

# Gump in Iraq

In my previous post, I touched on “Where are they now?” when it comes to celebrities. I read an interesting article the other day about the “kid” who played young Forrest in [Forrest Gump](#), one of my favorite movies. [Michael Conner Humphreys](#) is now a 23-year-old young man who is currently serving in the army like Forrest Gump did in the movie, ironically enough. Another twist of irony – in the movie, a young undiscovered Elvis Presley teaches young Forrest how to dance, and Michael Conner Humphreys served in the same place that Elvis did in Germany when he was in the army! Humphreys joined the U.S. Army in 2005 and is currently an infantryman assigned to a tank battalion and is known by the nickname Gump. After a year deployed to Iraq in its dangerous Anbar Province, Humphreys was transferred to Fort Riley, Kansas. He will leave the Army when his enlistment ends on June 4, 2008, and has already landed a part in an upcoming World War II film, Pathfinder. It’s nice to see a former child actor making a good name for himself.

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## 15 Years Since Doubtfire?!

We put in the movie [Mrs. Doubtfire](#) for the kids the other day, and I was curious about what happened to the youngest daughter in that movie, [Mara Wilson](#), because I’ve always thought she was so cute. So I looked it up on [imdb.com](#), and discovered that this movie is 15 years old already!!! Which means that little Natalie, the cute girl from the film, is almost 21 years old! I looked her up elsewhere on the internet because I get curious about the “where are they now” aspect of celebrities, and I found the following interview she did while

promoting a Cinderella stage play she was in. It was from 2006, when she was 18, but little “Natalie” is all grown up, and it’s weird to see her as an adult... well, a legal one anyway. Here is a link to the video:

<https://www.spike.com/video/2702330>

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## **Gruesome and Disgusting – What are People Thinking?**

I can’t imagine what these teens were thinking... Teens often do stupid things, but this one is beyond stupid... I just don’t have much to say about this; I’m dumbfounded. I don’t understand how a person or persons would come up with such an idea – too bad they couldn’t use that “creativity” more productively!

<https://www.thesmokinggun.com/archive/years/2008/0509081corpse1.html>

And check out the part in the police report where they say that one of the defendants regurgitated upon being questioned... is that a consequence of remorse or fear of getting busted? Is there actually a chance that he realized how disgustingly heinous his crime really was?

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# New Tangents

Well, this is my second post with the new “backend” of the tangents.org website, and I have to say, so far I like it better! It really wasn't that difficult to get used to the changes, and so far anyway, I've found everything I need. If you've read my post called, “When Technology Attacks” then you know that I am reluctant to learn new ways of doing things on computers, etc. once I learn the original way to do them. It seems right after I learn something new, it changes, leaving me right where I started – feeling dumb, frustrated, and like I've wasted my time. But with the new tangents.org updates, I have to say that I'm pleasantly surprised since I've figured out everything I've needed to use so far by myself without it even taking any extra time! After that warning from O Mighty Admin, I have to say I was dreading the day when the updates would take effect, but now I see that my concerns were unfounded – for now at least!

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## Sorry Wrong Car!

So the other day I was waiting outside Walmart for my husband to get our Wii-fund... I know, I said I wasn't going to wait in the car with the kids anymore, but I dropped him off and went home to get some forgotten items for our Mother's Day excursion, so I wasn't sitting there the entire time. Good thing too, because I went home, bumbled around the house for a bit, came back and still spent a good 10 minutes waiting for him to make his return. But I turned the car off right away this time, and I was fully expecting it to take awhile because he was making a return at Walmart on a Saturday after all. I even made the joke, see ya tomorrow...

But while I was waiting, I heard the cargo door of our minivan open up, and I thought, that's strange, I didn't know he was going to be buying anything he'd have to put back there... so I look in my rearview mirror, and there's a strange lady standing there with a confused look on her face. "Sally?" she said. "Um, no, I think you have the wrong car..." I replied as my 2 little girls turned around in the back seat and stared at her. The van she was waiting for then pulled up beside us, with the driver – Sally, I assume – laughing hysterically while her friend loaded her items into the correct van this time and hopped in the passenger side. She rolled down her window and tried to justify her mistake, "See they look alike; I'm not crazy!" Well, her friends' minivan was a Chrysler Pacifica, whereas ours is a Chevy Uplander, and her friends was 2-tone with gray on the undercarriage, but I guess they were similar in color... but still, it was a funny experience and probably really embarrassing for Sally's friend – just a testament to what a circus Walmart can be on a Saturday no matter where you live... Sunday I have to go there just to pick up my daughter's birthday cake, ugh. Maybe I'll send my husband instead... no wait, I'd better not – I'd like him to make it back in time for the birthday party!

