.

Short story- A French Hippo comes to America and has it out with the Nigerian Embassy over a lottery scheme.
Incident- Shooting at Holocaust Museum (2009-06-10 10:41)

Sometimes, one gets in the way of news in the making. An ambulance assisted with one police car sped from 14th street onto K Street, NW. From a small glimpse into the ambulance while the victim was being moved into the ED at GWU Hospital, appeared to be in ok condition. For the record, shootings in downtown Washington News crews are already on the scene, including Channel 7, about 1:32pm. According to other news sources, there was a big response of area crime forces onto the scene.

Swamp and Bridge- Wilson Bridge Bike Lanes (2009-06-12 18:44)

After coming back from the pool yesterday, I loaded my bike onto an express bus down to the Wilson Bridge, Maryland side. It was on the news that the new bike lanes were open on the new 12 lane span. So I get off at “Wilson Bridge” stop, with the bike, and head parallel to the Beltway by going down the walkway at Oxon Hill Farm- the one that leads to the visitor center and barns- I ask the rangers where to find the path. They say around the fence- I try the first road. It lead about 300 feet to a shed. I then go down the paved road that went to the water. An idyllic marshland southern farm. The road turned to dirt, and to rut marks. It ended at a pile of Jersey barriers. Promising, but no lead after a minute in a brush. I then tried down another clearing. A wobble in the mud made both my shoes get wet. An organized grove of trees grown wild. A line of vines. Sight of the bridge- but there was a fence- and it wasn’t the correct freeway. Sweating and overwhelmed with mosquitoes from the swamp, I pushed back after seeing a few decayed animals-large ones, and got back to the road- a great relief for a person who thought he’d need the state trooper to pick him up (the cell phone made me feel secure). So I get to the trail, which was the one that the rangers were probably talking about. I head up a while, and pull over to a subdivision at the first chance. Going up the road with the most traffic, I find a folded dollar, and came out where I had gotten off the bus. determined, and only having lost an hour, head back to the bridge. from an outcrop I tried to spot the bike trail. Two abutments far off was what I identified as the access point. I coast down the road in National Harbor, and end up on the shoulder of the bridge- I remembered, 3 12’ lanes and a wide shoulder. I maneuver across an exit ramp and onto the safe side of the guardrail. When I reached the trail overpass, I pulled my bike 6 feet up, and myself as well. That is when I hurt my thumb. But I came out unharmed. I scouted on the other side of the overpass, and found out that the trail came from the National Harbor riverline area. I reached the foundation of the bridge, and there was an inspirational sign about this tristate project (MD _DC- over water _VA) I pulled out my camera for a shot- no memory card. But At least I found how to get there! It was a great view, great experience as I made my way to Washington St (VA 400), the end of the trail. A glass sound barrier made the final half mile very quaint as I passed above the cemetery. And I made it. My week’s journey. I’m going to take Little Brother sometime- but I’ll spare him from the swamp part of the trip.

An Adventure (2009-06-13 19:34)

A trail called Glover Park
Under a damp tunnel and an old trolley bridge
up, up, up hill and over the sewage pipe and across a creek.

For some reason, I’m not being allowed by blogger to add a new post, so I have to extenuate here I just received a report from the White House that there are ambulances and many police cars at the white House. I sure hope that everything is OK. There is no more information than this on the incident.
WiFi Wishes (2009-06-16 18:29)

And for all the hotels and hovels that are willing to sell you an internet connection for $10, the local 3-star hotel (Washington Suites) will give it away for less. Anyway, I’ve been thinking of entering telecom as another aside for side cash, above Amazon who likes to take a 255 commission chunk. Anyway, what do they do with all the money?

Pelham (2009-06-19 19:33)

At first, I thought the movie was going for the most dirty words in a film (Rated R- South Park the Movie), but it was only gratuitous before the action started- one hour and 18 hostages. Can Denzel Washington as Lt. Zak Garber (whups- in the new film he’s a train controller caught in a bribe scandal) save the passengers from John Travolta before they’re annihilated one a minute past the deadline? Maybe it’s my partiality to mass transit movies, but I give the movie full ratings.

Summer Review (2009-06-21 10:22)

It’s pretty much summer, and I’ve been away from school for about 3 weeks. I’m a little disoriented, sweeping, in one hour, from school to summer job. But then come disorienting dreams. They only tend to happen when I get more than 8 hours of sleep. Some summer dreams from the past include:
-Forgetting to pack merchandise for a 8-week stint
-If my world was limited (Camp Incarnation - I must have watched the Truman Show that night)- I took a canoe and ran into the gym wall.

And most recently:
-Chinatown Montreal and New York blend in a dream and half of it is nowhere to be found
-Walk from Columbus Circle all the way up to the GWB and become disappointed, because I didn’t go all the way to the tip (for those who don’t know NYC topography, that’s 6 miles without completing the seventh.)I also stopped at Thai Pan, a Thai restaurant where I was given some rare coins, including the 1956 Franklin Half Dollar and 1794 Mozart Coinboy (Does not exist in real life). Then I have a cherry Yogurt and plan to go to Chinatown the next morning, and finish walking to Inwood- the tip (never did). This was Friday night’s dream.
-Summer vacation disappears as I enter time warp as I read an article about the 1999 Half Dollar being overvalued, and everyone else tells me about their summer. Of course this was after finding a treasure chest (it always happens this way!)- Saturday night’s dream. And I do have a 1999 Half Dollar in my pocket.

So before I get disappointed about my summer-
Go somewhere away- Enjoyed the mountain air in Front Royal 2 weeks ago. Really enjoyed last summer vacation- this is the second time I bring it up post facto. (although I didn’t like the 3:30am phone ring!)

Things to do:
Find out what’s east of the Capitol
Take a multi-transfer bus trip to Rockville(for $1.25) via Glen Echo and Great Falls
Spend more than 1.5 hours in Richmond
Help society (details to follow)
Summer vacation before Summer- enjoy the sensation of American kid freedom, start to want to do Summer homework to get it over with.

Before July 4- start doing summer homework but eventually lose pace (didn’t happen last year, thank goodness), start summer activity (camp or work); it’s not too late that one must mourn summer
July- forget that you’re on a summer break and that time is ticking  
August- uh-oh. There isn’t much time left. Hopefully, summer homework is done. Washington DC really empties out, I’m typically away the first week on vacation.  
back-to-school- enjoy the really cheap sales on school goods- FREE glue, 1 cent folders, and other purchases that makes you feel that it’s the 1920’s. Oh, and accept that summer is almost over.

Chinatown DC (2009-06-24 10:19)

From thousands, DC Chinatown has less than 700 Chinese inhabitants. What happened? Suburbanization and Americanization? The aspects that people like about an 'authentic' Chinatown may contradict the ideal living situation. Lots of people in one place? Goods at minimal price? It doesn't sound like American dream. When developers started taking interest in the property at the western end of Chinatown- then the east end of downtown when City builds a Convention Center (early 1980’s) and displaces some people, but as a government they build an apartment building a few blocks away for them. There goes part of the neighborhood . You know, the area around there has been so developed in the last 25 years that I can’t image the low-rising tenements and small buildings. Then in the ’90’s the 4-block MCI center takes out another chunk. And guess what happens after the stadium moves in? Gentrification! Changes in the law instituted to preserve Chinatown’s character prevented urban renewal and required businesses to display a sign in Chinese (no doubt that some of the signs are fudged). So that’s DC Chinatown.  
Conclusion- for delicious, authentic Asian food and products in the DC area, consult a directory, steer to Annandale or Rockville, and bring a car. DC doesn’t really have a Chinatown anymore in the traditional sense. I read somewhere that the DC area hosts the 3rd largest US Chinese population, but you can’t pinpoint that because of full integration. Now isn’t that better than a self-segregated Chinatown?

AC Gilbert (2009-06-25 17:59)

Globe, Erector set Ferris wheel, art project with lots of electrical wire and small rods, 4 oversized books. The Erector Set may be called the "has-been". Invented early in the last century, it "transformed how boys and toys were made". Girders and bolts that rile of industry that made Gilbert a rich man. But of course change in consumer tastes and handing over of ownership took a toll on this dynamic toy. Then in a society that now profits mainly in the service sector, why bother with tools and the type of satisfaction that doesn’t come instantaneously?  
What gets me is e-Monopoly, the electronic form of the monopoly game. It really helps cut down on banker dishonesty, but it doesn’t allow you to readily flash your bling maybe an atm next?  
But boys aren’t made from soft assets.

Event (2009-06-27 19:21)

Major Fire in Georgetown- smoke smelled over 1 mile from Wisconsin avenue, smoke cloud over Georgetown, large Fire Dept Response. No other details available.
To Make a Historic District (2009-06-30 15:55)

Let’s look at some photos from 50 years ago. Some things may still be the same, some things not. Porch additions, adaptation for new technology like big ground-mounted ac units, and, of course, the widespread installation of floor-to-ceiling glass. Now look at the picture and everything’s still the same. It’s not necessarily Peter Pan, though. It doesn’t want to become young again! Naturally there’s some things that are important to save, such as Mount Vernon or the Key House (Wherever the park department lost the thing), or the Old Stone House, last first generation tract-land house in Georgetown, or Dumbarton and Olive Street (The name: last street designations to not to be changed to the DC Alphabet system). And, arguably, certain rows of buildings on streets that are of significance. I know a person who moans of the Old Georgetown requirement that recycling pails must be smaller than a certain size. But is it necessary to keep large swaths of 42 neighborhoods in a midsize city? It’s dangerous too. I consider the story of the Takoma Park (a fiercely anti-nuclear power town :( preservation board that wouldn’t let someone change out their lead paint ridden shades at will. Bad for their children. And then there is the radically Brutalist (raw concrete) building two blocks from the white house that the owners want out with (The Church of Christ, Scientist. They allege that it’s a maintenance havoc). It was like a 15 year battle with preservationists. But there’s nothing really historic about that building that couldn’t be replicated. And anyway, there’s a lot of neo-Brutalism- a milder for of said style, and anyway, if someone really liked the school of architecture- they could build their own bunker- I think a Brutalist shed can be made with ordinary driveway concrete. Now about a Victorian neighborhood...

To Make a BID (2009-06-30 16:12)

That’s Business Improvement District. Some business neighbors desire to create a business district in the area between the Golden Triangle (which includes lobbyist row and other high-profile names such as the Mayflower Hotel and the Spitzer family commerical real estate across the street, the Dupont BID and the Georgetown BID. To quote them, We look impoverished compared to our neighbors. Keeping up with whatever family the saying mentions. And guess what. I would be part of it. For free, because I don’t live on a commercial property (only the most dedicated employees of a company do!) So according to their plans. an alternative to a mandatory tax increase that would last five years or more is a business association. When I consider that DC’s tony hotels (and their decently affluent guests) are mostly in this district- and I notice that there isn’t much retail on the streets- I suppose all the money flows across the creek to...Georgetown, and the Golden Triangle. Exactly.

3.7 July

Nick Jonas 2028 (2009-07-02 17:23)

Nick Jonas seems insistent on making a youthful presidential campaign. Not to play a race card, but if one has not yet, we would also be tremendously overdue for a continental european to become president. He has the talent to run the country... I’ve heard years ranging from 2028 to 2038 (?! to 2040. But it wouldn’t be the first time that a celebrity became president- think Reagan. From the horse’s mouth, ” as soon as he is old enough” (starpulse.com) Sept. 16 1992 would make him 36 in 2028. It’s going to be time for a young president, anyway. Reaches the whole 18-40 contingency, which might work if young people start to vote. Say, can a 34 year old run as long as he/
she is 35 by Jan 20? BTW I’ll be 35 and 6 months on election day 2028. But I’m not thinking of running then (never say never)- I’m not a uber-well-known brand...yet. That’d be a lot of catchup to play in 19 years. The AARP and the Senior contingency might have a reservation about this...

But if he needs more political experience, to make a long story short, he can become the Governor of California.

July 3 (2009-07-03 19:37)

I am really tired, but I am really tired, but I think that July 4 is a great day for us. Parades and fireworks (if your jurisdiction hasn’t banned them yet) and lots of American food. Of course there are those who think that July 2 is the more important date. I’m not sure, though. but it sure does feel like Dec. 24.

July 4 (2009-07-04 19:56)

i was at the pool today, but i made it back in time for the fireworks-on the mall. So it was another splendid show and a quick trip on foot by the freeway home. and now I go to bed before 2mornings trip.

ENG @ Bucknell (2009-07-07 15:54)

5 minutes until an Ethics session. I’ve been enjoying. Nice Parkhurst dining, coll labs. But, got to clear my data from this computer before class

People in the Last Day (2009-07-11 13:55)

I forgot that not all local food is health food, especially in Penna. dairy country. Parkhurst does a fine job of providing delicious meals. Fine in that I got into eating 5000 calories in one day- twice than what’s healthy. And I’m off to dinner. I also found it interesting that some people have seen the insides of a tractor, some who live on a farm, some have never seen the insides of a computer before, and some Republicans whose parents do not make .25 million dollars a year. I’ll write more insightful thinks when there aren’t 3 people looking over my shoulder

Day In and Out (2009-07-13 18:25)

I didn’t forget- post 497 will be about the sans-culottes but it’s only 475. So away I went from the three-story palace of Bucknell engineering. But first, the Soccer camp kids came on Saturday night- 400 of them. Lots of them. And as a going-away present, a thunderstorm. Off goes the steam whistle, but it goes ignored. Comes the rain, and we run in. Then yearbooks, and now, the eternal quest to find those folks on facebook.

I’m thinking that I can get rid of pool tile algae with the abundant supply of AJAX oxygen bleach powder. I feel like the groundskeeper from CaddyShack. 8 hours from arrival at home to work duty, let’s say.
Memoir, 1 week ago (2009-07-15 17:08)

Waking up on a cool morning at 6:30am, because you went to bed at 10. Seeing a real life groundhog, like Punxsutawney Phil, but with less celebrity status, and brown rabbits, admitting to nerdship and going to breakfast at 7am to avoid the big sports camp groups. Doing some summer homework (I’m falling behind- and the milk says August), watching calories because of all the tempting dining hall treats. Attempting to retrieve a $10 frisbee- on two occasions. Considering what was on the other side of those hills to the west. Seeing the American Reinvestment and Recovery act in action. Never need a jacket (except in the classroom), and never humid, and no daily thunderstorms. Not touching the computer for a day, watching Little Brother look at pictures of trains.

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Tubes (2009-07-17 18:43)

There was a shipment from somewhere in pool supply land that allowed for two new pool-bottom vacuum tubes (public pools tend to not use robots on the account of wily nature of the tubes in that they like to tie themselves into knots), and four new, glossy, red rescue tubes that are ergonomically soothing. How so? Your elbows don’t sag down into the foam when you rest them on the new tubes. And there is something about the fact that they are- new. New plastic scent, sharp corners and crease- free, and ‘GUARD’ in ghostly white bold print, as if they had never hit the water with the weight of a person before.

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Mechanical Pencils (2009-07-17 18:54)

A tisket and a tasket. I have lots of mechanical pencils that were on sale at Walgreen’s. Now these Papermates are refillable, but at this price, the economics of refilling do not make sense. Of course there are the environmental benefits of not using them as disposables, which may make it all the worthwhile. but then you might also need a spare eraser when you refill the lead? Is it still better for the environment? Well, you save a lot of plastic.

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Berkeley of the East (2009-07-20 17:37)

Takoma Park is split into three parts: Takoma (Park) DC; Takoma Park, MD in PG County; Takoma Park, MD in Montgomery County. But it’s all the same : Berkley of the East. It is, after all, a Nuclear Free Zone: it does not do business with companies pertaining to nuclear weapons, and will soon not do business with nuclear power (bye bye power company, enjoy your natural-wax candles at night). I’m waiting to see a wind turbine sprout up beside the Metro tracks. I guess they’ll enjoy burning coal til bad things happen. But there are charming things, like, well, I haven’t visited in a while. People accepting each other, some community spirit (the republic of Takoma Park) Takoma Park, MD in PG County was merged into Montgomery County, thus giving access to the higher-ranking and notorious Monkey Blair. Further plans of merging Takoma Park, DC into MD are still under discussion...

(The title originally read Berkley)
DISCLAIMER: The atticussawatzki blog does not typically take sides on politics. This is not apathy: it’s just an open forum for discussion.

Who’s in and who’s out
Conservatives gain seats in House and Senate. Many view one-part control of the three branches as a speeding train without brakes. Even with an economic recovery, people are spooked by the Summer of 2009—socialized medicine in the works? Obama is still likable.
Va. Gov. Tim Kaine gets a job in the White House.
Md. Gov. Martin O’Malley is voted out of office for all the things he did incorrectly (just things)—and was able to do a successful 2012 presidential bid is out of question.
DC Mayor (and maybe future governor) Adrian Fenty is reelected with plenty of room to spare—even though opponents try to start a rumor (it happens every cycle)
MoCo County exec Ike Leggett makes it; claims he helped county fight budget crisis and blames Mr. O’Malley for everything that he couldn’t fix single-handedly. His new private office bathroom wasn’t too politically scarring.
Rep. Norton (DC) gets more representation
George Bush enjoying himself in Texas.

The Whole 9 Yards (2009-07-27 18:36)

It’s not wise to bet against a remarkable US recovery. If one had bought a handful of stocks in February, when the news was pelting feel-bad news at you, a half-of-average rate of return at this time would be a whopping 16%. I’m not here to talk about money, though.
These days, the news establishment runs those feel-good stories. Ain’t it all bright and merry? Obamacare hits a snag. At least someone cares about running deficits.

Think Positive

The Seldom Flier (2009-07-28 17:23)

You know you haven’t been on a plane in a while if...
You expected not to pay for your first two bags of luggage
You think the drinks and peanuts are free
You licked your chops in anticipation of the meal, also free
You call the flight attendant "stewardess"
You think the pilot’s all jolly about his paycheck
You read the inflight magazine because there’s no better entertainment
You thought smoking was allowed on board, and there was a lounge to do so in.
You call for a blanket and pillow, and expect to not shell out a Hamilton—or swipe your card
You deny that a plane can make it from DC to Alaska nonstop
You refuse to believe that transcontinental flights are $189 (plus taxes and fees) and that transatlantic fights are the same price.
You thought you were still on the ground because the takeoff was so quiet.
You believe that the stewardesses are registered nurses
You think the average flier’s outfit is scandalous
Like Daddy
Found In Change (2009-07-30 14:06)

A mercury head dime was found by a certain Mr. Ross a few years ago in the dusty field of lower central park. Blackened by years in the dirt the 1944 was still a surprise for us all.
An Indian Head Cent from 1899 was also found by a certain ntfletch’s grandmother, as he relayed to me. As I reloaded my Smartrip card with nickles and dimes, I checked the coin return and found a 1942 war nickle- a good amount of silver in it, characteristically dull gray.
PS- Mars Candy Company is giving away .25 million free candy bar coupons on Fridays starting at 9am (I guess to give the West Coasters a fair shot during daylight hours)

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3.8 August

New City (2009-08-01 15:34)

We may meet America’s new 10th largest city. Larger than San Jose and smaller than Dallas, it’s Fairfax City, just 10 miles from Washington, # 25 largest city. For starters, Fairfax County is an accumulated strip mall subdivision, with lots of sprawl and crawl that happens to have good schools and great other things. So it would also be America’s richest (large) city. But why would they want to become what people think of a city. a ”grimy place” Isn’t the arts venue enough? It’s about independence for spending. But sadly, it’s not a one-step process. Counties in Virginia with lots of people can’t just make a city. For some reason like fear of the reins.
There is a Fairfax City in existence already - the population of it, by incorporation of the rest of the county, will increase to over 1 million.
Downtown? Tyson’s Corner Mall. Or for the upscale, the Galleria across the street.

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Pentagon Transit Center, 5:27pm (2009-08-03 18:08)

A sunset view of the Potomac
A guy blocking the path of a commuter bus in a vain attempt to gain admission, as in Tienanmen Square.
The neat lines of passengers on some routes, and the disorderly blobs of others.
The procession of buses of all different county flags and colors.
But, no unauthorized photography on Pentagon grounds, so words will do.

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Staples (2009-08-04 17:54)

A tisket a tasket
5 packs of filler paper in a basket
total cost
I don’t care
It’s really really fair
Say, 5 cents?
Makes me feel like I’m in the 18th century at staples.
The time they sleep (2009-08-06 17:24)

Getting your sleep is important. But how do I get it?
If I go to bed like about now, yes, I'll get over 8 hours of sleep before getting up. That sure is plenty enough.
But does the time really matter?
Can you break it up over the day?
I don't know; I've heard different things, and I'm not that good of a napper.
Except that time in March when I had a 24 hour flu and fell to sleep at 6 pm
Then there is the sleep cycle theory- 5 stages of sleep. When the alarm clock goes off and you’re in stage 1, you’re ready to go. 2,3, hard to get up, can’t get back to sleep real quickly if you wanted too, though. Two extra minutes help. 4 or 5, you can slip back to sleep easy, but if you have to get up...
I'm thinking of getting that wrist thing. It senses movement and will wake you up a bit earlier if it’s a good time.
But the older you get, the less stage 5 (REM dreaming) sleep you get. Less memorable dreams. Sigh.

Little Maryland: Dreaded Math Word Problems (2009-08-07 14:09)

Sharing 3/4 of its border with Maryland, DC has a symbiotic relationship with that state. When an urbanist blogger/journalist complains that East of the River (pop. 150,000) is devoid of supermarkets, commenters ridicule him/her: There's at least two each of Food Lion and Giant within 3 blocks of the 'invisible' border.
Then there’s the tax game: Initiator: "Let’s raise taxes. I'll look good when everyone validates me when they raise theirs" Follower: "Our tax rate is at par with this other state. Because of this there will be..." That's what DC is doing to combat revenue loss (and leak: A political game of follow the leader; increasing the sales tax from 5 and 3/4 of a penny to 6 pennies.
So Mary Lou buys a $.75 candy bar in a Maryland store. This is back in 1998, the tax rate is 5 %. What did Mary really pay?
Take 10 % (move the number to the right by 1 decimal place) and cut by two, add to final. If decimal, round up, that’s the way they like it.
$.83.
Mary Lou’s sister, Mary La, buys the same candy bar at $1.09 in the same Maryland store. This is in 2008, tax rate is now 6 %. What did Mary really pay?
Do as above, and throw on a 1 % (move number to right twice)
5 % = 11 cents
1 % = 1 cent
12 cents + 1.09 = 1.21
Mary La’s brother, Doc, figures it’s better to buy his candy in DC, where the tax rate is 5.75 %. He goes to Balducci’s (to eliminate need to adjust for so-called ’poverty tax’) and buys a $4.29 imported Belgian chocolate.
This is a toughy. Take 5 %, 22 cents, add the 1 %, split that by four and take three parts of it (.04/4 = .01 -> .03) The total price is $4.54.
The tax rate goes up to 6 %. Now what does he pay? $4.55, and less brainwork.
Virginia, Doc’s cousin, buys a ’dixie stick’ at the State Fair Shop. The tax rate is 4 %, the candy is $.25
Take 1 % and multiply by four
Or use ‘old math’ to get 1 cent as tax for a whopping total of $.26
Della, the other cousin, buys a hoity-toity designer chocolate box at Christiana Mall in Delaware, whose tax rate is 0 %. The candy is $19.99. She give the clerk $20.00. How much does she owe the clerk?
In this case, the clerk owes Della a penny.
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People from the slide-rule age say that keeping zeroes straight in their head is easier for them than calculator folk

State Drinks (2009-08-09 15:58)

There’s more political sponsorships and controversies than just state songs. So here’s a few good ones.

20 states have their state drink as milk. Just wait for a lactose intolerant politician to have to be a poster child for the benefits of drinking milk. I suppose some of these states don’t produce much milk. 2 states have alcoholic drinks: California Wine and Alabama Whiskey (although Alabama does say it’s the state spirit).

What about the children?

There’s Tomato, Cranberry, and Orange juices. The latter two may be obvious choices (Massachusetts and Florida).

One corporate sponsorship, Moxie Cola from Maine. Haen’t heard of them? At least Georgia did not give ‘Coca-Cola’ a boost.

Kool Aid from Nebraska

and water from Indiana.

Naming Your Post-Apocalyptic Supercompany (2009-08-12 17:05)

Take a fancy number prefix, such as Tera, and add to name referring to planets or space in general or some technical term. This could be Farad, an unit for the capacitor.

So, Terafarad Evil Company

Now you can take over the world and make everyone submissive to you. I don’t know how the big companies take over the world, I haven’t read ‘1984’, but the means is up to you.

Or, I like this one... large number, Googleplex, generic techy sounding name, Tron

Googleplextron

Well, there’s already a Google that some say invades their privacy and is chewing up the internet as its own domain. So there you go.

The Fashion Trend of the 2010’s! (2009-08-14 15:46)

It’s the fashion trend that’s taking this decade by storm! In the age of the "new Normal", where practicality is in vogue and frivolous spending is out of style, scrubs, which used to be typically worn only by those in the medical community, have seen a rise in popularity. It is a local legend that residents of Bethesda started the trend, which then caught on in trendy Potomac. "You’d see people inside that fence (around the NIH) frolicking in the grass in scrubs of all different colors. They looked like Easter chickens. So free in movement, the local jogging club started wearing scrubs as jogging gear. Well, then our rich neighbors started doing the same. I mean, if a multimillionaire trial lawyer wears scrubs to the cocktail party, it must be the trend." It was not too long later that the posh stores of Chevy Chase, 2 miles south of the NIH, started selling these work clothes. Neimus Marco currently carries 3 lines of scrubs in the $200-500 range.

But they are not just toys of the rich and fabulous. They can be found at your local Buck Chuck starting at $10 a piece. The scientific community is weighing in on this latest trend. Says a psychoanalyst, also wearing a white scrub with jacket, "It makes one feel as if they are doing something for the community" But warns a
podiatrist, also wearing a set of scrubs, "Wearing high heels and scrubs at the same time can lead to trips, falls, and broken toes".

Scrubs have been identified as some to be the agent of depersonalization. "If you’ve ever watched a scifi movie..." says a Trekkie. But the Committee on Un-American Affairs has assured Americans that there is no traces of communism have been found in this trend. "You get a choice of over 6 colors, and even get choices of different designs. Cartoon characters with bandages are a very popular design." The Plutotronton community has been reported to assign scrub colors to people based on caste. "That’s a sad fact", said Mr. McCarthisipi, "but that’s not my committee’s problem".

Fashion analysts from the fashion Institute of Fashion say that the trend may have originated from the plethora of medical drama and reality shows of the past decade, including Scrubs, M.D., Gray’s Anatomy, ER, House, M*A*S*H, and 20 years of school and I’m still not a real doctor yet.

Medical supply company FemoScrubTron says that some medical professionals are resorting to using togas in light of the shortage. "If you or a loved one has an extra pair of scrubs, please consider donating it to us. We’ll give you a free catheter for it ".

What would the Sans-Culottes Say? (2009-08-18 11:08)

Let’s drive through the nice part of DC
Let’s start at Washington Circle, leaving through the west part of the central city. That 4-story hole in the ground? A new Giant. Two blocks up on Penn. is a large-sized Trader Joe’s that draws commuters to its free subterranean parking lot. Across the bridge to Georgetown proper, there is a incoming Safeway (socialsafeway.com). Some would regret the loss of suburban-style parking in front for a more “urbanized, walking friendly store”, but there will still be free parking under the store. Four blocks up is the Bread and Circus- now labeled as whole foods. But get this- it’s actually less than 2 miles from the next one. 2 miles1? This is what the grit urban gentrifier from Columbia Heights won’t believe. Well, as we progress north, there is a Giant falling into disrepair that has been held captive by the locals. But most don’t shop there; they drive over to one of two local Balducci’s- six on the east coast and there are 2 within 6 miles. The second Whole Foods, a Rodmans, a Giant on the Maryland side of Western avenue, a smaller Trader Joe’s, another Giant entering Bethesda.

Back to 1993 (2009-08-18 11:23)

I was only half alive back then. No, I was born, but had no idea on affairs at that time. It seems like Mindy Cameron did something brilliant, Mumbai was Bombay, Beijing was still commonly Peking. AND there was this Great Healthcare Reform of 1993-4. It really sounds like the 2009 plan, except that the promoters were not among the most liberal people in politics (Remember, in the political circle, the extreme far left end of liberal merges with socialist, and Americans don’t like that concept). Businesses wanted to hack off healthcare costs, hospitals wanted to shuck costs for treating poor, uninsured patients to the government. So Mrs. Clinton heads a task force to research the matter. But the big theme of the era was fiscal responsibility, and as now, people took the plan to be expensive and big-government oriented. Reaganism? Within 18 months, the idea was dead, and Mr. Clinton moved on to other things.

SO what would the Sans-Culottes say? From what I know, I suppose they’d approve responsible spending. But healthcare services back then were extremely limited and for the wealthy, and likely lethal. While the national leadership wasn’t on fire for building palaces for themselves (in 1993 USA), the concept was (1793 France) that responsibility and liberty mattered. Big government bad.

http://www.upenn.edu/pnc/pbtok.html
Is it Real or Am I Dreaming? (2009-08-24 11:36)

There are those days where you feel out of your head. That’s happened to me before- usually when very sick or dehydrated. You see in slow motion and it’s an OBE experience. But does it happen at other times? When I question: What is the meaning of parents, life dreams. When I question the fact of reality. When life is like a dream. I dream in sleep sometimes of hitting a jackpot find of great numismatic value. But it’s never real. Until now.

I was at the bank, and the tellers and I were volleying about the government’s postdated check. They claimed that I had to wait til tomorrow, but I argued that since they already held my checks for over a week, and they took them before, that they should take mine today. Must be a manager’s peeve fad of the day, like making sure the patrons don’t wear underwear under their swimwear, or something like that. So I remember the Dilbert comic about tellers encouraging customers to use the ATM, so I did. I was nervous about handing the check to a machine, but the ATM scanned the check and verified the amount. Since it was after 12noon, it’ll be processed tomorrow- thus alleviating their complaints about a post dated check. So I can load my transit smart card, I withdraw a $20. I go to the post officelet that was across the hall and planned to break the $20. The clerk didn’t like the thought, and another customer insisted that he pay for my 2 44 cent stamps and suggested I go to the teller. SO I take my 20, and since I’m sort of eccentric, asked for a roll of halves and two practical fives. It took them a while to procure the roll. It was a raggedy one that a customer must have brought in, so I went to count them. By George some were silver. The momentum carried my lazy legs 5 blocks. I take out a five to load my card on the bus. By double George one had a star (also a currency collector’s delight, especially in higher denominations). I got home, and found the whole roll was 40 % silver halves. A better hit than anyone I’ve heard of on the Web. I wondered how this could be real.

Now I have no money to spend.

Thing is, I didn’t want to go through the hassle of delivering the check safely again to the bank, which was 7 metro stops away from home.

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Time (2009-08-26 12:50)

I’ve been thinking: three days off and I haven’t done much useful. I try to monitor my time, but it disappears. I don’t want to blame soccer practice, which has me out at 4pm and in at 9:30pm.

So...

I’m usually ready to go at 9:30am

Monday- achieved close to nothing. Ok, it’s my first nothing day.

Tuesday- get saran wrap and aluminum foil. Chase a hothead three blocks to make him apologize to me for the inappropriate thing he said to me

Wednesday- go to Capitol Visitor Center, get school supplies. Waste time on internet.

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A feeling (2009-08-28 12:35)

I could go on about what happened yesterday involving a smartcard and a pink piece of paper but I will not, because I don’t feel like thinking much today. 5 days away from the pool and I’ve lost sense of time, the days, the number of the day, and the sense of completion. However, today, I feel as if I did everything I needed to
in order to be ready for class Tuesday, 8am. No, it’s a welcoming mass, I think. I have not yet written my memoirs, neither on any fanciful tale, yet I feel as if I did something today.

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**Procrastination, Hiatus (2009-08-31 14:50)**

I interrupt my regular post, "The costs of building a responsible freeway" to bring you an update on the swirling ideas in my head.

Taking the engineering design process which I so fervently learned in Penna. in July,

Let’s take $100. What can we do with it to make it bigger?

Heat it up so the molecules expand- it’s bigger, but the value does not increase

Give a loan- I’m always nervous when giving loans, whether $1 or $10.

Give a microloan- the young entrepreneurs I know are studious about timely payback- "Bis dat qui cito dat" (Latin for "Who gives back quickly gives twice")

Look online and start a home-brewed business with it- cut out the middleman/lady who receives the microloan

Ahh, I almost forgot about the nice 70 degree weather outside. First time since May I wore long sleeves.

Here’s the scoop:

http://www.webmastersprofitpak.net/new-business-ideas2.htm

Well, last day of summer vacation

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**3.9 September**

**Rush (2009-09-05 15:08)**

Where have I been? What have I been doing? This stretch from Sept. 1 may have been my longest unexcused hiatus of speech on this blog since July 2007. What have I been doing? School lots of it. Don’t remind me of Wednesday- first full day of school. Start with the school day, add a soccer practice, a scrapped knee and a violin lesson across town and the initiation rite of homework from a lot of new teachers. Tuesday? I was in an aggressive homework mode. The English? Well, I had one night to make sure it was reader perfect. Good time investment, got a solid A on the stack of papers. And as I heard from a senior- annotations in the margins! (Your teacher) loves it!

So after a partly leisure day at the library, I’m being called back home. It was no rush. No clear objective. I took at least an hour cruising the web, scouring satellite photos to ID an abandoned railroad, wondered at the marvel of the forward-thinking (and now old-looking) Penna. Turnpike, read about the Nissan Pavilion and Kingman Island, spend an hour munching on a bagel and reading the college paper (Blue and Gray, to give a hint where I was), and blogging as I wait to catch a bus, and doing homework assignments.

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**Cubicles (2009-09-07 17:16)**

A relaxed environment that is welcoming to interaction. That’s what a cubicle was designed to be. First marketed in the 1970’s, the modular form of architecture made transformation of office spaces easy- no costly wall modifications, and allowed for better use of open plan spaces. Well, the concept of making a 'better' environment for employees dissipated as space managers sought to economize on space. 9x9 is a good size these days... And in the strip Dilbert, they are ridiculed and compared to prison cells, especially when
combined with bright white overhead fluorescent lighting.

Then there is the counterrevolution. Open work space with no assigned workspaces. What a radical idea. Curvature!

How can we keep the conformist look but increase morale and further economize? IKEA furniture— a decent table can be obtained for $50, and a chair $10. But the chair is what counts. I have this nice $60 manager’s chair. It’s fluffy, it twirls and rolls. So let’s add one of those. People who need privacy can hang hangings from the ceiling panels, if they still exist in the ‘contemporary’ workplace. That’s about 15% the cost of a standard $2000 cubicle. Or some people are revolted by the sedentary lifestyle of deskwork. Let’s take away the chair.

Or let people byof- bring your own furniture from home, as long as it fits in the ‘virtual boundaries’ of your workspace. A door? Maybe.

Game in the mist (2009-09-11 18:49)

I pulled this school-spirit Haiku for the 9th grade Haiku competition. School spirit can’t be turned down.

Big brown flying ball
gliding into the basket
Panther Victory

I pulled this silver bullet against one of those really deep-thinking writers: those 3 haiku he used were his gems: I only had 2 gems, so I fell out of the bracket that round. He likewise fell out in the next round, having run out of 17-syllable pearls.

After grabbing a short violin session (which, to an end did not make the conductor happy), Because of laws that restrict how many people a non-CDL driver can carry, some of us (including I) had to catch a ride over to WIS with drivers who had limited licenses that provided for one or two passengers- what a waste of space on the road and the environment. I was nervous as to whether I would field at all- a matter of center ‘d’ or center bench- a preposterous thought. You don’t do that in some sports. Basketball maybe. But wait, I had to grab a red jersey from the athletic director. Well, I made it back in time. Edmund Burke, a ‘small’ radical, freethinking, call-your-teacher-by-first-name school, doesn’t have its own field. While both Burke’s and the Panther’s uniforms were very similar, no one had problems identifying who was who. Judging a book by its covers in a way did work. Anyhow, an amazing shot that rattled the net. Panthers up 1. But don’t forget-right after scoring is the most vulnerable time for the goalmaker. Change of possession, a high head, and a vengeful opponent can call for a quick turnaround. Goal two. With some certainty, one can say that the score will be 2-1 before 3-0. It happened. But it’s good that they got to get the sensation of success. Three more shots, and the game was over.

Before 20 minutes, all players who came out to the game had rotated in. That includes me. Center midfield.

Objective: Keep ball ahead of you. Pass if needed. Receive if called upon. Moved the ball forward a few times, received a leg to the ab, lost a pass once, a faulty pass directed to me that was easily taken by the opponent but swiftly recaptured. I don’t know how long I was in the play for, but it felt short. I must have been in for at least 7 minutes though, I think. It must have also been a sort of important position, as some denied that I played there (yes, I replaced Peter). A goal wasn’t made on us at that time. I did enough.

I was in for the penultimate rotation in the second half, right midfield. More success. The drizzle provided for chilly hands, but that was nothing like what winter brings. The position called for lots of running up and down the field, and some drive to change possession. If I had considered stopping for four seconds t take a breather, then I would have lost some of that momentous drive for the ball. It worked a few times, but I would also say the god of Astroturf sent a few stray balls my way, which, I made good use of. A hairy defensive moment, calling out suggestions as to handle the ball, "Kick it up (to the offensive line), do not cross center (so as to not risk a one-touch shot by the opponent)."

Final score, 5-1, Panther Victory.
A shake of hands with Burke’s players, congratulating them for giving us an excellent game. Well, they were never enemies, only opponents.

American Jokes (2009-09-13 11:30)

I love America. I’m not laughing at it, but with it. These jokes sum up some stereotypes about Americans: Stuffed, gun-toting, cupiant, affluent, overlyprotective, and on...

1. Only in America......can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.
2. Only in America......do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.
3. Only in America......do people order double cheese burgers, large fries, and a diet coke.
4. Only in America......do banks leave both doors open and then chain the pens to the counters. ”
(http://www.jokesaboutamericans.com/)
How many American tourists does it take to change a light bulb?
Fifteen. Five to figure out how much the bulb costs in the local currency, four to comment on "how funny-looking" local lightbulbs are, three to hire a local person to change the bulb, two to take pictures, and one to buy postcards in case the pictures don’t come out. (Ibid)
Why is an astronaut like an American footballer?
They both like to make safe touch-downs.
These four guys were walking down the street: a Saudi, a Russian, a North Korean, and a New Yorker. A reporter comes running up and says, "Excuse me, what is your opinion about the meat shortage?"
The Russian says, "Excuse me, what’s meat?"
The North Korean says, "Excuse me, what’s an opinion?"
The Israeli, says, "Excuse me?? What’s excuse me?"
The American says, "What’s a shortage?"
(http://thejokes.co.uk/american-humor-3.php)


"Let’s go to the JHU place at Sciece City and watch cells multiply, then, we can watch a techincal presentation on neurology as we eat 'dippin' dots'.” That’s the science cityt lifestyle. Just like Tyson’s Corner is remaking itself from blacktop and office towers and a fantastic mall into a full-service city (that is not totally contained within the mall), Montgomery County, Md, just across the river, wants to turn a starship research cewnter, The Shady Grove Life Science Center (it already has a Metro station nearby!) into a 24-hour destination. Granted that it’s already a 7am (some scientists like to start early) to 1am destination (some scientists try to get home for dinner). It’ll cause a traffic jam! It’ll be like Tyson’s Corner! Then there is, "It will be a fabulous opportunity to show that Montgomery County is a first-rate center for research (it already is).”, claims some.
On the plans is to include high-desity residences, an entertainment center, hotel, and research space, and so on.
Science has done so much for us and the world, prolong our lives, debunk prejudice, make the world a better place, and so on.

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To Make a Tag Day (2009-09-18 19:23)

It seemed like people were nowhere to be found. There was a fire drill, 8:35am. The results and observations will be reviewed by the School Safety Committee. At least 70% of students came in 'Tag', and were levied $5 a head. No cut-arounds, though. All entrances were made into obstacle courses to help discern the people who think levy hooky is a fun game. All in all, well over $600 would have been collected, with a very good profit margin, that we as students should see in coming months. FYI, I don’t do $5 tags. I point out that at $3, more people would be akin to paying, and that would result in more money? No, the market saturation is complete. Maximum revenue has been gained. Not to say I’m not charitable: I plan to make a contribution to the Model UN Fund, which I encourage all students who have a stake in the club, or in the free world for that matter, to do.

To Make an Empire (2009-09-18 19:33)

Did you notice how half our class plans to run for school office in the Spring?, queries one affindat. No, like in the future, we’re going to like run the world. I mean, half of us will run the world and the other half will take it over. Everyone’s going to know about that group of kids from St. A’s.

Picking from a potential pool of 150 is a lot different than luring from a pool of 20,000. I don’t understand why we do it, but we play games with the premier DC public school. In the meanwhile, we lose 1:2, at best. They live in various environments, from the realm of lawyers and local politicians to the diversified masses, including art majors. Many come from joke-worthily homogenous society with dabblings in science. The tech corridors. STEM. Maybe I bring it up to the wrong people: Let’s be the first denizens of Science City. "Shaddup". A truer friend brought the issue up: Audiences. Yes, these people who only think of rap and b-ball are the ones who aren’t the future powerforce. But as for the deep-thinking investment club or the worldly Model UN, there might be my audience. Indeed, the way the investment club analyzed Ford (F) stock as a good investment, they have a bright future.

