

As If We Needed ANOTHER Reason To Stay Up Late...

Yesterday was gong to be a huge catch-up-around-the-house day for me; I had big plans – unpack the suitcase from our unwillingly shortened venture earlier in the week (my son has decided to be the first one of our kids who doesn't travel well. He won't sleep away from home, and he cries in the car – not cool for a family fond of road tripping), catch up on my email, and read and write some blog posts, among other things. I got through the email and caught up on my fellow tangents bloggers posts (this task was made especially easy since [one of us](#) has seemingly disappeared), but I never got around to writing any posts of my own. Time just slipped away from me yesterday; everything seemed to take forever. I had a huge shopping to do at my **favorite** place (bold represents sarcasm) Walmart. I was so tired that I got to the store and was waiting in the customer service line before I realized that I had forgotten the credit card at home – ugh. At least I only had one kid with me to reload into the car, otherwise it would have taken even longer.

Aside from the busyness and the fact that I should go to bed earlier but never will, I've been sleeping much better lately – that Claritin is a life-saver! Still can't get a cat though – we took the kids to the Humane Society the other day (just looking – we actually left without a new pet, hmmm, don't think that's ever happened before!), and I just gazed at a cat and sneezed; I didn't even touch it! What a shame because our friends have 2 litters of teeny tiny adorable farm kittens right now! But back to why I was so tired that everything took forever yesterday. My husband was asked to review the local community theater's youth production for the newspaper, so we took the kids (minus Sir Climbs A Lot) to see the show. Well, shows, actually, the turnout was so great for the youth

theater this year that there were actually two plays. And a few of our game night friends were involved, so it was fun to see them on stage. But by the time we got home and got the kids settled down to start writing the review, it was past 11:00! And because the turnout for youth theater was so great (which is an awesome thing), we had 37 kids to mention in the review. And here's the doozy – 37 kids to mention and no program! There was an error at the printing company, and the programs were not ready for our special dress rehearsal pre-screening on Thursday night. The director made us a partial cast list, but it still took awhile to figure out who was who enough to write a review. Luckily, the kids had done a nice job and the shows were adorable, so some of it was easy writing, so we were chugging along (well, I was playing a video game since Hubby was chosen to write the review and needed my computer, but I was helping) when all of a sudden, something comes FLYING into our living room. And no, it wasn't the usual parade of kids – I mean flying literally. It was a displaced wild bat (we have pet rats, not a pet bat – yet), and it was flying panicked around our living room. I'm not afraid of bats, but it was a sudden thing to happen at lish in the morning, so I cowered next to my husband until it left the room. I was really afraid it would fly into the halogen lamp – I've smelled the roasting bugs that became victims of the halogen; a bat in there would leave quite a mess, poor thing. So anyway, now we had to locate the bat and show him the door. In case you're reading this and you're horrified and re-thinking any future visits to our house, be assured that like fellow rural NW Ohio older homeowners (wait, I said that wrong – I'm not old, the house is!) we've had a bat in the house before. And like the previous occurrence, this one was captured without incident and returned to the wilderness. But first, we had to build a bat relocation contraption and stumble around on chairs at 1:30 in the morning trying to catch the thing. But we managed, and he happily flew away when released outdoors, and it was still before 2 in the morning. But my poor tired husband still had

to finish that review – which is where I got my post title; I can't believe that bat interfered with my sleep cycle! All was said and done and we were both asleep just before 3, followed by a busy (and forgetful) Friday with a game night which led to another late night. Yawn. So why am I sitting here blogging instead of napping? Oh yeah – 4 kids = no napping.

Faith

Well, we found a church home in March, and it's been going very well; we love it there. The month of August is filled with church opportunities for us – a few classes we're taking, a carnival for the kids, I'm volunteering in the Welcome Center, and we just went to a retreat at a beautiful Christian campground in Michigan yesterday. But this post is not about THAT type of faith – it's about a dog named Faith who was born with only a stub instead of front legs. They had to remove his stub, and his mommy and first owner rejected him. His new owner named him Faith and taught him to walk and get along without his front legs just fine. How cute is this?





