

ONE More Time, She Says...

Yeah right. I've heard that before. I went to the dr. today and we were supposed to schedule an induction date – AGAIN. But we have to wait and see how I'm doing at another appointment – AGAIN! My body is very slow to react and I think that if I weren't induced, my babies would never come out. But Thursday is the new day, so we'll see how I'm doing then, and she said *hopefully* Friday I can be induced. Hopefully is the key word here because after going to the dr 4 times to get an induction date and not getting one, I'm starting to lose optimism. My husband says let's just wait until the 21st... that's funny because our first daughter was born on December 21st, our second daughter was born on May 21st, and our 3rd daughter was born on October 20th (the 21st was a Saturday and the dr. was off work and didn't want to induce me on a Saturday). So it's only fitting we should have a July 21st or even July 20th baby, right? But this whole pregnancy my dr. said she wanted to induce me a week before my due date (which is July 14 and she is adamant that it is correct) because I have large babies. My first was 7 lbs 2 oz which is normal, but my youngest two were 8 lbs 12 oz each with the last one being even a half ounce more than her sister... so it seems that they just keep getting bigger. Except today the dr. said this baby doesn't seem to be as large as the others, and since my body is not cooperating anyway... it's the waiting game we play.

I guess we've gotten spoiled with being able to set a date for having the other kids; we've gotten used to knowing when the babies are going to come, and it's hard to remember and realize the fact that it's not an exact science even in this day and age. I want him here ASAP of course, not only to meet him, but also for selfish reasons; mainly involving having my body back so I can do some things other than eating and sleeping. I feel so guilty about my lack of participation

around the house, but physically, it's become impossible to even push myself to do things like I was a few weeks ago... I can no longer bend over to let the dogs out, and bending over to do laundry is becoming more difficult by the day since we have front-loading machines. My muscles most of the time feel so tired that I worry they won't even hold up my own (very heavy) body, let alone strong enough to chase kids around... and my kids have been acting horribly lately – what timing. Hubby has really had to pick up some extra slack around here, well more than that really, he's doing almost everything... and I feel badly but what can I do but wait. My biggest wish of course is a healthy baby, and wish #2 on the list is an easy, painless labor, so if I get my wishes, all this waiting won't be so bad in retrospect. But in the meantime, I have so many people waiting on us... Grandma's been on standby from 2 states over for a week now since she is planning to come and watch the kids... Hubby's work is somewhat on hold since he must take frequent breaks to referee the kids. He's waiting until I'm in the hospital and Grandma has the kids, then he's going to work like a maniac in the empty house to build up our finances which have also been neglected during the waiting game... Not to mention all the wonderful friends and well-wishers who want to meet little Christopher! Maybe on Thursday I will have some better news... or I could actually start going into labor on my own before then... yeah right! ☐

The Fourth, Fireworks, and a False Alarm

We had a wonderful Independence Day – happy birthday USA! Went to the local airport where they have a fly-in breakfast every year. There are lots of planes to look at; some

grounded, some taking off and landing... and they even have a few that give rides. My middle daughter, the daredevil, was the only one who wanted to try an airplane ride, and she went up by herself! My husband doesn't like to fly, our older daughter is scared of everything including her own shadow, and I've developed a fear of flying over the years that left me frightened for my daughter on her airplane ride. But it turned out ok, she had a blast, and the pilot and other people there were very surprised that she was so unfazed for a 4-year-old going up in an airplane for the first time by herself. I'm really glad she got the opportunity to do so because I really don't want to pass down my fears to the kids. Seems our oldest somehow got the fear of flying, but its hard to tell from where since she is afraid of EVERYTHING. Maybe I can convince her to go up in our friends' plane next time he comes to visit... though that won't be any time soon because he was actually on his way here a few weeks ago and had engine trouble. Had to set down in South Bend and the airplane has been out of commission ever since... oops. At least nothing catastrophic occurred.

At night on July 4th, we spend the evening at the country home of some friends for a barbecue and fireworks. It was really nice chatting under the stars between the cracks and pops of the fireworks. I'm so glad we were able to have fireworks on the 4th because one of the things I just cannot get used to about rural life is their affinity around here to celebrate Independence Day with fireworks in late June. It drives me crazy because my birthday is on the 3rd of July, so my whole life it's been birthday and fireworks together, and that's the way I like it! And speaking of birthdays, they turned the barbecue into a birthday celebration for me... it was SO nice! It was supposed to be a chance for us to get together, and I kind of invited ourselves over because my husband has had fireworks sitting in our garage that he's been waiting to use for years, but we couldn't find a place. So when they mentioned last week that their son likes to blow off fireworks

on the 4th at their house... opportunity knocks. But then they got me a birthday cake and presents (including such CUTE little boy outfits for the baby and also some things just for me), and it was all very nice. So thanks so much to everyone who reads this blog who was there – it was lots of fun!