Whom do these leaders follow? Their older cousins? No- there’s a STEM shortage, an Privileged generation, sure. Rebellious, sure. Concerned about the environment and social welfare? As a card in the wallet (more than none, less than a whole life). Likely to end up working and partying as a Zappo clerical? Not the ‘90s man, or lady. In an attempt to maintain a lifestyle provided by our helicopter Not the last generation. Those goths! I envision being their boss, really. Positivity is the road to success. Our parents? Our grandparents? Our emigrant great-grands? Family values pass on like dna. Generations. See that one of investment club speaks for his friends’ and brothers’ suburban class scism cause (for example, Montgomery Co. east of Creek vs West of Creek). Four points: he seems cool headed and not a populist. And, he’s a stable conformer (not a big-government type). It’s also egalitarian- raise our standards but don’t parasitc the already successful. He reads the Wall Street Journal and is economically ‘realistic’.

Young people are what we need. Moldable. We need x more y-careerees. They’re consumerist, and the glut on the way out will need houses. Oh, and all these houses (or most of these spare houses) are in suburbs. Granted, some of these exurban developments are helpless, but we can return the orginal meaning of the suburbs of the convenience of city living with the ease of country life (this was the 1920-1950 slogan). Thus, the quip by Harvard legacy and Bethesda (inner-burb) resident that the young people will move from suburbs to city, according to my evidence, is incorrect. Maybe the first tax hike or bag fee will put them on the outbound train (You must believe that Big Government at all levels is harmful to our values!).

The demigods in the sky:

Technically, there is no reason why industrial execs can’t live the high life. There is really no reason why manufactory has to be done in developing countries. These days, there is a bulge of ready-to-work workers in places like Ohio and Pennsylvania who have experience in the manufacturing and heavy industies. Yes, college-spiff degrees lead to a flavorful landscape with a wide variety of careers from banking jobs to art jobs.
But there isn’t an overwhelming demand for art. Fortunately, as we reemploy former factory workers into modern plants, they will retire, and we’ll need replacements. Pull them straight from the high school gown at 17 or 18 or 19 and make them 40-year company men or ladies. We’ll save middle america and restore the way things used to be with stability and American Industrial might. The things that made the 20th century great. O little town of Bethlehem PA!
So, if you believe in what I said above, you seem to have a good shot at success
-Atticus Sawatzki, motivational coach.

Bankers Sequester High Value Items (2009-09-19 17:37)

Or, more accurately, tellers have a propensity for taking collector coins out of circulation. I went to Riggs Bank in Georgetown, the oldish landmark on M and Wisconsin, to to see if they had any of those large dollar coins, the ones made up to 1978 before the Carter Quarter (Susan B Anthony Dollar) was introduced. I was hoping to pick up a few lkes, maybe even one of the big old silver ones that a silver certificate would get you. But, they didn’t have any at hand. They didn’t check the vault, but they were sure they didn’t have any. Then the senior teller came and told me, "We don’t get many of those anymore. When we do, we like to keep them for ourselves. Go to a dealer to get them." So that verifies one roll hunter’s suspicion. Count me lucky that I was able to get a roll of silver from a bank that one time.
Solution: go find a bank with tellers who don’t know a hoot about coins, or a bank that strictly forbids their staff from doing this practice.

One Big Family (2009-09-20 19:05)

Is it really true that buildings do sometimes sell for $1? Yes. And do they have scary terminology attached as a condition of sale for the price of a candy bar? You betcha with liens and tax requirements, etc. This leads me to question the realism of the 'urban novel', The Young Landlords. Set in 1979 Harlem, these pesky 15-year-olds get served with a tenement building I haven’t finished reading, and am far from it, but there are some disagreements brewing...

Equinox (2009-09-22 16:43)

The stars must have been in alignment.
Or, maybe just day and night.
I suspected it first at 10am, when I was sorting through my "clientes", a latin word. Or, the people who owed me greenback. What I realized was that half of them weren’t in class. So before I ruled on hookey, or write a thesis about the relationship between borrowing money from friends and sickness, I knew there was a wider trend. Sadly, I had to leave last period early for a soccer match. "Where’s P.?” one asked. "Thought Alexandria was too far for a game.” "Where’s K.?” "Sick.” Well, there goes some great players. Early in the game, our enduring goalie was injured in a successful attempt to apprehend a rougue ball heading for the rwrong net. Pretty bad, it seemed. Limped off the field with assistance, nurse on the go was radioed, ice bag given. Prognosis: A few days off.
A newbie goalie was put in. The alternative, K., as I said above, was sick. The fresh blood made 3 great saves. Final score 2-0 panther victory. A logjam over the 14 st bridge, home.
Happy equinox and a beginning of autumn.
Time to spare (2009-09-24 19:44)

I will be getting home on a weekday before 5pm. What a novel concept. Since mid August, there has always been a soccer practice or game to conveniently occupy me. But now that I have this one day reprieve, what shall I do when I get home when banks are still open?
A freudian slip? Of course not. Find a roll of halves and a stack of $2 bills. That’s my style. But why the reprieve? A victory on the field with four goals. Some thought the game was lost. The opponent was up 2-0. Then a comeback. 4-2, a sufficient pointage that we get to, well, not bring our cleats.
Well, happy house day, cactonians. May Main House conquer again. I mean, may the best team win.


After 3 months of helping people with their minor problems and issues over the summer, I found it quite different to encourage the irresponsible behavior that I had discouraged people from doing over the break. Spin around ten times and consume 2 cups of Jello. Yes, two cupfuls. In a competition relay race. Luckily for Main House, there were more than enough qualified people to do the deed. No, but in the vetting process for 4 contenders we had to determine the prowess of each of us. So we determine the ability of the newest recruit, a foreign exchange student. "What’s Jello?" "It’s sweet and fruity." "Never ate it". "Well would you like to try Jello today". "Spin around and swallow? Nah". The creds of everyone else: A sucessful Jello run back in May. Closet gluts. I, a cream pie contest winner, was not as qualified as the other Mainers. For other houses, well, due to their lack in numbers and absentees and disdain for jello and gelatin, some members had to run twice, and, 4 cups of jello. I wanted to see that. Yes, I shouldn’t want to, but it’d been something. But it was intense. The spinning causes great disorientation, which really disorients the contestant. Thus, I was occupied reminding our fellows how to eat jello: head sightly back to supress gag reflex, not too far as to cause choking.
Yes, Main won the relay.

How to Slow Traffic (2009-09-28 19:46)

without speed bumps
Try putting in streetcar tracks. Georgetown has left about 8 blocks of streetcar track on two streets, unused since 1960, to do exactly that. And preserve history.
On the same note, the much, awaited delay of the opening of the new National Capitol Trolley Museum on October 18. Great- delay opening to coinncide with the 40th anniversary of the museum’s founding. But why is there a new museum? The streetcar was displaced again by the automobile. How ironic. The ICC Project (aka SR MD 200) is planned to plow right through the old museum site, as well as the 20-minute demo loop for riding the trolleys. But remember about all the modern social expenditures that are now attached to freeway building (I 110) ? The state was so obliged to do just that. What an ending.

A Hurrah for Youth Empowerment (2009-09-30 20:10)

Some oft quoted ideas
Allow everyone to register to vote at 16- current law in most stes allow you to register if you will be 18 by the next election. That may be as young as 16 or as old as 18. All 16 year olds are allowed to make political
contribution (Hey kids, remember sending money to the Obama team? Maybe you were a Ron Paul fan or for Romney or maybe on the McCain Train)

Drinking age
If prohibition won’t work then a country probably needs a drinking age
Let’s make it 22. Your brain is more developed then than 21.
21 or military ID?
Let’s let responsible college kids have a sip.
18 with completion of alcohol safety course (required for boating and driving in many states, why not have one for drinking responsibly), 17 with diploma (or otherwise proven responsible) to allow for younger freshmen.
If they’re going to do it anyway, why not make it legal
There are loopholes in many states, but to keep this site FAMILY friendly, they’re not being listed here.
Smoking- consensus says: Just ban it.
PS If you’re reading this post while driving or operating other large machinery WATCH WHERE YOU’RE GOING!

3.10 October

On the Great Falls, Part 2 (2009-10-02 20:12)

The sophomore’s rafting trip happened today. I went last year, but even without asking I knew what they did.
They got on the yellow school bus and watched as the neighborhood went by while I was counting significant figures in Chemistry.
I then had an ethics test. They were passing the houses of the robber barons on Georgetown Pike. During a math class of running full mind to understand synthetic division of polynomials, they pumped up rafts.
During the free period, they ate pitas and some had been convinced that this could be their last meal.
After putting "The things they carried" back in my bag for a while and pulling out "MacBeth" for English class, they luged the rafts over their heads down the steep ravine to the water, and then were briefed on safety and designated captains on how to steer a ship.
During second lunch period, munching on mystery meet, they learned to trust their classmates and build bonds as they navigated down the river and treated each other with dignity, for rowers have to row in the same direction to go somewhere.
While translating in an embattled manner "Le Medecin Malgre Lui" for French Class, they fought currents and weighted lifejackets as they swam upstream, the best swimmers not doing a good job on distance.
While building chords in music theory, they broke bonds with the normal force of the earth as they all (or most of them) jumped off a cliff
While arguing that the war in Iraq was not one for oil, they slipped their wet outergarments into a plastic bag and put on polyester fleeces and polymer-laced t-shirts and slippers and sped back to school
During orchestra, they pulled out mp3 players for the last part of the journey.
During the soccer game, they were there, and acknowledged, yeah, I’m tired.
Some things don’t change year to year.

Why We Don’t Have Skyscrapers (2009-10-03 13:03)

Since this piece of property is so close to a metro station, you can take this strip mall and turn it into a 20 floor tower. Want to stand out? OK, you can build up to 300 feet. The ultimate plan is to create a real city
environment for a suburban county. Walkable, intriguing.
Why not taller? Inflating real estate prices = more lateral development = quicker means to a citylike environment.


Addendum: "We built this place up from scratch with the help of greedy developers". Well, there was a historic downtown Rockville, much like Leesburg, VA or Frederick, MD. It was torn down for the lovely brutalist towers, most notably 51 Monroe, as an early "Transit-oriented development" (It’s connected by skywalk to Metro Rockville).


Media Circus (2009-10-06 15:49)

Sometimes, a character in a drama is killed off. So I wonder: Does the great drama of news production report death erroneously? How frequently, and why?
Someone was badly mangled in a crash involving a car stolen from the mayor. The victim is recovering in a local hospital.
Of course, as I witnessed occasionally outside of GWU hospital (the one where Capitol Hill goes), news reporters can be annoying. So someone from the hospital cites patient privacy, and upon a reaching barrage of microphones, mumbles.
And then, word gets out.
But it doesn’t really matter, because the victim was just a pawn in the media circus.
A misled statement won’t hurt anyone.

On a Low (2009-10-08 15:44)

Yde wrote a sports short in the Cactonian paper of note (The glossy paged Priory Press) of the JV soccer team: "JV Soccer opened their season on September 11th, with a 5-1 victory over Edmund Burke, but lost on the 16th to Wilson (Coach says we need a can-do spirit, but I must acknowledge that this is DC’s most desirable public high school) 4-2 in the Abbey’s home opener. The team is very confident about how far they can go. "We’re gonna go all the way", said Captain K (Sophomore)."
I will not lie. There were many happy times that goals were made while joking about the last one. But at 3:00pm there was no indication of what was to come. Maybe in a lyrical sense there was. A windy day that chilled the fingers. Best memories from the Saint Thomas middle school team in frosty New York Novembers.
In the shadow of the NRC and that new glass prism that’s rising near White Flint, a game was played that, well, didn’t show the best of the team’s ability. They were allegedly a "second-rate team", but the record of us against them shows otherwise. First half, us up one, wind mildly in our favor, second half, tied after a glorious penalty goal kick worthy of replay, winds moderately out of favor. Heartbeats were modified in what seemed like very good luck, that balls kind of seemed to go over the goal. Final score 1-1. Not too terrible, solidifies us as better than the .500 that we came in with. When we congratulated the other team, it was perfect. There really was no loser. But we could have done better. A mildly injured player came off and said, "forget about it (winning by 3 to make up for the loss against WIS), we’re playing (crud)".
If Captain K can speak for the team, I wonder whether the others had the same feeling that fateful day recently. Well, with some hard practice, anything is possible. Let’s do better on Saturday.
There aren’t ever retributions for giving glorious praise to the team. I’m not condemning anyone, it’s just how it felt to tie.
Vague references were left to protect identities but were sometimes used for artistic purposes.
A three-item agenda
Violin Lesson, 10am, moved up 1/2 hour
Soccer Game, arrive 11:30am

Since it was 8am Saturday morning, I asked for the key. It was simple work, a bit congested in Bethesda, but mostly just cruising at 40mph. Mommy was saying at one point, "speed up with all the other cars"."Look, I'm going over the limit. Now if one of the police pulls me over and writes a ticket and DC DMV finds out (by point assessment or a dedicated civil servant) then I'll have to wait another 6 months" (I can get a provisional license with a clean record in one month). "Well why would they target you?" "b/c this is an out of state car" "that's ridiculous" "No, OK then go ahead and drive with your full licence" But if the drivers behind me didn't appreciate my fear of law, they could admire my quick response to a light changed to green. A first time for a U-turn, and a perfect 90 degree pull-in at the Maxim Oriental Grocery for a quick stop.

There are two certainties about the soccer team:
1) Someone from the chang family will score in the last five minutes of a half
2) There is no thing as a game with two losing halves.

Having left from a violin lesson late in Gaithersburg, and waited a good 100 seconds at the stoplight on Muncaster Mill and Shady Grove road, I hoped that I would make it to Terra Cotta (Michigan Park) in half an hour, to get some pre game prep. Coming onto the 355/ Veirs Mill Road split, I decided to take the diagonal route, but, there was road work. Also, there was a broken bus. On closer inspection, there was a bus and a car and the car had some damage, blocking two lanes. Even past the debacle, there was traffic on the one open lane. Cancel the thought of getting to prep on time. It was already 11:40am. Re-enter 355 on Edmonston Lane, hit more shopping mall stoplights and slow moving traffic with drivers with slow response times. A yellow light. "No, not Randolph Road!" Mommy said; "Can't get a good stop (the pavement was wet) The brake is vibrating, maybe because of the way you were driving earlier." I then remembered, "Could've taken I-370 to 270 to the Beltway. But then I remembered, "I don't know how to get from the Beltway to school! Knowles Avenue. Garrett Park. A one-stoplight town with an attic-in-the-street sale today. I always like this town when we come through. This is a nice suburb. 12:00pm. Maybe I could make it for the starting whistle. Beech drive. I saw 355 again. Please don't let me go the wrong way. No, those were the Gaithersburg bound lanes. I was reoriented. 90 degree turn away from Stoneybrook. Audubon Society. Stoplight at Jones Mill, a lineup at East West, a green light. Woodbine, Wyndale- I rember that. What the jalepeno, "turn here". Daniel rd. Yes, "turn here". Oregon Avenue, 12:30pm. The game started without me.

I ran inside and pulled on my jersey. Teabag told me, "They're wearing white". I ran back inside, past the kids who were throwing snappers at people who past by, and put on my alban white #12 jersey as I walked nervously towards the field. Had mommy apologized on my behalf? Yes, I felt awkward. I walked behind the bench. "A., M., get K., T. Oh, Atticus, you're here." G. then walked off the field holding his nose. K, you're back on. "Atticus, get something–get” "gauze?" I used a lot of that over the summer. Nosebleeds, large scrapes, use that. I took four packs and some paper towels. The athletic director was attending the situation. "So it's hard to use too much of this gauze. Sterile 12 ply. It wasn't a serious injury, within 2 minutes the player was back in the game. Atticus, get A. Yes, I made a run. Valiantly my comrade was breaking with the ball. "Cross, cross, I suggested. Um. Maybe he didn't want me to make his goal. End of the half. 0-0, tied.

The other subs were put in again during the next half. "We have subs now. Come out if you need a break", called the coach. I wondered,"would I get played again". There had to be consequences for tardiness and truancy (something that didn't quite meet my situation). No, I was put in for relief twice more.

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0-6 for Homecoming (2009-10-10 13:04)
"I've let down the team. I really did", I thought. They worked brilliantly in the first half, but then, something happened. Maybe the Maret Frogs let out their varsity players on us. One goal went in. A corner kick. Bad Luck. A second. A cross and shoot. Exactly what we did in practice. Two goals, twenty minutes to go. Let’s carpe diem this game. A third. A fourth, a fifth, a sixth.

A Captain, coming off 2 minutes before the game was over, commented on the game; "(Darn) it", with an annoyed tone of voice.

In the 17 minutes I played (14 in the 2nd half), no goals were made. I finished the game and congratulated the other team. Did our team burn out? Because of my absence in the first 20 minutes? The goalie is the microcosm of the team, coach said. First half, played strong. Second half, lost confidence (is that an euphemism for slacked off?). But we played hard, he continued, but they’re not 6 points better than us. Let’s get that back on Tuesday.

Doning your best is what counts, right? If it works. (Flashback, JDS last Wednesday)


**Italian American Hertiage Day?** (2009-10-12 08:00)

Here is a politically incorrect view of the ‘discovery’ of America. Of course, it ignores the role of the Vikings and the fact that there were already people living here, as well as the crimes against humanity that happened afterward.

In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue.

Columbus wanted to find a new way to India

People thought he was a fool; he would surely fall off the edge of the map!

Back then, people thought the world was a rectangle, like you see on a map.

Columbus was Italian, but he got some money from the Spanish queen. Spain was the richest country at the time.

He built three boats: The Nina, a small boat, the Pinta, the boat in the middle, and the Santa Maria, a big boat

Columbus set out with much fanfare.

But he got into a storm, and lost two boats.

The seamen were tired. They were hungry. Some were sick. They wondered wheh or if they would ever get to India.

But one day, they saw land.

Columbus found America, but he did not know that yet.

After a while, Columbus realized the people who greeted him on the shore were not from India.

However, the name for the people he found stuck around.

Columbus traded European goods for some of what the Indians had

Columbus went back to Spain very happy with his discovery.

Even 500 years later we remember what Columbus did. Many laces in America are named after him, such as Columbus, Ohio

Columbia, South Carolina

Columbia, Maryland

The District of Columbia, where the Capitol and White House are located.

We even have a holiday named after him.

On Columbus Day, we celebrate his discovery, and honor the role of Italian Americans in our country.

(For better or worse, elementary schools are teaching kids a more balanced view of Christopher Columbus in the New World.)
Iron and Asphalt (2009-10-15 19:03)

The death knell of the streetcar sounded loudly after World War Two. What was the fifth largest industry, a mostly private-sector affair, was greatly reduced in less than 20 years. Luckily for DC, the man in charge of obliterating the streetcar system merely enclosed the tracks under asphalt, a fact that did not become apparent until Metro construction in the 1970’s. Maybe the death knell is...streetscaping. DC’s notoriously bad streets are often languished for repairs. But on 11th street, a blessing may not have been all that good. Beside the heap of dirt laid mangled rail-like strips of metal, torn from the ground. That was it. For a fact, the 47-year neglected track may not have been perfect, but some towns have found that the buried tracks sufficed for restored service.

Irish Triplet of Games (2009-10-17 05:19)

St. Andrew’s. The Red Lion in the center of the field. The experiment, "let’s take out a good portion of the ‘good’ players and let’s see what happens". Result: Tied in the time (half of the game) without these players, down 0-4 with. Oh, and a churchmate of mine was the top scorer for their team. Some good water cooler talk. There were injuries too, "ouch".

Field School. In the valley under the mansion on a drizzly, cold day, 12 degrees over freezing point. Up one at the half. Up two in the last two minutes. They score a last minute goal. The clock stops. The ref gives an extra 30 seconds. They score. A dissappointing tie made worse by how happy they were for tying. "What in (heck) happened?"

Presidential Thrill Ride (2009-10-19 18:50)

Joe Biden was known for parusing mass transit even though Union Station is only 3 blocks from the internal Capitol subway. His comment about avoiding crowds during flu season(which was taken to include mass transit) was just a fluke. Several first ladies have taken to Washington’s Metro Subway, including Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Reagan. But for cited security reasons the president has never ridden the Metro.

Mr. Obama, a quick-risen Washington Star, has been known for frequenting fine dining establishments. While in the Grand Hyatt, whose basement connects to the subway, Obama took a stroll with a few secret service agents and a pair of binoculars. Obama cited interest in joyriding a train, so arrangements were made to empty the first car of an apporaching train. This task was accomplished by Subway staff and Service Agents. A couple and their three children from Iowa were the last passengers in the front car. Not knowing Washington custom of biting fish smaller than you, told an Agent that they wanted to see the President. These days, it’s a rare occurence. The family was frisked and were informed to stay on board. To their great surprise, a contented Obama walked into the secured train car. Obama seemed to enjoy every bitof the ride to the NY ave fedcenter station, where he was escorted to a limo. "You see, we were almost afraid that he was going to want to drive the train" said a subway staff member. "In chicago, we all would ride the ’el’>, quipped Obama.

In reality, Obama is not publicly known to have ridden metro subway as president.

200
Silly Ways That People Get Government Money (2009-10-23 18:56)

So...who’s a first time homebuyer in your household?  
Your 4-year old?  
Some people say it’s cheating the system  
but there’s no minimum age for owning property in America  
of course it turns out the parents are pocketing the cash  
by they were the ones that paid for the house.

Bethlehem Steel (2009-10-26 19:01)

Extravagance in the little steel city of Bethlehem.  
If you go there today, down by the river there are these industrial-age buildings, long, next to the railroad  
tracks, and a tallish greasy rusting tower. Believe it or not this complex ran until 2003. In the meanwhile, a  
nearby auxiliary building was converted to condos in 1998; the smoke from the aged plant still fouled the air  
of Lehigh Univ., breeding ground of executives.

Numbers that don’t add up (2009-10-29 19:20)

Teachers +  
Administrative staff (1:1 ratio in DCPS)+  
Cost of maintenance, supplies, etc=  
big cost of education  
a number like, $10,000 per head  
$19538 in somewhere like Arlington, VA  
this is a suburban district, so maybe in a big city the number goes over the magical $20K?  
It sure does: $24,600 for DC.  
So where does all this $ $ $ come from?  
Tax revenue, etc.  
But hardly anyone pays that much in taxes. Much less the $50,000 to cover your 2 1/2 children.  
But most counties aren’t actively courting singles or better yet, retirees to boost their coffers.  
State spending? Fed Spending? It’s confusing to me.

Reconstructing the Scene (2009-10-30 18:51)

A person was hit by a bus on Riggs Road near North Capitol Street. The person must have not made it or  
been hurt real bad because the ambulance was there and gone in 5 minutes. At nearby Ft. Totten Transit  
Center, gap buses were placed in service to alleviate major delays in the area.  
Another account:  
Multiple cars involved with multiple serious injuries at Riggs Road and North Capitol Street. Big Mess.
Happy Halloween (2009-10-31 19:46)

Everyone just gather at the intersection of Wisconsin and M. That’s right. One night in a long while and it seems that there is something big going on. Something that I am missing out on. There was a constant flow of people coming across the bridge, and an occasional hoot and holler. Now what is rare is the sight of students younger than college age; high school and middle school. Now I know that such types mingle in Georgetown, based on anecdotal evidence from schoolmates, but I hardly cross paths with them. I was at the library at 6pm. I was quite surprised at the large gathering of studious students. But while I engrossed myself in work, they dissappeared. Keep stdying hard, said the last person to leave. I looked around. No, I was the last person left in the library at 7:45pm.

3.11 November

DST Horror (2009-11-02 14:42)

My cell phone was still an hour ahead at 8:26am. I fiddled with the buttions to no avail. But sometime during the day, it switched itself to the proper time. Now this extra hour we got yesterday was put to good use by wasted revellers, either still singing sin, drinking gin, or on the street, or in bed. But I was eager to get my math homework done. The day went on as normal. Sort of. An open house at school (the 50 % of the student body who showed up still have yet to learn of their reward), an ensemble.

But with this new change in daylight savings time, there are a few problems (or as some say, concerns): Pitch black at 7am on Oct 31, the change time check battery mantra: is it anywhere near 6 months anymore? Loss of synchronocity with Arizona most of the year (they don’t do DST).

And since I was up so many hours yesterday, I was real ready for bed at 10pm.

Carry Me Back (2009-11-03 15:07)

We don’t pay enough attention to Virginia politics here, but since it’s such an important day in Old Virginny, we had to cover this story.

Virginia and New Jersey hold their governal elections on off-year 1, that is, 1 year after presidentials. From surveys, it seems that the Republican candidates are going to win, altough liberal media sources are not willing to accept that.

So this is exactly how republicans win in red states: An unpopular democrat runs for reelection. He/she wins the party primary, hence the battle, but loses in the war*. This is the case in New Jersy, but in Virginia, there are no second terms, so change of party in power is the way the cookie crumbles.

McDonough- hurt by ultra-conservative Master’s thesis- Republican
Deeds- hurt by running smear campaign- Democrat

I made a prediction a while back that this is what is going to happen in Maryland in 2010. Let’s see what happens.

Spoof Alert (2009-11-05 19:02)

The Silver Spring/ Takoma Park MVA has started offering online road tests. The videogame format did not conform to state standards, said Ms. Fay Liu, who developed this new way of ‘skipping the trip’. It’s easy: all
you do is have a friend film you while driving, and upload it to the website when you’re done. The instruction sheet informs test-takers to announce what action they’re making, so that the voice analysis system can grade the test. If you fail, you can make an online appeal to have the film reviewed by a make-work program participant.

Activists have applauded the move, saying that while banning new drivers altogether would be more effective in reducing global warming, the reduction of an oft-hated carbon-spewing trip is a step in the right direction.

Why did Ms. Fay Liu come up with such a great idea? “Because I really don’t like Ms. Bumper. I’d like to see her transferred to Gaithiersburg and deal with complaining customers there”.

Ms. Fay Liu added that test-takers should eschew putting on makeup, excessive giggling, drinking from those big party cups, and excessive eyeballing of the camera. “Look, you just saved like 2 hours. You’ll have time to do all that... at home”. MVA officials have asked local videoediting shops to not edit the test films. "As for geeks who can do it by themselves, I mean, if they can fix a Mac, I’m pretty sure they’ll be able to use a car”, said Bubba “Babbling” Brook, a state legislator. "We might, though, consider putting a make-worker in each testing car to verify honesty. If they are incapable of knowing wrong from right, at least their extra weight will add another complication to the process of acquiring a motor vehicle operating licence”.

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**Where have all the dollars gone? (2009-11-07 14:31)**

Oh (boy), (Little Brother), I saw someone with an old $20 bill today. Not just the old black and white one, but the really old one. It made me really sad. [Oh, Atticus, did you do anything?] In fact I did. I asked the person to save it for me, and she gave it to me. [What?] Yes she did. I started to did through my wallet to scrupple enough change to make equal. I would have given that 1999 $5 bill away for it. She said "Don’t worry about it. Keep your savings for college".

I have managed to collect every series bill in denomination of $1, $2, $5, $10, and even $50 from 1995. But why not $20? There’s a reason: The two $50 bills were given as gifts for Little Brother and I for Christmas when Santa decided that I should start saving money. Those lower denominations were easy to pull from the wallet over the years, even the $10 on occasion. But as for the $20, there were emergency milk runs, "Hey, that’s my Jackson", and other personal necessities that kept them from being saved. Well, I hope we saved this one from soon destruction by the Federal Bank.

There’s a red seal $5 that’s a family heirloom.

Disclaimer: The generous person who gave me the $20 was mommy.

The Vienna Quarterly Coin Show is going on tomorrow.

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**The Show Must Go On! (2009-11-10 17:29)**

It’s a ritual that’s been performed for millenia.
The mental condition that made you decide to hurt our life liberty and happiness does not let you off the hook.
The state prosecutor was careful to dot I’s and cross T’s.
The governor (and the Supreme Court)respect the authority of the state court system.

Public consensus says...

We’d like to see you dead.

Oh, and there is a 100 % chance that you’re guilty (not 99.99 %)

You’ve gotten more attention than the average felon

And manage to cost more dead than to stay in prison for another 40 years.

While we no longer have public ceremonies, we make it up with media hype and the standard rituals:
Last Meal
Last Rites
Last Words
Last Breath
Last Heartbeat

Many states have outlawed formal, legal executions such as that which will be happening to our local sniper in a few minutes. Some more states have so thoroughly restricted it so that there’s an insurmountable amount of red tape to hurdle, there’s Texas Law. Or Virginia in this case.
The individual trials were spread among 3 governing bodies:
The trial happened in DC: We can’t execute you.
The trial happened in Maryland: Now what if that aforementioned condition mitigated that thing you did? Did we catch you on tape? Is there DNA evidence? Now someone else could be framing you?
So, the trial was focused in Virginia: It’d be an honor to continue this fine tradition.

How much money shalt thou bring? (2009-11-12 20:00)

$2 for token participation in the Model UN fundraising event (hot drinks and donuts), of which I’ll be going to school early to handle.
$5 for the tag day. I just learned that these were paired with dances to “make it more convenient” for students to wear their dancing attire to class- for a fee.
$5 for the RAVE. For some reason, student government does not approve of the student body’s favorite DJ, DJZ ([1]www.tomzorcdj.com) Maybe Dionysis should get cracking to GPA (that’s right, grade-point-average) reform instead of old spite. ( $10 at the door)

$12.
Well, all that great stuff is still cheaper than a movie at so-called ’Chinatown’. It makes even more economical sense if you believe in the ’loot rail’ theory.
(Crooks steal well-monied people’s stuff and make a getaway on mass transit. This is based on the theory that crooks ain’t got wheels. Evidence has shown that most crooks steal a car if they need one.)


Triskaidekaphobia (2009-11-13 18:46)

For American English speakers, that’s fear of the number 13. And how appropriate is it that I have four friends with birthdays today.
I pointed out that a 13th floor doesn’t diminish property values in pricey markets. Nor is the floor by pure essence of labeling and weaker than the 12th or 14th floors. There were also 13 people at the Last Supper. There could be a scientific explanation to bad things happening on Fridays that fall on the 13th: There is nothing to fear than fear itself. That is, fear made you fail that quiz. Or just utter non-preparation. Or this-lighting bug repellant on fire to create a fireball for your Friday 13th ritual. Bad idea. The can could explode. Just an example. Make the day more unlucky. (Someone did post a live picture of the bonfire tonight).
Most rules suspended, except stop signs (2009-11-14 12:26)

In med school you learn about how the body works for the first year. Then you learn what goes wrong. The speedometer in the car went finkley recently and thus required a suitable rental vehicle to take a road test with. I seemed to have solved the problem by ordering DMV service from an "AB Driving School", which operates in both DC and Maryland. Skip to this morning, I arrive at the RI Ave station, across the parking lot from the testing center, 7 minutes to 8. 8 as a rendezvous time that would allow me to get acquainted with the vehicle for 15 minutes before the test. But they didn’t show: a call found that they were utterly incompetent and nowhere near the DMV at 8:15. Cutting across the parking lot, I found an ambulance and roadwork that blocked the exit. Upon further inspection coming around the other way, there was a federal case of roadwork. On top of this were a multitude of student driver cars with timid drivers proceeding at walking pace.

The DC road test is known to be infamously easy. I wondered what the route would be around the construction zone: maybe around the triangular parking lot. Donald the Road Test Inspector took a seat and asked to check Left flasher, right, then brake. Clumsily, I did right left brake. But that didn’t really matter. He pulled the emergency brake, and then said to go: "I’ll tell you where to go but not what to do, right out of the lot and left at the signal, and don’t use your left foot otherwise I’ll fail you”. What? One foot driving? Never heard of that before. Tough love. Driving sort of like I was hopping on one leg, I cautiously edge out of the parking spot next to a Dick’s driving school car. At the junctio I come to a complete stop, just in case. A right turn out of the parking lot, a full stop before turning right on Brentwood. "Careful around the roadcrew", I muttered. Carful, too, to avoid being a lemming going off the cliff, I avoid following a pickup that cut across what seemed to be the solid-line-marked median and I turned on the left flasher and he grabbed the wheel "Game over. Intervention", I thought. He pulled the wheel around the corner. I remember striking the brake with the left foot. He ordered for us to switch places. At this point and time, why bother putting the car in park? but I did an accidental or intentional notation error could happen. "You see, this is a living city. You can’t live by the (driving) book. One day there’s no construction, next day they’re tearing up your street. (Yes, once I practiced parallel parking behind a steamroller.) You’ve got to prove to the city that you’re in control. This ain’t no countryside (there isn’t much countryside in DC) the city is breathing. It changes. Now how wide is the lane?” "Usually 10 to 12 feet, the distance between the white lines or from the center of the roadway to the parked cars.” "Nah. It’s curb to curb. Now on a road like this (unmarked two-way with dual side parking), where would you drive? Sort of to the center right with enough space to let cars pass the other way and to make sure there aren’t kids running from behind cars” "The center. You see, You got to be the master of the road. You have to see ahead. Like back there, you should’ve seen that truck come from behind and make a turn (whups...missed that). Back at the circle you should’ve seen where you were going, that’s why I told you a long time before where to go”. He gave more spiel, and had some dialogue about driving in the moment. and he continued driving, smoothly and carefully around the block. Failure’s route? We hit a cement truck. I mean, it blocked the street. You see that?, pointing to the faded double yellow that now went off the road, you wouldn’t follow that, would you. The guy put down the new marking but didn’t come around to taking off the old ones. It’s a living city. Now, if the speed limit was 25 mph but everyone was going 35, how fast would you go? Um...I suppose I’d go with the flow of traffic. And at 45? Well...if I didn’t avoid the road, then...I guess the same applies. And alone you’d go 25, right? Yes.
He took his dented aluminum clipboard with him as he went to talk to my parental figures. "Yeah, we had a talk with the supervisor about the construction zone, but it’s a living city. He seems to be following the book, but some professional practice would help. And more about getting real life practicise. I asked about getting the score sheet. "We only give them to you when you pass. If something happened on the 3rd road test they'd want to look for a pattern". "Oh, and he wanted to know about the route and tips of the trade. If we gave that out, then we wouldn’t know who could drive and who couldn’t”.

"He didn't mention the speedometer" Mommy said. "Well, he was baffled by the cement truck. But we didn’t even get to parallel parking".

This inspirational coach story would have worked in a movie if it didn’t involve a not-pass situation. Of course, situations might change. Lost paperwork, lack of completing the form, etc.

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brentwood rd _ _ _ _
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Retrojourney Through Books (2009-11-16 15:17)

Like any good home library, our home library collection encompasses past times. Take, for example, the zen in _ _ _ _ _ _ _ books from the 1980’s. Also from that time is the grand era of self help and dreams of money. Move to the early 1990’s. What did that first family do to us? Gawking at the barcode scanner was the first step to make people reconsider their consumerist ways. After all, we didn’t have to pretend anymore. Maybe it was something else. Titles like "Living Cheap News” and "Tightwad Gazette" flourished with the tool called the computer. They, and others, were blatantly anti-consumerist. After all, do we really need to fill up our landfills with diapers? The fad didn’t last long, and we got sick of cloth diapers and went out buying this new toy called the SUV, and subscribed to this thing called the internet. Then there were the Dummies guide to living your e-life, and then, print media as we knew it vanished like the colony of Roanoke.

Well, luckily we forgot what sensibility was about.

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During my free period, I went out for some clean air and to complete a mission. Buy a Twix bar and deliver to wrestler before the match. I nervously used the price-check function and inserted quarters and dimes. $1.25. I pushed the code E-7 with the utmost care. Down came the bar. I put it in my backpack and the day went on.

Technically, we were let out 15 minutes early to do a pep rally for the talented wrestling team. In reality, I got there slightly late and the team did a little dance-around on the gym floor. In good time, it was over and we were free to go. Unusual for me, I lost track of the next 40 minutes and remembered playing in the orchestra as well as waiting in the wrestling antechamber.

I put the bar in a manila envelope, unsure of wrestling team policy. Some kids who shared the locker room with the wrestling team took a peek. I shared it with them. The lights, spare a dim fluorescent, was off, and the wrestlers sat in a quiet circle. "I wonder if they're doing (bad things) in there". "Nah.” Soon, though, a dozen of them came out in hardly anything at all. "The weigh-in”. The team spent the day not eating, cutting their hair, shaving, losing water mass, however they could to cut their weight. Then I was approached.

"Give it to me NOW I’m so hungry”. Quick energy boost.

I made a phone call, fiddled a tune, and made it back in time to watch the show. The reason I took the
loss was that, er, expected to be paid back. So I fidgeted with the manilla envelope as our Panthers gravely bashed the Heights by wide margins.

I was asked about the "yellow envelope". Nah, nothing official, really.

Contrary to what I thought, the 2 minute matches were fast-paced. The two opposing wrestlers would jostle for a bit, then one would lunge for the other’s legs, and then they were on the ground. Pretty soon one was on their front as the other tried to pin him on his back. Sometimes the tide would flip, and the aggressor was now the vulnerable. For a while the guy would struggle to keep one shoulder up off the mat, but eventually he was pushed down as the referee dashed from side to side for a better view. A slap on the mat and a whistle and a loud cheer. A pin. Point on the record now, and a safety pin on the Abbey Boy Wrestler’s Varsity Jacket.

Two sophomores of ours approached the scoring table, shook the coaches’ hands and left. "A forfeit”, I thought. I followed the two to the wrestling team room, where to my benefit there was no future master commander yelling orders at guests.

(I was summoned by BFF.
Well I summon you out.)

"So”, I said shaking the manila envelope wide open, waiting for money to be poured in. "By Christmas”, he said.

I sure liked the show. I thought that the promotion with the pep proved that wrestling is a cool spectator sport.

"Well”, explained Little Brother, "our wrestlers sit at a dark table in the corner staring at each other and only eat, say, an egg for their meals. They’re really strange”. "You see, our wrestlers are the life of our party”.

ARRA Lives on (2009-11-22 19:12)

Here lies the site of the first project funded by the ARRA. The ARRA funded 'shovel-ready' projects that individual states could not afford. This project, developed in the midst of the Great Recession of 2007-2010 by Senator then President Barrack Obama, saved and created over 600,000 jobs and led the nation to the future with things we thought we didn’t need.

Sign posted on the 2034, 25th anniversary of the start of the project on Interstate 70 Washington Spur at Antietim Battlefield, known as Eisenhower Highway, National Pike, or Obamaway.


What a global warming’s worth of hot air.

As a public house, the President, the cabinet, the secret service and the other elected officials have only so much control in restricting access. Unlike your private home, the White House is technically open to the public.

But there are a lot of bad people out there. Ever present was the barrel-rod fence on all four sides, which you aren’t supposed to grab (the police tell kids that the fence is electric). There was always a security tent with magnetometers, and eventually Penn. Ave was closed to general auto traffic.

For the past few years, Congress has sided with Mr. Bush in limiting access by the public (something that seems to be constitutional). But back in the ’90’s, you didn’t need to give a social security number for visiting, nor schedule well in advance. Indeed, there were free range tours.
Naturally, I was never on a guest list when I visited. Of course it’s rude to crash a high-power party, but criminal investigations for harmless celebrities? Sounds like a show trial.

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Say it ain’t so... (2009-11-29 18:42)

The editor of Greater Greater Washington pulled up a proposal for the future of the Washington Metro. The map came from the mid-’90s from a community politician. Most notably, ”it envisioned a rich white person’s subway”, says the website’s editor, noting the fact that the two new lines, the Beltway and a line from Annandale through the Northwest (and this politician’s grounds) to Wheaton, which serves said demographic. Remember, these are demographics from 15 years ago.
This is in stark contrast to the ‘dreamer’ maps of today, which focus on new lines to the ‘underserved’ east side of town and mid-city. Of course, 15 years ago, a riot may have been around the corner...
Naturally, the 1968 riots caused many to flee the inner city, if not the city writ large. Development in the city, other than the construction of ‘projects’ for the displaced, was focused on downtown areas soon to be served by the multibillion dollar Metro. Most guys like Foulger and Pollin made their fortune in developing the northwestern suburbs, which yielded way to Washington’s silicon valleys on the Dulles Corridor in Virginia and the I-270 Corridor in Maryland. Long story short, biotech and computer firms held more promise in the ’80’s and ’90’s than an arts district in a gritty neighborhood. If you build office space, will they move into the neighborhood? No, 1992 riots. Put off hope of repopulating your inner city. And that was when this politician made the map.
Ranked by seriousness, it was only a practice activity for the consulting firm which probably drew it up pro bono.
The politician endorses big development projects but does not endorse the map.

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Cybershopping Monday (2009-11-30 18:33)

According to the ”Complete Idiot’s Guide to Start Your Own business” from 1998, we knew that e-commerce was on its way when we saw signs that Santa is dot- comming to town.
The nice dot-com bubble from Web 1.0. Anyway, you can do your part to further the future!

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3.12 December

Name Switchers (2009-12-02 16:20)

Have you ever seen that show, Potomac 20854. Chances are, you have. 90210 is actually based in the Beverly Hills of the East, 10 miles northwest of Washington in Potomac, MD. The school is modeled off of Churchill High, a nationally top-ranking public high school, and some references will be familiar to the Washingtonian.
When some movie website did a Brand Recognition survey of Potomac 20854, at least one person thought the show was about a vacuum cleaner. No, it’s just the real-life 90210. Often, screenwriters (like myself) avoid using real palcenames for fear of legal retribution. So sending the title 2500 miles to the other side of America would help achieve this goal. Anyway, people recognize the Beverly Hill brand. You know, the
one that’s full of people with out-of-place mansions, luxury suv’s and plenty of Botox to go around. I’m sure there are real people there like the ones in BH of the East.
The problem is that 20854 didn’t seem to run smoothly off the tongue of the screenwriters. What about 20054 (two double-o fifty-four), the original zip code 
DC 54 (In homage of the pre-zip system
River Road (in homage to the street that sees many luxury car accidents)
Sidenote:
NCIS didn’t come of as a runaway success, except in the DC area market, where the plot takes place.