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## **Teacher's Pet – All Grown Up**

While serving on the board of a local community agency, a certain personality type came to my attention: teacher's pet. Yes, these people are alive and well and living as adults. Surprisingly it's not something one grows out of when he or she leaves school; rather, the behavior seems to evolve and follow the person into adulthood. I use the term "teacher's pet" loosely here because I don't know how else to describe it, so I will try my best to give examples. Back to this

person on the board – it starts when the person stops the flow of the meeting to contribute to every item on the agenda. I think it's good when people participate and share their ideas, but there is a fine line when their comments and "helpful" suggestions cross the line into being disruptive. Case in point – at a meeting recently, an item on the agenda involved discussing traveling to Chicago for a board training seminar. The teacher's pet of the group spoke up and went into great detail about how the board of this organization should actually be taking more than one vehicle on trips like these in case something happens to the vehicle. He explained that if the vehicle carrying the entire board of the organization were to crash or something else horrible were to happen, we would no longer have a board if the President, Vice President, etc. were all riding together. Good point, but a little extreme, I would say... This board is not in charge of running a country or anything close to that scale. I'm not saying that it's not important or that steps should not be taken to safeguard the staff involved, however, I don't think dividing up into 2 vehicles has anything to do with preventative safety and actually seems like it might put a strain on the budget (**insert another gas prices gripe here**). It's a good idea for the President and Vice President of the United States and other heads of government to travel separately but when talking about this particular group it just doesn't seem like a logical idea, especially not an idea that should have taken 20 minutes or longer to discuss.

A second example of adult teacher's pet behavior happens often in community theater. My husband and I are active in our local theater group, and while directing a few plays together, we've come across at least one individual who was a bit over eager to please the directors. Again, don't get me wrong, enthusiasm, especially for community theater, is a great thing. But when you interrupt the process of producing a play in order to offer "helpful" suggestions that aren't really helpful at all and just keep the entire group waiting

for you to finish talking, then it's probably better if you just let the director do what he or she needs to do. It's also especially annoying when people offer things to help with the show; be it labor, props, etc. only to not follow through and actually deliver the work and/or goods. Makes me think they were just sucking up to the directors!

So when I say 'teacher's pet', I guess I just mean those people who are so overzealous about showing and proving to others that they are participating in the group that they come forth with ideas that aren't always well thought out. Like I said, it's not that I discourage contribution, and by no means should people be made to feel that their ideas are stupid, however, they should use discretion in bringing up topics that are relevant to the conversations at hand and also make sure that they are going to follow through with what they say they will contribute.

*POST DISCLAIMER: None of the above comments have anything to do with anyone who is a regular reader of my blog!!! ☐*

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## **Happy Mother's Day!**

I had a wonderful Mother's Day weekend. We decided to celebrate Saturday in order to avoid the crowds at all the restaurants and other establishments; also it worked out well because my kids often need all of Sunday as a rest day to recuperate from the previous week and the weekend before returning to school on Monday. So, I slept in Saturday until I was awakened by the idyllic crow of a rooster... wait a minute... we do live in a rural area, but that was no rooster – it was a screaming parrot and it wasn't the least bit idyllic, just horribly annoying and not a fun way to get woken up.

But, it was nearing 10 am, and I figured I had left poor dad with the kids long enough.

I was making myself some oatmeal for breakfast when I was greeted in the kitchen by cute little girl #1. "Happy Mother's Day Mom!", she said, and gave me a stuffed animal she had found in her room. I find the re-gifting really cute; it's her way of sharing what she has and also displays her thoughtfulness in wanting to get me something but being too little to go out shopping on her own. She also gave me the most adorable essay she wrote in school – I will share, though it's much cuter to see it in 8-year-old handwriting:

*Happy Mother's Day! I love my mommy for many different reasons. One reason is that sometimes she gives me what I want at the store. Another reason is that she helps me do stuff around the house like make soft crunchy cookies. The last reason is she lets me have fun a lot like at the park! I think that my mommy is triffic, wonder ful, and vary funny.*  
*by Taylor*

Daughter #2 was next, and she handed me a singing gorilla from her room. "Happy Val-tine's Day, Mom!", she said, hugging my leg. She is almost 4 and apparently forgot the name of the day, only remembering that she was supposed to give me something and be well-behaved, but that's all that mattered to me! Don't be fooled, however... they are not perfect angels ALL of the time – my kids' Mother's Day sweetness was promptly followed by a HUGE knock-down, drag-out, screaming at the top of their lungs fight... The first of many throughout the weekend. We still had a great time though – my husband always does a great job of keeping his cool which is more than I can say for myself... but there was something going on with my oldest this weekend, and it showed!

