

THE DAILY DISNEY

Disneyland, Anaheim, California

Wednesday and Thursday, May 22-23, 2013

MAGIC MOMENTS

A photograph of Sleeping Beauty Castle at Disneyland, illuminated with blue and white lights at night. The castle features multiple towers with blue conical roofs and white walls. The scene is framed by dark trees and foliage in the foreground and background.

Sleeping Beauty Castle at the end of the day. *STORY INSIDE*

MAGIC MOMENTS



Gordon and Emily are ahead of me in our Matterhorn bobsled as we head into a tunnel through the mountain.

At some point in his four years at UC Davis, Gordon decided he wanted to be a movie actor.

He had been performing in plays for 10 years by the time he graduated a year ago, but the decision on a career goal came as a result of a voyage of discovery that had its detours.

The beginning of that voyage almost certainly began with the first of his many visits to Disneyland – only weeks after his first steps – when he walked up to Mickey Mouse to shake hands.

Almost everything a visitor does there is in the context of appearing in a Disney movie, and when Gordon said he wanted Emily and me to take him one more time for his graduation present, it wasn't surprising.

It took only a year to coordinate downtime in our three work schedules to pull it off.

There were lots of great times in our two days. By going during the week before Memorial Day, the crowds were light and we had only one line, a 60-minute wait to ride the Radiator Springs Racers, the newest thrill ride in the California Adventure Park,

and used Fast Pass only once to avoid a wait for Space Mountain in the Magic Kingdom.

But the best for me was listening to Gordon describing the work of the actors playing the various Disney characters – many of them in costumes that hid their faces and prevented them from speaking – but also managing to communicate and interact with park visitors simply through gestures and body language.

I was listening to a pro.

We spent our second day in the California Adventure Park and had dinner in the Carthay Circle Restaurant, which is in a reproduction of the now-demolished Carthay Circle Theater in Hollywood. It was where Walt Disney's first full-length movie, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, premiered in 1937. While we waited for our table, a woman who introduced herself as Donna Lynn de Lauria and her dog Lady stopped by to chat. She said she lived on Buena Vista Street, which runs through the park, and left the distinct impression – without naming names – that she likes to pal around with guys like Clark Gable and Cary Grant. Lady was quiet and apparently eternally housebroken.

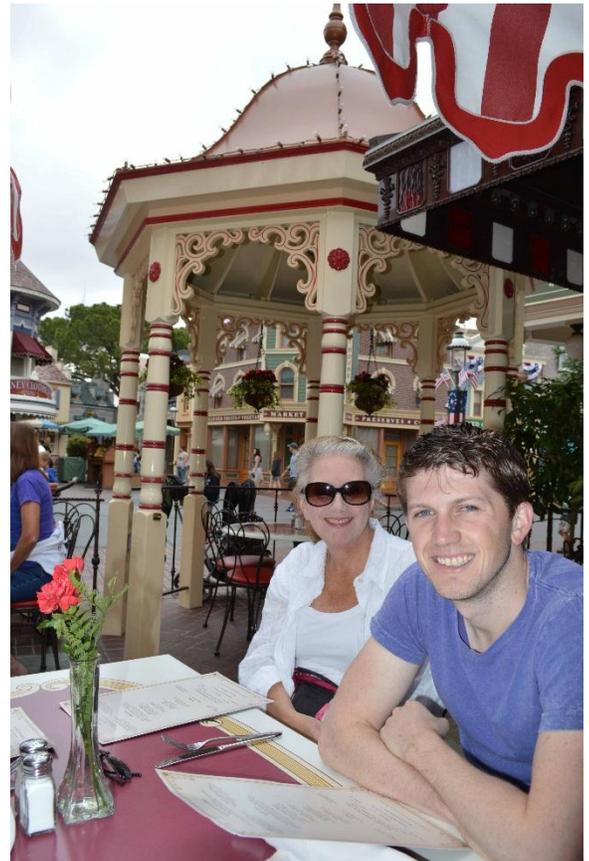


Outside the Carthay Circle Restaurant in the California Adventure Park.



Mickey Mouse does a song-and-dance on Buena Vista Street with a group of newsboys. Although the musical number was about following your dream of making it big in Hollywood, the newsboy characters with Mickey are from the 1992 Disney film *Newsies*, which was about the real-life New York newsboy strike of 1899. The strike was caused by newspapers raising the cost that newsboys had to pay for their papers and refusing to buy back unsold copies. As a result, the newsboys worked from morning until late at night for about 30 cents a day. The two-week strike, which helped lead to the first U.S. child labor laws, was led by a newsboy nicknamed Kid Blink, who was blind in one eye. Rallies drew thousands of newsboys and cut the circulation of the *New York World* from 360,000 to 125,000 copies a day. The papers eventually capitulated and – contrary to warnings from publishers like Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst – the First Amendment and journalism survived.

Breakfast on Main Street USA in the Magic Kingdom.





Upside down on the California Screamin' roller coaster.



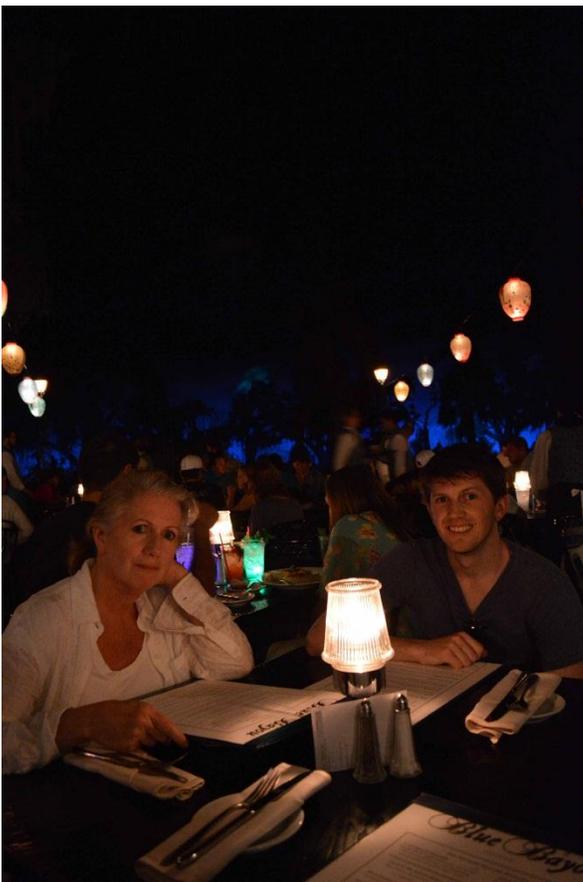
The crowd fills the 2,000 seat Hyperion Theatre, where we watched *Aladdin*.



Mickey's afternoon parade turns down Main Street USA.



The Haunted Mansion in New Orleans Square, Magic Kingdom.



Dinner in the Blue Bayou Restaurant in New Orleans Square.

GOODBYE FROM DISNEYLAND



The Matterhorn stands in the Magic Kingdom.