Who Me? Parks Department Chief? (2009-12-06 18:59)
The local papers have been running stories about the life and dirty laundry of potential heads of the Parks and Rec Department. I must say, my resume looks pretty good to take over the agency.
I get along with people (more so than a lot of city call centers)
I know the culture, the area, the people (I’ve lived in the area all my life; many positionseekers are from far, far away)
I have a lot of experience with the local government (22 weeks, or about 6 months of total experience)
I have a decent amount of experience in recreation
I’m most qualified on the ancillary part of the resume.
I’d have the potential for a long tenure (the pension plan would kick in at 46!)
I have a clean record regarding contracts and benefits and accountability.
I’m a dreamer (Robert Moses, I’m taking your lead!)
(I’d be more specific if I knew that this was permissable by my DPR contract).

TRON, Road Test Version (2009-12-10 13:59)
In real life, things work perfectly so often that one doesn’t know what to do when things don’t go as expected. Simulators are meant to serve this purpose, when creating a real situation is out of the question. Of course, you can have a simulator that reflects the perfect world. THis is often used in the math and science worlds.
"You failed your drivers test!!"
"If you call it that"
"You know, I can’t speak to you anymore"
"Well, you..."
"What did I say!?"
"start with a construction zone, and the
test inspector tells you you should have ignored...”
"You liar! There’s no construction on the test course!"
"I took it in DC"
"City driving??"
"They would"
I was going somewhere new in Maryland recently, and passed by the Gaithersburg road test course. I suspected that it had to do something with bad drivers... I did hear though, that the test is routine, safe, quick and failproof. Maybe fail resistant. I even doubt that part of the test includes interaction with other bad drivers (that would look cool in a movie, when the staff coordinate over walkie-talkie to pesker the new driver).
The grass is greener on the other side...
Half Day Wonders (2009-12-13 19:32)

Ah, it’s exam time again. Yes, I go to a pre-Christmas exam holdout. The last day of the semester was uneventful, even stressful. It wasn’t until 3:05pm that we realized what had happened- We were in exam mode.

It comes to a matter of Christmas parties or a merry Christmas.
The first two days are relatively school-like; 2 tests separated by an hour period, but after that, it becomes a one-test affair. Leave school at 10am, home by 11am to watch some daytime TV. Quite comical, since a lot of us only study for up to 5 hours on the night before an exam.

That Wasn’t Falafel? (2009-12-17 09:39)

"You see, if we go to the nearest Waffle House now, we’ll be back in time for class". "Where is the nearest one?"
"I think that would be in Frederick (town in the mountains 40 miles from Washington)” (Group chuckle).
"Yeah you get it". "I think there’s something like that in Ballston (a transit-oriented development community 5 miles from Washington)" "That must be an IHOP" (More laughter).


“We wanted to make sure credit cards were here to stay before we started accepting them,” said a VEEP.
Welcome to the future.

NOAA’s Arc (2009-12-19 20:14)

I knew it was supposed to come, either this winter season or the next. By the past predictaments, it was bound to happen. But in December for Christmas? Nor after exams? This predictament of a storm is unprecedented. Take, for example, the foretaste of a storm on Dec. 5. It was a Saturday. This time too, the storm blows an a Saturday. What a fine coincidence. Now with a snowy December, does this imply more big storms THis snow’s a 7-year event. No future storm this season will match this one’s greatness nor impact(wink).

Betty Crocker, II (2009-12-20 13:56)

Part 1
The shopping mall has been blockaded by the snow. All of them, inaccessible. Except for DCUSA, but that’s not like a real, real mall. I mean, it’s STACKED! As for Pentagon City, all approaches from the north are cut off because both lines cross above ground sections, which were impassable by train. Bus service has been restored in places, but not to a mall it goes.White Flint, cut off too, Bethesda and the Mazza, isolated by the
infrequent underground train service left in the storm’s path. Tysons, Montgomery mall not on a metro line at all. As for driving, the car is a foot deep in snow and loses traction in 1 inch of slush. Thus, for us and millions of other Americans, we were kept away from the mall on the busiest shopping days of the year. I can just imagine years from now struggling retailers blaming the weather. (We did not buy the XC Volvo yet.) Bright side: Strong day-after xmas sales (pls don’t read as bargain hunting!) and a Roaring Christmas shopping season next year after 3 dismal years?

Part 2
It took twice as long as usual to get to church. Expecting absences, I signed the serving log. And indeed the Rector had a job for me. It was multiple jobs, usually served by a complement. At the Offertory, having never played this role before, I almost botched the most important part of the mass. The emcee (in this case, the person who tells people where what and when they need to do something) was absent and his/her role was played by the, uh, spotlight of the mass. The complementary acolyte arrived T-3 minutes, in wet sneakers. He too had to fill the roles of about 5. The congregation at this well-attended service sat in the small choirstalls, and most of those who arrived either lived in the neighborhood or were dedicated and able to take limited Metro from Bethesda or North Arlington. There was no formal fellowship and I assumed that Sunday group was cancelled. The organist was present and serving as usual, although without the choir. Money from the offertory ostensibly was left under the chalice table during the final hymn.

Part 3
Although all precepts should have indicated normal Sunday subway service, this was not the case. When I heard that bus service was reinstated there were eager beavers wanting to get places. Mother rode the Red Bus Circulator to "Chinatown". She reports that it was loaded. I wondered if Ride-On was really still running. If so, a two-seat ride (Red line to RO 46) to White Flint or the Maxim Oriental Grocery in Rockville, MD, could have been adventurous possibilities. In lieu of that, we turned the kitchen into a bakery. For recreation, trips to nearby supermarkets. Oatmeal raisin cookies, white bread, walnut brownies, an adventure, came from the G.E. electric oven.

Part 4
I feel relieved of duty. A term that had fallen out of my vocabulary, "Free Reading", became an ever-present, ominous thought. What had been a waste of time last week became the best use of time today. For that matter, I could do anything I wanted. I had not felt this way before; during previous breaks, even on the first day, I let time loose. But I was booked and cooked. If there was not a big natural incident, right now I would have been a soloist at a concert in Rockville, MD. I would have, beforehand, explored the NCTM National Capitol Trolley Museum dctrolley.org on Bonifant Road. Yesterday, I would have a violin lesson. I still have the book of matches from church in my pocket. I hope they had enough for the day. WHAT I had thought throughout December was that my vacation starts on Monday. Like the delayed test, I was given a reprieve. Let’s hope I make good use of tomorrow, and pray the Wall Street Hymn regarding access to the shopping malls:

Let the rivers run
Let all the dreamers
wake the nation
Come, the New Jerusalem
Silver Cities Rise
the morning lights
the streets that meet them
and sirens call them on
with a song...
(Carly Simon)
It’s allegorical and metaphoric.
Snow (2009-12-22 17:31)

Oh no not that no really no. This winter wonderland will fall victim to a wintry mix right on Christmas Eve, and then, rain. Yes, that ordinary stuff that we get every other season of the year. And then...if it doesn’t freeze overnight- we gain nothing. No revenge on The Establishment, no nature conquering man. While the temperature has peaked over freezing, creating puddles, it has steadily frozen.

Kaine on the 2016 Ballot? (2009-12-24 14:31)

Virginia is a presidency machine. As quoted by the state travel guide, "the Mother of Presidents". Eight of them, 4 of the first 5. Of course travel was very difficult in those early days, but still. As for Vice Presidents, politicians from the mid-Atlantic are popular. Obama, of Hawaii, Kansas(?), and Illinois vetted Sen. Joe Biden of Delaware. Gov. Tim Kaine, a top runner who would have been the politically cheesy pick (swing state). The usually Republican state must have been flattered. Ex-president Clinton wrote through a biographer that he thought that Sen Mikulski (MD) would have made a good pick. What about Mrs. Clinton? (It is supposed that Obama encountered a 'newscaster scenario' of the wisdom of including a white male as well as a minority character). Lots of words were spilled and rhetoric blown. But, its Christmas eve, and 2010 and its wildness is still a week away. As local hero and national shame Spiro Agnew elocated, the media is the erudication of nattering nabobs of negativism- nice alliteration! No kickbacks til the 21st century, now.

Holidays (2009-12-26 05:33)

Greetings from Morehead City, NC Holiday Inn Express whups gotta catch ferry.

How much would you pay to read that other blog? (2009-12-28 17:27)

Business Week has posted a series of articles regarding charging for online content. A common method these days is to include subscriber-only sections. The idea is that the reader will get frustrated enough to want to buy a subscription. However, some companies (and individuals webbies, not me) want to charge per view, like, the way your cellphone texting bill works. http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/80_of_us_consumers_wont_pay_for_online_content.php?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+readwriteweb+%28ReadWriteWeb%29&utm_content=Twitter http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9CR6L480.htm Market analysis shows that consumers would switch from their 'mainstream' media sources to smaller-cap, free sources like blogs. Hopefully, readers will be able to judge what is journalism and what is not. (April 1, Spoof, and AFD coders indicate unreliable sources).
Thank you readers, for your continued support of my endeavor! It’s a reader base like you that makes ad-lib blogging all the worthwhile!

MonkMunc (SPECPOL POV) (2009-12-29 19:02)

Dec 5-6
We started with a renowned international policy specialist, then moved to the piles of pizza and soda. After a quick half hour of socializing, it was time for some partisanship. Not before we were encouraged to shop at the bazaar. A moving bot that I saw earlier that day had not sold yet. I ran a functions test, and became surprised regarding why the $2 price tag didn’t get it sold in 20 seconds. So I bought it. Unlike the university conferences, things were a bit more relaxed, or, slower-paced. Half an hour to the end of the session for the evening, there was no working paper submitted. It was my time to do something. Usually, I had been caught off guard by illicit pre-written papers from a school in Florida or New Jersey, but, I had nothing but my stack of research, on Australia, to work with regarding self-determination, or, what’s a country. Ranbcor ran deep as Iran blamed the west for everything.

Saturday morning, we continued the same debate, and the committee was presented with a working paper from Iran. It was off the wall, and bigoted. My paper, cosigned by the necessary count of delegates plus two, was proposed, modified, and postponed on account of snow. Golly, this was the first time it snowed this early in the year. Soon, lunch break followed. Sadly, I had to part before the last session. I handed the paper to a co-sponsor- Sri Lanka (who added an Eastern perspective to the Resolution) and hoped for the best. To date, no word on the success of the resolution.

Wait a second... sometimes you get really involved in model UN!

What I did on Christmas (2009-12-31 18:55)

Christmas morning. The year had been heck for wallets, but our area survived the worst of the storm, and we had a respectful amount of consumerism under the tree hand beside the creche. I forgot that word that would have described the situation of the model railroad train. It was a fancy word. There was moderate traffic as we left south towards North Carolina. However, unlike most times of day and night, speeds were close to the speed limit. On the clock, we passed through the Richmond Viaduct 2 hours after crossing the Potomac. Then, we merged off from the venerated I-95 to the more southernly I-85, the direct route to Atlanta. Soon after the significant town of Petersburg, VA, the scenery was distinctly out-of-this-world; there were pines; big tall pines, and forests and fields. There was a drizzle; whether it was snowing in Washington or not I do not know. We pulled over at a ramp and the driver's seat was handed to me. I relied on the flow of traffic to judge an appropriate pace- the speed limit was an astonishing 70mph; the nervous point was when I found it necessary to pass. Not being faster or more aggressive than the other car, but all the places behind bridges and in the cut-thrus that troopers could hide behind. Based on how well an predictable and open the traffic was, I could predict the time of arrival in North Carolina to the minute. I felt like a pilot, free to move about. The rest stop in Virginia was barricaded as part of an effort by the State to be fiscally responsible. I remember how prodding the man behind the counter in Maryland was for me to sign the registry tis past June. I measured from the 21 miles marker; I estimated 19 minutes, or 12:20pm. I wondered what was waiting in Durham for lunch. BBQ? I watched as the numbers slipped down; we crossed the line at 12:21PM, and slowed up for the lower speed limit. At the rest stop, set up in a manner to emphasize hospitality, we picked up maps and a hotel guide. The actual visitor center was closed. There was no guest registry to sign in on. The rain poured harder now; I settled in the back seat with Roger Frock and his account of Federal Express.
Upon arriving in Durham, we found few choices; a Hispanic pub, or, as we drove further, a sandwich shop named International Delights. Indeed, there were what appeared to be international students working on laptops in their booths. The menu was Mediterranean; there was a sign regarding the lack of ketchup. An aberration! Now what was that word that I forgot this morning? I shared a gyro platter for two. Sage tea was presented; the only appropriate thing would be to have a little dessert to go with it: crispy honey rolls. That was delicious. The campuses of the colleges in the Triangle were deserted; we had only buildings and maps to comprehend these universities; Duke, UNC. I’d say more, but the soul of the campuses were away. The college papers were paused at exams, the grass void of students. As we passed by the numerous research institutes as we headed to the Outer Banks, I quipped that this was a copy-off of Washington’s Tech Corridors in Rockville, MD and Reston, VA. No, father replied, this was the original research center with the first internet connections to the government. Past Raleigh and the RDU airport, the environs became increasingly rural and swampy, an appropriate fade-out with the sunset and coming of dark. Dinner was had at a nondescript Chinese takeout place in a nondescript strip mall near a military base; indeed, there would be military bases in every town, or so it seems, from here to the ferry. Past the restaurant, the road was still a freeway; torrents of rain threatened a sudden stop to this day’s travels. But we needed to be closer to the ferry. Eventually, past a closed exit, the rain slowed and tapered to a drizzle. It was miles until we arrived at Morehead City, a mostly summertime place, but with multiple marine bases to bring life in the off season. We passed the nicer hotels and delved across the bridges: there was nothing open. We returned to the Holiday Inn Express, a reliable place that serves breakfast and gives free papers in the morning. I retired early, missing the fact that there was a computer for free use in the lobby.

Morning comes with the ringing of the alarm clock. We must pack before breakfast to make the ferry. After a hearty breakfast, compliments of the hotel, I threw in a blog post and we left, ever eastward, to the ferry. The increasingly marshy environment was quite genial; there were Kangaroo fuel stops and Piggly Wiggly Groceries and Bojangles, which we don’t have up north. There were small inns, fishers and oyster shuckers, and at the end of the road, a queue for the ferry. This ferry, Cedar Island-Ocracoke, would take 2 hours and some chane, amking it my longest ferry ride. There was not much to do but everything to do: many vistas from the two decks, an enclosed space for private activities. Within a while the ferry from Swanquarter ran parallel for the final hour. Again, there was not much on the island this season save a lighthouse. Photo ops with the local cat and buying groceries from the she-she market were available, though. The next ferry was smaller, and the passenger area was no larger than an intimate dining room: we assembled the sandwiches, and ate them. The ride was compressed to 40 minutes: just enough time for a ‘picnic’ lunch and a walk around deck. The wind was blowing, and the hallowed beaches of the outer banks were for private enjoyment. Pea Island provided a vista for viewing pelicans and cranes. Evening bore down as we passed the Kitty Hawk site, and its adjacent town of Kill Devil Hills. With bittersweetness, we crossed the bridge back to mainland and drove into Virginia and Hampton Roads. We quickly settled for The Oceanfront Inn in Ocean City, having ‘frequent visitor’ enticements in the waiting. Dinner was spent in a mediocre sub shop, Zero’s, that harkled to the sub shop college experience that I don’t think I’ll have. I was tired, so much so that I fell asleep before the Jurassic Christmas drive-thru lights show on the boardwalk. Granted, the line to enter was long and the automotive pace slower than ideal. Checkout time was 11am. A quick bike up and down the beach as well as a swim in the warm pool finished our stay. A small petit dejeuner from McD’s in anticipation of a buffet lunch. Indeed, the buffet was unimpressive, so we drove off. We saw another buffet, Japanese. It was $12.95 a place, more than our average meal. We took the splurge, and I ate sushi and desserts to my content.

New Year Again (2009-12-31 20:44)

Gosh this year is almost over. Same with the decade, the one that has brought- lots of things good and bad. Here’s to the next decade. The world will not end in 2012, so it’s only good things ahead. Obama said it too.
Geez, I didn’t realize that he’s already been president for almost a full year. Then there will be all those congressional, senatorial, and state elections for 2010.
Chapter 4

2010

4.1 January

Overhype (2010-01-02 19:26)

2010- won’t feel much different- for a while. Sometime in 2000, people thought that recessions were a thing of the past. The fundamental of the economy hasn’t been made that strong. Otherwise, 2010 doesn’t call for any miracles.

Bogs and Blogs (2010-01-05 19:50)

Yes, I feel bogged. And I have waded through a bog before. A real one. But a consequence of schoolwork bogging is that- I don’t get to blog as much. Naturally, I should start a Facebook petition, but I’m not that much of a rebel.

Look at that its a Free Period! (2010-01-07 18:54)

It’s caused controversy and animity. It’s also the cause of an errant commercial aircraft. It’s called scheduling. I took a look at my 2nd semester schedule. Somewhat different. Let’s look at some details- No more 4th period off. This meant I had 3-1-3 class layout and gave me time to finish english papers midday. Last period free- most days. Except for Labs on Monday and Wednesday- Music Theory and Chemistry. No free period except lunch on Mondays and Wednesday. But Chem Lab on Wednesdays- that’s a lot of fun and free moving. Tuesdays are quite empty: Service occupies periods 3-5. On Thursdays, I get second period off. According to standard procedure, I should have been put in the other chem class to get first period off- and a midweek sleep-in. But in-school free period makes for more productive time. Now I have to get back to Situational Awareness.

Snow Dance (2010-01-08 19:25)

If it starts snowin’, schools start closin’. The situation today in the DC area reinforces the stereotype of the ningaphobic school administrator
There was about an inch on the ground. All around schools called a 2 hour delay to help parents negotiate powdery conditions. For me, it was a one-hour late start; however, we paid back the time through compressed classes (same material shoved into less time) and a shortened midday 'mingling period', aka, lunch break. Obama must have another snide remark about school closing policy during his second Washington winter.

The Toast (2010-01-12 16:55)
I was not on the cast list, although it seemed that everyone else was casted. Seniority issues, maybe, I thought. Then today, at least three casted came to me at different times and said along the lines of: You’re on the cast be there Wednesday- it’s a mistake.
Since our finale of soccer in mid-October, I have become quite accustomed of getting home at 4:30pm. The sloth sets in. But as I watched the sunset at 5pm, I knew that things were going to change- for good? The end of the play will roll smoothly into tennis season. With that, late night homework angst. But that’s life. I hope that all this after school business will make me more productive and efficient.

Get to Bed (2010-01-16 18:27)
"In 1925, under pressure from his publisher to submit a manuscript*, Arrhenius started getting up at 4am to write. As might be expected, rising at such an early hour had an adverse effect on his health” (*Sidenote: publishers are like that)
Masterton and Hurley, Chemistry; “The Human Side” (pg 87)
Get your sleep. I had fallen behind in doze time in the past two weeks- and guess what. Friday, I wake up with a sore throat. Fortunately, the 3-day weekend is allowing some sweet recuperation time. The sore throat, after 9.5 hours of sleep, is gone.

They knew it. I blew it. (2010-01-17 18:52)
Final mile. A traffic circle, a yield, and a few blocks to go. But wait! There’s something that looks like a traffic stop done in the horrible place of the center of the roadway. I pull over to the right lane. Traffic. I see the fire vehicles ahead. Another embassy event. Three point turn- bing. First practical application of that. Pull towards downtown to avoid that traffic. Cars blocking the 3-Way intersection. Bing! My first use of gridlock. Down a tunnel, around that little Longfellow square, and down the street. A fire vehicle passes and pulls back into the fire station. Two blocks, and stopped traffic. There is a crane extended to the top of a 10 story building. I thought it was typical roof work. I forgot that it was Sunday. Another fire incident. Back up 75 feet to open cross street. First practical use of reversing. Edge into an alley, take a right turn, cut diagonally across Pennsylvania Avenue into an alley and I’m almost home.
City driving.

Homework Excuse: Obama left me spellbound (2010-01-18 19:21)
I just could not believe it. This year, the local tranist agency was running a normal weekday schedule- as if this holiday did not matter. It was empty at the library, until midday. For the afternoon, I had a concert to
atend. The boilerplate MLK Day special at the Kennedy Center. Nothing new. Last year I performed in an orchestra at the Strathmore event. But this year I’m here and passing by lots of police- DC police, no Secret Service or Capitol Police. Someone important, but maybe not from the White House. There were magnetometers. That was a telltale sign. So were the uniformed secret service agents. On the stage was a podium with the Presidential Seal and the 'smokescreen', like the setup in the White House press room. The concert proceeded as usual, though more talk than music. We did learn that our Michelle Obama was in the audience, as well as a few congressmembers. Yes, they occasionally ride the DC subway like anyone else (as feds, they do get the mass transit allowance). But- "here is a speech from the President of the United States". Loud cheers erupt. Yes, it was The Man, although his ears seemed more pointy than on television or in the paper. It was like watching 3D TV, but it was real. I could actually see his face (At the Inauguration, he was barely a speck from .7 mile away). He was about 200 feet away, and within good camera distance. There is a policy of no photography during shows, but this adage was broken by most everyone. A redcoat did approach me at the end of the show about it, though. Standard procedure. The president was in clear view, on the stage, for about 20 minutes. He left gracefully with the awardee, a Congolese pro-Basketball star, who, with part of his NBA money, funded a new hospital and research center in Kinshasa. Yes, Obama was dwarfed by the player’s sheer height. The fairy tale was mostly over, although cameras did turn to the rear at the end of the show. I didn’t see the spectacle, but I suppose that the First Family was waving to India. Arte from two tiers below me.

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Shopping Spree! (2010-01-20 15:08)

Civil War Friendship Memorial, a massive memorial spanning the Potomac river commemorating the end of the Civil war and the reuniting of North and South.

Why it’s bogus- Put the memorial on the Mason Dixon Line. Maryland was a ‘northern’ state by coercion.

Federal Stimulus Memorial Southern Bay Bridge, a record-length combi suspension and trestle bridge. Why it’s bogus- it serves no interstate interest.

Federal Stimulus Hart-Miller-Pleasure Northern Bay Bridge, another impressive bridge over the Chesapeake. Why it’s bogus- it serves only Baltimore.

Virginia Flying V Ceremonial Air Brigade- an impressive sight of aerial might! Why it’s bogus-It’s Frivolous!

Anti-Nephilim Spacepod- forget just the nuke threat. The final coming will be indiscriminate to anything or anyone- unless this thingy is built. Why it’s bogus- have these officvials been to church lately?

State Pride Protection Program TIme Machine- its ostentatious use is to go back in time to stop Spiro Agnew from gaining political power by locking him in the Dungeon, also to be built with Fed funds. Why it’s bogus- Einstein proved that time travel is all but impossible.

Fairfax County Business Attraction Magnet- the details are unknown, wtheher tilting MontCo on its side or using large powerful CEO magnets. Why it’s bogus- It’s a B>A>M race; MontCo will just buy one, too.

Rockville Sister City Visitation Incentive Program- the program will provide trips free of charge for Rockvillers to visit Pinneburg, Germany, in the name of cultural awareness. Why it’s bogus- Junkets! Anyway, there’s a brand spanking new arts+ humanities center two miles down the road at Strathmore.

The real story: PG County (MD) can’t manage to spend $2 million in HUD money, although the state as well as bordering Virginia have doused themselves with billions in BRAC, ARRA, and other federal monies.

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Sorry, Out of Towners (2010-01-24 19:10)

The article explains it all.

What was for one year a 'scenic parkway' through the woods was doubled in width into a hazardous "roller
coaster"
The beltway was not widened to 8 lanes until the 1990's. Somehow, there is still a short 6 lane section and even a 1/4 mile 4-lane section abutted by 10 lane sections. What about the traffic jam? Non existent according to traffic patterns.
While the eastern half of the belt was always 6 lanes to serve as an I-95 bypass, the Western portion in Virginia opened with a quaint 4 lanes. I-95 through DC was never completed.
The exit numbering system is an ever-changing jumble, and is explained as clearly as possible by the article. Locals tend to refer to exits by crossroad.
The proper term is Capital Beltway (named by Maryland and Virginia together), not Capitol, to indicate that it served the area and not just the city or that big-domed building (the 'Capitol' beltway project was a totally different urban renewal effort).
www.capital-beltway.com

You can take it with you (2010-01-27 19:01)

(anch) So, Commissioner Brook, whad'ya think of the local population surge?
> Well, it's some good work on our part. The population's grown so much I think next Census we're getting a third senator on the Hill.
> (Laughter from crowd)
> (muttered by intern): you mean another congressman.
> No, I'm serious!
> (anchor) so that's why they call you babblin'.
It's close to Census time and it's been said that there has been a 'major tectonic shift' in the population base. Take, for example, the measure of the mean center of population. For the 1790 census, this was Chestertown, MD, on the eastern shore. It continued moving southwest at 8 o'clock, just about the trajectory of I-70. The measure is near Louisville, KY now. The MCP continues to move south. This brings up the point of reassignment of congressmembers. I suppose this is done as little as possible, because someone loses their job. Except by a stroke of luck, it'd be hard to get that newly vacated position.
There are about 500,000 constituents per congressmember. Thus, it is pretty obvious that Michigan, with 15 reps and 9 million people, is bloated compared to DC with 0. Face reality, there is something called a declining state. Err, New York's bloated too, with 23/19mil. North Carolina has 13 for the same about 9 million, and Maryland 8 for its 7 million. Federal presence buys favors but not seats.
So who's getting those rust belt seats? Again, the southeast. Virginia (disclaimer- grown by feds), and the rural south like South Carolinaland. There is also Nevada, and Utah naturally. Depending on political climate, DC could be given one, constitutionally or not.

Set oven to 450. (2010-01-28 19:50)

In the most objective sense, J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye" opened the floodgate to a new genre of unrefined literature. The work is monumental, if not provincial in the sense that many could have thought of the concept of being the first to cuss, swear and psychoanalyse a mentally troubled kid. There was Flowers for Algernon, which at times became unsuitable for children, and most recently Feed, which lays waste to the english language. No, that last book is over the edge. It's irresponsible. It's unrestrained criticism of the housing bubble and ever-shrinking technology before it popped. So basically, Salinger taught the
writing world to break with modesty and devolve into a free for all. This could be for better, that there is pan-symbolism to be found in any psychotic rant, or worse, for the same reason.

Salt and Sand (2010-01-30 19:42)

Ha! WOuld I believe it! Our third Saturday snowstorm of the season! This one’s a little different from earlier ones- it’s the powdery stuff that you get when it’s really cold. Not that 33 degree barely snow material. I wonder if it’s any good for skiing: we sent a brigade and are awaiting news. For the matter, the DC area has surpassed the average seasonal snowfall with this storm. Bring the powder on!

Temp (2010-01-31 19:37)

It chilled. It chilled fast. The snow was powdery, because it was cold. It was 36 degrees today, enough to melt some of it. The fluffiness will be gone. It will be just ice in the morning, because it’s cold now.

4.2 February

Snow Days- Political Material? (2010-02-03 17:49)

There are some things that should not become political. These include science, general safety. I said ’should’, not ’are not’. Remember, this year is an election year. Anything goes. Weather-related school cancellations are not an embarassment. Plumbing issues that close a school are. The same goes for skidding minivans that could have been spared the trip. Or the snowplow trucks that are damaged by that skidding car. Running out of snow cleanup funds does not seem to be a political non pas. But, not plowing streets in the name of fiscal responsibility seems like a bad move, a la DC 1996. Maybe the neighboring jurisdictions or the national guard will lend a plow. Sometimes, the decider is pressured into making a bad call- "these kids already lost 3 days of school" is no replacement for impartial judgement. Or what if the signs are not there- snow is expected to come at noon. Should you close school and risk ridicule, or brave it out and risk a rushed, teutonic effort at having to get kids on buses and home before the white stuff comes. That’s an embarassment. Alas, mistakes don’t ruin you. It’s the way you handle them. Don’t make knee-jerk reactions too obvious- it makes you look incompetent. Try evolutionary change.

Scare tactics have been shown to work in favor of incumbents. Try this: "Vote for Mr. X, he’s the only one who can protect your family from Jack Frost". Or, a general ’state of emergency’ on election day.

For the record, Mont. Co. was teased for making a no delay call on Monday when roads were heavily iced over. Asking about people’s commutes, there was sliding and a near-hit incident with a salt truck down a hill. Snow came again last night. It was a little, about 3 inches, 1 on roads, but school was called off. Sources say that, by 9am today, the snow on the roads had melted. A 2-hour delayed opening could have been done. But, all in all, Mont. Co does a good job for the heavy responsibility of 300,000 coeds.
Checklist (2010-02-05 19:55)

Sleep as late as desired
Practice violin and do homework
Stay in pajamas all day
Make a snow cone (but don't eat it)
Stay inside
Make a snow fort with lots of snowmen and snowladies
Make some hot chocolate with an eurobiscuit and marshmallows and cinnamon on top
Keep a snowball in the freezer as a reminder of this awesome winter (I got this from the show Arthur when I was about 8)

Snowpocalypse (2010-02-07 20:13)

The snowplowing trucks boomed along the thoroughfare at all times of day today. I asked the snow king for 14 inches, not quite 40. He must have misheard me.

This time, Montgomery County was the epicenter of this storm, dubbed "Snowpocalypse". Power outages, downed trees, and stores running low on supplies are widespread throughout the area. It has been 2 weeks since I have been to MoCo on account of recent weather activities. Reports are coming to the newsroom from secondhand sources who say that it looks like doomsday- or winter wonderland. Choose your pick. Don’t expect another storm in the area of this magnitude for 6-7 years.

As for me, I did make it to mass this morning; the congregation was reduced to 10% its usual size. I cooped myself up at home in the afternoon with the final work on an essay and laboratory report as well as a mock SAT exam. Fun? Choose your pick. Most institutions in the area are closed tomorrow, including the Fed. However, the DC Gov't plans to open with 1 hour delay. When there is a will, there is a way.

Gilded Age of Washington (2010-02-11 12:16)

Donahue Peebles: Washington’s Bloomberg?

Once upon a time, a wealthy individual proposed donating an estate in a tony west-of-creek Washington neighborhood for the purpose of serving as the mayor’s residence. In a sense, the local Gracie Mansion. But with the fact that there is this perpetual west-of-creek/east-of-creek cultural and political strife, it seems unlikely that a mayor would feel politically correct living at that estate. On top of that, no person on that side of town has been elected mayor. (Except for the ceremonious title of "Mayor of Georgetown", which was an official position from 1751-1871). But, it has been brought up recently that a candidate for mayor cannot polarize him or herself to one side of town.

So, it has been made quite clear that the incumbent mayor, who faces reelection this year, is out of favor with half of the city, but his approval ratings remain strong in the NW. His chances of reelection aren’t really compromised if tallied against a polarizing, retributionist figure. But what if we bring in the Billionaire?

Do we trust proven leadership or a rich man?

Donahue Peebles, the awfully wealthy locally grown real estate developer, is seen as a potential candidate. His political interests started young, when he was a senate page in high school. But business won him out for the while. He has not officially stated his candidacy, though. Given the local political climate, he might find it wise to wait for 2014.

What I’m doing this Weekend (2010-02-12 16:01)

Good evening from KAIROS! I’ve managed to smuggle my internet phone into camp and am here to share my experience with you. Now, I’d never spoil any secrets. We’ve been keeping busy, though. Prayer, song, meditation, social time, board games, wilderness walks. Oh, and snowball fights! No boating, though, the lake was iced over. But I mean, seriously? What are you doing fasting in the wild when we could do the same thing at Bethesda Marriott? It’s a totally different experience. It’s like we’re on that show LOST, but we are fed and watered on a regular basis. But I must say, it’s like some modernistic brain thing. You build up expectations and anticipation, and then, come Thursday, boosh, you’re on a motorcoach to neverland. There is a slight allegory, I guess, to the Second Coming. But this is like, really, only the first full day. I suppose Sunday is a lost day, considering that Fourth Day will be sprinkled over the next 16 months of our school career.
I should get back to quiet reflection.

The Ag Preserve (2010-02-13 19:13)

City of 2050.
Washington Area real estate is inflated in price for a few reasons: desireability, and increasing scarceness of developable property. If trends keep up (which they have even amidst a supposed construction slowdown), cities will extend straight out to the-farm. Yes, next to the skyscraper is farmland. No discernable suburbs. But what about the farm? It’s part of the Agricultural Preserve meant to protect farmland, wilderness, and wildlife. It also protects real estate prices by squeezing demand. It’s a suburban version of ‘historic district’. Even now, one can travel from pure farmland and ‘the forest’ to an urban, high-rise environment in 15 minutes. I remember when I realized the quick change: I was coming home from "Science City" on the tech corridor, cut though the woods as a short cut, drove by some estates doubtlessly owned by lawyers and Beltway Bandits. Then, a few traditional style suburbs, and then the high rises. 15 minutes. It made a profound impact on me (Cliche :)). Just imagine being a city person, but your neighbor is a cow.
Some prospective Detroit investors plan to use this method to revitalize the city, or, at least, make a quick buck.
Peace with you!

815 V St NW (2010-02-14 19:01)

"The commissioner has decided there will be no such rock-bop in this town. This so called rock and roll is detrimental to our youth". By Mayor of Camden, NJ, 1952
By today’s standards, society complained about the color of the nurse’s gown. Today, there was plenty of hip swinging, crow-screeching, and syncopated beats. The first group I saw was, in my opinion, detrimental to youth. Their ‘music’ sounded like sitting on the Dulles Airport jumbo jet runway with a drowsy sort of side effect from the cough med and a henchman for sadism’s sake. If it was artistic at all it was in the sense that it conveyed the sense of angst and pain upon the listener. The lyrics were anti-social when intelligible over the grind; for example, a girl axing her family (that was an euphemism, too). There was rampant head bobbing by the ‘musicians’ that disregarded anything about cerebral science, and the volume level most likely exceeded OSHA regulations.
Why was I here? My friend and 3-course classmate was performing tonight. And about Kairos? No problem. You’ll be back by then. Indeed, Kairos went out with a bang- a great liturgy, incense and all.
The our guys were up. There was a trumpeter (GN), percussionist (LW-M), vocalist (RC), and two guitarists
I’ve been here since 9am, (did they get to go to church today?) and I’m ready to leave!” Then the song starts. I never heard Rob sing in that way; it sounded like it was from the rogue, a sound bursting from the chains of tradition. But it was refreshing; unlike the goth metal band, this music had well-written lyrics, and the format of the music felt like what we learned in music theory class: Rock and Roll = Steady Beat + Chord Progression. It was sort of Elvis-y, tradition rock style that their parents would have played at home. There was, again, that song of leaving. There was one that praised conformism. It was actually sincere. There was a love song, not mushy, though. Names don’t matter to me much, but they are ID’ed as KSD. I don’t know what that stands for.

When will the CD or MP3 set be cut?

(One to none performed after; anecdotal reports suggest that their drumist is quite talented, if not a Ladies man). 9:30 club, 2/14/10

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Tromp d’oeil (2010-02-19 19:53)

The LP record, for some, is the epitome of elegance in recorded music. The precise ebb and flow of sound waves is replicated on the vinyl disk. This infiniteness of possibility of color and tone is somewhat lost in digital recording. The smooth transitions are made into rugged bits and bytes.

The same concept applies to printed music. No detailed music score can truly capture expression and intonation. The precise feeling of the length of a note is subjective; rather than the objectively printed meter. This is left to the artist’s interpretation.

I learned this on Sibelius musicwriting software. My rhythms that came to the PC through the midi keyboard were cut and rearranged and approximated into a piece that lacked full expression. Yes, surely, the music score can be improved. But this is a system to which we are familiar.

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Lankering at Lakeforest (2010-02-20 18:12)

"It’s about 4 minutes up this road, no more.”

This was the distance from a violin lesson in Derwood to Lakeforest Mall. I heard things about the place, that it is an ‘urbanized hangout’. I held that fear as we entered the parking lot. There was a penetrating mall cop presence- none that I saw in upscale malls like the Tysons Galleria, nor downscale ones like Silver Spring’s City Place. There were empty storefronts. Looking up thorough the prismatic shaped skylight, there were several brown patches on the ceiling, something I took to be as neglect. Mall cops on foot, in uniform, on Segways. The marble tile floor, however, was still spic and span; the escalators worked and looked appealing to ride.

What we had come here to do was to see a special Chinese New Year themed exhibit. There was a small set-up on the first floor, visible from the terraced second story. That was all? Alas, there was loud music, of the traditional kind. It sounded...far eastern. There must be more to the festivities. In the central atrium, display tables and a main stage was set up. There was a performance by what seemed to be an after-school kung-fu troop. There was soul, and physical presence. These festivities were much more than a matter of political correctness. (Tomorrow is the event’s last day).

Addendum: The empty storefronts and splotches on the ceiling were concentrated in one wing only; the rest of the mall was quite alive and well. Now what was up with all the mall cops?

A mall on its way out:

1) Increased security presence
2) Empty Storefronts
3) A disappearance of printed media and credit card offers
4) Discount retailers (unless it was an outlet mall to begin with)
5) Fountains turned off
6) Escalators not functional
7) Turned-off lights
8) Emptiness; a general 'dead' feeling

Admissions Office (2010-02-24 19:53)

Your Brag Sheet displays some impressive leadership abilities.
We wish that your GPA would be a bit higher, but you are on track to have a stellar semester.
Now you say you’re doing an SAT prep course.
Your app package and heart seem to be in different places.
Tell us more about Choirschool.
Yes, that’s true. You come back another week for the SAT II’s. SAT I’s gotten too long to put both on the same day.
Let me interject...
Even WPI demands more of applicants.
Discipline.
The college want to know: what can you contribute to their school? That’s a make-or-break deal. They need people to fill their clubs.
Embrace your talents. Sell yourself for who you are.
No, we have to get that number on your transcript changed.
Is that really what you want to do?
They’ll forgive you on that.
If you are really serious about it, you’ll need an Independent Study project or something or other.
A humanities sort of guy?
That was how it was 30 years ago.
Here, take this note to class with you.

Take that, SG. (2010-02-28 19:40)

Feb 26.
The festivities were toned down a bit; the student gov’t appeared complacent. Don’t some of them remember Pimlico? Was there something special that we had to anticipate? A DC Public School was added to the tournament roster, with all connotations and denotations (a sure defeat by a much more athletic team?)
I was caught outside at the starting buzzer; I was out on an info mission- play practice that day or not? Tied at nine; 9-19 at the quarter; 23-33 at the half. While losing, the situation was not hopeless. Not one bit. The Panthers pulled up as close as 1 point to the opponent, Potomac’s "Heights" school. The lead disappeared with foul shots and quick layups; we slipped on fundamentals, too. But the spread disappeared again to 4 points with 3 minutes left in the game. But by 1 minute the game was written. There was 9 points between the teams. From second place last year, we had fallen that far.
4.3 March

Sing and Run in the Snow (2010-03-06 18:17)

In spite of all the February snow, the tennis season intended to start on time. This, however, could not be done with three inches of the white stuff on the ground. So the first two days were indoors. But what do you do if you’re activities are overlapped? Fade out, say hello, excuse yourself and disappear into wood work.

One Long Week (2010-03-13 18:11)

What a week. If you’re hooked to my blog, you’ll see that something strange happened this week (hint: no posts!). There was a lot of play practice, a lot of assignments to pass through the chute, and SAT prep. So, here’s a little story: Wednesday, second period. I settle down for ethics class, and in comes a classmate from French IV. “Doug, Atticus. Test.” “Huh?”, we muttered as we threw our books into our bookbags and quick-stepped to the test (uhh- those middle schoolers are so loud when they move from class to class!). But our messenger got more than us- a hysterical department head to pull him from Chem class. National Exam. French, 2010. Level 4. The next day was the latin test (didn’t take it); the Spanish (not taking it) will be next week. Homeworkwise, there was not much in the past week; upcoming SAT, school play, sports try-out, an absent english teacher (who did not forget to leave work for us!). My mantra has been, for the past busy month, ”March 15”. That day, I am free from the Play, free from tryouts, free from SAT prep. That day is coming soon. Don’t forget to Spring Forward- and check your safety devices’ batteries.

Off again, half past 8. (2010-03-17 18:56)

Four Days. That’s the time I’ll be away. After all, the Kairos experiment seems to be more than a build-up- to the encouragement of self reflection. There will be a bus, and one that has an undercarriage for luggage- one of those hoity-toity coach buses. We also brought in snacks- for ”long, discussion-filled nights”. And on earth I’ve been asked to bring Crisco! Won’t Sterno do just fine? Or, I hope he just means ”Nabisco”. As a practical matter, bags needed to be packed. No punchlist. I’ve done ”away from family” trips before, up to two weeks’ length, in another continent. But there was an item-by-item checklist! So, we’ll see how the packing goes. One note- admin didn’t tell us to stay under 50 lbs. Then there are the subjective things. Is there a gift shop? Rest stops? (btw I’m not sure what state we’re going to! 3 hours can mean anywhere from New Jersey to West Virginal!) Any faculty members riding along? Better be a sycophant. Religion department? Pack Pieper, or the Catechism. History teacher? The Cold War by Gaddis seems fair. My plans for going to bed early? Squat! I have four days of internet social life to do, violin-playing, and so on. This Entry Passed by Student Life Censors. All Revealing Details Have been removed and Replaced.

Kairos, Open and Shut (2010-03-21 18:09)

I have been up for the past 38 hours, save a 3-hour and 1-hour nap. This is what you do when you’re at one of these certain events shrouded in secrecy. Actually, we had the opportunity to get a ’sleep’, an offer I did
not take. I’d say more, but I don’t want to ruin any surprises for future generations of Kairoseers. That said, I strongly encourage all sophomores to come. In fact, depending on my level of conviction, I will zealously recruit you all to go!

LTF man!!!
This page has been censored beyond belief.