Thanks to Elizabeth for sending this to me!

It Runs In The Family

My aunt sent me the following picture of my cousins at the Cubs game the other day down in Florida – it's a screen shot from WGN. At least they got to go to the game where the Cubs beat the Marlins at LandShark Stadium! In case you're wondering, the Cubs are doing very well right now – over .500 and just a half game out of first place. They've been playing some GREAT baseball and are very fun to watch these days – GO CUBS!



Why We've Already Packed Away The Baby Walker...

Because he's a boy.

The other day, I was sitting in the living room when some action in the area of my son's walker (the thing the baby stands in that has wheels on it, allowing them to walk easier) caught my peripheral vision. I silently watched as he turned around and proceeded to climb up and out of his walker, backed down the front of it, and quietly sat on the floor like nothing had happened. Then it dawned on me that I hadn't even put him IN the walker in the first place! I checked with my husband, and he hadn't put him in there either, and later that evening it was verified as we watched him do it again – my son had put *himself* in his walker in the first place before he climbed back out again. He acted like a pro, so who knows how many times he's done this, but needless to say, the walker has been packed away before he even used it to help himself walk. But that leads me to my point – we've had 3 girls and now a boy, and we are starting to see the major differences between little boys and little girls; the most noticeable at this point being that boys **climb EVERYTHING!** My son can climb before he can walk. He's been climbing stairs for awhile already, and the other day he climbed the table in the laundry room, and he can almost climb up onto the couch. I can't imagine what it will be like when he CAN walk, YIKES!!!

The End Of The (Band) World As We Know It...

Our town holds the distinction of having Ohio's oldest city band – it's over 150 years old. Remarkably, this city band has had only 3 directors since 1888 – the current director has conducted the band for 48 years! But at the age of 96, this was his last year with the band – and last Wednesday's concert was his last. The turnout was incredible – for a small rural town, an audience of 1,000 was beyond expectations, I think. Usually, we can hear the band concerts from our backyard, but there was a threat of rain for this last concert of the season, so they moved it across town where they could have it under a roof. We drove over for just a little bit, and even though we stayed in the car in the parking lot (sleeping kids), it was very enjoyable to listen to the band in the night air.

I would have liked to play for the band under this band director, just to meet him and be a part of town history, but my schedule does not allow for this as a hobby right now. I guess I'll have to wait until my kids are grown and I can play under the direction of the city band's **4th** conductor since the 1800's – providing I still have the skills to play in a band, that is – I am quite rusty even now, let alone years from now! But as I was saying, the city band as we know it is about to change...

A Nielsen Family

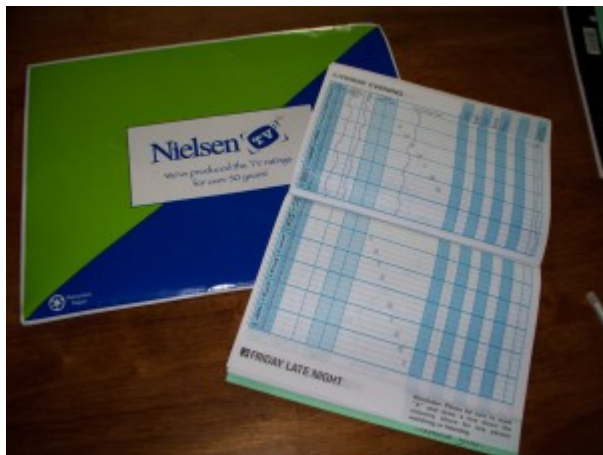
It began with \$3 cash being enclosed in a letter – we had been

selected to be a Nielsen family. You know the Nielsen company – basically, they gather information about how many people are watching what on tv in order to determine how much commercials should cost. So anyway, they sent \$3 cash, and I have to admit, that piqued my interest. They called with a short phone survey, and a few weeks later, we received a large envelope with 4 booklets (tv diaries), and \$30(!) cash. There were instructions; all we had to do was record what we watched on which tv for a week. But it turned out to be easier said than done...

