

## THE BIRTHDAY GIRL July 28, 2012

By Michael Erlewine ([Michael@Erlewine.net](mailto:Michael@Erlewine.net))

Well a birthday it was for my six-year-old granddaughter Molly. As many of the clan as could converged on our home in Big Rapids, Michigan for the festivities. Before I get to that I want to tell you how I threw my back out a bit.

Margaret and I were walking our dog Molotov and my daughter Anne's dog Lukah on leash a couple days ago down a long alley, when a loose dog that had to have St. Bernard in him because he was so large swooped out a yard and headed straight for Lukah. There was no familiar butt sniffing or nose-to-nose detent, but a full attack with fur flying.

Lukah, who is a thinish Husky and not prepared for this, was instantly being chewed up. I of course can't allow this and weighed in with my feet kicking the big dog in the ribs and trying to get a hold of him. Not sure if I helped any, but before I knew it the St. Bernard-type dog was off Lukah and had ahold of my dog Molly, who is very much smaller.

Now I was really determined to break this up and just kept doing as much damage as I could. Meanwhile the owner of the large dog, just a big kid, had arrived and was trying to pull the big dog off by grabbing his tail and yanking him back. The long and the short of it was that we managed to separate them and that ended it. In the meantime I had managed to get some nasty rope burns from the leash working against my skin and somehow threw my back out. In the end I was panting like I had just run a mile. I am getting old.

Now my back was not full-out or I would have been on my belly crawlin' for home, but it put it out enough that I have had to walk with a stoop for a couple of days, while Margaret applied some Arnica-type oil and massaged the bruised area. I am recovering, but I am getting too old for this kind of thing. Now back to the party.

Molly, the birthday girl, was all about getting ready for the party and moving its agenda along as swiftly as possible. And it was about the presents. But there were several things that had to happen first and one of them was lunch at Schuberg's Bar, probably the best hamburger joint in the area. We waited until after the lunch hour traffic, but it was Friday and it seems there is no such thing as an empty bar on Friday afternoons. It was packed and we had to wait to even get a small table for four, around which we jammed seven chairs.

That was OK, but the place was so loud that I gave up even trying to talk. It was like a carnival in there or the Fun House at the circus. I kind of went into park mode and waited it out. We managed some food but the whole place was like being underwater. You couldn't hear anything but the loudness. We could smile at one other.

After we got home, we got ready for the birthday party. Margaret had made two of the best blueberry pies I have ever tasted. That and some whipped cream for the likes of me (I don't eat sugar), and some ice cream for those who can have it and we were ready to party.

The photos kind of show you how it was from this point onward. The birthday girl was in heaven and she got more than a few presents. She counted six, and said that she got everything she

had wished for. Then we had pie and what-not. Now I am tired and may have to take a nap.

### Solar Flares

Yesterday there was an M2.7-class flare from a new sunspot, AR1532. No CNE-event seems to have been produced and even if it did, it would not be geoeffective.



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The moment of truth.



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Here is Molly early-on in the morning when this was all being put together. She definitely approved the décor.



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An innocent bystander, Lukah, kept an eye on all that was going on.



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The birthday girl herself, ready and waiting for the party to happen.



The overseeing frog on the dinner table. Our table just collects things like this, the sand/rocks from my niece Laura, the rubber frog from my daughter May.



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Ambiance.



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Michael Anne's daughter Emma was a happy participant in it all. She was party-ready.





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My grandson Max looks on as his sister makes out like a bandit. He did get what his mom (my daughter Lotis) calls a "pity present."



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No great rush, once the presents began, Molly is in her element.



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And the presents were everything Molly had hoped they would be.