WAMUNC XII (2010-03-28 18:09)

Position Paper
Ireland
What Happened
DISEC- WAMUNC XII
I did something foolish on Wednesday night- stay up late to finish a position paper. First off, it wasn’t a real work of art. It was enough to scrape by. Thursday night- oh then I realized I shouldn’t have done that. Just try then to get a coherent sentence out of me. I probably turned the Dais off when he banged the gavel to end my speech and I squelched- "What?" The topic: "Virtual Nuclear States". Vague. Making details would certainly take time and effort. It sure did.

Friday, I felt bad for myself. I had come home late, did a tiny bit of homework, woke up school-time (what feels like "before the rooster crows"). The other delegations? Sleep in (to about 7:30am) and take excursions. I suspect the other regional schools let their MUN kids take Friday off. As a goodbye surprise (before spring break), I had the joy of an English test and taking "special delivery" status in the Ottermobile. Well, I had my fun the weekend before.

Friday? Not bad. A schedule fluke meant I came in late to hear a pro-proliferation professor preach his controversial view. I had to get in the game. Sleep-shorted or not, this was the right time. I found a way to become the leading signatory of a paper- write my own. I handed this, written on a 5x7 canary pad in pencil, to the Chair. "Well, can you make it nicer?". We had a swell classroom in the evening- the room in the School of Media Building was set up to replicate a cutting-edge newsroom you see on TV. GW’s big on emulating ‘real life’. I got my sentences straight, and rushed to finish transcribing that working paper of my own. It was not too long later before there were 8 working papers on the table. That was too many in any seasoned MUNner’s opinion. As a diplomat, I merged my paper with that of Spain’s. A lot of it was redundant, and, as the college kid had just spent 30 minutes typing my ‘comprehensive paper’ into the computer, must have annoyed the Dais.

Saturday? Great! This was crunch time. I understood that any prize or commendation hinged on this day, and I respected this fact. I tried not to do anything outrageous to annoy the Chair, and I think I succeeded that day. Basically, we spent all six committee hours repping the paper and making it digestible to the most countries as possible. Clauses of mine came and went. Seeing that the main authors (sponsors) of papers were spending ‘quality time’ with the Dais, I decided that I had to boost my role as a non-nuclear state and make my contributions seem, well, important. I felt I did the best I could. Next topic, I assessed myself, I would dominate. The vote came late in the day. I spoke eloquently against closing the list without wasting my minute. In a committee of 80 with an inclusive Chair, you don’t get a lot of speaking time. Especially if it’s DISEC and you don’t have nukes. The vote came. Res. 1.1 cleared the hurdle. I was not enthusiastic about it, but sold my vote for two votes on the Spain/Ireland paper (1.4). Res 1.2, written by a classmate (Slovakia-M.C.) to get brownie points, also passed, albeit being a short addendum ‘to any suitable paper’. Res. 1.3, was weeded of conflicts with already-passed 1.1. The cruel, pro-proliferation paper, failed, to my pleasure. Res 1.4, my ‘baby’, won yea vs nay, but failed because of the high number of abstainers (38 yea, 32 nay, 11 abstainers and some who didn’t vote). Hey, they were afraid to say no! Res. 1.5, Portugal (classmate’s- YO-A) paper and Res. 1.6 failed as well. Time was up. I had done alright. Our delegation as a whole rocked the committee.
Sunday? I was on fire!! The stars were lined up for me. Every Palm Sunday I’ve been alive I’ve been at church. I didn’t want to break the record of 15/15, but realized that the non-faithful college students running the show had me in a tough spot. 9am start for committee vs 10am on Sunday. Deliberate, I thought. But 7:30am mass at my parish just off of GW worked just fine. I felt- delivered. I used a Starbucks gift card I had to buy a Pike’s place to wash down the sugary aftertaste of the fundraiser donut I had just bought and took the pretentious white cup to committee with me. We were ready to move to topic B- India vs Pakistan re Kashmir. Within 10 minutes the Japanese delegate had working paper 2.1. The Chair was convinced it was pre-written. Ireland strategic victory! But the Dais looked at it. It was rejected for the mention of "Santa Claus". I called for a 5 minute Unmoderated Caucus. I could then blow my paper through as WP 2.2. I collected signatures- I needed 16. The Oman decided to help me with the paper. He was intelligent about weeding out things that DISEC was not authorized to do- military withdraws, for example. We also didn’t have to worry about funding. That would be a great relief for me (I added bonuses for all those nations that voted yea on the Resolution). Japan removed Santa claus and reintroduced. The Chair swiftly moved to voting procedure. I motioned. "Wait, there’s another one coming" "That was not a point of order, Ireland." The prim demeanor of the room was devolving. Portugal put on sunglasses to complement a cream colored suit to become the “Great African Warlord”. Oman, rushing to get brownie points, continued to push that paper of mine. I know that feeling all too well. Voting procedure. At this point, one could only stall Darth Vader with an Unfriendly Amendment. Girl Scout Cookies for all were unanimously (let DPR Korea- our own R.S.) approved. To all those who downvoted the Resolution and promoted Independence of Kashmir would get big cash payouts from the UN ‘general fund’. Using the only bit of Irish political position in existence, I required that no lard would be used in cookies distributed on Fridays and that states in violation of this would cede their batch to Rome. The amendment was shot down (what, they don’t want money?). Both India and Pakistan nuked Ireland. Ah, you know you did something wrong if that happens to you. Then for superlatives, I was called "most likely to become a politician". Oh well. I was also called the best leprechaun. Wink.

After committee, I refilled my Decaf coffee. They gave me a new cup, too, on account of Swine Flu all for 55 cents. Some other classmate-MUNners came by: "Say, Deng Xiaoping (M.MeC.), if you won some award wouldn’t you have to share it with everyone?" "Theoretically". The slideshow- it was great. STAMUN (our delegation) didn’t get a lot of awards. Except for our committee. We took the lower rungs by force. Malaysia (CMcC) and the man dressed for success (Portugal- YO-A) were commended. Ireland wasn’t cited, neither was Res. 1.2’s author and key voice Slovakia. Deng won his award. As an involved fan, our Faculty Advisor noted the trend of less awards. "But, it’s not about the awards". Slovakia on the UNDP (not M.C.) promoted his traditional views on human reproductive health. Abstinence, Chastity. Not incredibly popular among the young, but the man deserves a commendation by our school’s Youth Christian Fellowship Group. I had my beliefs: Travel cutbacks by other schools because of budget issues. WAMUNC feels a need to make as many long-distance travellers feel welcome. They know we’ll be back- but the school from Honduras? So here’s another year to STAMUN! "Next year, the game plan will be different". No matter how much I dwell on the topic of awards, remember, Model UN isn’t about awards. Initials were given to protect conferenceers’ privacy.

4.4 April

Oh busy week (2010-04-01 07:05)

There are two camps that the school students fall into: Going on vacation or doing lots of work. And by going on vacation they mean actually up-and leaving by car or plane: one more day in Washington and they’re on the work train. Seeing that I’m still in Washington, one can conclude this break doesn’t feel like a
vacation. Internship and summer program apps, job apps, vague homework assignments, you name it.
Mon- Orthodontist (braces off- yeah!), Nat’l Geographic- special film on Terra Cotta Soldiers (tix for exhibit sold out), Orthodontist for retainer.
Tues- Jog, movie @ Nat’l geographic on shipwreck research, Church rehearsal @715p.
Wed- Supreme Court Marshal’s list invitation to court hearing, CPR renewal@ 5p.
Thu- Do money moving with savings act. b/c interest rate is so low, Lifeguard Backboarding review, CPR Class part 2.
At least I’ve been getting enough sleep this week!

Great Vigil of Easter (2010-04-04 19:15)
I took my first trip to the local parish’s GVE (Great Vigil of Easter) service. It was a big deal. The service started at 9; when I checked my watch after service, it was past midnight. We had run the whole gamut. I’ve done GVE’s before, but none as late or as lengthy or spiritually intense. Think of this: Now how did a friend from St. Thomas Choirschool land at our same church? "The music world’s really small. So, naturally, I happened upon St. Paul’s". It is a special place that offers three choral services each Sunday, and one of few US Churches to offer weekly treble Evensong. Said a former classmate from NewYork now at Georgetown Univ., "That is the loudest congregation I’ve heard". At St. Thomas in New York, the parishoners let the choristers do the singing.

R&R (2010-04-09 19:38)
What a rough week back! At least by Monday night I was back in the academic spirit- sort of. It took til about last night to get that get-go fervor back into me. As for chem test, well, if it takes 2 days to fill out your index card cheat-sheet (vs the usual 45 min session), then I should have taken it as a cue. Oh well. Fortunately I get a second shot backed up by an alternative third shot. In retrospect, I coul’ve kept a 1-hour-per night study hall standard. But I was burned out over break. The week was occupied much by sports practice, but c’est la vie. Think of this- now, over the weekend, I have all the homework time I need! I’ve been ferociously working on a play for the VSA young playwright’s competition. I’m trying to do a decent job, and not to rip off too much from my classmates’ life experiences. What I mean is not to pull a Marcel Duchamp and skirt work to make a point. If I wanted to make a point, I think I’d put some effort into it.

The Tax Death Spiral (2010-04-14 16:57)
Sometimes, a politician will decide to raise taxes for whatever purpose. This is done early in the term, so folks will forget. Indeed, what happened in Maryland happened to be a smart move: The bottom fell out mid-term, and no one’s discussing raising taxes. But when your neighbor Virginia manages to keep taxes low through fiscal responsibility, that’s when you know you don’t have a captive population. Indeed, tax records presented by the right-leaning Washington Examiner indicate that over 100 millionaires have left one county of Maryland for Virginia, presumably, since the instatement of the populist-based millionaire tax. What do you do when the result doesn’t work as intended? Hold the tax rate? Bad idea. Raise it? There goes the Tax Death Spiral. As taxes rise, more and more people will flee. Then, when you start taxing the middle class-whizz bang, there goes your neighborhood. Thus, what remains is a failed state with a chronically ill budget.
Witness any big city in the last part of last century. 
So what do you do when you become the maverick of tax increases? Lower them. While that means less revenue in the short run, this is the only redeeming path to a decent state future. This applies to all sorts of taxes, including real estate, income, sales tax and any fees one thinks of imposing.

Only 50 years til retirement? (2010-04-17 19:14)

A friend, then 14, said that you’re old at 17, not 16. I sure feel different than I did last year at this time. Nevertheless, I received a great outpour of encouragement on Facebook. Everyone knew the date. 4/17. Atticus Sawatzki’s birthday. My parents did, too. My mom had something to say: “And me? I was the one who did work that day.”

I didn’t make a big deal about this birthday. I don’t know why; it could possibly be due to entitlement fatigue. At age 13 I was able to put my life on the internet. At age 14, I was allowed by law to work, at 15, get a joint card account, sit in an airplane exit row and be a lifeguard (by US standards). At 16, a library of congress card, a motor vehicle learner’s licence and most adult benefits. Some of these benefits are leagues deep in the law. Why’d I want to start riding a bike helmetless? Or ride in the back of a speeding truck, unsecured?

But about the anticlimax- it’s because it’s on a Saturday! I don’t have to worry about bruised arms until Monday.

Thank you, Tom and Kathy, too.

Fling on Mt. St. Alban’s (2010-04-18 19:12)

After a few minutes of door-checking, my mother and I came across a medieval-looking door at St. Alban’s in Washington. Inside was the party we were looking for. At St. Thomas, I had been spoiled with these sort of social events. Alumni get-togethers with the choirboys present and obedient as live entertainment, and, on some rowdy occasions, napkin. But the older I’ve gotten, the more I’ve got to contribute to these get-togethers. As a chorister, all I could say was yessir, nomam and dunno. It’s nice that the choir came to see me. Yes. As part of the Development program, the choir has been travelling on 2-day junkets. But they particularly like the DC area: Overall, a nice place to be, lots of alumni, lots of high-church families to share their homes with the choir. Having read the prep-school analysis book “Preparing for Power”, I was particularly attuned to what was going on. How little could you eat? I had one macaroon. How long could you talk? COuld you gracefully exit a conversation? Any faux pas? So, it works out for both of us.

Retrocession: Modern Precedent (2010-04-20 16:27)

Some say that to think that Maryland would ever want to take back DC is crazed talk. There is no Civil War, and lots of people actually live, today, in Maryland’s part of DC. Thus, there is to be only one big city in Maryland, not two. But the State that is is not gobbling the whole city, but nibbling it from the tip. No one seems to ever think of this friendly precedent: For one reason or another, the Wilson Bridge from Oxon Hill, MD, to Alexandria, VA, was built so it crossed across DC’s very southernmost tip. All that is at this tip is water and an apparent sandbar. When a new bridge was built last decade, Maryland urged the DC council to cede the part of the city’s aqueous holding that was under the bridge. That way, neither VA or MD could
ask DC to pitch in to the maintenance fund. This change may have affected the residency of several bald eagles and sea gulls, but, as for humans, no one maybe except the guy who operates the drawbridge.

**Hot Water (2010-04-22 19:41)**

Yesterday was Secretaries’ day. But most officials consider this day ”Administrative Professionals’ Day”, for the sake of professionalization of every career path, or just for greedy managers who want in. Else, it could just be that Secretaries are synonymous with pensions-disappearing. To the satisfaction of ”working girls” (quoting the 1991 Carly Simon movie), there is now (and has been for a while) a day called ”Take your Daughter to work day”. Egalitarian fathers, or mothers, bring their daughters to work so they can see that their opportunities aren’t limited to secretary, stewardess, nurse or teacher. Now I remember the grade-school debate about TYDTWD: why couldn’t the boys take the day off from school? (One boy did; he was ridiculed for the rest of the year). So, in a bow to gender equality, more and more boys took part in (and ruined?) the tradition. Today’s Earth Day as well, and being the busybody that I and all my friends are, were unable to attend the festivities on the Mall. Thus, the isolation between us working conformists and environmentalists with leisure time grows.

Take this to the typing pool and leave in the 20th century.


How does a prestigious club become prestigious. Is it exclusivity? If so, then does it mean the lower the invitation rate is (if there is one at all), the higher the response rate will be? In a prestigious and secretive Facebook group that I am in, new members are discussed before being sent an invitation. Turns out, the invitation acceptance rate is a clean 100 %.So then, does being exclusive imply prestige? No, not as cliques are involved. Could selectiveness be used as a marketing tool? It sure has been and is.

**Not for money but for glory (2010-04-24 18:59)**

Amazon the web retailer has started to offer cash to bloggers who drop the name of specific products in their posts. The pay rate is based on how many click-throughs you get from your blog to an embedded link to Amazon. This, of course, causes partiality which some would say is hazardous to the free-minded world. That said, if I were to sell promotions on this blog, then I would clearly identify the pay-to-say sections. But from my point of view, it’d take a lot (and not pennies or dimes)for me to sell out my audience.

(note that name-dropping in content-embedded ads is different that a general sponsorship or advertising that is kept separate from the journalistic material).

**School Concert (2010-04-25 18:42)**

A novel concept: the choral and orchestral concerts were combined this season. This was done for a number of reasons: larger audience, less dates on the calendar, etc. I noticed that first point as we circled around the campus to find a parking spot coming in. The two sections were separated by an intermission in which the orchestras prepped up. All the ensembles played well, and the semi-pro Jazz ensemble rocked the house
as usual. As a special tribute, the Hearn brothers (with Brendan, the cellist, a graduating Senior) played a virtuoso Irish jig. Although I’m a bit peeved about the refreshments being finished before the end of the orchestral performances, the sum that I did have before playing was gorgeous. It seems to be a great way to close an Alumni weekend.

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T+F@Landon (2010-04-27 19:45)

2 gymnasiums, 2 full sized fields and a lax area.
There’s probably a jousting area that I didn’t get to see. This is Landon School, on Wilson Lane in Bethesda, MD. Years ago, I was at this athletic-heavy school for a tour. Now I was here for track.
2” 45’ was all the time that I took to round the track twice (800m total), but I could feel those 8 seconds. I promised myself that I’d give my all in the final 200m. I did; I passed and charged. I knew today would be better; I relieved myself, removed a retainer, tightened my laces, and did not have a cold rain on the parade. Yet, my lungs were pressing against the ribcage. I suspected I ruptured a few capillaries; I think that explains the metallic taste that I had internally after the run.
Was it really 7pm? It was. But I was home by 8pm. Sometimes, track meets are held- locally.

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I’m An Affiliated Voter Now (2010-04-30 18:00)

Discussing communism is one thing. It’s a different matter when you’re discussing communism with the student from China. In Communist China, membership in the Party is dispensed on an exclusivity basis. In fact, only 7 % of the population is a card carrying member. In Comparative Politics, we learned that some young Chinese die to be members. You must love communism to be a member, though. Such an affiliation can put you on the US blacklist. The Party’s less ideological now than it was in Mao days. In fact, there are now businessmen in the club. We call this hypocrisy. Fortunately, our student sees a future in a free world enterprise and does not expect to be a technocrat. Being a member of the Party, he says, doesn’t guarantee you the best job anymore.
In America’s multiparty system, parties vie for membership. Exclusive parties don’t work. Maybe they used to in the 19th century, but not today. From my laptop, I can join any number of political parties, from the GOP to the DNC to LaRouche’s cult or the Greens. I just did join one, and it only took about 2 minutes.
They fiddled around with the idea about being 18 in the disclaimer, but they didn’t ask anything of it. If you can register to vote prior to 18, then so goes.
Some day, I’ll come out of the woodwork on which one I joined.
In support group:
"Yes, I have something to admit."
"We’re behind you all the way"
"I’m a member of the *********** party.

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4.5 May

Got a Job (2010-05-01 19:29)

"There is the f(x) club. You see, you need to be a function to get in this club. If you fail the vertical line test, you have to stay out on the street. Now inside this club there’s a special room. VIP lounge. Call it what you
want. But only one-to-one functions are allowed inside”.- From MCAS (Mr. C—— Appreciation Society), a Facebook group.
On Friday, the last day of class instruction for Juniors, the Headmaster posted the list of leadership assignments. The plebicite-elected, Admin approved presidents, designated House Heads and social chairs. Up for grabs-publicity and treasurer. Later that day, up went page two, listing the school media positions. Yearbook was predictable; our in-house shutterbug and technoratus got his due. The RA- resident artist (specializing in pen drawings and dermal doodling) made it a team. THe key to the Priory Press (student publication) was given to the three people who I knew to have applied. That would be the stellar writer and SAT smasher (I’ve heard rumors of a perfect score!), a prolific web-writer, and myself. I admit, I am a prolific webwriter as well. So who’s an Editor and who’s Staff?
That’s something we’ll probably be discussing.
Happy Birthday, Augustus!
Happy May Day.

College Board’s Customers (2010-05-02 18:30)

An SAT last Saturday, and an AP tomorrow.
For the millions of students taking the battery of testing products, the people in Princeton are building a cash cow.

A Great Sleep Proposal (2010-05-03 18:34)

Early to bed and Early to rise...(Ben Franklin)
is essential in the early nature of first bells at America’s finest high schools.
Thus, I have a solution that I have finally been able to implement.
8 hours is the same whether 8-4 or 12-8 or whatnot. I propose that we sleep 10p-6 a. Of course, under normal operating condition, such devotion to shuteye would create an acute backlog of work. But, if those conditions were altered (college?), then such beautiful rest will be able to be obtained. Getting up at 6a doesn’t make going to bed at 10p too hard. But going to bed early on a late-rise Sunday is unnatural. However, we must not resign to sleepy and cranky Mondays. Just get up a little earlier on Sunday. That means going to bed early on Saturday and thus on Friday as well. This means people without nightlives? I guess so. Maybe we could cause a cultural change.

Stealth and Steam (2010-05-04 18:59)

Purple among the tide of blue, us Panthers found wedges among the hoards of runners. The mission was direct-2 laps. For some, this was just a formal way of cooling down from a 1 or 2 mile jaunt. For me, it was a warming up to longer-distance adventures- next season. The fact that we were bunched didn’t bode well, but after the shot went, we all found our places. I was looking for my 75 % tempo that I would maintain for the first lap. Passing was a bit difficult, though, because of the crowd of runners. Lap 1- not too tired. Shout-out indicated 1 min 22 sec elapsed. Not bad for a metered pace. By our good training, we have gained the skill of passing in the final lap. Especially fun and devious is the stealth approch. Tail your victim and pass late in the run. So, in the last 200, us in purple increased our pace and bolted in the last 150, because this was it for the season.
Now this is the fun part- I have not received an official reading. Thus, I estimate that I would have cut about 7-10 seconds from the second lap and therefore run a sub-2"40'. Not bad for my track record.

Exotic Trips by Car (2010-05-05 16:46)

A survey of my classmates indicated that nearly all of them have visited Canada, by land, sea or air. However, not so many have visited Mexico. I have to warn you that dawdling in many countries is different than taking a fling in USA north. The US State Department offers a pamphlet on things you should know before you travel down south. As a matter of fairness, border crossings in Canada have been secured in recent years to the level as they are down south, so no big surprise there. Don’t see surprised if you see a chicken truck.

Pay the special protection fee- you’ll need it

Don’t drink tap. Some nice hotels have central water purifiers, but don’t risk it!

Make sure that the currency exchange gives you recent coinage rather than devalued older money.

Keep a low profile and don’t look out of place (DC people are pretty nice about this; cartels may not be so tolerant).

Navigating traffic circles in Mexico City is a futile task.

Read an official travel guide and do not goose step down there based on this information. Of course, booking an impulse trip to Cancun is a different matter.

Happy Cinco de Mayo!

Take the load (2010-05-07 20:12)

It was 5pm when I had left the locker room. 2 hours before the Athletic Banquet meant enough time to finish that precalc practice exam. But, as I was to find out later, Mom was looking at it and kept it out of my backpack. So I settled for French. That was until a Reaganite Militarizer came into the lounge and put on "Top Guns". It was great. Let me clarify. Sortie action shots made the movie worthwhile. There were a few icky spots to fast forward through, but mostly clean and touching.

It was 7 pm too soon, and I had to forcefully tear myself away from the screen.

To be continued...

Take the load, Cont. (2010-05-08 18:45)

I already received a tipoff on the quality of the food

Rockland BBQ. There was cole slaw, and we were each doled 1/4 of a decent sized chicken and ribs that slid easily off the bone. To top that, a pasta salad and dinner roll were piled on. Creamy cake and beverages were available at our discretion. The sumptuous feast occupied all of us at the table for a while. The chickpeas in the Baked Beans was an interesting aside and made good small talk. At this long table were a bunch of Sophomores at on periphery, Seniors decked the center and Juniors (including myself) at the end, topped of by a "7th form" graduate of 2009 who assisted with the baseball team this season. One main topic among the Seniors was the matter of the highlight Scholar- Athlete Award. I don’t know the exact qualifications to receive it, but I heard that only 4 out of 40 Seniors qualified for consideration. We talked about the surprise John Kelly had on his face back in ’08 when he received the honor.

Each coach from fall, winter and spring had a reunion with his or her team. There were gaps in attendance to this fete, especially among the JV and Middle school-alt teams. For Winter coaches, "the snow cut 1/3 of our
season at the most inopportune times” was a common theme. I was cited by Coach Defour (’06; UMD ’09) for being a good sport. It was unexpected on my part. I suspected that I had that surprise John Kelly face on me at that time. The descriptions he gave made me blush a bit. I will say, though, that I was a rookie walk-on in August with no High School soccer experience. I and my teammates received my Certificate of Completion. "See you all on Varsity next year!”. With five-plus graduating Seniors on the soccer team, there is room for a good portion of JV to advance. As more sports were listed, my high-caliber neighbors amassed trophies. There were enough on the table, from Breslin’s to Blake’s to Bragale’s, to replicate the Forum Romanum.

This year, I participated in two sports for the first time. March is a bit tough for me. Last year I had Lifeguard training; this year I had play practice. I heard that the coach didn’t take well to her top player, a Senior, kowtowing to G-Visitation for the first two weeks of tennis practice each season. The airline tradition of Senority First does not apply to meritocratic sports teams. There’s a difference in leniency between the top player, and higher-seeded players (two of whom were also in the school play), and me. So, to keep it short, within the same week I was on the Track team.

I think I may have sent a bad tone by stepping out right before the Tennis presentation. Notwithstanding, I got back in time to see the awards given out. Sportsmanship award? Nah man! This here is the biggest arguer on the team. Knowing each USTA and league rule doesn’t make you a gentleman. Our suspicious were shattered, though, when Ms. Lane gave Rob a trophy for his contributions. Some of us do not agree with putting Freshman on Varsity teams, much less middle school boys. In her description of him, she explained that he might have well been on Varsity since fifth grade. The call was six years, and Rob also got the four-year letterman plaque with the Fuzzy A.

In some Spring sports, one received a Cert of Completion. It’s quite symbolic, though. Baseball and track still have champs to complete. You’re not done 'til you’re done.

Then there was the highlight of the evening: the scholar-athlete award. Some call it our version of the Rhodes Scholarship. Who would get it? NVD? Mikey? Denny? It was Rob. It was a change as much as Pope JPII. Award history had favored the more "jocky" type, with an edge for student gov’t leaders, but this year not so much.

Which begs the question: Who will it be next year?

Better Grades (2010-05-11 18:43)

Ah, on the brink of my final AP. But unlike the others (Comp Pol and Music Theory), it seems as if every other American student will take an English AP. Will that raise the stakes or not?

As a student striving for a high score, I encourage testtakers who decide to give up to not cancel their scores. This lets the people who don’t try get the 1’s and 2’s and those who try better scores. Plus, it'll save you ten bucks. If you don’t want to let your college see your slack status, then by all means order a non-report of your score. But pls don’t cancel.

Don’t Judge a Concept by its Title (2010-05-14 18:37)

There has been discussion on the topic of "net neutrality”. Some internet service providers (ISP’s) have a propensity for judging web content and determining an "appropriate” speed at which you can access it. Some in Congress want to bar this practice. What this proposal is is essentially banning a book based on its partiality (no-it’s not a radio fairness doctrine matter- read on). What is more disturbing is that people who like the sound of "neutrality” but do not understand the heart of the matter are passing judgement- this is Congress.
You may like a lesson in IP jargon:

Key people:

For those who don’t understand the technicalities, there is a difference between ISP and "The Internet". An ISP is an internet service provider that provides your portal to the internet. Your ISP provides the software and a home modem and DSLAM (server) that get bits and bytes over the phone or cable line (but does not necessarily set you up with a browser). Think of the internet as a fancier way of talking over the phone. More often than not, the ISP will foot the data transmission bill (read on); if you get a flat rate bill for internet service regardless of how much time you spent online, this is you. Think AOL or NetServe. As a limited-supply utility, the utility company is required by law to allow any ISP to operate on its phone lines- and give a good bulk rate for data transmission to the ISP. In fact, this applies to any ISP who asks. Essentially, ISP’s can start up when they want, like a private business in an unregulated sector. While Congress is not proposing a Control Board, this proposal demonstrates either the lack of technical awareness or the desire to strongarm private endeavors. If you are offended that your ISP prioritizes web traffic you’re not a part of, switch to another provider. Or take the can-do American approach- build your own system!

Caveat- If you happen to be somewhere that there is only one ISP, your rights to impartial service may be ensured by antitrust/monopoly policy. Check US and State code to determine if this applies to you.

Go-Go a No-No near MoCo (2010-05-15 19:11)

What is GoGo? Just like Mambo sauce and Chinese carry-out, it’s a part of DC culture. DC urban culture, that is- and by Urban we mean East of the Creek. Yeah.

A student organization from a tony, forward-thinking school in Tenleytown (west of the Creek), decided to hold one such event. Typically rowdy, go-go events are not something you bring West of the creek. But it was only meant to showcase urban culture in a whittled-down, sanitized way...

The debacle lived up to its rowdy reputation. Imagine coming home to your quiet residential street at 5pm on Friday. After dinner, you go out to the front yard...and your neighborhood is taken away. Rowdy youth whose identities you don’t know shout like it’s the Battle of the Republic. Styrofoam containers litter the sidewalk. You get the idea.

For these tranquility-loving residents who associate themselves with suburban culture, this debacle hardened perpetual fears, concerns, and anxieties about what goes on...in town.

I’d link a go-go video, but it’s too graphic/crude for this blog. Look up "Mambo Sauce go-go" if you’re really curious.

If you need a dose of our suburban culture, check up 90210. It resembles 20854. However, most of NW/ west of creek is a bit more subdued.

Source: Northwest Current, a community publication.


Mambo Sauce is not a go-go band. Mambo Sauce is a band that has been influenced by go-go. Please don’t attach our name to violence or go-go as a whole. Check out our official webpage www.mambosauceband.com and follow our story and you will see that we are quite different then what you speak of.

Thank you in advance

Mid-Exam Report (2010-05-18 18:06)

According to the Wall Street Journal, success is a confidence game. How the two are related is unknown (does confidence come from likely success or does success come from sheer confidence?). This is the science
behind good luck charms. Note, though, that superstition leads nowhere. Do your work and have faith in
yourself.

Even though I have spent less time studying for these exams, I’ve felt that I’ve been doing a better job on
them than in past exam cycles. What I mean is that I finished successfully and honorably within the 2 hour
time frame. Now what this means is that I’ve actually learned something. Part of the solution may be a
good night’s rest. I was tempted last night to stay up to finish studying, but I decided to hold it off for the
morning. This latter choice I took, and it was a good one.

Got to hit French now.

Coming up soon on this blog: Bring on the soda tax!

Quick Reflection Before Field Day (2010-05-20 18:57)

Ah, the pressure is sort of off. All I have to do is some last minute GPA tweakers- spare outstanding
assignments. But that won’t mean that I won’t enjoy field day. Be there or be squared- by the 1/2 power
(haw haw haw).

Next week what lies in store I don’t know; grades are due on Tuesday, and only then can I let go. But that’s
soon.

Got to get out early to set up the events.

Field Day 2010 (2010-05-21 19:29)

Good organization and planning- or lots of people. After a video introduction, field day went on to be a great
success. In reality, I am quite tired from it all!

Especially dodgeball: For my taunts, I became a perennial target. This meant that I was dodging foam balls
by rolling over to the side. This was injurious to the ankle, but like a young horse I hobbled back to stature.

Ice cream distribution went well for once, thanks to our leaders’ great providence.

Great job, guys!

Moore House won this year, but I’m sure Main has a great shot at next year’s cup.

Cure for ”Appalachia Syndrome” (2010-05-23 05:32)

It’s all about access. That was the cure for Maryland Panhandle’s three western counties. Since the
1950’s, national planners have made good road construction a key part in bringing this region to East Coast
standards. Witness I-68. It’s advertised as ”the better way to Ohio and Points West”. Sorry, Penna., but the
septuagenerian turnpike doesn’t make meet with a 19-year young double-shouldered beauty. There is variety,
too; entering Cumberland you’re thrown onto an inner-city style skyway.

A drive into the heart of West Virginia is a nauseating experience. While fun on a rec trip, your starch-suited
investor’s won’t like the thrill.

http://actionallen.blogspot.com/2006/07/interstate-68.html

Class of ’10 (not me) (2010-05-30 19:08)

What’s the chance?
Sent across town from my usual work site
and to the place down the street from school
for an event I wanted to attend?
I fidgeted with the duty schedule. When could I take a break- 40 minutes was what I needed. I found a gap-
and I got the blessing of the manager to go off-facility. I threw on my casual best and ran for about 6-7
minutes until I reached the school auditorium. I picked up a brochure and read and chanted along with the
grads and school community. I fulfilled a promise- I had not missed graduation!
I engulfed myself in the rituals and the camaraderie for the brief 15 minutes I had.
I took a peek at the young men in white suits on stage, then wished the exchange students well and sprinted
back to work- making it back on time.
I took a good look at each of their framed spreads. All were able to list 6 achievements. Some had a NMSC
(PSAT-related) tag on the crossbar. I took a good look as to imprint one last image of them in my mind. Some
I had taken class with , some I hadn’t, some I took two with. Some wished I had taken a class (one wished for
more than 2), and some wish that Juniors were not allowed in Seniors’ classes. We spent some time figuring
out who would be the director of the HUD (after designing a bunch of exclusive resorts), and who would be
the next Sec. of State (a name like Chancellor gives you a certain lead). We took some time too to figure
who’d give the speech for the Class of 2035 (of course during Nick Johna’s reign). There was an after-grad
party, apparently, in the boardroom above the theater. There were two contemporary-aged co-eds crooning
to two newly grads, appareled in casual attire. Don’t worry, we iced one of them (we took one guy outside).
Ah, next year the controversial class of 2012 will be taking care of our party.

4.6 June

Donut Day (2010-06-04 18:37)

6/4 = National Doughnut (or Donut) Day.
In honor of this special occasion, I jogged over to the local Krispy Kreme (paradox), and took large bites
into my Boston Kreme Donut that did not cost me a penny. Dunkin’ Donuts is doing the same (the local
college, GW, with its hoard of New Yorkers and Connecticut people, imported a DD to our area). While I’m
in SATII prep mode, Little Brother is running a comparative ”taste test” that will take him across the city
and until 11pm.
Now say what about America’s waistline?

SAT II, Round 1 (2010-06-05 19:25)

SAT II today...
I took the tests at Holton Arms
Halfway between home and my violin instructor
(I was not the only one- other kids had their violins too, for after the test!)
I was originally scheduled for two- French and Chemistry
But I decided to throw in a Math II at the end
It turns out that when you take SATII you get the whole book of 30-something tests- and can choose which
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one to take at what time.
I heard US History is a popular impulse purchase.
The folks in Jersey say that they'll just bill your family for the extra tests.
Does this invoice delay my scores?

A Line Gone Out (2010-06-07 18:22)

On the bathroom counter lies a soup bowl filled with water, and a three-ringed bouquet of flowerheads suspended on the surface of the water. It’s been over a week since graduation, where Hf. Riechert put those flowers in unfunctional yet artistic glass bowls. Yet, those live flowers still look fresh.
In retrospect, it’s only been two weeks since the last final exam, but it has felt like it has been so long ago.
Well, it’s summer now, and a slow summer seems to be a good one.

Five Days in Annapolis (2010-06-11 18:36)

I have never been in the JROTC or taken a formal military science class or attend a military-centric school. That said, I’m off to Annapolis tomorrow for a five-day taste of the Naval Academy. I don’t know what to say about a naval career; I’ve heard to keep an open mind about it.
Over Spring Break, I was looking up internship programs, the federal STEP (Summer temp. youth program), and other summer activities in general. Frankly, the application for the Navy program was not too hard. The hardest part was class rank. It was not an objective number from my point of view; our school doesn’t supply it. In that case, the USNA stated to estimate. I lowballed my estimation for class rank, in deference to the math whizzes in my class and some others who applied with numbers 3, 5, and 7.
–I also applied for the USCGA Aim Program, but an apparent computer glitch prevented me from submitting my portfolio of paragraph essays.–
I applied later than my peers. When I first heard of their intent, one had already received a letter of acceptance. "First round pick", we say. I received a similar letter on formal stationary soon after the deadline. I suspect some of my other classmates received theirs as well. They haven’t been vocal about it, though. As the school mantra goes, "As GPA’s are competitive, so is everything else".

Five Days in Annapolis, Been Changed (2010-06-18 14:22)

Article I of the US Armed Forces Code of Conduct:
"I am an American fighting in the forces which defend my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense".
EMT teams raced around campus Wednesday as we performed a half-version, 7 hour synthesis of Sea Trials, a keystone experience for Plebe (Freshmen) Midshipmen at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis Although our whole squad of 7 pulled through, not every shipmate did. Some stopped on their own volition; others went out with a zap and bang. On our squad’s final trial, fatigued, wet, and sore, we clumsily bear-crawled down a hill. We had a perfect sightline of EMT’s working on a fellow shipmate. I suppose that the Midshipmen didn’t put up a courtesy curtain because "that there ain’t the worst you’ll see in battle". The openness of the event also allowed us to say to ourselves and to our squad buddies: "That kid has (darn) good dedication".
I had a co-worker tell me that I was nuts for considering to attend a service academy. Multiple times over the week we were reminded, directly and indirectly, of what you’ll have to be prepared to give up if you
attend the Academy. Examples include time with friends and family, civilian clothes, "regular college stuff", your life. Our squad leader, a Midshipmen of the Class of 2013, took us to Memorial Hall, a most revered and hallowed space. We perambulated the hall in our buddy pairs. He pointed to the columns of WWII Midshipmen casualties. The usually peppy gymnast just stared. "That many", he murmured. We then went over the wall bearing plaques for the casualties of recent graduating years. The squad leader showed us our place on the wall: "Remember, we are at war and will likely be at war when you graduate". What I want to do is pilot from the bridge of a large ship. My title would be Surface Warfare Officer. My buddy wants to train to be an aviator- not on recon missions but as a Marine Aviator, in the middle of the field of action. I was not dissuaded, neither was he. We know that with privilege comes responsibility. "Where else will someone let you, age 25, take out a $40 million jet and burn $18,000 of fuel in a single trip?"
That’s what’s so great about being a Naval Officer- the end product of Academy life. Now clean words here will not describe how much I loved the daily challenges- including and especially Sea Trial Day, a "tough day" even when it comes to real-life plebe year. This is the best part- I never expected that I would like it so much. I reencountered that shipmate the next day at "Graduation". He told me in a serious tone,"Too bad that I missed Indoc last night 'cuz I was in the hospital".

What a beast.

Shipmate Anonymous, what you missed was the awesome experience of being placed under pressure by rising Sophomores who are testing out their newly-earned authority for the first time. Reality Check: What’cha gonna feel if your wood-clad ship was on fire? Personally, I was in a sweat based on the high expectations, but I kept cool under pressure. I wasn’t ’dropped’ (for reparation in the physical form) as much as I or any of my fellow squadmates had expected.
At least we had this sometimes rebellious reply in our sleeve: "Sir, order to the helm Sir". Never Sir a Ma’am, though.

We call it Father’s Day (2010-06-20 17:34)

Price of Tysons Buffet for two: $45
Running into a pack of classmates on the way home through Bethesda: Priceless.
What is a free day to me?
Navy respects Sundays just as I do: it’s something special. After morning PT, you’re off until noon to pursue religious activities. In fact, the day is tagged as "yard liberty", aka, you can walk around casually; just stay on campus.
It must’ve been an act of God- I’ve never been that tired after a buffet (in Rockville). Already late in the day, our party decided to not pursue the cooler clime of North Central Maryland and decided to return home. Sleepy, I caught sight of kids that looked like they went to St. Anselm’s. Mom thought so too. We pulled around a corner and I doubled back to meet them, in Summer Seminar attire. We shot the breeze for a minute, discussing a Brazilian friend’s antics after the world cup game (the series that I have missed out on, but not regretted). If they had to see it to believe it, though, I’m Navy.
Remember, TH, to practice parallel parking before taking the road test!

Sailors, Seneca, Sunday (2010-06-27 15:41)

I had a dream. I was in a white sailor’s suit, saluting then piloting a ship. That was a nice dream.
On a summer Sunday, I have little to do after the extraordinary morning church festivities (Patron Saint’s day, SS Peter and Paul).
Twenty miles away from home, a lake in a regional park in Upcounty Mont.Co. looked appetible as my family
finished business off in Germantown. The lake was Seneca Lake, in Black Hill Park. On the small beach were young-looking lake attendants in Yellow polo and Khaki shorts chillaxing under an umbrella. Gosh, that’s the future summer job of many DC lifeguards. (The DC guards say the pay and benefits are better across the state line, but that they demand experience). Really, they were environmental police. They were there to, in a friendly way, remind you that what you dump in the lake is what comes out of the tap next week. For this reason no swimming or motorboats are allowed. It makes the Lifeguards’/Dockhands’ job easier: any soul soaking in the water is either in distress or mischeivious. Let’s call these people Tap Water Guards.
I’ll just say that it’s a huge difference in scenery: Poolside versus Lakeside.
I took a look at the Baywatch episode list. As expected, the plots are way over dramatized. That’s understandable, but that show’s got a lot of wild things going on. Still have yet to see my first episode.
In the real lifeguarding world, a reach-from-the-deck a day is an impressive record. It’s also a sign that someone’s neglecting prevention.

4.7 July

A tired combobulation on a discount state workforce (2010-07-03 18:46)

A small-gov’t dream! State employee salaries all reduced to minimum wage!
The bureaucracy should’ve never grown so big. I mean, a wage freeze seems to have solved the deficit in most places. A wage super-cut will fix a problem in no time.
But think of the children.
I am not an expert on Cali Labor Issues, so I’m not sure if the pencil pushers saw this coming. It’s not nice to pull surprises on people’s income: Is it even legal?
Any wage recoking will have to happen with newbies: A number of gov’t jobs can be used as a fallback option for those who can’t make it in the private sector. Then there are jobs that require a competitive workforce. No way else to recruit than competitive wages. Sorry, in America gov’t work is not about honor and duty to the fatherland.
What the state workers need to do is drastic to keep their quality of life, ie strike. In DC Parks, we’re pretty convinced that if our wages were cut, we wouldn’t work. (I make summer job income and not a handsome salary). I got to mention that we have bargaining position as there is currently a mild staff shortage.
Supposedly, there are better paying jobs for youth elsewhere.
Disclaimer: I am a modestly compensated state gov’t worker who lives in Gov’t City.
Try to imagine this news headline:
Obama to California: Drop Dead.

Leading Up To Vacation (2010-07-22 17:55)

It’s been nearly 3 weeks since I last posted. A lot has gone on. It sounds cliched, but when you consider the time it takes to prepare for a 6,000 mile odessey by auto, taking the trip, and recovering from it, I’ll say my current internet presence is a wonderful addition to the world scheme.
July 3 was my last day prior to vacation with my regular co-workers. Work had just gotten harder and I didn’t want to rub it in, so I just gently mentioned “wedding and reunion” prior to signing out. I was also gentle on the managers, who were sorting out staffing matters. (It’s great to work somewhere that you’re basically essential).
July 4 was dedicated to sailing (that’s another blog post to be written)...and to God. It’s Sunday, after all. The Mass had a patriotic tint that was most apparent in the recessional hymn, ”God of our Fathers”. Sailing is a good workout, I’ll tell you. I still had time for tradition; hot dogs, watermelon and fireworks. Like I’ve attended every Palm Sunday mass since I was born, I’ve faithfully attained each National Mall July 4 Firework display since 1993 in some form or another (That was the 17th).