Recording what is watched on all of the tv sets (what year were those diaries printed – who says “tv sets”?) in our household turned out to be quite a challenge! First of all, we have a parrot in the laundry room, and his tv is on all the time. I don’t always know what is playing, but I do know that the bird loves The Price Is Right. So I made a little note in our tv diary for that tv and mentioned that it’s on all the time for the pet parrot and that he especially likes The Price Is Right. I made sure to notate that I don’t know if he prefers Bob Barker or Drew Carrey, though...

And then there is the kids’ tv, which is in their room. I know they watch a whole lot of the Disney channel, but I don’t know what’s always on it. Because it’s summer, we didn’t watch much tv in the living room; we mostly use that tv for movies on DVD. It was challenging to remember to write down details every time a tv was watched, and if we forgot, it was hard to remember what was watched. So at times the task was daunting, but we had already accepted the payment, so I felt that we had to follow through with the project. Overall, it was a neat experience, and if they value our input, there will be a lot more of The Price Is Right, The Office, and hopefully Cubs baseball on tv ☐

Just for the heck of it, I took a picture of one of the tv diaries and the envelope:



Overall, a fun experience, but next time I might have to decline depending on how old the kids are when our names come up again. It was very difficult for me to have to complete “homework” with 4 small children underfoot – hard to say if it would be worth the \$30 again... maybe if the kids are older and can fill out their own diaries...

A Bridge Over Not So Troubled Water

I received a cool picture via email the other day – a river bridging over another river! It’s man-made of course, but what a feat! It bridges the River Elbe in Germany and connects two important shipping canals. The project was put on hold indefinitely when Germany was split during the last century and was finally completed in 2003. I think this is pretty cool, so I’ll share it and thank fellow tangents.org blogger [Jamiahsh](#) for sending it to me. I don’t know why he didn’t put it on his blog, but I figure he probably would have gotten a chance by now if that’s what he wanted to do with it ☐ Check it out:



For more information about the bridge, [click here.](#)

“It’s Kind Of Like A Kid’s Birthday Party...”

The title of this post is a quote from my favorite tv show, The Office. Now I must go on a brief tangent to find out when this awesome show starts for the season – there it is, September 17, ugh, almost two months to go! Time to add a countdown to the site...

Tangent over. Anyway, in the tv show The Office, they have an annual awards show called The Dundies. The lovable yet jerk of a boss, Michael Scott, gives (mostly silly) awards to his staff, and the workers generally are not thrilled about the Dundies. A character named Oscar Martinez says the following about Michael and his Dundies: *“The Dundies are kind of like a kid’s birthday party, and you go, and there’s really nothing for you to do there, but the kid’s having a really good time, so you’re kind of there? That’s... that’s kind of what it’s like.”* The reason I’m sharing the quote with you is because it

floats through my mind every time I invite our family friends to one of my kids' birthday parties. I have 4 kids, one born in every season, so we have a birthday party around here every few months. For the older ones, we invite their friends from school, and we invite family and a few of our adult friends to the parties for the younger ones. I really hope no one is ever bored – it is, after all, a bunch of adults sitting around at a kid's birthday party. We don't play "pin the tail on the donkey" or break a piñata; it's just a reason for a bunch of us adults to get together, chat, and have some cake. This is exactly what we did this past Sunday at my son's first birthday party. He had a really great time, and so did his sisters helping him open the presents. He turned blue from his birthday cake, which he absolutely loved, of course!



BEFORE: *(his bib says "My 1st Birthday", but he hated it and is trying to get it off in this picture)*



AFTER:

He also got lots of great presents – some adorable outfits and cool toys that actually kept him busy for more than 10 minutes! He likes his new toys so much that he's been playing with them non-stop! They've actually kept him out of trouble – well, kind of, he did have two baths out of necessity already today and he spilled a glass of water all over my computer wires, but that's nothing for him.