Saturday we took the kids swimming at a local hotel's pool since my husband has a business acquaintance staying there and had a meeting. I love being in a pool while pregnant – all the extra weight just melts off and I can't describe how wonderful it feels to actually be able to move my legs again... though I'm still paying for it today with soreness... but oh well, I think this is what I can look forward to from here on out – and it won't be long, at least that's what I keep telling myself. I really thought it wouldn't be long Saturday after I went swimming because I started having contractions. We were about ready to go to the hospital when I got up and walked around and they stopped. I think after being in the pool all day, I was so hungry and thirsty at dinner that I ate and drank a lot and just filled myself up too much... my body wasn't ready to sit down I guess and when I did, muscles began to protest. Such fun. But I did learn something... after I finish this blog I better go and finish packing my hospital bag... just in case!

Crazy Busy

In the past few days, I've been able to catch up a little, but I haven't written much before today and yesterday because we have been too busy having fun!

It started last Friday when we took the kids out to the [Fun Spot](#) in Angola Indiana. We had a great time, but I think I

learned a lesson about taking 3 kids out for a full day of fun in the sun while I'm trying to nurse a full-term pregnancy. It was over 80°, and we ran out of water and I got sick. I think what pushed me over the edge was trying to watch my 20-month-old as she sat at the edge of a pool while my other children and husband went on the water slide. It's hard to explain to someone who doesn't know, but being this hugely pregnant is basically like being incapacitated – if my toddler had fallen into the water, it would have taken me way too long to get over to her. There was a lifeguard present, but still I was a nervous wreck and the stress of the situation was too much, so I picked her up and took her away from the pool. This of course made her cry, and so the exhaustion came from trying to redirect her and do something else in the heat... it was all just too much for me when all I wanted was a seat in the air conditioned arcade. And for his part, my husband only got to go down the waterslide once which also made me feel badly because he had so much fun, but I just couldn't handle our toddler any longer in the heat alone.

After the water slide fiasco, we made our way to the animal area – they have a macaw parrot and a few baby deer and some big cats. They are rescue cats; lions and tigers and a cougar, and I'm not sure where they were rescued from. I was a little disenchanted with how small the animals' enclosures were, but since they are large cats and spend roughly 20 hours a day sleeping, I think it's a good thing that they've been rescued at all and get food and shelter every day.

Then it was time for more rides, and this place is built for kids my daughters' ages! They have about 10 kiddie rides which all 3 of them could ride, and my 8-year-old still really enjoys these since she's not ready for big rides yet. Her little sister, on the other hand, cannot wait until she is a little taller and gets to ride the 4 roller coasters the Fun Spot also has. Then they have several middle-of-the-road rides for everyone, like flying boats, a scrambler, a tilt-a-

whirl, and even more I'm not mentioning. Compared to the carnival that just left our town, admission into the Fun Spot is a steal – it was \$4 for me, a non-rider who just wanted to visit the zoo. Our little toddler cost only \$4, and she was able to ride about 10 rides. Our 4-year-old was \$8, and my husband and our oldest were \$16 each. So for a grand total of \$48, it was a full day of family fun and much cheaper than the traveling carnival or even the county fair, based on what you get for your money. And I have to add that in June – too bad it's over now – but in June they had a special promotion where if you bring in a report card with A's and B's on it, the kid that earned them gets in free! So subtract \$16 from our \$48, and our day of fun was only \$32 – we were really pleased. The only problem with the place is that they are at the mercy of the weather always, and with all the rain and storms we've been getting, our day of fun was no exception and was cut short when a sudden storm moved in. But it was only an hour and a half away from closing anyway. Also, we had been about to leave as it was, and the staff handed out half-price admission coupons, so we will definitely be back when I can enjoy some of the rides myself after the baby is born. And I will be able to give hubby another few rounds on the water slide! We were so pleased with the place that we tried to go back Sunday since we wanted to take advantage of the report card promotion one more time before June was over, but alas, the weather foiled our plans and we ended up at [Crazy Pinz](#) in Fort Wayne, Indiana instead. Still a fun day, but no where near the value of Fun Spot. Crazy Pinz is an indoor entertainment place, and they have an arcade, mini-golf, bowling, and a 3-story play area for the kids. We've been there before and really liked it, but this time, everything had changed and was MUCH more expensive. But, we had 4 little kids (brought a friend along) who really thought we were doing something really fun that day, so what could we do but spend the day at Crazy Pinz regardless. I have to mention that somehow, on the way to Fun Spot on Sunday, my husband and I got to talking I guess and somehow missed the exit and

overshot the place by about 20 miles. (Sorry for not using you, Mr. GPS, I thought I knew where we were going!) Then Fun Spot was closed for rain, so we had to head down to Fort Wayne, and overall we ended up spending an extra \$20-30 on gas... Kind of a big oopsie with gas prices being so high in this day and age. It was a bad luck kind of day, but we did end up salvaging it, and overall, it was an AWESOME weekend.