My main priority on July 5 was to complete the DODMERB ROTC/Service Academy physical, a necessary and important step for the aspiring midshipman. Make a good impression: As the Naval Academy mantra goes, ”to be late is to be forgotten”. Being on-time was not an issue with light traffic and an ample allowance of time to travel on my part. Since I was going on such a long trip, I decided to pull a day’s work so I wouldn’t forget what work is. I was assigned to a neighborhood pool of mine; little brother is based there and was more than eager to see me; he called 3 times in 70 minutes.

West 2010: Day 0, Appalachian Plunge (2010-07-26 17:23)

Clean-up was easy; at the local pool, things are squared away so that guards can focus on guarding people and summer youth focus on cleaning. Within an hour, the car was laden with hundreds of pounds of provisions. After 2 blocks due east to access the bridge, we were headed due west, for the next 2500 miles. The sun was hot this July 5, and the sun would bake Washington for the next week. The sun set red with particulate dust as we rounded Hagerstown. Traffic was moderate but dealt with by my newly learner licensed brother. One thing I remember about the west is the ”strange” fuel octanes. 91 is the recommended octane for our vehicle; we have 87, 89, and 93 in our area, but this station 70 miles out had the fuel. I-68 through Maryland was quaint, to say the least, with rolling hills that dragged mile through mile. The heavy car gyrated from 45 to 70 miles per hour in an attempt to save the engine from undue stress. I handed over the wheel back to my brother outside the WVA border...and woke up under the awning of a conference hotel in Morgantown, WVA.

A Brief Interruption to Discuss a Pertinent Issue (2010-07-27 13:27)

Insurance companies, especially Allstate and State Farm, have been burning risk pool money for lobbying congress. In this case, they don’t want to insure minors, a high-risk group (though not as high as the 75+ group). To the public, they rally in the name of ”saving 11”. That’s the daily number of teen auto deaths. It is a valid cause, but the approach to ameliorating this tragedy must be scientific and not political. This way, we will get the best result on lives saved. Having held a Learner’s License for 12 months, the medley of rules in each state of the nation gives me different levels of privileges. In some states, learner’s cards are commuted to full licenses. Learning drivers’ operating hours vary significantly. For example, DC restricts driving hours to 6am-9pm, a number of states restrict from 1am-5am. Travelling with the family, it only meant a larger number of seating arrangements (i.e. brother and I in front seats, parents in back). The STANDUP ACT would change this by ”standardizing” driving ages by increasing to the greatest common factor. Washington, we have regional variations. In some states, increasing age minimums has had an effect on lowering accident rates. I have second thoughts about the effect it has had in some others. We have something called a ”free state” complex north of the Potomac. In Maryland, a statistic provided by [1]www.idrivesmart.com explains that 5 % of drivers in Maryland are unlicensed. Why? Fear of the MVA is the short reason. Also, laws are more loosely enforced than in Virginia, which throws the books at young drivers, esp. from out-of-state. Just putting it out there, it’s easier to change laws (make licensing more available) than change the custom of ”self-initiation”. 

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I'll be dwelling on Maryland's case for a while. Most of my angst teen readers are Maryland-licensed drivers). Perhaps the MD has the most extreme case: 15y9m for a learner, and now 16y6m for a Provie. If you're under 18, you can't get a "real license". You get automatically installed enhanced privileges at 16y11m reworded to be a prophetic "151 days thenceafter".

Of course, your old man or lady can officially put on your brakes. All it takes is a nice letter to the MVA "asking for them to take away Timmy's license" (Thank goodness you can't do it one-click online). Timmy, good luck trying to get a judge to rule your parent "incompetent".

If a 17-year old can operate an army tank, why isn’t a civilian friend able to operate a pleasure vehicle? Because he’s irresponsible, says the AARP? I, and the general public, believe that experience, not maturity, (yes, there are immature teens out there. We can shape ’em up with: a job that is not make-work). Some politicians and youth-fearers think otherwise.

You really don’t understand how annoying pedestrians can be til you’ve wheeled around the city. With that experience, I’ll bet your bottom dollar that you’ll be a better and more aware pedestrian. It had an effect on me.

There’s also the matter of civic responsibility. What’s the social impact of being reliant- on a parent- to register for voting or for the draft? Answer- you’ll never grow up if you’re a recipient of such state-mandated coddling!

Welcome to your pool. Your life is in the hands of pre-sixteeners. Good luck finding the manager. He’s 17. Trust 15-year-olds with the safety of pool patrons, don’t trust 17-year-olds with cars. At least it will have one positive effect: increased young voter turnout. Yep, in my conversation with young Marylanders, they’re anti-incumbent over the recent licensing-age reshuffling. Some of them are going to vote, too, because they feel as they’ve been insulted.

Another tip: Make kids buy their own car or insurance. Several entitled children I know have caused serious damage to their "grown-up" toys. The ones who put personal investment into their rides tended to have clean records.

Come to think of it, there are two groups of "bad drivers"- those coming in, and those going out. When our time comes, we may well consider "supportive legislation" for drivers "in their golden years".

I haven’t even gotten to the matter of states’ rights. Like much maligned legislation, the standumpact is an unnecessary impediment to individual states. Some states (like California and, on most points, Maryland) have driving codes that adhere to a "national standard". Most states don’t, and most states don’t have a problem with that.

The worst-conceived provision in the STANDUP ACT is raising the Learner's License age to 16. Duh- isn't that when you traditionally get a full license? Other than that, it undermines safe driving practices that are initiated by the family and approved of on various levels by each state. Say, learn at 14, drive alone at 16 gives a full 2 years of learning experience in the more impressionable years! Maryland would be double-undermined. The learning stage, just increased last year, would be cut back to the length it was in the first place. A little-known provision allows for no age restriction on driving with a certified instructor (experience and coursework counts toward state requirements if done since your 15th birthday).

Some personal suggestions:

Parental Involvement
Parents: Give experience while they’re young: before "wheel envy" sets in.
Drunk/Buzzed driving is totally unacceptable and morally wrong
Do something about chronic speeders. Habits form young
Fatigued driving is also a bad idea
Bona-fide commuting rarely results in tragedy. Let teens carpool with each other. Consent forms make sense for minor passengers.
Bad things happen at night. You should know where your kids are at 10pm. You know, trust but verify.
Thanks, Ronald.
"Night driving is the strangest thing". I said it myself. Kids should have monitored experience, and lots of it, before attempting to go solo at night.
Shock therapy: imagine all the bad things that could happen if you
Discuss Insurance rates
Accidents during necessary trips are a tragedy. Accidents during cruising or chilling times is a too frequent occurrence. Idleness can lead to trouble. Boaters and pilots file float plans. Driving kids should do the same. Amazing story: A friend, now at the USAFA in Colorado, volunteered himself and his F-150 to hospital duty during our recent blizzards. He was 17 then.
Note: I follow all restrictions placed on my license.


4.8 August

Sum up a month? (2010-08-21 11:37)

Last published July 31?! What have I done with my time?
Here is the hierarchy of media, according to my soon-to-be overlord of publications (If you remember from my May postings, I got a job for the student paper at school).
Good news
No news
Old news
Lame/ pagefiller news
I’ve gone for the second choice, basically.
I’ve been off of pool work for a week now, and I must say that this past week was the fastest gone- in my life, perhaps. Nothing happens in town in August, and I haven’t done too much of note. Maybe I’ll let you in on the Tuesday saunter around Capitol Hill, into Eastern Market, the Library of Congress, Union Station, and the Folger Shakespeare (Mr. F made money in oil, not coffee). Didn’t do the Capitol Visitor Center, though, b/c I didn’t feel like going through a "double" security screening. Nice itinerary, though. Rolling a wheel and tire Wednesday down the street to the gas station during a rainstorm was comical, though.
Maybe you want to get to know a little more of what I’ve done: I finished reading my third Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises. If you found a deep message in this book, please write me! (The others: FWTBT and Old Man). I’ve started to write out the family tree of the Greek goddesses and gods, but still need to comprehend (read: read) The Iliad and The Aeneid. Amazingly, I’ve gotten more homework done at work than during my time home.
Soccer preseason is going on. PT during Navy Summer Seminar seems like cake compared to Coach’s special relay-runs mixed with PT. We do this drill black-flag day (hot n humid)or not. There’s plenty competition for the Varsity spots: more talent than ever on the St. A’s team.
I’ve also slept away a little under 40 % of this past week. I accredit that to biological recovery from soccer. Can’t believe that I haven’t told you all about my weekend sailing or my weekend to Long Island. That’ll come soon. I promise.

15 hours until I wake up and go to school (2010-08-25 11:45)

Enjoying my last day of summer break. Soccer preseason is the most sleep I’ll get during the school year. All in all, I’m looking forward to senior year- asides from the class which gave me a vague homework assignment. There’s no more time to spruce up assignments or say that I should be doing xyz with my time. As it’s said at the Service Academies: Plebe Summer- you didn’t have to worry about homework! Now I do. See
everyone tomorrow!
I recommend everyone pack their bags for school tonight, because you will be disoriented waking up at 6am, possibly in the dark.

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School’s Fun (2010-08-27 19:35)

Today was my first full day of school since May. The transition wasn’t too hard, as I’d spent plenty of hours this summer at the Abbey kicking around the soccerball. What took me back was my realization, on the Metro ride home, that I’d just spent sunrise to sunset at school. I ought to not have been; the administrators assured us 1st semester seniors that we’d have enough to do.
There is a good shot I missed out this season’s issue of prime lockers (24 cubic feet) and settle for one half the size. I mean, there were about 18 Seniors eligible (i.e. currently play a sport and allege that a regular locker would not fit their sporting equipment)for the 22 units. I sense that the Juniors took a few of them nefariously. What I get now is a good selection of neighboring real estate.
(As a matter of micropolitical correctness, I’ll add commentary on other subjects later).
In AP Biology, there was a sense that memories- from Freshman Biology- last: the teacher recalled JH, now a student gov’t leader, machoing his lab partners on his ability to tolerate the stench before he himself got woozy on formaldehyde.
We participated in a great textbook issue. For the first time, the textbooks really feel like 20th century technology. In recent years, we have saved our backs with online editions for home use. However, many conceded that this is the year we should’ve transitioned to e-readers. In the Pub(lcations Lab, two seniors were hashing out our class’ eternal keepsake, the yearbook, and two other leavers were working on the glossy-paged periodicals we kindly critiqued award-winning literature. I received my first homework assignments of the year. As a matter of good policy, I made at least a token effort to complete the assignments before starting the weekend.
In IE (intro to engineering), I’m earning credit for what I do on my own: think of how to make things work. For the team portfolio (a semester-long lab report, in other words), I’ll have to insert some calculations. I think the more tedious they look, the better it will be received by the PhD. Certain that the Doctor wouldn’t approve of any idea we generated on day 1, I left good sketches in my notebook for closer to the first advisory grades. The details of these, and of many of my and my classmates’ maligned and horrid ideas will remain sealed until presentation day in December.

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4.9 September

In DC? Enjoy cooler weather and track work... (2010-09-03 18:42)

In just a few minutes, the eastern branch of the DC Metro’s Red Line will close for major overhaul. Having rode the line a few hours ago, nothing seems amiss on the trackbed. This is the trackkeepers’ job; to intervene before the bottom falls out. From my engineering-dad’s perspective, there will be a fascinating array of work-crews and equipment on the trackbed from 10pm tonight until 5am Tuesday morning. That’s 79 hours of intensive care for the tracks that carry hundreds of trains a day.
Most people won’t mind, though. They’re out of town, far away from the DC Metro and its temporarily truncated service. If all goes well on the tracks this weekend, my Tuesday commute will be a bit better than before.
Patriot’s Day ACT (2010-09-11 19:06)

This passage is based on material from practice tests and post predrafted on Sept. 10. I took the test this morning at West Potomac High, South Fairfax, VA; the last available site in the Anselmer’s sphere of influence.

The ACT is a great relief for the College Board student. Looking at the prep material, there’s a greater patriotic element in the literature comprehension selection than in the SAT. On this chain, the ACT also contains more material which the mainstream of collegebound students would find interesting.

Many of my classmates who scored in the 1800’s (of 2400 potential) topped 30 (out of 36 potential). The ACT conversion indicates a 27 would be expected. Thus, it’s fair to say that you, too, might do better on the ACT. Is it right for everyone, though?

You ought to have taken math through the Algebra 2 level; and had a thorough teacher at that.

Learn to conceal your laughter at bad grammar

You don’t need a big lexicon

While reading passages, think of ways you’d shorten the text

Know that the ACT wants you to be succinct and direct, like the archetypical American.

You will spend more time with the calculator

Some problems will resemble math class

Don’t get discouraged by the dense language of the intercultural reading passage. The ACT only has one.

You should be able to analyse data and make logical leaps as the time presses short

Is it a forewarmer of America’s future? The science section was designed to be pressed on time, compared to the english and math sections. The math is at a challenging level for most test-takers. Some pundits have used the ACT as positive proof of poor math and scientific ability in American youth!

A teacher who will remain nameless has the tendency to let his students’ essay-writing skills deteriorate after 2 semesters. The east coast SAT-slicker may find the transition back to AP’s (especially AP English Language!) Not to fret. While the ACT has been favored upon by talent searches such as John Hopkins U’s CTY, more east coast colleges have come to accept the test from Iowa.

Fall and a Server (2010-09-18 19:11)

Today us in the National Capitol Region experienced the simple delight of cool, clean, crisp air in the morning. A forebearer of fall, the daytime cool will extend into the daytime hours. After plugging college applications for a good part of the afternoon, I decided to learn more about the heart of computer-to-computer communication; ie, the basis of the internet.

A student whom some would attest is morally opposed to computers was plugging lines of code into Java for AP Comp Sci. It’s easy to teach a young dog new tricks. On that basis, I quickly learned how the digital world works.

The internet is not exactly a bunch of tubes with trucks. It is, however, an efficient post office system of sorts. Your computer request information in a protocol manner and the server responds, possibly asking you for your credit card number. This back and forth happens frequently on your trip to the WWW. These days, the dialogue is continuous. The tube concept derives from this development. In more primitive days, the information would travel via regular phone lines (ohh- graphics were such a pain to load!) By the way, the computer would tie up the phone line while using the internet!

With the advent of DSL, this problem disappeared. I remember the surprise the first time a call came through while looking up info (that’s all there was back then!) Back in the dial-up days, blogging might have been done on computer software, then with modem flipped on, the text would be transmitted to the server. Doing work online (ie writing blog posts) was, to my knowledge, not common. Back then we also relied on landline
phones and couldn’t tie them up for an hour.
Now who wants to be an internet historian?

Organizational Charts by Teens (2010-09-24 19:08)

House Day. You don’t appreciate the work it takes to put the day together until you do it yourself. No, I did not do it singlehandedly, but the Student Prez. and Veep spent many hours preparing and the whole House Day ready to intervene. When the duties for the day were divied up, the task came down to each individual. As a peripheral member of the "Student Gov" through the student paper, I was given the nerdish role of supervising Trivia. My duties came down to this list:
Find your House Members (the system was devised in 1987, before Harry Potter) and mark their hands A- D for rotations.
Ask yourself these questions:
Where this group of kids is supposed to go:
Which group should be arriving next:
Did anyone get lost, voluntarily or intentionally*?
For trivia: find replacements to fill seats left vacant by disappearing souls.
Note to pundits who think us at the Abbey are nerds: Kids were skipping out of Trivia, not Football.
Even good planning can fall to pieces. I applaud quick response to a fiasco relating to the scavenger hunt. It took the kids 15 minutes (out of 45 planned) to complete the odyssey. After one rotation (of 4), the activity was scrapped and the old standby of "Protect the Wall" resurrected. The kids were grateful, too, that there was one less academic activity for the day.
After finding enough warm bodies to fill Trivia seats, I was getting a little fever for the game myself. Even though Seniors aren’t technically allowed to, I got my turn to compete on stage just before the day was over. My brilliance did not overwhelm the other Grade 9-12 contestants, so I wasn’t by-lined after answering 10 questions!
A clear-cut test of organizational success is the ice cream service. How long was the wait? Not long at all, since we pre-scooped.
The temperature reached over 90 degrees with high humidity, but no results of heat casualties. Accolades for water service and frequent-enough breaks from activities. By the last rotation at high noon, I received plenty of help for inside the air conditioned theater!

4.10 October

Months Change and Laws Change (2010-10-01 19:49)

Yesterday, a tropical storm made a lake of the soccer field.
Today, a crisp autumn day replaced the summer heat. These pleasant days should become more frequent in the closing days of "the year of the weather".
But more importantly, a new law may change some bad habits. Repeatedly on this blog I declare texting while driving a really bad idea. While I’m not a fan of legislation, there’s a change I’d like to inform everyone about and it may actually apply to you.
Marylanders seem to have an affection for talking( and texting) while driving. A law went into effect today banning use of handheld cellular communications devices by all classes of drivers, except for emergency calls. Car phone use seems to be the cause of most bad driving in the DC area. Don’t expect Maryland
drivers to "get better" overnight. According to a Wiki chart, MD is the only state with a lenient ban on adult/experienced drivers; it's (only) a secondary offense. In the other 6 no-phone states and DC you can be pulled over solely for using a phone. 

Did you read this post on a mobile device?
Are you also trying to drive?
Then pull over so you can spend undivided attention on my blog!

Columbus Day Again (2010-10-11 18:18)

As a testament to my new-found busyness, I haven’t posted since October 1. Meanwhile, stuff has happened. I plan to get all my college materials out by Oct. 28. Yes, I know that some colleges give applicants preferential treatment for getting in applications early. I know that some don’t, but I want an universal deadline- for simplicity’s sake.

It’s Columbus Day again. The Feds and most schools are off today. Private industry was humming, so were the schools which take Yom Kippur off instead. Yes, a number of private schools as well as a few school systems in the New York Tristate Area and two in Maryland. What did I do today? Accept today as a day to get caught up on school work- and catch a nice jog on the C+O Canal.

Happy Half Birthday (2010-10-17 18:21)

That’s 17 and a half. The high-IQ kid’s show "Arthur" makes a stand about Prunella’s ego-eccentricity when she throws a 9-1/2 birthday party (wow- almost double digits!) The little celebrated, often ridiculed milestone marks halfway from last April to legal. I don’t plan to do anything extravagant; it’ll just be less of a hassle (no more "Mommy can you sign off on this”).

More essentially, I spent part of this weekend over the state line at Holy Cross in Bethesda. It was a Model UN event, and a well-orchestrated one at that. I could rave for the food (Panera-esque bread bowl beat the taco option 10-1), but the dynamics of the committee sessions were a draw as well.

ALL the below is simulation, not breaking international news...
I repped VietNam in SPECPOL, dealing with the Pakistan Flood Crisis. Naturally, I chummed out with China and N Korea. I couldn’t help but side with Lebanon :). Trusting the Pakistani government was an edgy position to take- but edgy in Model UN means fun. The chairs (the high school co-eds who ran the committee and imputed punishment to disruptive nations) kept reminding me and my friends (allies) that we were poor and therefore irrelevant to providing aid relief. Our little club befriended America and won over "that rich country” we needed to pass the bill. The chairs thought that China should fix its own poverty issue before bailing out Pakistan. Things were going oh-so-well; I was about to get my resolution passed, until a Crisis happened. Yes, it put egg on my face. A report came out stating that the Pakistani government was a leaky tube that lost 60 % of aid money to evil-doers. Away with US support and my Resolution went out the window. Somebody on the Crisis committee is going to get a nuggy tomorrow in class...

Brief Points (2010-10-24 18:48)

*Mole Day was yesterday, 6:02am- 6:02pm (6.02 x 10^-23). It’s nice to see science being relevant in culture.
Computer is running excessive virus scans. There’s nothing to fear but fear itself, "radialpoint".
Watched "The Social Network" on the silver screen yesterday evening. Very well presented; sad that it ended 248
after 2 hours (just about on the dot). There were racy scenes; probably not suitable for little kids or grandma. College students seem to appreciate this movie the most.

Finishing up on that college essay. Found a hook and a decent line and typed it up. I just need a few transitions.

No Test Material on This Page (2010-10-28 19:19)

I’m sure that anyone involved knows that October SAT scores came out today. I know that it was hard to get through between 12:01am and 2:00am, as the needlessly worried students stayed up to see the event. The lines probably were also heavy from 6:00am to 8:00am, as the early to bed crew started to rise. Mom convinced me that I should save the surprise as an afternoon treat. Why’d I want to check at 6am? "So I wouldn’t wallow alone". Commiserating is a sport. In fact, SAT was the topic of our shortened day. Busy with a Latin test for a good part of the time, I wasn’t able to run to the Publications Lab to check my results. After all, I don’t have my SAT login code memorized.

If you’re wondering, I did a swell job. Only thing, is that the scholarships get bigger the closer to 1600 you get. At some point I have to stop worrying. Talk about restoring sanity, though.

4.11 November

What Just Happened (2010-11-06 18:28)

Tomorrow will be one hour longer. As you set back your clocks (the ones that don’t automatically reset), don’t forget to check your smoke detectors as well.

As I am not a political pooh-bah, but rather a busy student, I did not have the luxury of time to wing around Downtown DC for Gray’s celebration of victory* then up to Baltimore to hit up some political celebrations for both MD Governor contestants. First, I must ask, how much is it a victory party when you “win” 42% to 56%? Yes, you’re the one with the 37%. Some issue concerning voter discouragement robocalls arose from a message along the lines of; “take it easy tonight” Your candidate won so you don’t have to go to the polls”.

All or nothing shot, isn’t it? Four days after the election, (formerly) incumbent candidate Gov. Ehrlich’s Rockville, MD campaign office stood deserted save for a large poster in the window and some furniture and yard signs.

over an unofficial campaign to write-in Fenty the incumbent. Fenty, a pro-charter school, pro-business democrat won the DC Republican nomination but declined the offer.

So, we didn’t lose many incumbents in our area:

Local congressional politicians in a feedback loop
Decades ago, a pro-government candidate won the vote of a constituency of government employees.
The government hasn’t left the area. No reason to shake things up politically.
The candidate is still in office, but very powerful now because he (or she in Mikulski’s case) has seniority.
When you’ve got seniority, you bring home bacon. This means bringing more government money and people to the area.

You wouldn’t want to vote against bacon, would you?
Early Onset Senioritis (2010-11-16 18:54)

I opened the mailbox and pulled out an envelope that I thought to be rather thin. I was pretty anxious when I realized it came from a "quick decision early action school". I peeked for a key word: either Congratulations!, or Regretfully,.../a dry Thank You. Then I saw the word "Congratulation" blazed in gold on the outside of the manila envelope. I suspected what was inside, but wasn’t 100 % certain (maybe they wanted more information). As it turns out, that day yesterday, I got an acceptance letter to U Pitt, Pittsburgh. Most of the content of fat envelopes has been moved online, as it appears from the "enclosed details". Pittsburgh is a school that I’d be very happy to attend come Fall 2011. As a result of my personal college ranking, I was able to cancel plans to do applications to several lesser picks of mine. It’s not even Thanksgiving and I have a place to go. Early Action is wonderful.

"Why aren’t you having a party?" asks Dad as I’m quietly doing homework. "Homework", I reply. No Senioritis for me, yet. Upon the insistence of those around me, I’m still applying to "high reach schools" in New England. Furthermore, the Honors College requires a maintenance of a 3.5 GPA (the SAT threshold was the easy part, right). Notwithstanding this, I have a Service Academy Nomination interview over Christmas Break (that’s technically in second semester). Senioritis is not a legitimate condition to them.

Turkey Day (2010-11-25 19:20)

As I have for the past 3 years, my brother and I returned to the Choirschool in New York for a night on the town. So what usually happens is that the younger alumni will come over for cocktails and dinner, play some basketball with the 8th graders, then try to see a movie. After banging on the dark windows of three or more theaters, we’d resort to hooving around Times Square. However, this year is the first year in which the cinema was open past 11pm Wednesday before Thanksgiving. In years past, even in New York City, you couldn’t catch a Thanksgiving overnight flick. As a group, we watched Harry Potter 7.1. It really wasn’t my style; I’d have preferred the plot to take place at Hogwarts. There was a lot of action, noises, and shrieks in the film, which should’ve been unfriendly to peaceful sleep. I must have rolled through a whole sleep cycle during the film, because I didn’t feel tired at all afterwards. The GAP student was very cordial and overly generous; he lent out the living room of his 1BR apartment in the Choirschool to us graduates. It was cock-crow time when we came back from the food cart run, and almost dawn when we turned off the lights. I thought I’d pull an all-nighter, but by my usual school wake-up time of 6am, I was fast asleep and missed my alarm clock set for Sunday wakeup of 7:30am. That was the second time I slept through the alarm.

I made it to mass on time (11am), but it was such an adventure to cross After being engulfed in a mass of people, Gus and I were able to get into the empty-enough Subway and ride a loop-around trip to the church east of the parade. The service was brilliant; I had become unaccustomed to the acoustics of the grand church, St. Thomas Fifth Avenue. A meander through the wonders of Port Authority and Penn Station (with Tim Hortons!) preceded our departure by Megabus from the city. Too soon was it time to leave, and maybe next trip I’ll allot more time to see the city.

4.12 December

Old Establishments (2010-12-04 19:19)

America’s oldest college, Harvard University was established in 1636. This date takes on the [1]Yamasa Soy Sauce makers by a mere 9 years.

William and Mary is a then-lifetime younger, coming in at 1693. News reports cite several examples of restaurants and inns dating back to the 11th century. The Hoshi Inn in Komatsu dates to 718.

As for an organization outside Japan, the Worshipful Company of Bakers dates to 1155. The Medieval guild is something you may have read about in your World History textbook. Nice to know that they’re still alive and well.

One thing to take in mind is that most of these oldest establishments are not, and have never been in their histories, conglomerates!

A prime example of the dangers of diversification is Kongo Gumi, a Japanese Temple Building firm that has been in continuous family operation since 578, just a century after Ancient Rome’s fall. However, the latest generation of family leaders branched out to commercial real estate in the 1980’s, and, well, bad idea. The company, debt-ridden, was absorbed in 2007. Read this Bloomberg article:[2]http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz/content/apr2007/sb20070416_589621.htm

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We’ve Got Creativity (2010-12-09 15:45)

Every competitor to American dominance (and holder of the fed’s debt)seems to be sending satellites, trinkets, and people into space while we stagnate. They, too, seem to have kids who are smarter and more dedicated to learning than our videogaming youth. These international kids major in STEM disciplines, of all things! So, is America behind?

Who was...

First to launch the forerunner to mid-20th century rocket technology (Goddard),
First Space Tourist (Dennis Tito of California)
First to send an Iphone to Space on a 4-figure budget("Brooklyn Space Program"*)First to privatize Space. I heard that the backer of the SpaceX program is actually from South Africa, but history books will remember this as an “American” endeavor.

The SpaceX launch earlier this week resembled what the government did about 50 years ago. However, one main difference is that this project was spearheaded by private industry. If a private company built a craft that terminates the lives of 2 % of its occupants, there’d certainly be outrage, and shutdown by the feds. But if the government does it, it’s simply a Christopher Columbian Odyssey. In 55 or so years of government management through NASA, the space program notably sent men to the moon (but none in 37 years), and a shuttle (which would be an antique if it were a car). As in a number of other homegrown tech-related industries, the government spearheaded initially, but then there came a time for private industry to take over.


Mercedes has this “exclusive” social network for the under-30 set. But clearly the website was written by someone over 30: I’m one of too many of my “demographic” for the club. In big letters from them: Sorry. In fine print, there is a link to the general survey page, but the damage had already been done. Okay, another luxury car company would actually appreciate my interest in their business (my loyalties are with Volvo). But consider this: if I were a potential customer, I’d be totally turned off. Rule 103 of marketing: make your customer feel special. Now suppose that down the road, I decide to go to a Benz dealership. I’d have fun with the salesman. Don’t ask me about the chicken games I’d set up for him, but I’d get the run for my money. The set-up line might possibly be;“I know that something that happened between me and this company 30 years ago isn’t your responsibility, but someone’s got to take the fall.” The result may end up with me taking that electronic checkbook out the door in confidence(if cars will be sold in stores then), or in a good laugh.
First Snow (2010-12-12 19:03)

As my classmate across the table was working away on math, I kept my joy to myself. When I got up to go outside before the flurries stopped, J. wanted to know what I was doing. "Catching some flakes", I explained. He put his work down and stared intently out the window. Sorry, J., for distracting you. Outside, I let youthful enthusiasm get the best of me as I lallied around on the path to the upper building. An exchange student from China asked, "what’s that?". Snow. He was gone before I could find out if he got snow frequently at home.

Then I saw in the tabloid paper; "snow showers", forecasted for Monday (tomorrow). I can remember the joy that a fresh snowfall would bring as I woke up at 6am, as if there was to be school. Snow settled overnight, as the yellow of the streetlight reflected on the thin layer of white on the road in the pre-dawn sky.

Actually, back to reality, snow during an exam period isn’t too desireable; you’ve got to take the tests sometime. Thus, it is bittersweetness I feel as the forecast dissipates.

Infrastructure and Debt (2010-12-19 17:40)

I'm on Winter Break now, so readers can expect more insightful and numerous posts over the next two weeks. Increasing national debt seems to have bipartisan support. This recent legislation aggravates the Fed’s fiscal condition. It’s old news now, but I have to bring it up for the record. Giving tax breaks to all (rich and poor and those in between) is an easy way to get re-elected - until someone forecloses on the Feds.

Manhattan’s population, both in terms of residents and visitors, has grown steadily over at least the past 20 years. In the meantime, a single new link to access the island, from Mainland US, or the outer boroughs, has been built or rebuilt since the 1950’s. This newer link would be a single rail tunnel started in the 1960’s, finished in the 1980’s. Likewise, no new subway has been opened since 1940, save for a few miles in the 1980’s. There is supposedly a new tunnel being built under the East River to Grand Central, but we can’t verify progress until the trains start to run. For all I know it could just be a money pit - sort of like the cancelled Hudson Tunnel Project. Gov. Christie: things don’t get cheaper! As for the Hudson River, no new span, rail or auto - has been built since 1936. Modern technology has allowed for increased efficiency of the train tunnels, but some time you need infrastructure!

MD 200 (codename for Outer Beltway) appears to be almost complete on the first 5-mile section. On-time completion is still within the allotted timeframe. I would have appreciated it if the road were open today- would’ve saved time over winding through backroads!

Consumer Test: Roll-Sort (2010-12-23 19:22)

Some have said that sorting through half-dollar rolls provides the most collector coins, because they don’t change hands much. Others claim that dimes offer a better return on time, because the date’s so small on the coin. One frustrated collector whimmed that nickels are a better deal. Little Brother and I tried all three options on 60 halves, 400 nickels, and 250 dimes. The dimes were duds; the halves turned up nothing this time, but the nickels showed the greatest variety. Of 400 nickels, 10 were more than 50 years old, and one was a silver WWII nickel. According to Internet reporters, 1 of 1000 dimes is silver, so our sample was probably not large enough. I cannot dash over halves though; over the summer I came across two full rolls of
silver halves. I figure that any coin that ends up in regular rolls of halves has already been mulled through by another collector. Seek hand-wrapped rolls.

Before I Snooze, Merry Christmas! (2010-12-25 19:43)

We wish you a merry Christmas
We wish you a merry Christmas
For us in the DC Area, the official qualification for a white Christmas seems a bit strict. That would be one inch. This morning, we got a dusting. The effect was best on the river though. With the recent cold water, the river was frozen thick and appeared as if we had received a healthy snowfall. We received 3 inches last week.
Snow and Christmas seem to go so well with each other.
We wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

New Year 2011 (2010-12-31 21:06)

Thank you to those special readers who made my Christmas extra-Merry. It means a lot to receive your thoughts and kind words. 2010 represented a decrease in quantity of posts, but, as I believe, an increase in quality. What I mean is that, in these last few months, I’ve started doing research for a number of the posts. Another factor is college. Although I got the bulk of my work out by November, some new colleges popped up on my list- and they were not Common App. I sent my last college essay (those take time to write well!) at 3pm today. I gave it to the postman passing by in the neighborhood. Some good news too: I received full acceptance to Univ. of Pittsburgh at Pittsburgh, and to the Maritime College of New York. A number of the other applications are still in the works. I must note that I made a good step forward at Maritime’s neighbor across the Sound, the US Merchant Marines. I made sure to apply only to colleges where I’d be happy (not just ok with) to go come Fall semester, so I’m in a good position right now no matter what happens April 1.
Happy New Year as we head into year 2 of this new decade!
Chapter 5

2011

5.1 January

Happy New Year, Pacific Ocean! (2011-01-01 19:40)

I know that some readers of my blog subscribe to an RSS feed. You receive updates for posts of all sizes and relevance. You suggested that I write a bit less, but more in depth, and I heeded your advice. Thank you for your patronage. The reason I am here is simply a technicality. The dateline posts in California time; so at 12am local time (DC) earlier today, it was 9pm out on the West Coast. When I celebrated 2011, folks in Seattle, Berkeley, and elsewhere on the West Coast were enjoying their last few hours of 2010. Moral of this post? Understand that sometimes the dateline on my posts can be a calendar day off the content I write about!

Happy New Year; the dateline reads Jan. 1 this time around, if California didn’t drift too far into the Pacific overnight!

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Back to Business, Jan. 3 (2011-01-07 19:21)

This week is the 1 year anniversary of the DC bag tax. The bag fee is nickel and diming at its finest: for most people, it’s not worth shopping across the border to avoid the fee. However, a Giant Grocery right on the border (on the MD side) reported an unexplainable uptick in business this time last year. At least a number of residents had beef with the principle. Of course, you can always bring bags to the store to avoid the ‘fee’, but that’s a hipster thing. But-the idea is not going away: This year, San Jose, CA (population near 1 mil.) jumped on the bandwagon and banned plastic bags.

DC also gets a new mayor: Vince Gray. He represents a return to the status quo: Gray put the long-time teachers who were fired for alleged incompetence to the top of the rehire list. This is good old DC. Although shifting demographics should have favored the "progressive" (Adrian Fenty*), many of the ‘new residents’ of DC actually vote absentee ballots in their home state. This left the ‘authentic’ residents to decide the fate of the bike-lane-and dogpark-loving mayor.

Lost the Democratic Primary, Won the Republican Primary by write-in, but declined the nomination. On Election Day, Fenty won some Northwest precincts through an insurgent (and not endorsed) write-in campaign.

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These days, doctors and other authorized prescription writers like to prescribe medications—especially those that give the doctor a generous kickback. When pharm means kickback—that’s 1K to 5K dollars. You know, not too much work to get that new car. As long as no one gets side effects, all’s happy and well.

On the other hand, Obecalp has no side effects, and is a low-cost alternative that reaches the same placebo effect which fancy, expensive, and time-consuming solutions may do. Obecalp is so revolutionary that it’s not on the medicare/aid schedule yet. Don’t let the doctor prescribe an unnecessary medication which pads his or her pockets and milks yours! There are many different forms of Obecalp specifically suited to each patient’s needs:

Obecalp: (active ingredient: carbonated sucrose dehydrogenase) is a powerful remedy that is prescribed by doctors for many different conditions. Ask your doctor if Obecalp is right for you. Side effects may include a craving for sweetened items or even tooth decay; withdraw symptoms include sugar crash.

Obecalp Lite: (active ingredient: saccharin) goes easy on your waistline, and is suitable for those with conditions which counteract Obecalp Regular.

Obecalp Once-a-day: (active ingredients: aspartame, gelatin) Don’t let taking Obecalp get in the way of your daily routine! Once-a-day Obecalp is formulated with two layers to provide both fast acting and long lasting relief.

Obecalp PM: Specially formulated to reduce risk of tooth decay when taken at bedtime.

Obecalp for Kids: (active ingredients: moderate fructose corn syrup, niacinamide) Obecalp for Kids increases immunity to schoolhouse germs and has been proven to increase levels of physical activity among youngsters. Comes in groovy grape or bubbly bubble gum flavors. Side effects may include hyperactivity, which can be counteracted with Ritalin.

Obecalp Xtreme: (active ingredient: agent Y) Feeling tired after midnight is a chronic condition, which, if not treated, may lead to serious problems that can hinder your performance throughout life. Obecalp Xtreme contains the natural ingredients found in OTC Aspirin medication. (some varsity athlete): All your friends are taking it! What are you waiting for?

Obecalp Antacid: (active ingredients: sucrose, sodium bicarbonate) Regular antacids only mask acid reflux! Obecalp Antacid has been shown in clinical trials to cut to the root of the problem. Do not take if overly full from food or drink.

Obecalp KO: (active ingredients: ethanol, petrolatum gel, castor oil, methane by-products) Remember those bygone college days when you were so full of vitality, yet could get a good night’s sleep? If you’ve lost that pep, you may have a condition. Ask your doctor if Obecalp KO is right for you. Obecalp KO may cause drowsiness. Do not operate hazardous machinery or a vehicle until you know this medication’s affect on your motor abilities.

DISCLAIMER: This product, Obecalp, is actually a marketed item with a valid patent. Name is used under fair use through the spoof clause. The concept for derivative products such as Obecalp for Kids was created by the author of this blog. Look for these items, under a different trademark, on your local pharmacy shelf in coming years.

jennifer (2011-01-14 19:03:01)

We would never use aspartame or any artificial color in Obecalp. Dennis Buettner, Marketing Director, Efficacy Brands LLC. - www.PlaceboStore.com

Dr. King, General Jackson or Lee, Commemorate as You Wish. (2011-01-17 14:16)

Illinois was the first state to designate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a state holiday in 1973. MLK Day became a federal holiday in 1986 (Fed holidays are a big deal for the DC area), and by 1993 (Arizona was
the lager), all states had some sort of holiday on the third Monday of January. Some jurisdictions refuse to commemorate holidays that mark a single individual. On that point, some politicians pointed to the need to commemorate all of our Civil Rights activists. New Hampshire and Utah had names such as Human Right’s Day to mark the day. On the other hand, some states were less altruistic to the concept of world-as-a-family: South Carolina and Virginia conveniently moved their Confederate Commemoration days to overlap the third Monday in January. Since 2000, though, Virginia’s Lee-Jackson Day has been moved to the Friday before the third Monday in January. By 2000, the official name for the holiday in mid-January had been changed to MLK Day. As for the shrugging of shoulders over designating this day a holiday, it’s nothing new. The politically acceptable reason is that MLK day was planned to be too close to the excesses of the holiday season! (Remember that Christmas Week was just three weeks ago?) There is also the reason of relevance. In the DC area, it’s a big celebration and commemoration with a deep social context. The influence of MLK is less prevalent in some parts of the country, and thus understandably, isn’t as widely celebrated and commemorated. Some counties, usually in areas which do not widely celebrate the day, choose to have school on MLK Day, but some don’t have a firm stance. At least one county in North Carolina decided to use this holiday as a snow make-up day. The sudden change really ruffled some feathers. So whatever you celebrate or don’t, enjoy your Martin Luther King, Jr. Day!

4 Day Weekend (2011-01-22 19:03)

On Tuesday, I went down to the car; I needed it that day to shuttle equipment and people around at school. The night before, around 10pm, freezing rain started to fall from the sky. Tuesday morning, indeed, there was about half an inch of ice all around- sidewalk, and on the car windshield. I turned the car on, and started to chip at the ice with a gloved hand. I tried using the ice brush, but it wasn’t much use. After a few more hacks with my hand on the ice, I called upstairs to tell Mom that, "I’m taking the train today". "Come up, there’s no school today", she replied. Snow days come when you least expect them.

2 Day Weeks Are Easy (2011-01-27 19:04)

On a snow day, I’m obliged to blog. As unusual as it is, I’ve been productive these past two days. When I’m productive, there isn’t usually much news. Down in West End DC, the snow total amassed 4 inches, a respectable amount. In the northern suburbs of Fairfax County, VA and Montgomery County, MD, over 8 inches of snow blanket the ground. Get this- in parts of Mont. Co, the snow totalled two digits- 10.2 inches in moderately populated Damascus, and 11 inches in more rural Boyds, according to WTOP reports. Why do suburban snow totals matter? Because St. Anselm’s follows the Mont. Co snow reports. Why? There are several reasons. Mont. Co. is the lowest common denominator when it comes to snow. Back in the ’90’s, the County picked up a reputation of being the first to close. This snow-phobia has diminished somewhat: 3 inches of snow on farmland doesn’t guarantee a day off- it didn’t last season, and it didn’t two weeks ago. The second reason is that a plurality of students come from Mont. Co, and adding students who live within walking distance of the county line would make a clear majority. A third reason is that DC the city rarely issues snow days: DC expects kids to trudge through snow to a Metrorail or major bus route, even when cars are snowed in on the sidestreets. At least half of St. Anselm’s students rely on a car or SUV some part of their journey to and from school. Reason four is that the other schools in our league abide by MoCo’s judgment. If your friends are out to play, then so will you! Then there’s brand recognition and association. Mont. Co., as well as Fairfax, VA, do an excellent job in public school education; many schools in these counties rank top in the Nation. Mont. Co. Public Schools is the biggest absorber of students between
8th and 9th grade at St. A’s. Reasons for making the leap range from ”availability of females” to ”my gosh they’ve got Smartboards in every classroom!”. To my knowledge, DC Public Schools has not lured off any rising freshman in recent history.

One proposal that arises in the County is whether or not to split the County’s schools into two snow districts, so that South County gentry from Bethesda and Chevy Chase (like my classmates) don’t get a free ride whenever Sugarloaf Mountain gets a white coating. This suggestion is off the table, though, because enough students from Upcounty travel to Mid-and Down-county schools for advanced level curricula, lacrosse, etc., that a split system would be unfeasible.