So thanks again to everyone who attended – he especially loved it when everyone sang 'happy birthday' to him!

Library Update

A few blog posts ago, I made a plea to save Ohio libraries because the governor was proposing a budget plan that included a major cut in library funding. The vote went through the state legislature, and the budget was re-worked in such a way that the libraries received less than half of the budget cut that was originally proposed, so YAY! Our voices were heard! In this economic crisis, it is understandable that funding is going to be cut on certain community resources, so let's hope that our libraries can figure out a way to continue their many services without changing too much in light of these cuts. I received an email back from one of the congressmen, so I thought I'd share it below. Not that the letter was written personally for me, but it's nice to have my efforts acknowledged. Hopefully my friends who work for the state can keep their jobs in light of the budget re-working!

Dear Ms.

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns over Governor Strickland's proposal to reduce the general revenue transfers to the Public Library fund by \$227 million over the next two years. A vital aspect of democracy

is that all citizens are able to express their views, and I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with me. Although I was not able to respond to you prior to the budget vote, please know that your correspondence as well as messages from across our region and the state had a major influence on my work on this bill and, ultimately, how I voted.

Due to the economic situation that the State of Ohio is encountering, all agencies and departments have been forced to absorb cuts in state funding. Fortunately, during the conference committee, an agreement was reached to reduce the Governor's proposed cut to library funds so that libraries statewide will experience only an \$84 million cut over the next two years. While I realize that this is still a considerable reduction, it is substantially lower than the \$227 million originally proposed by Governor Strickland.

Again, thank you again for contacting me with your concerns on the budget. If I may ever be of assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to write or call.

Sincerely,



Steve Buehrer

State Senator

1st Senate District

VIPs For A Day (part three

of... well, I'll try to make this the last part)

If you've read my first two blog posts about our trip to King's Island, then you know that I've rambled and chronicled, and now I'm blue in the face and ready to move on. I would like to rate most of their rides though for those who are curious and/or contemplating a visit to the theme park. Somewhere there is a Discovery Channel show about the 10 Most Extreme Roller Coasters I'd like to see – I hear King's Island has 3 or more on the list! Going to hope that it's on youtube... If you haven't read my previous post, here is my ride experience scale: 1♦ = not so good, while 5 ♦ = awesome!

The Racer – 3♦. A wooden racing roller coaster that doesn't really race. According to our guide, people on the different racing trains would trash-talk each other so much that they built a wall to separate the two train colors. When we rode, the first time the blue train was not operating, and the second time, the trains did not go at the same time. Still a fun wooden coaster though!

Flight Deck – 1♦. Formerly called Top Gun, but whatever you call it, we did not like it. It's a roller coaster whose car is suspended from the track above the car, which basically amounted to a lot of swinging. Ok for me, not my favorite, but it made my husband sick.

Vortex – $\frac{1}{4}$ ♦ – This one only gets a quarter star to put it on the map – my map key didn't exactly contain a zero, so let's give it a quarter star just because it's a coaster. But otherwise, yuck. Jerky, but without any real thrills. Reminds me of the Shockwave they used to have at Six Flags Great America in Gurnee Illinois. Funny how I used to ride that over and over, especially near park closing when it would empty out. We would just stay on Shockwave until they kicked

us off! But as an adult, the ride type doesn't work for me.

Invertigo – 3♦. I need to go back on this one when it isn't lunch time! I think the Flight Deck/Invertigo/haven't had lunch yet combo did me in as I felt a bit queasy after this one. Basically, you go up and through a loop, and do the same thing backwards. The cool thing about this one is that you face other riders, which I actually don't know if that's a cool thing or not – our guide recommended we try sitting on either the front or back of this one so we didn't have to face strangers on the coaster. I did enjoy how this one whizzed through the station though, and like I said, I will have to try it again on a full stomach.