Saturday we went with friends to see the movie [Wall-E](#) and then visited a friend who is recovering from heart surgery. He is doing well thankfully, and we all enjoyed our visit together – even the kids, who played with cats and bugs and other creatures found around their house in the country. We ran up to their church which was having an ice cream social and enjoyed delicious food and homeade ice cream – a dream for a pregnant lady – YUM! Wall-E was pretty good and as it turns out, the Pixar people had a brainstorming meeting years ago, and this is the last film to be made from ideas presented at that meeting. Others are [A Bug's Life](#), [Monster's Inc.](#), and [Finding Nemo](#), so needless to say, that brainstorming lunch should go down in history! I have to say I was a little taken aback by the lack of human dialogue in Wall-E. Even after seeing the previews, I wasn't prepared for it. I think this is what may have finished off my 4-year-old since she had to leave the movie theater with dad before the movie was even half over. She's been able to make it through the last 5-10 movies we've been to in a theater, so that's why I think it was the lack of dialogue in this one that did her in. It was a cute movie though, but not on par with Pixar's latest features like Monsters Inc. or especially Finding Nemo, at least in my opinion. Then again, it was SO different, mostly because it was so futuristic that I suppose it's hard to compare to the others.

So yeah, fun extended weekend, even though piles of laundry await my folding. If you're anywhere nearby, head out to Angola, Indiana and visit the Fun Spot, it's well worth it

especially if you have really little ones – it totally trumps a place like Six Flags with their high admission prices and long lines.

Hereditary Thespianism

Ok, so thespianism is not a real word, but it should be! My husband has been acting in plays since an early age, and I was even in shows way back when before the stage fright got ahold of me, so it's only natural that we've been waiting for the chance to get our daughters involved in plays and community theater. Now that our oldest has finally reached the minimum age to participate in the local summer children's theater, we find ourselves back in the world of rehearsals 3 nights a week – yuck to that part of it.

But we are greatly anticipating her stage debut in the Phantom Tollbooth... though judging from her audition, she is more like me on stage than her father. Hopefully she'll overcome her shyness because she will have lots of fans in the audience! Performances are August 1, 2, and 3rd in case you're wondering!

Too Much To Expect?

This is going to have to be a very brief post... We've been SO busy lately, and I would love to make a post or two about all the fun things we've done this weekend, but my 20-month-old is quickly approaching her terrible two's and is constantly

spilling things and needing attention; therefore, I cannot sit long enough these days to make any kind of worthwhile post. My 8-year-old is off school for the summer, and started off as a really big help with her little sister, but since it's almost July, her enthusiasm for helping around the house is waning. Part of me feels badly expecting her to help out and babysit so I can get some rest and her father can catch up on work, but then I also feel somewhat irritated that we went to all these fun places all weekend, even spending extra money for her to be able to bring a friend along, with no chance for me to recuperate. I can't help but think maybe we overdid it this weekend... How is she going to learn any appreciation when we're constantly doing fun stuff and she doesn't have to contribute (much) to the work load around the house? On the other hand, being the youngest child when I was growing up, I was never expected to watch over a younger sibling, and I have no idea how much to expect from her – I don't want to use her or take her for granted as a built-in-babysitter...

All I know is, it would be wonderful if I could catch a break around here and have a good week or maybe even a few days to rest before my body must endure the huge ordeal of giving birth – I'm not sleeping at night very much and today the Dr. confirmed my suspicions that the baby has dropped, leaving me feeling constant pain and pressure down below which is exhausting in itself... Time to get off my rear end to make lunch, more later, I hope!

Doomsday – A Week Away?

One week from today, I will be hitting a milestone – the big 3-0. To say I am dreading it would be a huge understatement. It's not that I feel old – at times I do, but mostly I enjoy

being older because in some ways, my early 20's really sucked. After working out the growing pains of my early 20's and figuring out how and where to settle our family for the rest of our lives, my late 20's went really well. But there are a few things about turning 30 that have me feeling a little depressed lately...