Next, we decided to go to a neighboring city to go swimming in a hotel – my husband can get GREAT hotel rates online for most places, and the overnight getaway was exciting for the

kids and around the same price as driving somewhere far away (**insert gas price gripe here**) and spending \$ for other entertainment. Besides, being in the water felt WONDERFUL for my aching pregnant body... I would love to have access to a pool during a whole pregnancy sometime; it's amazing how the sensations of all the aches, pains, and extra weight just melt away when under the water. The kids had a great time, and we all got some exercise also, plus when we got home on Sunday, they all took at least a 2 hour nap – can't put a price on that! My husband of course, catered to their needs all day too, so really I got a whole Mother's Day weekend out of it – 2 days when I was supposed to get 1! I only hope I feel up to it enough to give my husband as great a Father's Day as I got a Mother's Day. But since I'll be even more pregnant by then, we might have to reschedule... ever heard of Father's Day in August? ☐

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## Reasonable Running Time?

How long does it take you to “run in” to a store? I suppose it depends on the size of the store and what you need. If you're running into the gas station to pay for gas, then it will probably take a fraction of the time it would take you to “run in” to a Super Walmart and pick up milk, diapers, and say, deoderant, or something else that is usually located all the way on the other side of the store.

But apparently the phrase “running in” has different meanings for different people. To me, it means ‘get in the store and get what I need as quickly as I possibly can’. To my husband, it means ‘get some shopping done so my wife doesn't have to get out of the car, and we don't have to bother unloading the kids’. The problem here lies where my husband is the *slowest*



*shopper you will ever meet.* This is **not** an exaggeration. I'm very thankful sometimes that I was blessed with a man who doesn't mind shopping, in fact, he even likes it, depending on what we're shopping for, of course. But it takes him **forever** to get *anything*. I still can't figure out why... is it because he reads every package of every brand of every product in which he's interested in order to comparison shop? Is it because he is unorganized and doesn't remember what he's at the store to get? Is it because he gets sidetracked and ends up shopping for three items when he's in the store to buy only one? It could be a combination of all the above; I haven't figured it out yet. But what I have figured out is to no longer put myself in the situation of being the car babysitter while my husband's 5 minute "run in" to the store turns to 10, 20, sometimes upwards of 30 minutes!

Now that I'm in the third trimester of my pregnancy, I don't always want to go in the store, whereas normally, I don't mind... like most women, I don't mind shopping, even if hubby is taking forever and a day in the electronics section. Which reminds me real quick – TANGENT ALERT – a brand-new Super Walmart in a town nearby has the right idea. They put a really nice big magazine section right by the electronics department with benches in between for the wives to park themselves while the husbands wishfully browse the electronics – Walmart doesn't often earn my kudos, but this is an example of some good store planning! Anyway, back to my venting..

So before the pregnancy, for some reason I was never the one who got to "run in" to the store – I always got the 'babysit-for-the-3-bored-kids-in-the-car' job, ugh. I finally put a stop to it because hubby's "running in" took so long, and then I got pregnant and don't have the foot power to last very long in stores anyway. So the other day, we're coming out of a store, and he says, very smoothly as he's already walking toward the Office Max and away from the car, "I'm just going to 'run in' real quick and check for something." Uh-oh. Did