It’s my last year in the K-12 system, so I’m not concerned about this, but some keen, younger students are aware of ”changing demographics”. As DC the city becomes more cosmopolitan and attracts well-heeled families, the schools increase recruiting efforts in the rowhouse neighborhoods of Capitol Hill and West Georgetown. As a result, pushy parents from snow-light DC may get the schools to adhere to the DC school closing announcement, and call to an end the easy flow of snow days.

5.2 February

Let’s Thrive This Big 28 (2011-02-06 17:57)

February is a short month, but for us Abbey Boys, there’s a good schedule ahead:

Of course, today is the Super Bowl. Students are taking both sides; some of us hope the Steelers win on account of one notorious Latin teacher. For the record, I’m on the Steelers’ side.

Feb. 10- according to the Facebook Page, the Abbey-WIS Game Away happens. One of my favorite aspects of this yearly match is the logistical side of things: how to move 150+ students, without school-provided transport, across town.

If all goes correctly, I will be a GRAD-uated driver. I plan to pick up my adult license on Tuesday (2/8). It’s just a paperwork thing, but stuff happens.

In the past issue of the Priory Press, our sports reported gave a history on the Abbey-WIS rivalry. It started out with a spat over seeding in a league bracket back in 2000 or so.

There us another, more chivalric, notion that we have: a WIS kid insults an Abbey Boy. Rather than throwing fists, the two decide to settle by observing the outcome of the next WIS-Abbey B’ball game. The game ends with a tie, and WIS asks for overtime. The ref complies, and the Abbey wins. Both the Wis kid and the Abbey kid maintain that their team had won, and that was how the rivalry started.

Feb. 17-20- 2 important events happen this President’s Day Weekend. Juniors and some Seniors take a Kairos Retreat. I can’t reveal details, but it’s a great experience. For a number of others, there is a NAIMUN-the N. American Invitational Model UN Conference at Georgetown University. For the Seniors, it’s the second-to-last Conference of their High School Model UN Careers. We’ll certainly put our experience to good use, saving the world in 96 hours.

TBD- the first Mixer Dance of the year. Stu Gov pulled off October’s Homecoming in stellar fashion. However, the ”Jersey Shore” themed dance had to be postponed twice: once on account of city plumbing work, and the next time on account of snow policy. Look forward to a Country Club-themed fete at the end of this month.

Media Influences School Straw Polls (2011-02-11 19:18)

For various reasons, the voting age is set for 18; no higher, no lower. It’s basically a moral imperative that the age is no higher than 18, under the old-enough-to-fight, old-enough-to-vote rationale. Many believe
that lowering the suffrage below 18 could not democratically happen for a laundry list of reasons. Parental coercion and influence is probably the biggest factor keeping mid-age teens from the polls. How will you ensure that the kids aren’t getting paid off by Mom and Dad for adhering to conformist views?

One way we can view this influence in action is through all-school straw polls, most commonly held around Presidential election time. For the sake of this analysis, we will look at Middle and High School results (age 11 to 18). We find that children of openly political parents are very likely to adhere to their parents’ views. (This is moot if the two parents support opposing candidates!). However, this correlation is no causation. From the sample of children of political parents, when these youngsters voted against their parents’ candidate, more children of conservative parents voted for the progressive than children of liberal parents for the conservative. While youth are often by nature progressive, this natural tendency does not explain the full extent of voting trends in school straw polls.

Media geared to youth tend to be left-leaning; I call out Time’s TFK publication in particular. Some networks take sides (Rupert Murdoch?), others inadvertently show support for one candidate over another, by amount of airtime and general portrayal of a candidate. If a majority of publications favor one party over another, who gets the benefit of publicity? Young people like a youthful leader, and, in recent elections, there has been no shortage of youthful Democratic candidates who have graced the covers of nationwide publications available in school libraries. For children of non-political parents, the Media seems to be the most important factor in influencing a child’s opinion about a candidate.

We also have to watch out for teachers; in their course of affairs, their political views may come out in discussion of current affairs. Teachers need to make sure that their (younger) students receive a balance of political views, if such opinion does play out in the classroom.

Most importantly, though, young voters are most drawn to charismatic candidates—such as Barack Obama. In the Saint Anselm’s 2008 Straw Poll, the current POTUS drew a majority of votes across all grade levels, especially in the younger grades.

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10 Days in the Life of a High School Senior (2011-02-27 18:24)

I haven’t been on this blog forum since I left for a retreat. I applied, back in the Fall, to go on the retreat as a Senior leader, and got slotted as a substitute. Meanwhile, one leader took up the offer on an all-expenses weekend trip to a certain educational institute in Tennessee (Vanderbilt). This was to occur on the same weekend of the trip, and so one substitute- Al- got placed on the trip. One week before departure, the adult planners found out that more people were going on the trip than originally thought. Enter myself; so that’s how it went down.

In those four days, I was unplugged. No internet connection; no cell phone tower in range. That was pretty nice. Then reality said that I was out two business days!

There was some catch-up to play; Merchant Marine Academy matters to handle; b-ball playoff games to watch (including two-hard-won matches and my first witnessed overtime success). That pulls us straight into this weekend.

On Friday, I spent the entire stretch from 7:30am to 10:40pm on campus at school save a 15-minute milkshake run before the start of the at boy-girl mixer at 8pm. Come to think of it, I was in class only to 2:45pm. After this, it was orchestra, a final physical activity for the Academy, play practice, and to get some meaning out of the next 2 hours, Vespers at the monastery, enjoying a meal with the monks, and cracking down on some homework. This was all before that aforementioned mixer. Theme: Country club. I’d say I won 3rd place in the attire category; my polo, Nautica, and neatly ironed dress khakis were a bit traditional to Sean’s and Matt’s argyle sweaters and pastel shirts, and chill attitude. The ratio was decent, but a number of our female guests seemed more interested in effeminate parlance between themselves than in mixing. Compared to earlier dances, companionship was a little harder won. I got what I wanted from it, and went home in high spirits. I was home a few minutes after 11pm.
On Saturday, my schedule read: r+r from mixer, Violin, lunch, shopping on the Pike (if you’re from DC/MD, you’d understand), haircut, parallel parking, league playoffs. Yes, Abbey Basketball made it to the championships to play the near-invincible Cov Life. Cars filled up the three level parking structure- and that with plenty of carpooling; amazing for a high school event. The league held the event at a Gallaudet University venue, and charged us to watch the game. There were a lot of people shelling out $2 or $3 to watch; that included a healthy majority of Cov Life’s student body.

Don’t get me started: at halftime, my team was up by 10 healthy points. We held the lead from 2nd quarter straight though 3 minutes left. Then stuff happened. Cov Life broke loose. Some of our fans lost the Abbey’s trademark classiness for a few minutes. They won on a 3-point made after an extended hold, 57-60. I sort of anticipated it, because this was the team that had chiseled out 8 points against us in the last 40 seconds in a regular season game. By the way- I didn’t know that was possible. So, games shouldn’t come down to the final 40 seconds. But when they do, teams typically are respectful: not messing up the opponent’s foul shots by jeering, for one. Regarding this game, I never felt sick in my stomach like I did when I got home from this one. I was pacing at home past midnight, unable to sleep over my uneasiness with Cov’s behavior. We’ve had tough losses before, but never have I witnessed such sore something-ship from a high school game. In my dreams, I relived entire plays from the game; I felt the enthusiasm of taking the second quarter as our own; then, snapping out of that dream, I realized that the game was over. Out of all of this, one point of pride for this year’s Abbey Hoops is that we’ve never suffered a loss that was not "tough".

I spent a good 3 hours doing backlogged math packets this afternoon, but it sure feels good to be caught up with math. If I would not have been so bothered by last night’s 9pm championship chutzpah, I probably wouldn’t have the desire to crack down so hard on homework. Anyway, parent-teacher conferences are coming up. Backnote: I resisted the temptation to pack math homework for the retreat. That would be considered a "distraction from duty" as a Senior leader.

5.3 March

Data Probe (2011-03-17 18:11)

Is that true? I have not blogged in 20 days? Since Feb. 27, I have have attended 3 games of the St. Anselm’s 64th Annual Basketball Tournament, and played the role of a cop as well as a groom in the school’s revue of Neil Simon. That accounts for the weekends, but what have I been doing Monday through Thursday? I passed my CFA (fitness test) the Friday before March 1. The next Monday, Track practice started, followed one week later with "Heck Week" leading up to opening night for the play. That week was quite a scene: during rehearsal, between my two appearances in the play, I slipped out to complete 75 % of Track practice...on 2 occasions. Then, on the night of the dress rehearsal, I had the thrill of getting wet and muddy with a greatly reduced component of the team. I later found out that the County had cancelled after-school activities for that afternoon on account of sustained heavy rain, and flooding. Fortunately, I had a set of dry clothes.

This is not to mention the late night outing to the diner this past Saturday (into Sunday morning), which, when compounded with the time change, has been putting me out of commission at 10pm a few nights this week. So as I recover from early-March madness, I find that it’s great to be able to focus on track- and getting on top of homework.

Short from the Abbey Dome: As a schoolmate says, we "spanked" WIS with a 48 point lead, and we took Washington Latin as well with a 30 point lead. This was a far cry from the league tournament, where the Abbey won two nailbiters before falling prey to Cov Life’s, again a nailbiting, debacle.

As for today, I found it quite odd that the school admin didn’t utter the term "St. Patrick" until this morning over announcement. No official shenanigans today, no official reminder to dress in green. In lieu of this, the
students showed up in a green tide, and one of our English teachers served up Irish soda bread. As for the admin, perhaps they did not want us to lauch into spring break too early: it starts at 12 noon tomorrow.

To do list:
Take CPR Renewal
Arrange Easter weekend
Work on 2 long term school projects
Gracefully decline offers from two colleges
Practice Violin
Prepare for and attend Model UN Conference (last in my HS career)
Wait for April 1 (acceptance rush day) to finalize college plans
I’ve bidden my time.

5.4 April

April 1: Astrodynetech Bids for 1st Corporate Seat (2011-04-01 15:17)

Residents of the DelMarVa peninsula have been wondering about the sudden increase in moving trucks coming through their part of the woods. In March of 2010, according to exclusive and anecdotal reports, Astrodynetech opened shop in Delaware, and accepted applications over 230,000 people from all over the world. These people then were required to relocate to company housing in rural southern Delaware. Observers note that this mass migration was just in time for the decennial census, and that this mass influx at this time was both economical for the fledgling company and just large enough to win Delaware a second seat in the House.

Since then, the company has moved another 110,000 staffers to this new boomtown. It is becoming apparent that the redistricting board made a pinkie-swear with the President of Astrodynetech to not "gerrymander" the new boomtown by keeping it in one cohesive Representative District. Delaware is not one of eleven states that is required to report such redistricting to the Feds, as per the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Says Delaware State Historian Angie DeFlow, "Ever since the DuPont family started making chemicals, our state has always sold out to corporate interests". VPOTUS Joe Biden, formerly a US Senator from the State, released the following statement regarding the feds’ response: "We have no grounds to invade their property until we have a warrant, which we don’t have. We’re really curious, though, so we’ll jump on the next opportunity. An example of an opportunity might be a coworker coming to the cops with a workplace smoking violation. Then the Labor Department can get in there and see what’s going on; but for now, our administration holds nothing against Astrodynetech". Says Delaware Governor Jack Markell: "It’s a great opportunity for all Delawareans to have such an influx of new talent and new investment. For us, it’s no small wonder that Delaware would be the breeding ground of democratic innovation. By the way, come some time and enjoy our tax-free shopping". Marylanders are wondering with envy why this debacle isn’t playing out across the Mason-Dixon Line. Although the Maryland State Senate Leader declaimed this Astrodynetech maneuver as a "desecration of democracy", Lisa Gladden spoke with tearful eyes, as if this debacle was a missed opportunity for Maryland.

Astrodynetech is a privately held corporation which was incorporated in November 2008 in the State of Delaware. Main shareholders include many politicians and ex-politicians at all levels of government, not to neglect Halliburton’s hefty share in the enterprise. Regarding the controversy that has arisen regarding the number of power players who hold stock, the President of the Company stated that "We’re paying our team members 25 thousand a year, each, plus benefits, for cushy work. If we were paying to play, we could’ve bought that Illinois seat from Blago back in ’09 for 600 grand". The company, asides from these brief comments, has remained mum and kept a low profile, and employees are dedicated to a confidentiality policy, with not whistleblowers coming forward yet.
Based on those figures provided, Astrodyntech will pay out around $7.5 billion in payroll this year. Considering the real cost for the Company, though, we estimate that three-quarters of those funds go back into the Company through rent, the company store, and work they actually get from their stiffs. The employees now are mostly occupied with building this new city; but once everything is built, one can only wonder if the stiffs will spend their days loafing around the grounds.

Residents of Delaware have mixed views. Pizza shop owner Donatello "Buddy" Rissoto, 38, states: "So here's a company that started in the middle of the Great Recession, and now has 300,000 some employees. They (Astrodyntech) deserve something". Another commenter, retiree Jake Barnes, 76, takes a different view: "Look, a survey in the Sassafras High School News reports that the name Jack Markell doesn’t ring a bell to a third of the students, a good number of them who are registered voters. Thank you, www.youthvote.org. If the survey had asked for the Governor's name, I suppose half the students couldn’t answer correctly, one or two. By the way, he’s their Governor! Politicians are taking advantage of dimwitted, angry, voters. Back in my day, by the way, the voting age was 21, not 17. Yes, I said 17; and I fought in Korea, too."

Update...

Just today, a candidate for the 2012 2nd District Election emerged from the largely secluded boomtown. The Astrodyntech party was officially recognized a few days ago by the state. The petition for recognition of this party came in with significant bump over the required signature count. Pundits state that, at least 75%, closer to 90%, will have to vote their boss into power if she is to win. This high threshold is based on predictions for high voter turnout as citizens will want to counter the corporate candidate in this historic Election. The pundits also predict that a number of the signatories on the party’s petition just wanted to see this party become legitimate, but will have cold feet at the voting booth.

The candidate stated that she, who has given no identity other than Astrodyntech so far, will most likely align with Old Time Republicans, but says that she looks forward to the day that "the movers of the American Economy, financiers of public education, wars, welfare programs, subsidies, Social Security and Medicare, and American Civil Society", what we think is codespeak for large corporations, will get a fair say in the democratic process. "It's been "look out for the little man" for a century now. Let's change the tide".

Says economist Jack Johnson, "The success of Astrodyntech relies on the outcome of the election. What the employees realize is that, if the company doesn’t win, the leadership will declare corporate bankruptcy and walk away scotch free. If this happens, then all the little guys and gals are out of work. We are certain that the staff is being coached about this is in the daily 'employee meetings'". There is a stock benefit in employees, which Johnson says is a cruel ploy to get employees to politic harder for this corporate candidate than they otherwise would. In summation, no Republic has lasted forever; this may be the start of the fall of democracy in America". But, Johnson also quips, "If Astrodyntech was thinking straight, they might've gone for a lower turnout midterm election. On that thought, they'd have gone for a low population state like the Dakotas to get the bang for their buck: the two Senate seats would’ve come for free".

Astrodyntech Found Another Way (2011-04-10 19:01)

It’s my ethical obligation to let readers know that I posted my most recent post on April 1. In reality, no corporation has created a mass migration for the purpose of getting a corporate candidate into Congress. However, I must say that my last post was not all fiction; corporate-backed candidates do sit in Congress, and at much less of a cost to corporations than Astrodyntech’s grand plan. Nevertheless, wouldn’t it have shock value for a big corporation to form a political party?

The President of Astrodyntech got results back from a study which uncovered that other corporations and big companies got the people and policies they wanted into office with the following:

Lobbyists- hey, Mr. Congressman; if you vote for this, you’ll look smart.

Setting up a magic show: big companies make it rain- for example, everyone likes more jobs in town. Attribute these jobs to Mr. or Ms.’ policies, while he or she is running for office, and you make a friend.
Private Industry does it better, and at a lower cost- Everyone wins: the politician, the taxpayers, and the big companies, especially.
Flat Tax Rate- this is part of the next point, but wouldn’t Average Joe like a simpler tax return? The millions of small...uh... lots of businesses in America would like that too.
Trickle Down Economics- This policy’s popularity is a product of the following point: the IRS has a monopoly on government based wealth spreading, but the free market will spread the wealth. It’s got to happen, right?
Fear of monopolies - Competition makes a better product. If one organization collects your tax money, how do you know that it’s being collected in the best way possible? Outsource the IRS to the highest bidders. Sell the right to collect taxes from w million number of people at up to xyz rates. That’s a contract Astrodyntech would love.

While these candidates fall under two big tents, the GOPs and the Dems, rather than carrying outright the name of a corporation, it’s a small detriment in comparison to the huge costs of maintaining an under worked plebiscite in a company town.
Now there are enough political blogs, and plenty of them have IP addresses originating from the Washington, DC Area. It’s about time I step off the political bandwagon. Next topic if nothing supersedes: Golf carts- a Suburban 14-Something’s Upcoming Necessity?

That Empowering Time of Year Again (2011-04-16 18:30)

Every year on April 17 since age 12, I’ve been getting more rights and privileges. A while ago, I tried to find a comprehensive list online, but I couldn’t find one. Here are a few benefits of growing up that I’ve compiled for people from ages 12 through 35:
12- sit in the front seat of a car.
13- COPPA doesn’t apply anymore- that means you can get an online life! Also, pre-registration of voters and organ donors.
14- eligible to work part-time, fly commercial alone, get a glider pilot license, minimum age to be charged as adult in some states, get married in some states (with parental consent, of course).
15- be a lifeguard, sit in an airplane exit row, get authorized on a credit card, take aspirin, fly alone on most airlines.
16- There’s quite a bit of things you can do; a lot of them are related to 16-y-o’s making adult choices. Some include eloping to Elkton and get hitched, w/o parental consent in some cases, moving out of home, saying adios to school in most states (editors note: Use this option to make learning work for you; not to slack off!), age for a standard marriage in a number of states, adult membership in many social clubs, work a full 8 hour day/ 40 hour week, take a Fed Reserve tour, register to vote (if 18 by next general election), get a driver’s license, full-privilege ATM card and checking account, qualify to work in a number of semi-skilled professions such as pool operations and entry-level shipping jobs, get a pilot’s license, get an adult passport, cross international borders without a notarized letter of consent, participate in a blood drive w/ parental consent in some states, use a weightroom or spa or sauna without an adult, participate in certain vices pertaining to the ATF’s domain (though not purchase them).
17- watch an R-rated movie without an adult, participate in a blood drive (w/o parental consent), vote in a primary (some states), join the military.
18- Voting, signing forms yourself, graduating from young driver restrictions, and participating in behavioral surveys is just the start. Essentially you get all the adult goodies except as below...
19- clubbing age, and marriage age in some states and, yep, some states raised the tobacco purchase age. Intent? Keep high school kids out of these activities.
20- this is when you’re an adult in East Asia (20 by the Western or Eastern age-counting system?).
21- clubbing age in a number of areas of US, legal etoh purchase age in US, rent a car or hotel room, sign a mortgage in some states, CDL in some states, some heavy machinery licenses, get a concealed weapons
permit.
23- become a commercial pilot
25- lower rates on insurance and , become an US House Representative
30-become a Senator or Governor in many states
35- become President or Vice President
And then we have what I'll call the AARP-type benefits that kick in at 55 with Senior Discounts and adult living communities.

My birthday is tomorrow, or later tonight by grown-up terms. I had plans to attend a Landon-endorsed rooftop event to dance my way to legality, but it was cancelled due to rain. In lieu of this turn of events, a friend invited me to go clubbing tonight. "Well", I said, "I'd have to wait 'til midnight. I'm done with teen clubs- over the line". "No, this party starts at 2(am)". Now how would I stay on good terms with my parents if I clubbed my sleeping time away? So I’ve spent this night at home, tonight feels like a last bachelor party for me- a final night unconstrained by adult responsibility. Yet, shouldn’t I be on the edge of my seat waiting for midnight to hit to indulge in legal-aged excess? While I’m not biologically 18 until 8:15pm tomorrow, I’m legally adult in less than 2 hours. Some of the privileges I’ve already enjoyed, such as signing a waiver for an event on April 30th. Some I will enjoy soon, such as voting in DC’s special election on April 26 (single votes hold more sway in special elections!). I’ll keep my readers up to date as I exercise these privileges.

Next up: Golf Carts for Suburban Early-Teens!

Golf Carts (2011-04-22 18:21)

Each year, more and more houses are built further and further away from city cores and reliable transit services. While many developments are intentionally planned for walkability to a "town center", many homes are built out of this range. Then consider this: how many car-enabled residents would value the two-minute drive over the twelve-minute walk? Then consider the implications for the non-car enabled- say, younger teens. Are we sure that all of these pre-adults want to "endure" the round-trip walk? (Take Mom’s taxi service out of the picture for now). Simple solution- bicycles. As I believe, most American kids have one in their garage. Bicycle infrastructure- either a wide shoulder for the road or a wider sidewalk, and bike racks in good repair- would enhance this transportation mode’s appeal for all, and increase younger teens’ sense of mobility.

In the meanwhile, as developed areas have continued to sprawl, States have been raising minimum driving ages, although the trend has cooled off in the past year. (Thankfully, the Allstate-insurance sponsored National STANDUP Act failed after the last election). What this has likely led to (I should find evidence or uncover it myself) is that teens are probably spending more time at home. Furthermore, another issue with higher driving ages is reduced employment opportunities because of lack of transportation. I suspect that the decrease in teen (ages 16-19) summer employment is at least in part directly linked to this issue. (Mama and Papa have been your chauffeur for so many years now...).

Working close to home has its perks, but America has a mobile workforce, teens traditionally included. If the teen is lucky, he or she will find a job within their means of commuting- by foot or bike. So how do we extend the mobility range of pre-licensed teens? Give them powered wheels. Easy-to-use and maintain powered scooters and mopeds are practical options that can give "reliable transportation" to more teens, thereby increasing their competitiveness in the entry-level job market. Such scooters are common in Europe, although less so in America.

Part of this is a culture thing- in days past, before 17 yo driving ages and passenger limits- teens in high school probably had little problem finding a ride, so there wasn’t too big of a suburban teen market. The next thing is that a number of states require license plates on select classes of scooters and licenses for operators. However, in many states, golf carts, even when driven on a public street, are exempted from these vehicle and operator licensing requirements- and are ubiquitous in a number of communities. So perhaps we could
see more of these vehicles around in the future. Note that I did not list socioeconomic implications on the diffusion of teens in the workplace: many licensed teens don’t have access to cars due to economic factors. The effect of this can be quite pronounced; at a park where a car is a virtual necessity to access, the high-school aged waterfront lifeguards were clearly a standard-deviation-plus above socioeconomic norm even for the tony County the park was in.

First blog from wireless device (2011-04-30 20:17)

I’m blogging from an iPad right now as I return from Pennsylvania to drop off Little Brother. I’m just getting the hang of this device; it’s an adjustment to get used to using two keyboards (one for qwerty and the other for numbers). Now I’ve got a bit to write about; first off is the DC Special Election that occurred on April 26th. Turnout was higher than expected (I got to participate). Surprising enough, the Republican on the ballot, Pat Mara, came within 1,200 votes of winning over the widely recognized Vince Orange. That is a 5 % spread in a highly Democratic city.

Next is our own school elections. Seniors don’t vote in these, but it was interesting to see that the students elected the kids with the "too cool" attitude. They are the people whom the Seniors "like, but..."; this nonchalant attitude will give the second place candidates a heavy say in how things are run.

5.5 May

The Fun Never Stops (2011-05-12 08:28)

St. Anselm’s school year for upperclassmen works as follows: regularly-scheduled classes end the Friday before the start of the two AP weeks. Given that students typically will take three or more of these 3-to-4 hour tests, it makes reasonable sense to not even worry about having classes these two weeks. Given the tests’ comprehensive nature, students feel entitled to a multi-hour r+r period after taking the test. I do too. The administration’s support for leaving time after the last class and before exam week is that teachers will get to use all their classtime up to AP weeks teaching new material. Students would then study on their own with a review sheet, and come in if they want help. Washington Christian Academy in Germantown, MD, also uses this open scheduling system during AP weeks, to my knowledge.

So you may think that this time as a two-week reprieve, but read this: Teachers can still have due dates on papers and projects, and athletic teams still hold practice. Despite this, I know that some students have used this time to catch up on missed vacation, but apparently that’s not me. I finished my last AP of the year, Biology, on Monday at noon. Yet, I’ve been up and around, at school handing in papers and prize submissions, finishing on the engineering class’ group semester project, attending track practice, and handling all of the pre-enrollment material for the Academy ahead of July. Oh, and I shouldn’t forget about the social events, nor the exams next week.

Skeptics of open scheduling during AP weeks can see that, well, at least a few students are putting their larger chunks of open time to good use.
Snow Days- Was this a good year? (2011-05-18 12:32)

Montgomery Co. MD to students and parents: Sorry; you should’ve had two 2-hour delays on April 25 and April 26. All absences for those two mornings are excused. Reason? Tornado warnings issued at 6:30am on both mornings. Reason that these delayed openings were not announced? The County makes the call by 5am.

In our area, school delays and closings usually only happen for snow and ice in winter; and the occasional September hurricane, more often a tropical storm. Cancellation of after-school activities is also common for heavy rains. Closing for tornadoes, in an area that receives few, might seem to parents a little incredulous to believe.

Mont. Co. batted average for giving snow days this year: 4. One was given for an ice storm: that day, I actually couldn’t get to school safely. Three were given for one Jan. 27-29 snow event, which left 6 inches on the ground in DC, but a whole 12 inches ten miles north in Mont. Co. The County, usually quick to give snow days, made a dubious call for one late-season weather event, giving a 2-hour delay instead. There was a whole 3 inches of snow on top of half an inch of ice on the ground upcounty. Neighboring PG and Frederick Cos. gave the day to the students. Mont. Co. would’ve probably given students that day and another in February, if it wouldn’t trigger an extension of the school year, and if there were not so many "teacher development days" this school year. Given that we took all four of those contingency days, from our perspective, this year was "perfect". Students would need 10 days off in all- rare indeed- to make any further gains: school year extensions are typically capped at 5 days.

St. Anselm’s now has gotten its own banner on Fox 5. While some teachers at school have expressed frustration about what they consider "wimpy" calls from Rockville, snow day calls are still based on Mont. Co. MD for liability reasons. What the school really wants, though, is to be able to make calls when Mont. Co. is out of school for teacher days without resorting to a phone tree. Some parents still live email-lite, but sending a shoutout to students on Facebook would work, though.

As for neighboring DC, only one snow day (Jan. 27) was called this year. The other days which Mont. Co. got off, including that ice storm, were 2 hour delays. But this was enough to trigger an extended school year; for some reason, DC had not put in any buffer days against the 180 day minimum. The Board of Education is looking into why the schedule turned out this way this school year.

Snow and ice totals set a record for the East Coast overall; however, three of the five major storms that hit Philadelphia missed DC, which made this winter season an underperformer for the city; yet, by catching one of those missed major storms, and picking up some clouds from the mountains, snow totals were slightly above average in Mont. Co.


AWOL from Blogging? I have an explanation. (2011-05-29 19:23)

When I last wrote on May 18 2011, I had finished all but one exam, the "Sacred Masterpieces" Aural final. This was before a whole host of events over two weekends, which have served as an excuse for my lack of blogging. As I sometimes do, I’ll lay out what went on in list format:

R 19 0900a-1100a Final Final Exam
R 19 1130a-0200p Alumni Association Pizza and Yearbook Signing
F 20 0715p-1159p St. A’s Prom at the Hamilton Crowne Plaza
Sa 21 1200a-0900a St. A’s Afterprom (Official but not School-Endorsed)
Sa 21 0500p-0900p Track Team Hot Dog Party
Su 22 1100a-0200p Baccalaureate Mass
Su 22 0400p-0830p Party at the B—I home
M 23 0830a-0400p Outbound Senior Retreat

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R 26 0630p-0930p Viewing of "The Hangover II"
F 27 1045a-0130p Graduation Rehearsal and Locker Cleanout
Sa 28 0200p-0600p Graduation Prep, and Vespers of Graduation
Sa 28 0700p-1100p Party at the S—n home
Su 29 0100p-0500p Party at a swanky home, courtesy of the G——t Family
Oh, yes, and my favorite reason to put off blogging: I got to hit the sack and go to bed. I'll pull this one as a
reason to give briefs on each social event- later.
But, as you and I can see, the St. Anselm’s Community makes sure that Graduation is a big affair.

5.6 June

Entries into my Calling List (2011-06-02 06:30)

"Entries into my Calling List"... did I pick up that phrase from the Choir School in New York?
So, as a continuation of last post’s discussion, you’ll get to see snippets I have for each of the events I attended
over the past week or so:
R 19 0900a-1100a Final Final Exam
In the class "Sacred Masterpieces”. Most of exam was a take-home essay; portion at school was the rather
enjoyable aural section.
R 19 1130a-0200p Alumni Association Pizza and Yearbook Signing
"Welcome to the Alumni Association". Enjoyed plenty of pizza, guacamole and chips, and mud pie.
F 20 0715p-1159p St. A’s Prom at the Hamilton Crowne Plaza
Dinner of bread rolls, arugula salad, fillet Mignon, and cheesecake was excellent. Dance music got more spice
as the night went on.
Sa 21 1200a-0900a St. A’s Afterprom (Official but not School-Endorsed)
Don’t tell any of my classmates about this, but I actually was in my own bed at home by 1am.
Sa 21 0500p-0900p Track Team Hot Dog Party
A small and cozy get-together; got to watch replays of best moments in the 2011 St. A track season. I
appeared in more than one of the clips; apple pie stunning; classmates attending affair had just woken up,
recovering from afterprom.
Su 22 1100a-0200p Baccalaureate Mass
"Half of graduation”, as the President of the School put it. Taking the Mass part of graduation now rather
than the following Saturday makes ”Vespers of Graduation” a much more manageable (reasonable length)
event.
Su 22 0400p-0830p Party at the B—n home
Just had enough time to change into casuals. Classmates and I watched cars make 3-point turns to turn back
the other way from the part of the block Mr. B—n had cordoned off for our use. Bocatto Gelato outing;
and Red Hot + Blue served up the meat and slaw.
M 23 0830a-0400p Outbound Senior Retreat
Hush-Hush; I don’t want to spoil any surprises for the younger students.
R 26 0630p-0930p Viewing of "The Hangover II"
Sorry, fellas; I was lifeguarding that evening. The movie, at 1 hr 45 min, is short compared to most feature
films today; couldn’t catch you all afterwords. If you’d had chosen the later screening, though...
F 27 1045a-0130p Graduation Rehearsal and Locker Cleanout
Persnickety-ness at its finest; at least it came with pizza.
Sa 28 0200p-0600p Graduation Prep, and Vespers of Graduation
Most important day of my life so far? Well, if it was, I took it pretty chill.
Sa 28 0700p-1100p Party at the S—–n home
Because Dr. and Mrs. S—–n found out that a six foot sub feeds more than just an extended family. Those
of us with other last names passed our time in the basement den enjoying ping-pong, wifi, and Airsoft.
Su 29 0100p-0500p Party at a swanky home, courtesy of the G——t Family
What’s more swank than chilling around in a house featured in the Wall Street Journal? Pool party, what’s
up! The opulence of the manor was astounding; every aspect of furnishing was extraordinary. In what shop
can I find rocket-ship one-use hand towels or straws with a plastic fish at the end? Now what a way to
celebrate.
I'm ever thankful that the host of the manor entrusted his home to us new graduates for the afternoon, to
Mr. G——t for putting his relationship to his boss on the line,
and to all of those who gave time, talent, gifts, and homes to make graduation season a blast.

My Experience with The Hill (2011-06-12 16:00)
I started to spend an hour after school on Tuesdays with the "Abbey Elephants" on account of a cordial
invitation from my friend who is the organizer of the club. A good number of the members are actually
deep into all the names and frictions of Capitol Hill. I, for one, don’t feel a need to know exactly who’s
going to win in New York-10 or Utah-2 or Arizona-3. I supposed that, though, since we’re going to school in
Washington, somebody could have a lobbyist for a father, or an advisor to a Senator, the State Department,
or even the President. I do have the unique distinction, though, of being one of only two classmates who
have voted in a real Statewide Election before college. DC had that April 26th Special Election a mere 9
days after my birthday, and one classmate was 18 before the Midterms back in November 2010.
There’s also a Young Dems club competing for the "swing" members. Jacob, the leader of the Dems club,
already had a DC-government technocrat, and head of DC’s Young Dems organization, speak for the club.
This is not to mention the three "Deficit Donut Sales" Jacob had set up. So, to keep the membership rolls
afloat, our leader, C., who also interns summers on the Hill, decided to go arrange a tour of the Capitol for
us through his grandfather’s office in the Senate. His grandfather? I wonder what he does on the Hill. So
the date was tentatively set for Monday, June 6. "Rendezvous 10am Hart Senate Building. Take Metro; you
won’t find parking. Staffers can have snob values, those from some offices more than others; dress in school
formals".
The Capitol Police, when outside of the tourist zones, are cordial, and getting into the Senate offices is a
mere matter of going through a metal detector and knowing your destination. I had a few minutes to wander
through the spacious lobbies of the Hart Senate Building, the most modern of the three. Clad in white marble,
it’s fortunate for the Senators that pictures of the interior haven’t made their way into popular debate. I
couldn’t find the gold bathroom, though.
In good time, our group was all together; three new graduates (including myself), four rising Seniors, including
C., our host and intern, and a rising Junior and his dad the school Disciplinarian. With one elevator ride,
which was complemented by the onrush of aides and staffers on every other floor, we arrived one turn and
twenty steps from our Senator’s office. Inside the glass door, an enthusiastic aide sat us in the conference
room, our envoy filling most of the seats at the oval table. She then closed the door. On one wall were images
of Arizona, just one of the Grand Canyon, but which, all in their own right, "makes me want to go there",
commented a classmate. On the opposite wall is a detailed paper map of Arizona, ready to be inked and
delineated, it seemed. Opposite the head of the table is the State Seal and Flag, and on the fourth wall, a
table bearing a TV, and a framed letter congratulating the Senator for his support of the Ballistic Missile
Program. The clock on the wall had a little yellow light that flashed every thirty seconds, and two seconds
before the minute as well. Our leader, C., commented with a sense of peev that "leadership groups" regularly
come into the office and ask, sometimes almost demand, that they see the Senator. "This meeting", our leader
commented, "was scheduled a month ahead of time and around the Senator’s schedule".
At 10:05am, Senator Kyl (R-AZ) opened the opaque door from his suite of offices and walked the two steps to his seat. All of us, seated and passing the breeze, shot up to standing position, as fast as we ever did, in utmost respect. He must have been at ease, with none of us lugging a laptop or scribbling onto a steno pad or wearing press credentials. Any political gaffe he had with us would have not hit the newsstands. Senator introduced himself, and then went around the table to each person, asking their name and shaking their hand with a firm grip. He walked with sprite in his step and appeared to us as sharp and engaged. When he got around to our classmate, intern, and leader, the two broke into a hug preceded by the familiar title, "Grampa!" Well, yes, even Senators have grandchildren.

Senator Kyl laid out to us the generalities of his life as a Senator: "Fly in Sunday evening...do some business on Monday...Shorter sessions on Mondays and Fridays...Spend most of midweek in committee when we’re not in session...Fly home Friday evening...I enjoy it, though". Despite his responsibilities as not only a Senator but the Senate Minority Whip, he has been keeping part of an eye out on the budding youth political clubs in Arizona as well as ours at St. A’s. Asks the Senator: "Do you have a debate team?" "Well", explains one rising Senior, "we have a Model UN team". Says Sen. Kyl: "Get a debate team; tell the Headmaster that a Senator told you so". He goes on addressing his grandson: "and you and Jacob should put together a debate on some political topic. And just as long as you know that it’s just for fun; I mean, take it seriously though; you won’t have any of the lasting contention that your school is afraid of".

"Any Questions?", Senator Kyl asks. F-Dogg brings up the first, "I’m interested in your point of view on what role the Government should have in business". Sen. replies that this is an "interesting question which the government has been dealing with for at least the past hundred years; and now especially with this current Obama administration and the unprecedented actions taken by Congress in the economy...it has become a very important question". "Take GM, for example. We did it by fiat rather than by the bankruptcy rules, and that is where it gets messy. Look at who got left behind; the everyday people with the million dollar or so liability claims- left out in the rush". He continues: "The biggest thing, mediawise, that'll be going on this week in the Senate is the Debit Card Rule. From my perspective, banks aren’t utilities; so we really should try to keep out of the way..." Sen. Kyl does appear to become passionate about topics he has a strong opinion about.

The next question came from me, about what it took to get where he is today. "Twenty years as an attorney; then I ran for Representative, and I won that. Eight years, and then the Senate race. Not too many primaries; when they did happen it was pretty straightforward; Arizona is strongly Republican". "My advice for anyone contemplating running for office is to live life a bit; don’t go straight into it right out of college". "Connecting with the voters is very important, too. Obama was on top of that...he’d have a rally and then he’d tell everyone in the crowd to text him, and then he’d get the information of hundred, thousands of people all like that. McCain had issues with that; Obama’s supporters would get customized emails, like, "Dear Chris...can you help us out?"; and McCain’s emails would say, "Dear Voter". That’s what we got to work on in this next election". A staffer came in with a camera, and posed us flanking the Senator. "Will sign and send to you", the boss announced. We then carried on. How much does a Senator bid cost? "Last election, 15 million dollars".

A staffer knocked on the door. "Come in", said the Senator. Poking her head in, she announced that the PM of Singapore had arrived and was seated in the Senator’s office. Says the Senator, "Pleasure to have spent the time with you". "Thank you, Senator". Taking the elevator to the Basement, I remarked, "Can’t believe it; just spent 25 minutes with the Senator Jon Kyl, and we aren’t even political assets". That chum time with the Senator at his office, indeed, may have been priceless. How many high school groups can actually make that happen? Let’s see; St. Alban’s, G-Prep, Gonzaga; but the list is short and their guest lists, from what I sense, would be politically driven. Ahhh...

These days, the entire Capitol building is restricted to staff or staff-escorts. Tourists arriving through the Visitor Center are issued "Visitor" passes, which lets them tour designated areas with a tour guide. This pass does not cover the Senate subway, to the chagrin of what I guess is at least a hundred visitors a month. Is that because there is the potential of constituents finding themselves in a capsule with too much concentration of power in one confined space? Fortunately, our envoy received "Official Business Escorted" passes, which
allowed us to go wherever a higher-up (intern or greater) would take us. That includes the subway. Our host and intern told us the story about the intern who took his friends on a three-hour thrill ride on the three different subway lines.

Still, there were some areas off-limits to us and to C.: in Hill lingo/jargon, these areas are called APO: Authorized Persons Only. This designation covers other Members’ offices inside the Capitol, not in the least Speaker of the House John Boehner’s well-marked office near the Rotunda. According to our host and intern, “you’d just run into a bunch of cops if you went in there”.

After getting properly credentialed, and having all our carry-along items probed by a chemical sensor, our group boarded the automated Hart-Dirksen Subway. The trains arrived with clockwork regularity. Each car on the train held about 8 people each; maybe 7 Senators, as well as the Senate Seal, emblazoned in the center of the car. It was a smooth ride, and the flags of every state provided a change of scene from the sparkling white fluorescent walls of the tunnels. Soon enough, we were in the “tourist” part of the tour; we visited the Brumidi ceilings, the old Supreme Court chambers, State Statues, two from each State, and the stairway where contentions used to be settled with duels. With a few turns and two stairwells, we were in the Senate Minority Whip’s well-apportioned office; magazines galore. (In contrast, most Senator’s Capitol offices are a simple hide-away room when one wants peace from the press). In good order, though, our next guide arrived to escort us through the Right-wing Caucus Room, and onto the Senate floor. Haven’t read Time Magazine in a while.

I tell you, what thrilled me the most were the “inside” parts of the tour. A few of my classmates and I were able to snap a photo from the Senate floor before we were told that Senator-eye point of view photography was not permitted. A classmate flipped through Harry Reid’s copy of that day’s Order of Business. That was as far left into the chamber as we were led.

There were other young people denizing the chamber: two members of the Congressional Page School spread themselves and their study materials out on the floor right under Senate Minority Leader’s Mitch McConnell’s chair. To clarify things up, the chamber was empty that morning, as it is most Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. According to our floor guide, “the only time that the Senators are usually all together is during voting”. Rush to the vote they do: there is usually one elevator in each bank of elevators that is reserved for Senators (and their invited guests) only. To keep the exclusivity, most of these elevators are staffed. (These days, most of the other elevators are self-service). In a time frame before and after voting sessions, the Senate Subways are reserved for Senators only- the mere hundred of them. Less endowed staffers get to hike it, or wait out the time. Everyone- save some interns and tourists- knows their place in the hierarchy.

Our intern gave us some anecdotes about life in the Senate: about the “candy desk”, and the Senate dining room. The most recent (and second) time our intern dined there, our Senator passed him and his companion off to the dining staff as “press”. Which brings us to lunch time at 1pm; a traditional time for the Hill to go lunching. (My Mom works in the neighborhood; she knows to lunch before 1pm). For something different, our intern took us off the Hill to the Good Stuff Eatery. That was when I had to split; but, what an adventure. Oh, and before we left the grounds, our intern collected our spiffy-looking credentials, counting them up to return to a security desk. If anything, it’s the staff who feels the pressure for returning the creds: like in many homes, the guests hardly get flack; it’s the hosts who do. What I did get as a souvenir is a gold-embossed calling card. The other trinkets, I can get those at the gift shop, any day.