Sponge Bob 3D Ride – 4½♦. I really liked this one! A lot of fun, and much more movement than its counterpart at Universal Studios, the Jimmy Neutron ride. It's a 3D Sponge Bob movie where the seats move as you move about Sponge Bob's world. The scenery is great, and not only is it 3D, but the rider actually gets to move along with the movie. As a bonus, the movie is very funny, and I loved the story!

Whitewater Canyon – 4½♦. You know the type – a large round boat makes it way down a "river", complete with rapids, drops, and waterfalls. I always love this type of ride and much of the fun is riding it with your friends or even strangers trying to see who is going to get the most wet! The day we went, it was an unseasonal 70°, and getting wet wasn't quite as enjoyable as usual. This is actually one of the smaller versions of this type of ride that I've been on, and the boat seated 6 people instead of the usual 8, 10, or 12 as I've seen before. But this version has an added element of fun – friends, family, and people who have ridden the ride can take revenge on riders by putting in a quarter for a chance to launch a water cannon at passing boats. This part is lots of fun, although they need to get the change machine working so more people can squirt! We went on with some kids who didn't get wet enough in their opinion, so they rode again while we

kept watch at the water cannons and succeeded in getting them SOAKED!

Backlot Stunt Coaster – 2♦. Lameness. But remember, I'm used to Universal Studios since we try to trek to Orlando yearly. This has nothing on Universal. But I suppose for younger kids, it could instill a feeling of bravery as they race past exploding police cars. It goes kind of fast up a winding track, which is kind of different, but other than that, the excitement kind of fizzled, and the ride isn't all that long. The brightly colored cars you ride in are super-cute, but does that really matter?

Adventure Express – $1\frac{3}{4}$ ♦. This is also kind of lame, which is alright, not every coaster has to be top thrill. But this one is like Big Thunder Mountain Railroad at Disney, but that is bigger and faster. Adventure Express was going alright until the rider finds himself in a climatic tunnel, climbing a lift past moving robots and everything. Then when you reach the top – nothing. Nada. Literally – the ride ends here. What the ?

Scooby Doo and the Haunted Castle – $4\frac{1}{2}$ ♦. You ride through scenes of Scooby Doo trying to shoot the bad guys with a laser gun attached to your car – cool! Even better, I actually beat my husband on this one! This ride is a lot like Buzz Lightyear at Disney, and I can never even get close to Hubby's score on that one. He must have had an off-ride though, cuz the second time we rode he beat me silly again. Oh well, this ride is awesomely themed. They remembered quite a few of the bad guys from the old Scooby Doo tv show, and there were sound bites galore. The castle looks awesome from the outside, and we even drove a Mystery Machine:



Other fun rides at this park that deserve at least an honorable mention are the railroad (just a standard train ride, but oh-so-relaxing after a huge day of coaster riding!), the Wild Thornberry's River Adventure (kind of a lame log-flume type ride, but still lots of fun), the Eiffel tower (we didn't ride it, but it was gorgeous to look at), and Dodgem (plain ole bumper cars, but when is the last time hubby and I got to ride 'n bump kid-free? I don't even remember!). Because we splurged and got the guided tour, we even had time to catch some shows – an ice show and an 80's review. The ice skaters were pretty good; especially one guy who even did a triple axle! The 80's show was fun, even though many of the performers were incapable of both singing and dancing at the same time. There was a special Michael Jackson tribute, even though he had passed away only a week before our visit. But there were afros, mullets, big bangs, leg warmers, bright colors, even giant Rubik's cubes, and it was fun to sing along to the rockin' 80's tunes. One did get the feeling however, that not one member of the show had any idea of what the '80's was actually like...

So there you have it. I've reviewed and rated the rides I rode and found worth a mention. If you are thinking of visiting, you should know that King's Island also has a huge kids area, and many more rides I didn't mention. We tried to stay away from any rides with a lot of spinning or anything that looked too crazy (especially this one called Delirium):



It looked a little too crazy/dizzy for me; maybe if you go to King's Island, you can try it and let me know what it's like in the comments!