he say 'run-in real quick'? You may take me for a fool, but I believed him. I thought he would be really quick because we had a meeting with a start time about an hour away, and he knew I wanted to make a few stops before the meeting, so surely he wouldn't jeopardize my errands by letting Office Max take too long... So I was under the impression that after I waddled to the car and pulled up to Office Max, he'd be ready to go... WRONG! I've been through this enough by now to know not to worry... I used to sit there and seriously think, 'what if he's being held hostage in the Office Max or what if he's passed out and gotten hurt or something? But we've been together for over a decade, so I now realize he's just a "forever shopper". I finished reading the daily newspaper and glanced around – no husband. I put on the radio and listened to a song or two... no husband. I checked the time and started to get irritated, dreaming of the ice cream stop that was going to be one of my errands before the meeting... no husband. I put on the mp3 player and listened to about 3 songs, trying to keep calm and not cry out of frustration (impatience+pregnancy-ice cream = easy tears) ... no husband. Now our new car starts to rumble and shake. Since we got rid of the Ford months ago, I didn't think it was a mechanical problem... then I remembered that the gas light had come on earlier, before my husband "ran in" to Office Max. I turned off the car, and waited some more. Finally he came out of the store – empty handed. I hadn't thought to turn off the car while waiting for him since he was just "running in", and now we were out of gas after idling for a good twenty minutes or longer – I hadn't been keeping track. Luckily there was a gas station right across the street, and instead of walking there and having to buy a gas can, he pushed the car and I steered it over to the gas station... it gave us time to blow off some steam... well, me anyway. I was also wondering what could possibly take a person so long in a store only to have them come out with nothing?!? But, I was literally too peeved to ask and I didn't want to talk about what happened at Office Max. All I knew is that my errands weren't going to happen

and I was going to the meeting ice cream-less.

In my husband's defense, he doesn't do this because he's not thoughtful or considerate; it's actually the opposite. He wants to save me from having to go into the stores, and save me from the trouble of having to deal with shopping hassles... and he takes long in stores even when I'm with him, that's just how he is... He just doesn't have a very good concept of time, and he doesn't realize that I'd much rather entertain the kids and myself in the store than in the car. Also, being a woman makes me prone to thinking ahead, while he is impulsive. If he had thought ahead about the Office Max errand, we could have discussed it, and I could have planned to get my errands done at the same time, or even gotten gas while I waited. Instead, since the Office Max errand was brought up at the last possible second when I couldn't even say no because he was too far away to hear me, I thought it'd be quick enough where I could leave the car on and not run out of gas. The good news out of all this is that the meeting ended early enough that I was able to get my daughter's birthday party stuff before that store closed, so really the only errand I missed that day was my ice cream. And I can do without putting more weight on my poor feet right now anyway, I guess... And this experience reinforced my mantra that I will NOT wait in the car while my husband "runs in" to anywhere ever again. At least not without a full library of reading materials or a laptop so I can blog about him while I wait... In case you think I'm being too hard on him by the way, I told him I was going to be blogging about this incident – he took so long we ran out of gas, for crying out loud!!! And NEVER will I wait in the car for him to 'run in' anywhere while the kids are with us!

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# When Technology Attacks

I have a love/hate relationship with electronic technology. I love and appreciate the advances that have been made in the world, and I use lots of technologically savvy stuff every day. But I hate learning the new stuff, and if I procrastinate, it seems that when I finally break down and learn it, something new immediately comes along to replace what I have just learned. And I am married to a technology addict. I know it's a common thing for men to be into electronics and the latest gadgets and all of that, but I think our house is exceptionally up-to-date on the electronic gadgetry, especially when it comes to computers. My problem with it lies where the technology becomes more of an inconvenience than it is a convenience. I have a few examples I will share:

1. Hi-Def Tv – My husband will sit and flip channels in the middle of a show just to try to find the hi-def version of the show. Of course he doesn't choose to do this during a Chicago Bears game or something **he** is inclined to watch. For those shows, he will actually think about it ahead of the show's start time. He'll sit and flip looking for high-def while I'm watching something, during shows like Dr. Phil or pointless reality shows. I know, these are dumb shows, so I shouldn't care about missing them. But if I'm going to sit and watch something, then I want to watch it, I don't want to miss any of it, otherwise I'm wasting my time. So, if I'm watching Dr. Phil, and hubby comes over and tries to find Dr. Phil in hi-def, I might just miss the background of a guest's story and not know what is going on for the rest of the show. Like I said, it's not like we're talking about high quality tv here, but who needs Dr. Phil in hi-def anyway?!?