The Senate Dining Room Menu: Bean Soup is Available Every Day.


1. http://go.compass-usa.com/senate/content/home.asp
Basic Cadets headed out to the US Air Force Academy last Wednesday, and Plebes have trickled in over three days to the US Naval Academy for I-Day, which happened yesterday. US Merchant Marine’s Plebe Candidates report next week—after the Independence Day Weekend.

Last Wednesday, my DC Congresswoman Norton held a small reception in a House Committee Room on the Hill. Arriving with half an hour to spare, I found out that I’d be giving a short speech to the audience. So there I am under the statue of Rep. Rayburn scrawling out a list of thank-yous, with my brother chiming in with helpful suggestions. Mission complete in good time. Norton’s Naval Academy appointee also found himself writing on short notice. Actually, he gave a good chunk of his speech unscripted, and did a very fine job.

A Fox 5 news camera popped in. Norton gave a talk, which focused on her pet issue, DC’s voting rights. The ‘keynote’ speaker, a 2005 West Point Grad from DC, and the new member of the Congresswoman’s selection board, also harped on the topic: He relayed his experience as a member of the Army in Iraq—without no vote in Congress—music to the Congresswoman’s ears. He relayed to us an encounter he had with a top-ranking Iraqi official during the planning stage for the first parliamentary election. The West Point Grad let this official know that the half-a-million people in his home city had no vote in their ‘parliament’. He said it twice, so that the message was not lost in translation. Says the Iraqi: “No democracy is perfect”.

Another perk—us four nominees had our names mentioned in the Congressional Record, and were cited in the local paper, The Northwest Current. The president of the local chapter of the USMMA Alumni Association insisted that we attend the affair on Sunday in Fairfax, VA. Our family accepted the invitation. With plenty of time to spare afterwards, my family took a walk around the halls of the Rayburn. Near one of the main entrances onto Independence Avenue is ex-Rep. Weiner’s office, with sign still next to the office’s door. Our send-away reception was not the only social event going on: the opulence of some affairs was over the top. One event was decked with candlelights, lush green tablecloth, and artistically placed bottles of wine. For the record, we had sodas, and cheese and vegetable platters—and a tray of cooked sushi.

Then on Sunday, I attended an alumni association “Welcome Aboard” for the US Merchant Marine Academy at the Westwood Country Club. Rep. Connolly welcomed us to his district, VA-11, and his country club. The banquet hall had panoramic windows overlooking the bustling life of the golf course: carts and all. In half an hour after the buffet brunch, the Rep. spoke on a whole range of topics. Some pertaining directly to the event included his “divinity deferment” from Viet Nam, and the sheer number of Academy nominees he made from his Congressional District, 49, with 26 to West Point. That’s the highest number of any District in the US, Connolly reports. Connolly is proud, too, of his five-star rating on Veterans’ Affairs issues by a servicemen’s organization. He pointed out to the audience that he pushed for full veteran status for Merchant Mariners who encountered hostilities from U-boats ”before the Navy got into World War Two”. On piracy in the Mediterranean, he reminded the audience that ”Thomas Jefferson took care of that 200 years ago; if he could do it then, we can definitely take care of it now”. On Libya, Connolly feels that US involvement is a necessary endeavor; however, he believes that it was wrong for Obama to not have consulted Congress earlier. “War; that’s the Congress’ business”. Connolly voted with the majority of Congress for a one-year authorization. He wishes that the authorization was for a shorter term of time, but he notes, ”that was what we had on the table”. Connolly then opened up to a Q+A session. He is up for re-election next year, as all the Reps. are. On the deficit, he notes that, as a moderate, he believes that to actually get a balanced budget, both cuts and revenue increases are necessary. ”Last time Congress balanced the budget, taxes were about 20 % of earnings, average. It’s down to 15 %. If we are serious, we’ve got to bring it back up to 17 % or 18 %”. He also remarks, ”Pray to God we do something by August 2nd”.

At both events, at least one person would raise the point of the ”fair nomination process” evident in the DC area. Yes; in some parts of the country, Reps. and Senators pick nominees singlehandedly, but around here, where the nominations can get competitive, the job is left to the specialists. The chair of Norton’s nominating staff described the task of deciding who gets the nomination: ”It comes down to who has the best chance of admissions. It’s difficult, and sometimes emotional, but based on our track record, it’s effective”.

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Push ups, Sit ups, Pull ups, and Running: that is my agenda for the next few days.

In Conclusion... (2011-07-05 14:26)

Just before I go off to the Academy, I’ve got a little bit of local politics for my readers to ponder.
Marc Elrich’s got to go:
It sort of disturbs my sleep at night that Mr. Elrich, member of the Mont. Co. MD County Council has commented on multiple occasions that he would like to turn the local power utility, which also serves Washington, DC, into a government run enterprise under the guise of "power to the people”. He is, by the way, an elected official, and given the voting record of his comrades, including 8-1 approval for a bag tax, it worries me that shareholders in PEPCO’s holding company, many local residents included, will find their shares devalued, and dividends non-existent, by populist moves of the legislature. I’d like to let my readers know that our local transit system was owned and operated by a privately-held corporation, and it took no government subsidies from 1862 until 1973. The transit system is now a gov’t run enterprise, and it took $239 million from local and federal government coffers in the last fiscal year. Mr. Elrich, Venezuela is a dangerous path to follow.

Then there is his abstention on a 7-1 vote over the County’s Disability Pension Policy. Reports the local paper, the DC Examiner, this vote created a two-tier payment system which differentiated levels of disability: partial and full. Reads the paper, "thus a broken finger no longer qualifies a County employee the same pension benefits as a paralyzed colleague would receive". Telling local county workers "no" is a rather "progressive" move in our area, but Counties across the area are facing severe budget crunches, and need to reign in on politically painless to cut cash giveaways to scrupulous public servants.

Looking ahead:
Both Maryland and Virginia are hosting US Senate races in 2012. In Maryland, Mike Steele (R) lost to the now-incumbent, then Rep. Ben Cardin (D) with a 9-point margin in 2006, probably over his support for the military actions in Iraq. Mr. Steele has not come out of the woodwork to challenge Dan Bongino, ex-Secret Service, in a Republican primary. It’ll be interesting to see how much Bongino’s lack of elected office experience and his support of Medicare Vouchers will affect him in the campaign. As for Mr. Steele, it has been historically difficult for Maryland politicians to win a rematch against an incumbent; namely the 1998 and 2010 Gubernatorial races, where Republican candidates faltered by significant margins after close losses in 1994 and 2006.

Some in the National GOP is already counting Virginia as a hatched egg as they try to make it to 51 seats in the Senate. It’s looking to be George Allen (R), former Governor, and Senator elected in 2000 and ousted in 2006, vs. Tim Kaine (D), Governor elected in 2005 for the maximum one four-year term. Has it really been five years since Mr. Allen dropped that slur heard round the Country?

2014 is the next Governor’s race in Maryland. Incumbent O’Malley has hit his term limit, leaving the seat open with no clear successor. On the Democrat’s side, Attorney General Gansler, who billed himself as one who "targets polluters"; and Comptroller Franchot, who tromped around the State giving commendation to businesses which do "more with less", and branding himself as an effective "fiscal watchdog" and an opposer to new taxes. Lt. Gov Anthony Brown may enter the race, but no Lt. Gov., Republican or Democrat, has won a governorship in the 40-year history of the position. On the Republican side, Harford County Executive David Craig is positioning himself for a run at the seat, collecting contributions even though he is term-limited. Other possibilities include Mike Steele popping out of the woodwork, and, don’t think about it, Bob Ehrlich making a fourth run for Governor, but probably not.

2016 will be interesting for the local community. MD Gov. O’Malley is positioning himself to run for the
Democratic ticket in 2016. According to political watchdogs, he has played the party line on every single issue in the book. Such dedication to ideals can really propel a candidate to the national ticket. O’Malley is not yet 50 years of age, mows his own lawn, and stars in a band, O’Malley’s March, which has cut 5 CD’s, and plays pretty decent music. His election record is stellar, too: Baltimore City Council, Elected mayor in his 30’s, only person to unseat a gubernatorial incumbent in 2006, pulled a 14-point lead over the former Gov. Ehrlich by pasting him as the incumbent. Take this when Ehrlich was polling above O’Malley early in the campaign. By the way, O’Malley never mentioned, or showed, in any of his TV ads that he was the governor-safe move for the time. His weak spot, though, is his adhesion to liberal policies, which he often rode to extremes in his first five years. However, he has made a change in tenor, publicly announcing that he signed an executive order to ”streamline paperwork” for businesses, and it was also announced that he ordered a study on bituminous shale production within the State. That sounds a bit like his foe Mr. Ehrlich’s ”drill baby drill” policy that would have been put in place if he were given the Governorship in 2010. Perhaps, locals will forget about his ”Chavezian” days when he appears on national TV (again) in 2015. Depending on how the stars align, a Virginian may also be coming onto a Presidential Primary Ballot, for one or two parties, near you.

Then what about Mike Steele, onetime Lt. Gov? Could he be the VP on the 2012 Republican ticket? Would that be enough to swing Maryland to the Republican side for the first time since 1984? Or does Obama still have an unshakeable grasp on the State?

Credits:
http://bongino.com/

What an Adventure... (2011-07-05 16:20)

Dear Readers,
I am about to experience one of those major changes in my life, the last one of which occurred four years ago. I’m going to a new school. Not just that, I’m going to college; not just college, either. Tomorrow I leave Washington to go to Kings Point, New York, to attend the US Merchant Marine Academy. I will report on Thursday, July 7, as a ”Candidate”, two weeks after arrival I will be elevated to the status of ”Plebe Candidate”. The Academy promises that I will have very little free time, especially as a Plebe. To cut to the chase, I’ll be blogging less often; much less often, if at all, for this first trimester at the Academy.

My readers, it has been my joy to have blogged for you over these past four years. I started blogging while I was attending my final year at the Saint Thomas Choir School. Back then, I didn’t have much time to blog: free computer use time was limited to half an hour Saturday evening, and an hour and half Sunday evening. Yes; some of us entrepreneuring students figured that we could also use the Computer Lab on Friday evenings when the other students, the nurses, and teachers on duty were all downstairs watching a movie with the lights off. Not recommending current Choirboys take that liberty, but I sure enjoyed the time making and editing digital newswreels with my brother, JT and MP; and building up what I considered my ”online empire”- my blog, a general website, and a Youtube account. I’ve heard that the Choir School has since modified its student computer use policy to reflect the modern digital age, but my memories remain in the past.

My first week at St. Anselm’s was filled enough with anxieties of fitting in, or standing out in a good way. I never had to stand in the front of the room as the new kid to introduce myself, but word about this particular afterschool pursuit of mine made it around the block. When it came to what made me stand out among freshmen at St. Anselm’s, it was my blog. Over the summer before Freshman year, I had gone on a paid-for three week venture with the Choir School, and over the course of five or so blog posts I delineated our daily travels, highlights, and mishaps, including that night half-spent at the Waitrose supermarket waiting for a replacement bus. Side note: The next day, my brother sent home a postcard with Windsor Castle ablaze—how fitting to the occasion. So in Freshman year, Sophomore year, I blogged just about daily. It was like a
challenge to be a daily journalist. I got to blog on a variety of subjects circling my life: cameos on classmates, and "hit reports" on how tests went. It took two years to shed that "new kid" title; I was informed by a class leader that you're a new kid until a newer kid arrives, but the epithet was just tongue-in-cheek: I had already left my mark on the Class and the School.

Then came Junior year, and somehow, I found myself busier than ever. It's probably because I found myself as a two-sport man these two past years at school. You can see on the sidebar on my blog how the quantity of my output decreased. But I must say, though, that the quality, in my opinion, rose precipitously. I got into a grander reach of topics, including politics, and my running gaffe on April Fool's Day. The constraints on my time pushed me to hunker down and get into "the zone" when I did blog. I found that I'd spend more time per post than I had given before. So while I let my regular production of my Youtube video series JangooVision fall to the wayside, I kept up on the blogging.

Jangoo- where did the name come from, you may ask. I had a classmate, and we were not really on amicable terms. In English class, each of us were asked to design a concept and put it to words. This classmate had created his universe of hand puppets, a la silent coyote, and named this universe "Zoltan", which I found out to be a Hungarian composer's name. Now my automated fast food restaurant concept needed a name. Not wanting to have to ask to use the name, I found one to use. Jangoo: I found the name one Sunday while reading through a St. Thomas Church Bulletin. Jangoo is an Australian organist's first name. As I told a classmate who is a fan of my JangooVision videos, I own that name like a trademark. On that note, I've followed the Library of Congress' guidelines to ensure that my work falls under copyright protection laws, even though my official registration is pending.

During my high school years, my blog had filled a niche market: same day community feedback on school happenings. Since my Sophomore year, teachers and administrators have come to me, gently reminding me that my blog was one of the first search results for topics ranging from CUMUNC and WAMUNC, Model UN Conferences, to tributes for an alumnus. My blog got me a position on the Priory Press, which allowed me to access readily a plethora of back-issues, which have served as inspiration for a number of this year's blog posts. Blogging and Youtubing, as one particular fratriarch of four brothers would attest, really makes me someone to remember.

Thank you to all my readers, and I hope to blog again.
Atticus Sawatzki

5.8 August

Inside the Fence (2011-08-07 09:41)

"Last published on July 5 2011".
That was well over a month ago.
I think I'm settling into the Academy. Now it's been so long since I've blogged last that I will have off-campus liberty the weekend after next- Acceptance Day Weekend into the Naval Reserves.

I've come across a blog, written by a first year midshipman, that details out all the aspects of Academy life and the evolution from Plebe Candidate (less than 2 months in) to recognized Midshipman 4/c (in the Spring), and onto upperclassmanship. While no two Academy experiences are identical, we go through "all the same stuff", although his Indoc might have been more physical that Indoc 2015. I don't know where he got all the time to blog, because that time is a luxury that I wish I had. Now last time I was working on this post was two weekends ago. Then I would have said that the blog doesn't pick up for two long weeks. It picks up right around now. I'm looking forward to some of the things mentioned, such as "plebe retreat". I have no idea what we will be doing, and I doubt that the upperclassmen will let us roast marshmallows (as
mentioned in the blog), but it sounds like a welcome respite.

My Weekend (Aug 6-7)
The Weekend that should’ve happened:
Class A Inspection
Power Squadron Team Movement to New York Harbor
Homework
Sleep
Midnight Muster
Sleep
Chapel
Homework
Phone Call
(Weekend ends at 1800)

The Weekend that happened:
Class A Inspection
Rugby Match (spectator)
Watch Duty
Sleep
Midnight Muster
Sleep
Watch Duty- some homework done
Chapel
Frisbee (highlight of weekend- who would’ve guessed?)
Phone Call
Some Homework
(Weekend ends at 1800)

Weekends can be very pleasant for plebes; especially those weekends where the upperclassmen leave campus en masse. Sometimes, they linger around until us plebes are allowed to hit the racks, so that we always see upperclassmen when we’re awake. The best weekends, though, are the ones we are afforded rack-in, that is, extra sleeptime!

And the link:
http://usmmamidshipmanstake.blogspot.com/

5.9 October

Outside the Fence (2011-10-04 18:13)

Last year, as an associate editor of the school paper, I learned the adage: Old news is crud news. I wrote this expose on the surprise liberty the Regiment got the weekend before Labor Day weekend for Hurricane Irene, but, that was like, 2 months ago now! I'll find some way to post it so that I don't appear cras. But on that note, it was a welcome surprise to be tromping around a weekend before we were "supposed" to. Now that we're "Accepted" into the Navy and we got our eagles, we look at our former selves in blank-chested summer whites with a smile of amusement.
I'm not sure how prevalent automatically-graded online homework assignments are these days, but, looking back on my soon-to-conclude first trimester, I had a lot of homework. Sure, it reinforced concepts, but my notion of college as a free-for-all where you do homework for your own understanding and not necessarily for a grade, was smashed. Oh- that and sleeping in class. Acceptable at regular colleges, but not at an Academy. I guess it’s the taxpayers who would rather have us learning in class than sleeping through it. But since we got caffeine privileges on Acceptance Day, sleepiness in class or during evening study hours hasn’t been a problem for me. My fix- cafeteria coffee. Once or twice a day. Two-thirds of a mug, no nonsense, maybe sometimes with one packet of sugar and a bit of half and half. I treat it with care: I didn’t drink it in high school, but in college, it keeps me working as late as I need to. I understand it’s addictive, but I haven’t built up a tolerance or physiological attraction yet.

Maybe I don’t need the coffee anyhow. The upperclassmen say that first trimester is the hardest, because plebes aren’t used a "working adult’s sleep schedule". Wake up at 0600, regimental life to 0745, carry on about the school day, sports and homework and dinner, rack-in at soonest time possible (as in 2200/10pm if you’re lucky; most nights closer to 11pm). So maybe I’m adjusting.

Power Squadron weekend trips for the two weekends before Columbus Day Weekend. First trip was on the YP 679, the Liberator, a true-blue-and white ex-Navy working ship. 108 feet in length and three decks, with a nice galley and mess, and a good rear quarterdeck for grilling and chilling- and working the lines. Yes; a lot of what us plebes (or rookies, as we are called on the waterfront) learn while working and being underway on a boat is what we’ll learn on paper in the classroom. It’s good to have a leg up.

So we took the YP out to search for an anchor the sailing team lost the week before. Underway at 0600 on Saturday, first overnight trip: very exciting. We located the anchor, but found out that our equipment wasn’t right for lifting the anchor. So we headed into Port Jefferson, NY, and had an evening on the town before retiring to the quarterdeck and shooting the breeze. It was a great time being out in the field, learning on the job and getting to know classmates and friends a bit better than before. A nice break from campus life. So the plebes back on campus had liberty that Saturday the eleven of us plebes were out on the YP. Well, college kids do what college kids do; and we’re held to higher standards than the average college student. And since most everything at the Academy is about teamwork, we sort of let the team down when we let a handful of our classmates, "our own", take liberty with too much liberty. For that, our Midshipman Training Officer promised us a "fun" weekend. So when the opportunity to get underway again came available, I sprung at the chance to go out to Greenport, NY, by Shelter Island near the tip of Long Island.

This time, we would take the trip in our regular Power Squad boat, a 46 foot Grand Banks known as Maximon. A fine yacht, with plush leather seats and good berthing areas. A smaller vessel, there were three plebes (rookies) and three upperclassmen, as well as the Waterfront Director (most comfortable boat, perhaps?), on board. Got underway Friday afternoon, rendezvous for BBQ with the other boats, as well as the Liberator, which also came, with a different and smaller crew. Some of the plebes from the last trip were present; others were back on campus. Studying, I reckoned. I had done most of my homework on Friday before heading out; and I brought some with me. I told my skipper, "as long as I can get my homework done on board, I could leave campus every weekend". We stood watch for 4 hours at a time, rotating with an upperclassman between handling navigation and taking the helm. Cruising through the night, we arrived bright and early in town. Each of the vessels made a day activity: one boat went fishing, another testing out the sonar, and the Maximon went for a crusie around Shelter Island. Good pizza lunch at an Italian place in town, and dinner at Claudio’s Crab Shack. A nice clean evening as the town was pretty much closing up for the season. Port Jeff., in comparison, is an year-round town. "Good Morning Viet Nam! played on the TV VHS while getting ready to snooze. Underway for the Academy on Sunday.

I just wanted to cut a post, so that my readers know that I’m about and well.
I’ll write to you all soon.
So for the first time since fourth grade, I’m attending a co-ed school. The ratio is pretty unbalanced (7:1), based on the fact that this is a military institution where half the students are engineering majors. But the ratio is better than in my high school, and especially than my middle school, where we were cloistered save for a trip to an occasional preppy mixer. Sure, some of the guys in high school had girlfriends. Senior prom, there were some steady dates. They meet their classmates’ sisters while putting on musicals and plays, and at family functions like the athletic banquet. They also met girls at church, and in their neighborhood, and at late-night 'social gatherings' (house parties) in Bethesda, Rockville, Capitol Hill, New Alexandria, or University Park.

USMMA’s Co-ed decks (but some decks only) are a natural means of mingling. What a difference living with potential dates make. All-boy high school had nowhere near the rumor mill that coed school makes. Furthermore, it’s a bigger deal about who’s dating who at a school where you recognize all your schoolmates’ names.

But who gets friendship and who doesn’t? It seems as if varsity athletes are too much, too brute to handle. Ditto the football team. Exceptions are the sailing and crew teams, and certain "adorable" members of the injury list. Certain girls fall for boys in running suits and crutches. Academic difficulty? Women don’t want to be with a sinking ship. The Academy’s mission is to appoint the 'best and brightest'. (During Indoc, the Drill Instructors made a deal about it: America’s Best and it takes you a whole 30 seconds to arrange yourselves in height order??) But, at least to the girls, some Academy boys are 'better and brighter’ than others. The boys with the best success tend to be sweet talkers with fluid voices, section leaders, 19 or 20 (rather than merely 18), able to party responsibly (able to get to Penn Station and board the 119 am or 319am train without assistance), have a GPA above 2.6, and are recreational athletes. Yes; I’ve heard this about recreational athletes at every college: they get dates. So it comes through the pipeline that a plebe boy and a plebe girl had a whole night of fun together in the City. Well, I was going into the pool one evening, and I saw their two names in the logbook. Flip back through the log, and there those two are: always swimming for fun together! If you do pay a visit to another gender’s room, the door has to pop open 89 degrees, and the boy better have a shirt on. That last rule doesn’t apply in athletic areas. Doesn’t studness pays off? And it progresses. After first meeting, a boy and a girl will first come to sit together in the dining hall. Then the boy will go to the girl’s room for help on homework. Then they’ll go out together on liberty. Next thing, they’re exercising together, and then, they’ll go to each other’s rooms just to talk. I’ve seen it progress like that more than once.

For everyone else, there’s a whole world waiting for young men in officers’ uniform.

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21 or Uniform (2011-10-27 05:34)

The Vietnam era "Take a shot, have a shot" logic is alive and well. This past decade, some state legislatures, including those in Alaska, Alabama, and Minnesota, have discussed officially dropping the drinking age for military members. None of the plans had come to fruit, though, on two accounts: that in this judicious age, treating the military special in this regard is a violation of "equal treatment" clauses; and furthermore, states that drop the age put themselves at risk of losing federal highway funds (it has been this way since only 1988). What a disaster that would be for a political career! Also, in this age of the "professional" military, drinking isn’t as much as a centerpiece of military life as it used to be. (If you’ve read Things They Carried, no steady stream of beer to forward bases anymore). But unofficially dropping the age is a state matter that has taken place. Best of both worlds: keep the highway funds and MADD appeased, and feel good that you aren’t denying a soldier or sailor a drink.

Some places have not adopted this logic, and some bouncers can read uniforms. Why that matters? Because
some believe that midshipmen are merely glorified college students. Slanted stripes equals midshipman. Since Vietnam, just about all officers have gone through 4 years of college. Anyone who looks younger is going to be a midshipman.

They can read ribbon boards. 'Firewatch' ribbon, only means that you’re in the Service. They know which ribbons are deployment ribbons: who’s been to war and who hasn’t. And they’ll get close enough to look at the emblem on our covers: In New York, the Maritime Service emblem located within the fouled anchor gives the only clue that we’re from the Academy.

5.10 November

In DC’s West End, don’t even think about using coupons. (2011-11-06 17:26)

Looking for that ‘refined’ neighborhood, free from the ‘grossness’ of America’s big-name food companies? Need to be hip? Don’t even want to see a non-’hip’ grocery store in your neighborhood? You’ve got good company in DC’s West End. Not even New York could compete. We’ll bet you that even in the poshest neighborhood, you’ll come across a food store that sells name-brand products. Not in the West End.

Word came through the grape vine that the ‘regular’ grocery store in my West End–Foggy Bottom neighborhood is closing. The Watergate Safeway, as it is known, saw little competition until 2006, when Trader Joe’s opened 5 blocks away with a $1 million deal sweetener from the neighborhood association (it was clear in the mind of community leaders that Safeway was slacking on performance). Well, this Trader Joe’s instantaneously became the highest-grossing outlet on the East Coast (see the discussion on the link). Now Whole Foods has opened up in the neighborhood as well. Can the neighborhood support three supermarkets? Maybe– if Safeway would have stepped up its game. Bare shelves were a frequent occurrence, and the store format is often described as “odd” or “peculiar”– check the Yelp page. It’s been described as "straight from the '60's". I wasn’t there, so I wouldn’t know.

From what I understand, the store still turned a profit. The main reason for Safeway bailing is that the owner of the property wants a 20 year lease renewal. Next is the corporate strategy of consolidation: the chain opened a rebuilt store of its "urban" design (swanky lighting and higher prices), located a 10 minute drive uptown. That store, known as the "social safeway", performed better as the suburban design it was. Nevertheless, it seems as if the chain assumes that most customers drive to the store, and would drive to the new store (In fact, most arrive on foot, and according to city stats, over half of the residents in the neighborhood don’t have cars). Furthermore, Safeway in the DC area has taken a new face as a property developer. A number of outlets are being redeveloped with condominiums or apartment placed on top of the store. Watergate, with the complex already built up, did not fit that model.

Given the way that this store’s economic model was shaken in the past five years, I would have shaky hands if I had to sign that lease renewal.

1500 people signed a petition to "save" the store, but it’s business first. Despite its faults, this Safeway did supply some of the regular groceries people are used to seeing: marshmallow fluff, 5 pound bags of sugar, and national brands. Betty Crocker? Pillsbury? Yoplait? No more in my neighborhood.

http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/8616/want-a-trader-joes-then-add-more-residents/

Get to Know the Companies (2011-11-07 07:14)

1st Company: Lock Down Company– The company officer, Commander Ragin, likes to take the hard cases. While his outward appearance as the archetypical up-the-ranks Marine Seargent, seems to say otherwise,
he’s been described as a "teddy bear at heart" by those who know him well through his special mast list for weekend revelers, and the "Ragin Ops" PT program.

2nd Company: Gets Around Company–You may be dining in Delano for dinner, and the other companies have two or three plebe tables going. 2nd company may have one. Chances are that we still eat dinner, but it’s with the team or with other companies. There is also the nightlife that goes on with 2nd Deck of 2 Co. I’ve only had that midnight to 4 am watch once, but I know that we get visitors in and out through the night. And I don’t know of any 2 Co. plebe who does "nothing", that is, no participation in an organized extracurricular. Furthermore, there aren’t any NARPS (Non-athletic regular people) among 2 Co. plebes to my knowledge, although a few of us power squad members could do some more pushups. 2 Co. plebes participate in a range of sports, especially the waterfront–sailing, and that stepchild of the waterfront, crew (their culture is a bit different and less publicly known than that of the sailing teams). Participation is also high in the Drill Team and Color Guard. Track, swimming, Baseball and wrestling also have good 2 Co representation.

2 Co. is a bit more laid back than other companies. Res Life is generally quiet, since everyone is out doing something. It makes our accountability a bit longer to take; that and having the most plebes.

Band Company: Band Company–They seem to get the short end of the stick. Living in the unrenovated barracks is the most obvious sign of this. There are some cool kids in Band Co., though, if being athletic makes you cool. Then there is the band.

3rd Company: Bro Co–Even in the 1980’s, this company was dominated by the football team. While the lightweight players may live in 2 co, this is where you find most of the team.

4th Company: Clean Company–I don’t really understand where this name came from, although I will say their decks are spic and span. If you’re talking about clean players, I don’t think so much. During Indoc sports periods, 4th co gave concussions like candy.

5.11 December

US Maritime Service (2011-12-03 16:45)

So with liberty secured (not given) for an unknown reason, what is a plebe to do? Do homework, blog and sleep (weekend privilege). For a few months now, I’ve tried to find information on the U.S. Maritime Service. What is the USMS? A uniformed service of the United States from 1938 to 1954. The service still exists, though, mainly at the USMMA, but also several at the State Service Academies. Information to research the current and former status of the Maritime Service is scarce.

Typical Mid-year Plebe Weekend (2011-12-04 19:05)

On Saturday, the Regiment held a regular Class B room inspection. These happen occasionally on Saturday mornings. At 9am, you stand outside your room with your roommate (unless you’re a firstclassman), and stand at attention (if you’re a plebe/ fourthclassman like I am) until and after your room is inspected. The Class B lasts about an hour and a half; the actual room check lasts about 10 minutes. Sometimes, other duty
calls a midshipman to be absent from inspection. My roommate was at a swim meet, and I was at EMT class. A good deal, right? Well, our room passed (though, since my roommate was out since Friday morning, less cleaning was done in my room for inspection than usual).

When both roommates are gone, the parts of the scoresheet that involve personal appearance and knowledge are omitted. But did we get off too easy? Since we’re plebes, yes. I’m on the list for room reinspection tomorrow. So I’ve lived this weekend in essentially a sterile room, and spent an extra few hours today making sure my room and my uniform is perfect for inspection. Why so much dedication to cleaning? Tomorrow’s inspector emailed me to let me know that he would not be as lenient as Saturday’s inspector. On the other hand, we don’t have to stand outside our room for as long as we would on a Saturday. That’s plebe life. Furthermore, liberty was secured (not granted) for plebes. That was a surprise, since we were on track to get some after the inspection. Since the firstclassmen who give us liberty were in Atlantic City for the weekend (just about all are 21 now...), we thought that they had forgotten that we were ‘stuck’ on campus (except for off campus runs). So tonight we found out that we had done a motivational spirit mission on Thursday night in celebration of the 200 nights the firstclassmen have until graduation, but had not gotten permission to do so. It involved bringing up 13 sailboats to spell ”200” on the grass—$40,000 worth of waterfront equipment. Someone was not happy about it, and that was how liberty was not granted. I’ve had a typical plebe weekend, as the upperclassmen will say. But plebe life only lasts so long.

Key to note, I got an achievement award—in the form of weekend passes- for a 3.6 GPA last trimester. I seek to keep that up. That means more times studying and less time being regimental. First off, EMT class runs through the plebe training period two of four nights a week (Weekends start on Friday...). So I’ve noticed I’m already being less of a plebe. As the Academy’s unofficial slogan goes, Academics first, regiment second; or the more practical ”people get kicked out for academics, not for having a dull shine on your leathers—though try not to end up on restriction” (you will not hear a regimental firstclassman say these phrases, except during exam week). Then why did I clean my room this weekend? An insufficient score equals restriction: extra duty hours and forming up every few hours on weekends and twice on weekdays. Not a good list to be on. So aside from academic ”judgment days”, where two 20 %-of-a-course-grade tests take place on the same day, this is as hard as plebe life gets. Halfway through already, 2015.

I’ve already lent the link to a Class of 2013 midshipman’s blog to cover for my infrequent postings while I’ve been at the Academy, but I’ll lend it again:

[1] usmmamidshipmanstake.blogspot.com

Also are less comprehensive blogs: attempts which started strong but were set aside by the pressure of more pressing duties at the Academy (homework, etc.):


And, since we like to point out our classmates when they’re being ”different”, here is just one of many hometown articles about classmates before they head off to the Academy. Drill Instructors like to find these articles, as well as Facebook profiles, to get a background on their charges before Indoc begins. Guess how one of my platoonmates got the name ”Toga Tom”?

I was a perpitrator of the decline of print media. During my tenure as an assistant editor of the St. Anselm’s Abbey School paper, the Priory Press, I put together a prototype website. My fellow classmate editors were conservative, and did not want to increase their workload by trying out a new media format; but a member of the then-Junior class looked intently at the maroon-laden blog skeleton that could have been the future of the school newspaper.

Is the student newspaper on a decline? The rise of blogging has allowed for plenty of skilled and unskilled student writers to vent their thoughts to the world without censors and the headaches of upperclassman editors. Do not expect bloggers to give up their autonomy. This is very true at an engineering school such as USMMA, where writing for the student paper is not as personally prestigious as it might be at a school with a strong journalism program. Though, it must appear to employers that an engineering student who edits a student paper can probably write a coherent paragraph. So is it a missed opportunity for engineering students to shun the student paper?

College rumor mills It’s cool to attract more attention with grabby titles (but please avoid libacious statements). Rebel blogs like "Arrogance on the High Seas" have gained a following by their uncensored attitude— in this case, about plebe angst. Why do people read the news? For gratification. To satisfy a desire to find out what’s going down. So how did browsing Facebook news feeds get so popular? Because it’s news people care about. Wait, What? I know what many people are wondering: if the future of news is your friend’s Tweets and Facebook posts from last night, that’s pretty sad. Let’s now assume that there will always be a market for professional journalism. We’ll put this newspaper 10 years in the future and online; the whole business of running a print shop and a distribution network was just cuttable overhead, especially with the rise of internet-browsing phones and the e-reader. Journalism will still exist; just maybe on a lower, web-based budget. And what about funding caravans of correspondents all over the world? The internet is global, and what happens in, let’s say, Poland, is left by our newspaper to the Polish in Poland to write about and put on the interent.

If this future plays out, what would it mean for student media? The campus is a smaller version of the world. Is it in the interest of the student paper to snookie around residential halls to compile a complete list of who passed out in whose room last Thursday night? (This is the USMMA general assumption about civilian college life). Or is this best accomplished through "citizen reporters", i.e., the roommates whose friend is lying on their rug, to Tweet the latest news. No way these days to spare our hard-partying student from global embarrassment.

Well, students already use Facebook and Twitter in accomplishing this objective. Your list of friends whom you subscribe to are the players in your universe you want to hear about. But any young person can tweet. What about the journalistically minded?

It just means that copies of the paper, which might have been ... This is a side note to the Facebook trend, but independent student bloggers retain control of their material, from birth to publishing to archiving. Low to no cost, no bureaucracy. Past mostly are the days of zany student writers typing up and photocopying manifestos and zines and leaving them in the newsrack at the student center. Blogs and the internet have taken care of "guerilla"/ underground student papers— although, in the past, some of these efforts have turned into recognized "independent student media". I cite the Georgetown Voice, founded in
1968 and likes to get in the toes of the good old trustees. Oh- the first amendment protects the "independent media". For "official" student publications, good acting on the part of student editors can assure that the student paper can keep getting funding from crocky administrators.

I can imagine a rabble rouser at the Academy:
Nancy Pelosi sends a politically charged candidate to the Academy. 
Said candidate makes it through Plebe Summer/ Indoc. 
Sometime along the time, said rabble rouser emulates his/her parent/uncle. 
Rabble rouser somehow types up a publication that doesn't violate the standards of conduct and keeps everything "very respectful". 
Rabble rouser distributes said publication in the middle of the night.

Commandant, finding nothing in violation of standards of conduct, calls rabble rouser to his office to ask him/her about whether or not he/she used government resources (the free copier or the library printer) for private business.

"Sir, yes, sir".

2 weeks of restriction that comes along with that may remind said rabble rouser that this is not Berkeley.

Patriotic Duty: doing what we can to cut the deficit:

In 2009, the USMMA became the first service academy, and only so far, to cut dessert at lunchtime. It is probably for the better, because the "freshman 15" is only the beginning of the weight-gaining trend of dining at Delano. One further idea, though, is to grant plebes more weekend liberties. This way, plebes will buy meals on their dime, not the government’s. An interesting thing to note is that Deano serves 20 meals a week. Sunday breakfast is not served, with the logic that everyone is still asleep or on liberty. There were a few days back before acceptance day that plebes had to wake up before 10am on Sunday; as early as 7am one day. Brunch starts at 11am; and boy were the plebe candidates disgruntled! I was on watch that day, so it didn't matter to me. I got a watchman’s breakfast. Doing a sudden change tomorrow would only benefit the contractor. But this is something that can be considered before writing next year’s foodservice contract.

Checking In (2011-12-30 19:13)

Been enjoying the Christmas Break. Met over half my high school classmates at a parent-sponsored event Tuesday night. Spent Christmas in Canada with family- Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec City. I’ve resumed keeping a daily journal, and will pull out the highlights to post on my blog. Felt very productive today, and this is the icing on that cake. Did a 4-mile run on the C+O canal, did homework, played the violin, and even picked up doing work on a short comic book that I started back in 2005. Just opened a can of worms. At least it’s a kid-friendly book!
A Gentle Slide Towards Recognition (2012-01-06 12:24)

A Happy New Year to our readers!
Draft: Editing not complete.
I was at my desk yesterday cleaning out and reorganizing folders I use for class when three firstclassmen midshipmen officers entered the room, talking. I shot up to attention, before being put at ease so that I could continue on with my business. The two were talking about rearranging the standard arrangement of room furniture for third- and fourth-class rooms, and were going to give their recommendations to the higher-ups-the commissioned officers. They were just chatting to each other; the people who look at plebes with stern faces and tell us to "get on our face"- do pushups- were concerned with finer details like room design. It was easiest to use a plebe's room, since there would be less items lying around on top of the drawers in the room. Ideally, there would be nothing on top pf the drawer or dresser in a plebe room.

Wondering whether two drawers that looked the same size were actually the same size, they measured my roommate's drawer under the desk, and the one inside the wardrobe. They were not the same size; one is two nches deeper than the other. They tried moving the dresser from in front of the window to under the desk, beside the already-present drawer. In moving the dresser, they uncovered alternative bedding- a sleeping bag. "He's got to hide that better", remarked the Company Commander. (Only firstclassmen are authorized to leave out unauthorized bedding during the day).

If they had heard what sounds like cans moving around inside a drawer (the one under the desk is a personal drawer), they might have instinctively asked: "What's that rolling around in there?" They know what plebes keep in personal drawers, in addition to leisure reading material, office supplies, extra uniform supplies, and socks and shirts folded the way laundry service folds- rather than the "proper" way: there might be snacks, Red Bull, bottled Frappucinos, headphones, "civilian" clothes. A plebe's collection of food and snacks grow soon after the end of Indoc: it starts off with Power Bars and Gatorade (less sugary than the drink staple Powerade served in Delano!) The belief that health and wellness checks (the only time personal drawers can get inspected) will result in Class Twos being issued (up to six weeks of restriction for "Failure to Comply with Direct Order" to follow the Plebe rules) keeps a plebe from keeping even those "unauthorized" granola bars in his or her room. If a package with food comes in the mail, it is to be handed over to the guardianship of the MIDN Company Training Officer, the firstclassman who deals with plebes specifically. The CTO gets tired of playing rationeer with the grub, and hands the responsibility of being custodian of plebe grub to "team leaders", thirdclassmen who were just plebes a few months back themselves. They know the real deal: keep it in a personal drawer.

There is that first liberty, and the plebe might come back with some grub. If you can’t share it all, keep it.
There hasn’t been a health and wellness check yet. Then Cookie Cafe starts up, and the mothers who run the close-to-weekly cookie event insist “I couldn’t bear to tell (Johnny’s) mother that I couldn’t take some to go”. What a good alibi for being found with cookies in your drawer! Oh— and if you want to eat the grub, you better wait till you can close your door at 10pm.

But in fact, it took a certain plebe two trips (that were observed by midshipmen officers) to the NEX to buy unauthorized food and drink in a boiler suit, with buttons popped, before being put on the mast list (the list that tells you that you need to see the Company Officer to explain yourself). It was then we learned that having unauthorized food and gear in our personal drawers wasn’t such a crime.

By November, Plebes are participating in team sports and other activities in full swing; and sometimes it’s just not possible to make it to breakfast or dinner. Enter food and vending privileges. These are also doled out as payment or reward to Plebes who give up an hour or two to do something for the Regiment, such as helping set up or take down table or counting pushups for the Fitness Test. Upperclassmen also take classes too, and are worried more about their own GPA than whether or not that bag of chips you have on your desk was authorized or not.

But then, what is a health and wellness check, and do they ever happen?

Yesterday, one company had a health and wellness check. 4th Company, but in time, all the companies should be checked. Although most rooms would undoubtedly pass without problem, there are possibly life-altering consequences (it’s that serious) if something is found. By something we are not talking about Twinkies or even tobacco, but liquor mostly- and evidence of illegal substances. With the only penalty possible being instant expulsion, you’ve got to be moronic to even consider using that stuff: this sentiment rings through the Regiment. But liquor– it appears on Midshipmen spirit T-Shirts, is use is humorized in morale emails, and, by George, the upperclassmen even drink it (in moderation) on liberty! What if a midshipman actually had a bottle of the real thing wrapped in a shower towel?

Because possibly ending someone’s career isn’t a laughing matter, the search has got to be done “right”. Two Company Officers, and a series of high-ranking midshipmen officers, proceeded through the main deck of the Regiment (transiting via companies except through zero deck- the basement level- is not permitted by underclassmen) towards the company that was getting inspected. Turns out, the COs only looked into firstclassmen rooms. In their minds, perhaps, the firstclassmen should be the ones to set an example for the plebes. For plebes, it is a good feeling that our police are policed.

Being 21 or not is irrelevant on campus*: no midshipman is permitted to have a hard drink on campus, unless you’re a firstclassman at the pub or a formal event in the Officers’ Club. Being under 21 just gives the investigating CO a few more words to say to the penitent. Interestingly, although plebes are more likely to get written up for having that stuff on campus, the first class has the most to lose: commissions have been lost to bad choices. If any midshipman needs to act like an officer, it is the first class. And they have the privilege of going out any day of the week, unlike the rest of us! There is more understanding of a Plebe making that kind of mistake: Occasionally, a plebe does become curious about “that kind of thing”–in uniform. Often, they are good kids who never even got close to the cooler in high school, but New York presented too big a temptation. Make that mistake early, do the time- Class I for bringing discredit upon the Academy- (6 to 12 weeks restriction, plus up to 100 Extra Duty- community service- hours), and don’t do it again. That was your one chance for exploring bacchannalisim, by the way.

I’ll note it here that CO’s “pick on” second and firstclassmen the way that firstclassmen have plebes. To CO’s, it seems, all eyes are already on Plebes, and thirdclassmen are already accountable for the actions of two plebes at any given time.