2. GPS – I cannot tell you how many times our GPS guy has gotten us lost. Yes, we have a GPS system in our car with a male voice – he was on sale. I've always thought I was pretty

good at navigating; pretty good at being a human compass and learning the layouts of strange cities and towns pretty quickly. In the years before we had GPS (and kids!) we used to travel by car A LOT, and I was always our navigator. I'd like to think I got us out of more than a few scrapes with just my sense of direction and an atlas... But my past experience gets me no where compared to the GPS guy. He has taken over. My husband will insist that we follow Mr. GPS' directions, even while I'm saying they don't make sense. For one thing, he's led us into a lake before, literally. Well, luckily common sense did prevail there at the last minute... my husband stopped the car before he drove into the lake, but he was tempted to trust Mr. GPS, and drive into the lake, I know it. Maybe it sounds like I'm jealous of Mr. GPS, but I'm not, really I'm not. I just suspect that he might have it out for us, or that he is a practical jokester who gleefully directs us into predicaments just to see how we get out of them... Kinda sounds like a dumb sitcom – tune in each week to see how we maneuver our way out of whatever mess Mr. GPS has finagled us into this time...

Don't get me wrong – I do appreciate all the technology most of the time, in a way. If my husband weren't so into all these things, I wouldn't have all the cool gadgets that I have, and I would not know how to use anything, including my computer probably! But how ironic is it that this post has been sitting in my drafts for weeks now, not getting finished, just because other things kept coming up that I wanted to write about, so I wasn't getting a chance to finish it. But how ironic, that today when I went to tangents.org, I got the following message about learning new technology?!? If you don't hear from me for awhile, I'm just procrastinating learning the new “back end” of tangents!

*Well my friendly bloggers... I have some great news that is going to make you all very mad! Yes, you read that right. Tangents will be updated with the latest versions of the blog*

*software by next Friday and as soon as today (whenever it is released). Why will this make you mad? Because the backend you have worked to learn is going to look significantly different. But don't worry! You have the basics down. Once you take a few minutes to get used to the new layout you will be comfortable again and blogging on Tangents.Org will be better than ever!*

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## **I Never Thought About the Crate Being Square and the Turnstile Being Round...**

In case you've missed my previous posts about animals and Jack Hanna, let me explain that Jack Hanna is my favorite celebrity and how much I really enjoy following his adventures through zoo life. In case you don't know who Jack is, he is the man who gave Columbus, Ohio a zoo. They did have one before, even though many residents weren't even aware of it, but with Jack's brilliance in zoo management and marketing, the [Columbus Zoo](#) has become one of the most renowned zoos in the world today. These days, Jack spends his time filming tv shows of his own, and also bringing animals around the country for appearances in theaters and on other tv shows, such as David Letterman, Maury Povich, and Good Morning America in order to educate people about respecting animals. Whenever animals are involved, situations can easily become unpredictable. Throw Jack into the mix, and these situations now become hilariously entertaining *and* unpredictable. Things seem to happen to Jack, and if you'd like an example of what I mean, check out the following article detailing an animal mishap Jack encountered at the airport last September:

**COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)** – Animal expert Jack Hanna and an 11-month-old flamingo became trapped while trying to squeeze through an airport security turnstile. It took firefighters to finally get the flamingo out. Animal expert Jack Hanna had a close encounter with a flamingo Sunday. Hanna, the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and a frequent guest on nationally televised talk shows, was returning from a zoo fundraiser with a mongoose, a small leopard and the flamingo. Three other people were with them. The entourage arrived at the Ohio State University Airport just after midnight Sunday to find the terminal closed. The only way to leave the tarmac was through a 10-foot-tall metal turnstile with several horizontal bars – not the easiest exit to squeeze through when you’re traveling with boxed-up animals, Hanna said. **“I never thought about the crate being square and the turnstile being round,”** he said. Hanna, 60, pushed the flamingo’s 2-foot-by-3-foot compartment into the turnstile, then continued pushing while straddling the crate. “I was stuck like a worm. My eyes were as big as grapefruits,” he said. “I can’t describe the feeling in my stomach. I can’t move up or down. The bars are on your face.” Hanna said he eventually squirmed free, leaving the flamingo still wedged inside and everyone else trapped on the tarmac. He then walked to a nearby fire station for help. It took three firefighters to hoist the flamingo’s crate up and out of the turnstile, he said. Columbus fire department logs show the firefighters arrived at the airport at 12:30 a.m. for a “flamingo rescue,” spokeswoman Kelly McGuire said. Hanna joked that the next time he flies through the airport, the biggest animal he’ll bring is a gerbil.

If you were entertained by the preceding article, I highly recommend Jack’s book [Monkeys on the Interstate](#) which details his life before and during his days at the Columbus Zoo – it’s a VERY entertaining and funny read, especially for animal lovers and zoo enthusiasts. I really hope I can schedule some time to catch Jack at one of his appearances soon, but until

then, I will keep checking for him on Letterman and will probably check out the book for a fourth time!