So keeping that sparkling water in my personal drawer on the down-low, I trudge on as a plebe looking forward to that Recognition day–probably before May- that we win, for almost finitude, some upperclass privileges.

Maybe at many colleges it’s only enforced in Freshman dorms, but, having lived in a class rates environment, I find it hard to understand the rational of hard drink privileges in the dorm set merely by being 21 (State colleges usually have that requirement for on-campus dorms), rather than setting it as a class privilege–say, a Sophomore- or Junior- year onset privilege. RA’s at some colleges have floor maps showing which rooms are
"wet rooms" and which ones are not—some require both roommates to be 21, some do no. One of my high school classmates happens to live in a "wet room"—though his roommate is 21, he is an observant Muslim, and doesn’t associate—buy, sell, or drink—with that stuff. On that note, I don’t even see the need to allow that stuff in the dormitory. Allowing it just encourages its use; no need to mention how trying to age-restrict in the dorms is a complete joke: a closed door, no loud music, and a less-than-nosy RA is all it takes to "express one’s adulthood" by chugging away in a less-than-mature manner.

Glitz, Glamor, Salt, Reasonable Profits Board (2012-01-20 10:32)

Hot topic around the Academy, SONY is making a picture about the "Maersk Alabama", the ship which in April 2009 was taken by pirates in the Mediterranean. Several midshipmen from the USMMA found out about the casting call in New York directed to "all merchant mariners". Although sea time (which the USMMA upperclassmen have) is recommended, at least two Plebes have been pre-screened and approved for the casting call. Word came through the vine that one of the directors wanted USMMA midshipmen participation in the casting. Although midshipmen from the USMMA and cadets from the other Maritime Academies regularly sail on US-flagged ships, including the Maersk Alabama, I’m not sure if any cadets were on board the ship at the time. SONY is casting mariners for authenticity (can you make a Hollywood actor look salty?), and their ability to provide knowledge to the filming crew and star actors, Tom Hanks included. Filming will be in Morocco this Spring.

Midshipmen who have received call-backs from the casting agent will get a long weekend to go to the casting call, and have a little time to relax in the City.

A link to the announcement of the casting call sent to the Alumni Foundation, which trickled down to midshipmen in 4th Company:


It seems like the movie industry has come a long way in attentiveness to settings since they regularly featured skyscrapers in downtown DC (non-existent). Don’t have a list of those movies which commit that venial sin, but Seth MacFarlane’s cartoon sitcom "American Dad", based in Langley, VA, shows silhouettes of skyscrapers in rooftop scenes downtown.

And a little talk:
There’s a soundbite going around Facebook about six members of Congress wanting to set up a presidential-appointed "reasonable profits board" for oil and gas companies to determine a reasonable profit, and tax everything—up to a rate of 100%—above that amount. [3]Sounds like an FDR Plan from 1942. It seems as if the disbelief is aimed towards the "reasonable profits" quote, not the concept of having companies pay taxes on oil extracted (4)or shrinking R+D and "depletion" tax benefits).

[5]With loosening of total state control over business, Cubans are embracing the capitalist spirit.

6.2 February

Joys of Third Trimester, 4/c Year (2012-02-01 15:03)

Still a month until third trimester, but the Plebes are starting to dream about what it brings...

Military IDs are issued: A significant number of setbacks occur after 2nd trimester. Many of these setbacks into the next graduating year occur for academic reasons (typically after failing 2 classes in one Academic Year); and for plebe midshipmen who have not been cleared for sea duty, this means taking 8 months away from the Academy and repeating the trimester. As I understand, people on setback time do not drill with the Navy Reserve; 4/c/plebes and 3/c midshipmen are able to quit the Academy without occurring a military obligation. No good can happen with "valid" military IDs held by full-fledged civilians floating around. For this reason, it seems, the Academy does not issue our Naval Reservist IDs until third trimester.

Recognition: What is it like to be an upperclassmen? 4/c gets to find out when Recognition comes. This event happens after specific plebe missions are completed: spirit missions for the seniors celebrating 300, 200, and 100 nights left at the Academy; community service and high school visits to represent the Academy; passing 10 Plebe Knowledge Tests as a class (we've finished 6; it seems as if we are being fast-tracked right now: read on). After Recognition, 4/c gets most upperclass privileges, including "rack in", or sleeping during the day; media privileges and order-in at all times, wearing backpacks, and being able to walk casually in Regimental areas. 4/c after Recognition still have to do cleaning stations and stand a hefty number of watchstations, but it’s good to be recognized. There is a theory that plebes are recognized before open house in April (thus we are being rushed through Plebe Knowledge Tests), to raise morale and to show visitors that the plebes they saw back in August have moved on to a higher status.

Practical Sea Courses: For plebes who have been given a hard course load in second trimester, ready-to-go-to-sea classes can be a relief for engineer students who have sizzled their minds with electrical engineering. There is also the excitement of preparing to ship out; like planning a vacation (but sea year is not a vacation), it’s exciting to go through the administrative steps, one at a time, on the way to sea in June or October. (I’m scheduled to ship out in July).

Superplebes: Setback coming from third trimester are already recognized. I wouldn’t imagine that they would room with unrecognized plebes (because of their immense privileges). One thing to note is that recognized 4/c wear collar insignia on campus, where unrecognized plebes do not. Third trimester is the first time that plebes don’t formally greet everyone with collar insignia. Superplebes are your classmates.

Class Rates Liberty: Liberty policy is the same for 4/c from September to June, though third trimester 4/c are ensured three overnight liberties; whereas none are granted (they must be earned) in 1st or 2nd trimester (although we have our long weekends such as Columbus Weekend and MLK Weekend).

Return of the A splitters: 2/c and 3c who set out to sea in October will be returning later this month. People say that some are ready to "fraternize" with us, which they can’t do until we’re recognized. And they expect us to be recognized once they step off the boat. So that’s a second reason, on top of making us cheerful for open house, why recognition always seems to happen sooner than May.

6.3 March

Recognition Season– but is it for us? (2012-03-20 13:27)

Early in a plebe’s career, he or she is convinced that their class is going to be the next black cloud class. There was one in 1959, and another in 1968. What that means is that the plebe class isn’t recognized, that is, gain all the privileges of a midshipman (note that we accepted all the responsibilities of a midshipman back in September), until third class year. But as the USAFA and USMA have been recognized in the past 3 weeks;
and Navy plebes got a few new privileges, we’re getting a little concerned about our own recognition. Things
were going well before spring break. We passed our 7th of 10 plebe knowledge test as a class right before
exam week, and we finished our mural on “zero deck”, a major privilege and step towards recognition, which,
during Indoc, I never could have imagine being a part of. But the plebe comes to realize that recognition will
come eventually. By March 1, we knew it was coming soon. Our recognition steps were being rushed, as if
there was a deadline. No more than six, then five, more weeks of plebedom. Then after spring break, our
plebe train seemed to have derailed.
By October, we had learned that there are reasons that plebes get recognized as surely as the flowers bloom
in spring:
The first class gets anxious about licensing exams, and having finished their resume building, have no interest
in chancing plebes anymore. As a matter of integrity, you recognize ’em and give them all the privileges
they the plebes had started to take when they came back from spring break (doors closed during the day,
unauthorized food buying and order out, talking in the passageways, not running outdoors, etc).
The Third class gets a little fratty after getting back from sea, and by playing on the same sports teams
with plebes. By that, they start skylarking—“fraternize”—with plebes. And the 3/c realizes that the 2/c will
become a different breed- “petty firstclassmen”, in just six weeks. The 2/c will start becoming responsible in
general, so they’ll look to the hopefully recognized plebes to be friends with. And there are good and bad
reasons to "frat". First off, it’s a good means to pass tips to the underclass for going to sea. Next trimester,
the 4/c becomes the 3/c. We take charge of marching plebes around during Indoc, and we go to sea. Once
you recognize the plebes, 4/c can frat safely with 2/c and 3/c. So there won’t be any more talk of a certain
3/c being too “friendly” with a plebe.
Yet, sometimes, flowers don’t bloom.
Our new Commandant, an anti-excessive/underage-drinking zealot (not a bad thing?) from the Naval
Academy, where that culture of no tolerance to that sort of thing has been going on for a decade now, met
with KP’s unofficially laxer, rather European, attitude towards having a "good time". It may have not been
luck. Administrators must have been concerned with the ever-increasing count of midshipmen receiving
alcohol hits.
There is no one reason for this increase. Midnight musters on Saturday nights were introduced, and that
revealed some plebe revelers. Some of the upperclassmen were reliving their plebe days through stories we
brought back; certainly, not more than a few wanted to stop the stories from coming in, even if it could keep
a few plebes from alcohol hits from increasingly more vigilant senior classes. Plebes who had a "good time"
had been spared from the maximum penalty, which was saved for the 1/c and 2/c who did the same; and it
didn’t seem to some to be a big deal.
So the Commandant comes in and lays down the law. Across the board minimum of 10 weeks restriction
and 100 extra duty hours for that kind of case. The subjective “Do not, Do not embarrass the Academy”
has been replaced by the new Navy standard of “No underage drinking; if you’re old enough, you stop after
three drinks”. Quite Clear. Plebes are responsible for each other, and by accepting that responsibility for
your classmates, three plebe alcohol hits under the Commadant’s watch, and recognition is out the window.
But you can’t change a culture overnight; especially if it’s St. Paddie’s Day. Although the hit count remains
unofficial, our class did it. We’re the black cloud– black out– class of 2015.
Black cloud? That’s another word for recognition. It means that you’re class is done with the plebe system.
Plebes for life. Close your door, listen to music. Yet our firstclassmen were quick to assure us that a speedy
recognition is still possible. When we have completed all the steps (which could happen by the original
deadline that we felt that they aiming for), the seniors would ask the Commandant to reverse his decision.
In the meantime, we would have ‘earned’ recognition; and that is enough to get a bit of respect and a set of
privileges.
I think we can get our train back on track.
6.4 April

You can call me Midshipman Sawatzki now. (2012-04-30 08:51)

I guess it’s been long enough since I last posted that Blogger changed the format on their page. So as I get used to the new format, I’d like to mention that the USMMA Class of 2015 has been Recognized. What does that mean? It means that we’re not plebes anymore—sort of. We still do the necessary plebe jobs, like cleaning stations and table-serving. But there are so many things that plebes do that are demmed "not essential to the functioning of the Regiment". Things like squaring corners, walking 6 inches from the wall or curb while outside or in the barracks. Carry bags by handle, rather than using shoulder straps. "Legally" being able to be friends with upperclassmen; and no more saluting firstclassmen (at least until Commissioning in June). Collar insignia is worn. We now have perpetual "rack in"—being able to keep our doors closed most of the day. But we are apparently the Class to get Recognized the latest in the year, at least since the Class of 1958. By the end of plebedom, the "plebe attitude" was already wearing off. That comes with the third trimester and coming back from Spring Break, and is a sign to the Firstclassmen that the plebes need to be Recognized soon, before they start acting like they own the place. So Recognition was a satisfying ending to what has been a prolonged plebe life. We passed our last plebe knowledge test on Wednesday evening, 4/18. On Friday morning, the Battallion Commander let us continue on talking in the hallway before falling in for formation. Then—he reminded us that we were still plebes, and we did some PT for it. That evening, we had a flag hunt and rifle PT. We were then informed that we had passed our last Recognition step. We had finished plebedom! Afterwards, we were encouraged to watch movies and stay up as late as we wanted to. At 10pm, the Seniors gave us a "fake recognition"—muster in the auditorium in Recognition gear. We got to the auditorium to find it empty. I made a point to get to bed ASAP, since I knew what was going to happen the next day. On Saturday, 4/21, we were called out on line ar 4:30am. Boiler suits, PT gear and running shoes. This was the day—Recognition at last. We did a lot of pushups and situps on the "grassy knoll", as well as some teamwork excersizes: tandem push-ups and a tunnel crawl. Then the Seniors called us in to the auditorium to remind us to play safe. On the agenda was pulling the biggest pickup truck up the hill. It would have been easy if the driver wouldn’t have tapped the brakes every so often. "Almost hazing", one of my companymates uttered. But for one day, it was okay. What would it mean to join a frat without some mild pranks? Then there was a mud pit, log PT, “running of the plebes” and finally, we got to ring the Memorial bell as a symbol of Recognition. A speech by the Regimental Commander, who reminded us of all the pains us as a class had caused him: "I gave you liberty against the advice of your training officers". We were Recognized now, but we were cold and muddy. Once we had stripped off the mud-encrusted boiler suits and disposed of the mud-ruined shoes and socks, we washed off with a nice, cold shower and proceeded to breakfast in running suits, rather than khakis, again, a Recognition privilege.

6.5 May

USMMA 2016: Packing List (2012-05-14 07:36)

Some members of the Class of 2016 may well have come across this blog. Most of you are graduating from high school, and partying responsibly to help ease the fear of the unknown that you will be entering to on July 5th. Before we take away your hair, your civilian clothes, and your identity (for a few weeks only, though), I’d like to say a few things: Your Drill Instructors are my classmates. No need to be afraid of them. You’re going to be insufficient/be a failure, and you may live for two weeks wondering if your DI can get you kicked out of the Academy for not marching right. Hydration is the key. Drink lots of water. No need to be “that guy” who passes out from the heat. July 4th is not a “party night”, unfortunately. Not for your Indoc team, either.
You, and us, need to appear looking sharp and alert at 8am. I will be your EMT. You’ll see me at morning
PT, at sick call, and at health and wellness before you fly to your racks. You’ll like us, since we don’t yell
and scream. Use the medical service as much as you need, but remember, you’ll have a nickname if you’re a
frequent flyer. Your DI’s will come up with a name for you, too. You might have heard that some injuries/
ailments cause you to be set back into the class of 2017. An injury that will keep you on the sidelines for less
than week (sprains, etc) are no cause of concern. And here are a few items that they did not tell you to pack,
but you should: Stamps+ Envelope (bring extras for your platoon mates) Paper Journal, with a “boring”
cover. Lighter Flashlight + Batteries Mouthwash Alarm Clock- you will need one on the last few days of
Indoc Cash for the NEX Shirt stays, if you can find them Welcome Aboard! From everyone who’s not a Drill
Instructor, we’re very happy to see you! (Because when you see a Plebe, you ain’t a plebe anymore).

6.6 June

A bit technical, a bit nostalgic: 4th Class No More. (2012-06-26 20:06)

Now where did I leave off? Just a quick summary– I felt that this most recent trimester was the most rigorous
of the three. No easy B+’s- the grade needed to score an Academic Star . My GPA this trimester was weighed
around B. As a mentor suggested last trimester, I had built up enough of a lead earlier in the year that I could
still maintain a Star status for the year overall. I knew of In a brief personal journal entry, I noted this past
exam week as "The Crucible", since it would determine if I had a choice of engineering majors (The cutoff for
two programs is near 2.8, a B- average). So no big blog post that week. 24 hours after completing my last
exam, I was on a Reserve Fleet ship, the SS Wright, in Baltimore MD. Aboard the ship, us USMMA students
entertained the staff and leaders of the Maritime Administration from just an hour south in DC; represented
the future of American maritime potential aboard the museum ship NS Savannah (and became one of few
midshipmen to work aboard a (formerly) nuclear vessel); represented the Academy during Fleet Week in the
city (Navy mids and Coast Guard cadets were present as well); and finally, worked on modular refrigerator
units that were being placed onto the ship. And we spent some time after work in the evenings cruising the
city in plainclothes. On that note, it was to benefit that one upperclassman had brought his car to the ship.
My older Academymates enjoyed $1 specials on National Bohemian (Natty Boh)– but not the driver, mind
us; we enjoyed baseball on the big screen at Candie Maries (at Fleet and Milton), and I enjoyed playing some
ping-pong. We didn’t know how much fun and enjoyable– and economical– an American port could be. We
expressed some shipboard courtesy- Catch the crew after the meal if you have a question about work. And
some courtesy among our own: Do not discuss the Regiment outside of campus– that includes casual remarks
about our promotion on June 19 (after 2012’s graduation) to midshipmen-one-class-higher. Indeed, talking
about "class rate" is viewed taboo like talking about social class in America. (It seems to me, though, that
Band Company is just slightly different. Class rate is paid attention to with detail over there- The Regiment,
which includes Class rate, seems to be a big pride in that Company than in the other companies). While
at sea, we have the same title- Cadet. We often work side by side. So class rate just is a tad less relevant
while at sea— although, I must note, sea experience does count. Onboard the SS Wright, there were us
newbies– landlubbers, perhaps, with single digit count of days at sea. Our driver was a year higher than us,
and had over 200 days at sea- on ships that left port! The rising senior on board had somewhere near 300
days. And that term "Rising firstie/ second/ third class" was a new creation by us, since we had to recognize
that the incoming fourth class (Class of 2016) haven’t been to sea yet; and that our shoulder boards needed
to be restriped. The person in charge, the port engineer, is a 1975 Academy grad, and never heard that
term used before. Always room for something new. The taboo of "class rate" is drawn to the spotlight: As a
practical matter, I left campus dressed down slightly. I had dry cleaned my official liberty attire- summer
whites- and put it away in my suitcase so that it would be fresh for when I needed to entertain official visitors
from the Maritime Administration onboard my ship. Others left in civilian clothes for personal reasons, such as to mark the end of fourth class year. Apparently, according to the new commandant, this is a second class privilege that had slid to the third class over time. It’s true. I checked the thick book of midshipmen regulations (over 200 pages). But why did second and third class privileges merged over time? The oldest regulations were written when midshipmen spent nearly all of third class year at sea. This has changed since the 1960’s, where two “splits” in each of 2nd and 3rd class year alternate semesters (now trimesters) at sea. But what happened is that A split spends 2 trimesters as third class, B split spends 2 trimesters ans second class. (Part of the reason for this was to better Kings Point winter athletics- B split students spend all 4 winters at the Academy– the other component was to keep students from the ”drudgery” of 6 straight trimesters). So is it really fair for half the class to have better culmulative privileges than the other half? The other large change is a revamping of liberty policy. The new first class had already gotten creative with 4th class liberty. Noting that most disciplinary problems on liberty occured after dark on Saturday nights, liberty was granted all weekend, as typical for upperclassmen, with the exception of 9pm to 9am on Saturday night. The most adventurous 4th class would have to hang tight until after midnight bed check before heading back out to the City. Previously, we had rotated between weeks of liberty from 2pm until midnight and weeks of no liberty because someone ”messed up” the previous weekend. The new strategy (which I had actually suggested months before as a way to raise plebe morale for those who had no intention to participate in nightlife) worked. It worked so well that it came into use for the third class, to combat their own occassional rowdiness on the 3:19am train. (But we were not the most rowdy, though, as the New York Post never mentioned us in why the Long Island Railroad increased police presence on that train. This was a culture change for the third class, who were accustomed to overnight liberty evey weekend. But the 3:19am train would also literally become a thing of memory only. Effective the weekend before Memorial Day, the 3:19am, train was now the 3:04am train. It had been the 3:19am train long enough that recent graduates talk about the memories from that train. Perhaps the change in departure time, it is rumored, was to break us up into two groups- those who came back to Penn Station early, and those who tried to cut it close. Perhaps it was to drive some nightlifers back into town for another hour of cash spending. The Commandant reports that liberty policy will indeed change. Overnight liberty will be granted on a pass system (a system which had existed before the familiar system, which he calls a ”free-for-all”). Fourth class will have the fewest (That would be, according to the old rule book, 3 for the second and third trimester, including holiday weekends). Currently, first class are entitled to seven- about one for every other weekend. Policy regarding extra liberty passes for high GPA’s will be formalized. While our first go-to guy to take these weekends was the Class of 2012’s valedictorian, who certainly enjoyed the privilege as a plebe, his successor doubted that the program actually existed– doubting that talk on the parent’s page reflected reality. For my roommate one recent weekend, this doubt was overruled by the Commissioned Officer on the basis that mothers are right!

6.7 July

How much does it cost to be a Midshipman? (2012-07-03 15:49)

My Dad would say that life in the Navy for a young single man was this: you could get your paycheck, blow it in town, and come back broke to a roof over your head, and four meals per day. (Taco Bell did not invent the fourth , nighttime, meal– the Navy did). I never agreed that this blog was purely polite dinner conversation, so I decided to discover if this held true for midshipmen at the USMMA. Mids and Cadets at the other four service academies start receiving a stipend on day 0. In fact, all Midshipmen at the USNA are paid the same rate- it’s just that the seniors have a lot fewer deductions than the fourth class. At the USMMA, a real neat and motivational promotional video ( ) notes that you receive pay while at sea. In fact, it’s quoted by the first class that the stipend received from sea year minus midshipmen fees paid each trimester add to a
positive sum for you. (I’m waiting for my check to arrive from my week on a ship in Baltimore, but I trust it will). That figure assumes that you won’t spend all of your cash in Bangkok. So what must you do to live off your stipend? Limit snacking– commissary food (free meals) is to be consumed only at designated mealtimes, in the dining hall, or a box meal if on a team trip, on watch, or while in the infirmary. Having commissary food or utensils in your room will make you eligible for Extra Duty hours. 6 hours of work is a lot to pay for that banana. Have a restricted social life– I’d say that there are likeminded midshipmen who would enjoy on-campus, free, activities while their classmates splurge in the city– but I fear that you’re one of few! That was also a pun. Midshipmen on restriction go weeks without going out on the town– but I’d recommend you not put yourself on restriction to make for fiscal discipline. Videogames are a good investment. $60 will buy you weekends worth of entertainment, and, if it’s the right game, you’ll have plenty of friends to play with. World of Warcraft, Modern Warfare, and Halo are popular. You could also take a knack for reading or aimless cruising of the internet, but be ready for nicknames. Use the "free" laundry service– no, it’s not free, but you paid for it in your midshipmen fees. Drop off one day, pick up the next, except for Sundays. Just be sure you have a pair of PT clothes for the day your laundry’s gone. Resist the temptation to buy things you don’t need- you’ll be tossing a lot of it before going to sea, anyway. Your entire room just won’t fit into two suitcases. Yes, I’ve bought things I regret paying for, but my case is very mild: I’ve heard of a classmate buying an "unneeded" I-phone. Be athletic- or rather, "sportif", a word borrowed from the French. Sticking to a workout routine, taking extended jogs on weekends, or having an affinity for shooting hoops will take up some idle time that you might otherwise be spending cash during. Also, you might feel enough self-esteem that you have no need to prove yourself as a party-hardy. No one insisted that my next door neighbor stay out past midnight– after all, he was the star swimmer. Eat meals on campus– resist the urge to order out. $10 saved by having a meal at the commissary rather than ordering, once per week, adds up to some change. It’s okay to "be full" when your pals order over the phone. Got to go to dinner at the chow hall before it closes.

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See you later! (2012-07-22 19:24)

Tomorrow, starting at 6am, I’m headed off to Korea to start "sea year". Actually, it will be a continuation, since I had some experience on a reserve fleet ship in Baltimore– experience in things like what clothes to bring to work, and why dinner is served at 4pm when the ship is in port (so the cook works a normal 7am to 4pm shift). My relation with a prepositioned ship in Korea– South Korea– started as a suggestion about 1 week ago, and the plans were finalized on Friday. Flight to Detroit from JFK, then JFK to Seoul. Found that there is a direct rail link between the two airports in Seoul I will be shuffling between– Incheon and Gimpo. From Gimpo, I’m headed to Yeosu. It’s a 45 minute flight, and the town is 2 hours by bus from the larger port city of Busan (where many a Kings Pointers made memories). I’m sure I entertained and inspired some of the new plebes with the news of where I’m going– 365 days from now, you can be going to Asia, too! Just don’t fail out, don’t quit, either. And dear CTO or his petty officer of company (x), could you muster the plebes somewhere other than main deck– where I want to roll my rolling chair loaded with suitcases and bags from my room to the elevator to the locker room on zero-deck? Put all my belongings in bags– those which I will be picking up in November when I get back to the Academy are placed in a locker room on zero-deck; and the items I need for sea, into two suitcases or a backpack. A little foresight is needed, since it’s going to be October or November when I return. Some items go to my brother. Registered for the November 6 election, changed my computer password, and called the cab. I will be travelling and working with a classmate, whom I will get to know better. And, if things go as expected, we’ll have sea stories and you’ll have blog posts to read (pending on the availability of internet on the ship– there’s got to be!)

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Chicken Politics (2012-07-31 03:09)

From the Seattle Coffeehouse in Gwangyang, Republic of Korea: If I ask a Southerner at the USMMA about Chick-fil-A, he or she will often rave about the crispy chicken sandwich the restaurant serves up. If I ask someone from the Northeast, a blank stare is likely, the same way that you’ll catch me with if you ask me about Jack-in-the-Box (never been there). The chicken establishment’s sole presence in DC is a new food truck and a limited selection at the Catholic University’s food court. To get a Metro-rail accessible chicken fix, take the orange line to Ballston Commons Mall, or the blue line to Crystal City; both across the Potomac River in Arlington County, VA. Based on what I’ve seen in the news and on comments forums on those news articles, I’m not expecting a Chick-fil-A in DC anytime soon. To date, there has been a correlation between conservative-controlled districts and the existence of Chick-fil-A. Especially in the DC area. For example, in Maryland, its presence is minimal in DC’s suburbs; yet there is one every few miles along I-95 in the Northeast part of the state; and there’s a whole line of ‘em down State Route 2. Easier to see, take a map, paint red each county with a conservative-controlled government (conserva-Dems included), add the state’s two Republican congressmen, and locate the Chick-fil-A’s. It’d be a peculiar business strategy if the company intentionally expanded this way, but Chick-fil-A is now breaking new ground up north, but not without resistance by elected officials. In Boston, according the the DC Examiner, Mayor Thomas Manino had tried to block Chick-fil-A from opening shop, but had no legal ground. In Chicago, the mayor raised a storm as well. Says Mayor Rahm Emanuel: "Chick fil A’s values are not Chicago values". I wonder what the Chamber of Commerces of Boston and Chicago think. And the same news from DC’s mayoral bullpen: "Gray, a Democrat, referred to the company’s product as "hate chicken" in a tweet on Friday. His statement... followed similar statements by mayors in Boston, Chicago and San Francisco that the company was not welcome” (AP). (Don’t make me feel bad, Vincent). But, from the DC Examiner, "Robert Turner, president of D.C. Log Cabin Republicans, provided his thoughts on the matter to Yeas & Nays. He sees no issue with enjoying a spicy chicken sandwich and also supporting the right of two men or women to walk down the aisle together. "No problem at all,” he said. "At the end of the day, if one looks deeply at the companies one patronizes – eating at Chick-fil-A, shopping on Amazon, ordering a Coke with your meal – you’ll find a multitude of issues where you and that company disagree.” http://washingtonexaminer.com/d.c.-log-cabin-republicans-dont-mind-e ating-at-chick-fil-a/article/2502621 And in New York City, Chick-fil-A is noticeably absent, except for a small presence in the NYU cafeteria. I wouldn’t expect a branch to open in the East Village, but a Chick-fil-A would blend into one of Great Neck’s storefronts. And the Subway sub shop would see some competition for midshipmens’ dollars.

6.8 September

Pick and Choose (2012-09-17 21:57)

I started writing this blog post in Korea. Since then, I’ve sailed out to Saipan. And I’ve gone for two weeks or so without most of the internet, though I’ve been able to access wikipedia aboard the ship (and spent quite a few hours on that informative website). I have not been around blogging much, but I’ve been thinking about politics at home. Here are some of my picks and explanations for those choices in the upcoming election in DC. Charter Amendments Expulsion by council on 5/6 vote (or 11 of 13 members) for gross misconduct. I voted Against, since “gross misconduct” does not appear to be defined, at least as presented in the proposed amendment. Although unlikely today, 20 years ago, it might have been a possibility that such an amendment would be used to expel members who “didn’t fit in” with the group. On barring councilmembers convicted of a felony while in office from holding that position again. On barring Mayors convicted of a felony while in office from holding that position again. I am For these amendments. Talk about crooks in government,
DC has had its share over the years. Passing such an amendment could make it easier for minor party or independent candidates to take office. Some of the larger names in DC politics have had their share of legal troubles, to mention the least, Marion Barry (he might have been charged with a misdemeanor only, though). Chairman of the Council Phil Mendelson, Democrat He is competent in his current job as chairman of the DC council. While much of the city’s political power lies east of downtown, he fares from the Northwest part of the city (where I live). He was elected from within the council to fill in for Kwame Brown, who resigned over the all-too-common-in-DC ethics scandal. At-large Councilmember Mary Brooks Beatty, Republican Her major opponent in this election is Vincent Orange, who has been on and off the DC political scene for at least the past decade. Orange most recently ran in an April 2011 open-ticket special election to fill a vacancy in the city council left by the newly-elected mayor. His major opponents, resulting in a 3-way split of the vote, were Patrick Mara, Republican, and Sekou Biddle, the placeholder and a Democratic candidate. Mara lost by about 1,200 votes (4%) and attributed it to Biddle competing for the same demographic of voters. But Orange was not a shoe-in. He had lost his past three campaigns in the city, but I recall him being quoted in a newspaper saying (this is not verbatim): “I was discouraged, but God told me to run again”. Given Orange’s recent indecisive victory, without a strong third name on the ballot, Beatty might stand a chance in a city where only 2 or 3 Republicans have won elections in the past 40 years. Ward 2 Councilmember Jack Evans, Democrat Without him on the DC Council, the City might have looked as bleak and blighted as it did 20 years ago, when he was first elected to this position. Since then, he has raised a family with three children in Georgetown; sadly, he lost his wife to cancer, and then remarried to have a large stepfamily. He has been reported by newspapers such as the DC Examiner and the City Paper as being the most fiscally conservative member of the DC council, and being very enthusiastic about new development projects, including getting a stadium built in the Chinatown area. His district includes downtown DC, and he seems to be a good match for this special duty. He also happens to go to the same barbershop as I do, and works at Patton Boggs, a legal firm just across the avenue from my place. US Senator (Shadow Seat) Nelson Rimensnyder, Republican His view on things? No taxes. That’s right, no federal taxes on DC residents until we get two voting senators and a voting representative. He is running against the incumbent Michael Brown, Democrat. While on an insiders’ tour of the Capitol, my classmates and I got to see what DC’s shadow senators do: When in the Senate chamber, they sit in chairs alongside the wall (without desks), and make comments when welcomed to. It happens that the Rimensnyder family was present at the Congresswoman’s Service Academy Send-off this past June; they have a child attending a Service Academy in the Class of 2016 (didn’t hear which Academy). US Representative G Lee Aikin, Statehood Green Party She hits out some clear points on what she would improve with the DC tax code. From the Washington Post: “My son, District-born, now in special forces, said it best: ‘Mom, you have two important things. You are honest and you care.” (http://projects.washingtonpost.com/elections/2012/dc/city-council or/2368/g-aikin/) State Board of Education At Large Mary Lord Should research more. Ward 2 Jack Jacobson He has no opponent on the ticket.

6.9 October

(2012-10-27 19:04)

US House of Representatives Bruce Majors, Libertarian Although she assisted me in procuring a nomination for the USMMA, and has been a strong supporter of local students attending service academies and joining the military, I have one reason why I will not be voting for Delegate Representative Eleanor Norton, and that was over her view a compromise back in 2009 or 2010 that would have given DC a voting representative in Congress. The proposed bill would have created a new seat also for strongly Conservative Utah, but a rider in that bill would have loosened some of DC’s gun laws. It was for this last reason that Norton rejected
the proposal; ostensibly on the grounds that this violated DC’s sovereignty. However, myself and many of my high school classmates believed that this was the best chance for DC voting rights, and it was squandered. But apparently her decision was accepted by a large majority of her constituents; she was re-elected with over 80% of the vote in 2010. Bruce Majors happens to live in my neighborhood. I believe that he was a realtor, and when I was growing up, I would see his advertisements in the local Safeway supermarkets.

6.10 December

America (2012-12-03 18:29)

The Redskins were slated to win that game. The Carolina Panthers, a team with a 1-5 record in the football season to date, were going to face the Redskins in their last home game before Election Day. The ‘skins had lost the last two games, and were looking to turn this streak around. But anyone who defied the predictions and put their bets on the Panthers won a potload of cash. Online, one Redskins fan vividly recalled the 2004 election-predicting Redskins game that was not: “In 2004...there were bad calls... they took points off the scoreboard...” (This was the first anomaly after 16 correct election calls, the Redskins lost the game, but Bush won a narrow reelection). This victory for the Panthers was one attributed to the god of the elections; the game was fated to reveal who would win the election: when the Redskins lose, the party controlling the White House changes. Based on this predictor, Romney was going to win this one. Other signs included the unemployment rate (no incumbent since FDR has won with a higher unemployment rate than what it was at his first election) and the incumbent’s job approval rating (no incumbent can win with a rating under 50%– Obama had 49% at the end of October). But, as 99% of us know, Obama pulled it off. In my circle; our America; the student body of the US Merchant Marine Academy, Romney’s loss left us young voters with mixed feelings; and deep philosophical questions. Romney performed well in our America– This is to say the America that consists of the military, of those making (or envision making) $50,000 per year, and a higher-than-average proportion of Caucasians. This America was Romney’s America, and seeing how well he was performing in our America, he was confident in his chances for victory- it will now be a minor legend that he had only prepared a victory speech for Election night in Boston. Just a glimpse into my circle is is the kitchen table on the ship where I spent the three months prior to the election: The 26-year-old son of an Army officer from Virginia concerned about Obama’s relation with the military, and of the income tax rate (“They’re milking me and my girlfriend!”). The 28-year-old libertarian who left California for Nevada because of taxes and restrictions on gun ownership (“There’s no income tax in Nevada—my mortgage now is what I was paying in taxes in California”). The gold-buying, gun owning 60-something from California who is disturbed by the increased activism of the federal government over his lifetime—and by how his state destroyed itself politically (“The problem is the young sheeple, their colleges, and their shoebox apartments—but you give me hope”). The well-read 50-something moderate from Vermont who thinks the Obama agenda is the wrong track for the country. And, speaking in a whisper... the NPR-listening liberal from DC... That’s the Captain they’re referring to. With so many reasons to vote for Romney, how did he lose? Simply put, Pro-Romney America made up a smaller part of America than it thought it had. It was Romney’s lack of connection with the reality of changed voter demographics that cannot be understated. Young (white) voters under 30 went for Romney: Forget the preconceived notions of liberal youth: Romney won with young caucasian voters. That’s all and well: In a survey of students at the USMMA, where I attend college, At least 80% of students consider themselves white. (White males make up 73% of the student population). But the prevalence of young caucasians at my college is an anachronism: between 35 and 40% of young voters under 30 are Black or Hispanic. Not to forget our Asian-American young voters. Given that the nationwide median age of presidential election voters is 44, it will become statistically unlikely for a presidential candidate in the future to win an election by the strength of the white vote alone. Despite winning 56% of the young
white vote (McCain carried 42% of these voters in 2008), Romney won only 38% of the youth vote overall. (http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2008/01/todays_median_age_voters_grew.html) The white vote won't win you the winning ticket anymore: Obama is the first president to be elected without the majority of the white vote. He achieved that distinction in 2008, when McCain won 53% of the white vote. It made news fairly soon after this recent election that Romney won 59% of the white vote, and swept 90% of the white vote in Mississippi and Alabama. Many commentators whose articles I read pointed out that whites in "liberal" states were responsible for re-electing our President. But according to a grid from www.dailykos.com, Obama won the "white vote" in just seven New England states and Hawaii. States where Obama won the white vote in 2012: Vermont—66.4% Rhode Island—58.9% Massachusetts—55.9% Maine—54.8% Hawaii—53.5% New York—51.9% Connecticut—51.8% New Hampshire—51.3% It’s no secret that Romney banked on high voter turnout among whites for his re-election. Indeed, Romney fared as well among white voters as George H.W. Bush did in 1988 when he swept 40 states. The simple truth is that voter demographics have changed, and banking on the white vote for victory is not a solution anymore in a good number of states. Take into account the states Obama won in 2012 with low support among white voters: Virginia—34.4% Florida—37.4% Nevada—37.8% Ohio—41.8% New Mexico—42.2% (If Romney had won these states, he would be the 45th President of the USA). There is a small tidbit of good news: we don’t really live in a Red State vs Blue State America. The divisions are not as stark as the state line: Red Americans live among Blue Americans. They may be neighbors. But the circles we affiliate ourselves with, or are put into, may define our view of what is happening around us. As much as my circle put our belief in the "Big Mo" Romney was riding after his October 3rd primary; another circle, say, liberal-arts college students, saw an Obama win as inevitable. The results, however, draw into question how integrated our society actually is. If America is really post-racial, how does the vote split so cleanly on ethnic lines, including among young voters? They (mainstream media and intellectia) talk about "multicultural America". How young people of my generation, of different ethnicities, interact seamlessly with each other. Says David Burgos for the industry magazine Ad Age, "Kids and young adults, for example, are more open to diversity in advertising because their world is already majority-minority". This talk of a "multicultural America", a diverse (and politically liberal) Obama-era America, is manifested in local listings of "most diverse elementary schools", parents going out of their way to ensure their children grow up in multicultural environments, and in the diverse crowds at Obama rallies that you see on TV. Perhaps, the mainstream media and intellectia shares the slim worldview that my circle had. As seen by how the vote split, their view of America is not as wide as it ought to be. "Multicultural America", where racial tension of any degree no longer exists, is relegated to just parts of the country—frankly, the Northeast. Elsewhere, votes were cast along racial lines. And as the election results turned out, my circle of America, consisting of those who benefit, or think to benefit, from a Romney presidency was not quite as large and encompassing as we had envisioned it to be. With the customability and subjectivity of news sources, credible and not, it became easy this election cycle to hear and see the news you wanted to hear. The danger, of course, is that the world view of members of each camp will devolve further from reality and objectivity. That is if there is nothing to ground a person in the reality of multiple ways of thinking about the world. And what about the young adults today? Between liberal-leaning and conservative-leaning youth how dissimilar are our growing-up experiences and our youth? And what does it take to reconcile these differences? *(http://adage.com/article/the-big-tent/role-whites-a-multicultural-america/229483/)
Chapter 7

2013

7.1 February

Historical Preservation and Chicago’s Judge of History (2013-02-09 12:22)

It has come to my attention that the University of Chicago plans to demolish a childhood home of Ronald Reagan to build a parking garage. As a kid, my Dad would take the family off the main road, up winding and dirt roads to former Presidents’ houses, usually a log cabin with a flagpost and a sign (a la President Buchanan). So that’s why I took a little bit more than a cursory glance at the issue. While it makes for a sensational headline that Obama intends to clear Reagan’s house out of the way for his own Presidential library, this is absolute fiction. But Reagan’s house may be short lived. It just feels a little uncharacteristic that a University like U. Chicago would contemplate tearing down this tasteful looking building, especially since gentrification and adaptive reuse are in vogue. And when the building is gone, perhaps there will be a 4-by-6 inch plaque reading “On this site...”, and maybe a little flower garden. Some would say that the inconsideration given to this century-old building is because Reagan’s politics were incongruent with Chicago machine politics. Although the machine may have had beef with the Gipper, it’s a fact of history that he won the hearts of the majority of voters in states with granola, bookish reputations (I mean this with positive connotations), like Oregon and Vermont (In fact, Minnesota is the only state Reagan did not win). And who in academia is to judge history? After putting disgraced Vice President (and former Maryland Governor) Spiro Agnew’s painting back up on the statehouse wall in 1995, then- Governor Parris Glendening, once a school teacher, stated: “It is not up to us to alter history. This is not an Orwellian future where history can change. We learn from history, warts and all.” But in Chicago, there probably is nothing to do with politics; rather, Reagan’s childhood apartment is a low-rise building that can be knocked down with a few swings of the wrecking ball. Profit can be maximized by building a high-rise parking lot. Universities are businesses, too. Throughout my childhood, I watched as my neighborhood university, George Washington University (GWU), buy townhouses and build large buildings. Some townhouses they preserved; others were demolished to make way for premium-rate dormitory towers. In the most recent case, GWU had a hand in the construction of a 12-story commercial office and luxury apartment building. One might call this mission drift, but the University had the interest of students in mind: the Whole Foods in the basement provides students’ kitchens with organic food on days when the farmer’s market across the street is not open. As for the University of Chicago and Reagan, the city government of Chicago is standing on the sidelines, allowing laissez-faire to take the day. Perhaps it’s just my DC bias to find tearing down buildings as unusual. DC is the city where just about every building is defended fiercely by the Preservation Board. Not particularly Reagan’s values. So maybe it’s an expected end for the home of a pro-market advocate. Then again... “You don’t know what you got till it’s gone They paved paradise to put up a parking lot” Reference: http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1995-04-14/news/1995104008 _1 _agnew-glendening-portrait
7.2 May

At sea again (2013-05-03 17:21)

I am not typically one to leave readers dangling, but it appears that I went to sea again without letting you all know. It is my second sea voyage, and there are a few things I intend to do differently: Sea projects- basically correspondence courses- work on the drawings early, so that there is time to add details later. Solitude of the seas- last voyage, my ship had some Internet access- as long as it was Fox or MSNBC news; or a .org/ . Gov site, you were good to go. I stated in touch with the world, but spent a lot of time for the satellite connection to load. This voyage, there is no Internet- I am in port in Corpus Christi right now. The ship, however, receives news headlines, and text-based email service is available. I have been, and will be, soon, enjoying the conveniences of modern life, aside from an Internet connection. Shore leave- this is what you call getting off the ship in port. My last ship would typically stay in port for a week or more (government cargo). But on a commercial ship, port stays are shorter- usually under 36 hours for a tank ship( which is longer than the 12 hours container ships average in port.) - and there is often work to be done- port stays are the business of making money on cargo. Delivering the product. So shore leave is lived to the fullest, whether it is the evening in Malta or an afternoon in Amsterdam. Writing this from my phone. What a surprise it was to have the Internet at my fingertips again!