This first thing is really not a big deal, just food for thought, really – I read an article about a year ago about fashion etiquette, and apparently etiquette says I can no longer wear my hair in pigtails. They say 30 is too old for this. I haven't worn my hair in pigtails since I was about 6 years old, but it's the principle of it now being inappropriate because I'm too old. What if I wake up one day wanting to wear my hair in pigtails all of a sudden? Not really a catastrophe, but again, it's just the principle – something I CAN'T do... Maybe I should wear my hair in pigtails ON my 30th birthday...

My biggest qualm about turning 30 is that I feel too old for a career. Over the past year and especially in the last few weeks, I've been thinking about all the things I'll never be nor do because it's too late... So I guess this is it – I am officially locked into the Mommy career path, sigh. Not that there is anything wrong with that, some people thrive on it. I'm just not one of them. While I truly appreciate being able to stay home and watch my kids grow without having to take some low-paying horrible job, I will also greedily admit that sometimes it's not enough. Sometimes, I think about maybe taking a minimum wage job, just to be able to contribute, just to be able to have a logical conversation with adults during the day. Most of my daily conversations now revolve around poop, Barney, Hannah Montana or what was stuffed into the toilet. When a person is in their 20's, I always figured that was the time for establishing one's career path, but my 20's are gone, so I guess this is it. Some days, I'm ok with it. Some days I don't even have time to really think about it.

But other days, I think about how I want to do something much more productive and lucrative, make a mark on the world while having fun and feeling like a contributing citizen... I know, there are lots of people (especially stay-at-home-moms!) who say that raising happy, healthy, successful children IS the most productive and rewarding job out there... But that's easier said than done. First, I don't yet know if my efforts will be fruitful – what if the kids don't turn out so well? And second, and I hate to say this, but I will anyway – some days it just doesn't seem like enough... I want to be creating something, doing something, making money – I lack that immediate sense of accomplishment in my life, and I am a person who thrives on immediate payoff for effort. Third, there's always the thought in the back of my head – what am I going to do with myself when the kids are grown and in school? I will be in my mid-thirties at the youngest, and since I didn't use my 20's to develop career skills for myself, where will that leave me when my days are no longer filled with changing diapers, preparing meals, cleaning up spills and mishaps, and chasing after kids? Lately I've been dwelling on all the careers I've let it get too late to pursue, but there's also the terrifying thought – suppose I actually had some free time for myself... WHAT ON EARTH WOULD I WANT TO DO WITH IT? I never have any free time, so I don't even know what I would do if I got some, and that for some reason, is terrifying!

I'm sure the pregnancy is adding to some of the anxiety I'm feeling about hitting the big 3-0. After all, I'm due, well, actually, scheduled to give birth only 5 days after I turn 30. And like I said, most days I can look at my 4 beautiful children and think, wow, creating them is a lot to accomplish by the age of 30... But what about the dark days when all 4 are acting up at the same time, and I just can't feel pleasure nor reward in the career path I've chosen? And most of all, what career is just going to suddenly pop out of the woodwork for me once the kids have grown and aren't so needy?

Can't I just turn 29 again?

Last Chance

This is probably one of the last posts I'm going to write about pregnancy. As we get down to the end, there's not much to report (I cannot physically do much TO report!), and I will definitely post pictures of the baby. I started my weekly Dr. visits a few weeks ago, and today, finally we are starting to see some action. The Dr. says my pregnancy is now officially full-term, and my body is preparing for birth. At today's Dr. visit, the baby was moving around lots while she was listening to his heartbeat, and it accelerated nicely while he moved. The Dr. wants me to get induced the week before my due date because I have big babies (Taylor was only 7 lbs 2 oz, but the last 2 were 8 lbs 12 oz), but Dr. is off on Monday, so right now we're looking at July 8 or 9. I don't have to decide until next Monday, but I think I'm going to go with the 8th since I'm so anxious – why wait if I don't have to? I have a few meetings scheduled that week, but I will have to miss them. Besides, that's a nice date for a birthday – 7/08/08 – since we have no hope of holding out til the 21st. Our first 2 daughters were born on the 21st of their months, December and May, and then our third daughter was born a day early, on October 20... sometimes I forget and celebrate her “month” birthdays on the 21st out of habit... But baby Christopher will be no where near the 21st... July 8th – that's only 5 days after my birthday! But I like the sound of it and can't believe that it's only 2 weeks away! Time flies so fast, 2 weeks will pass in no time! Good thing too because I get less sleep by the night. I'm up going to the bathroom at least 3-4 times, and then I've been having trouble sleeping when I lay down again. But since I don't plan much during the day and my

oldest daughter is out of school for the summer – she is a great big help with our youngest-for-now, I have been getting good naps for the most part.

Please send thoughts and prayers for our friend Cathy who is in the hospital after having a heart attack on Sunday. We're going to visit her tonight and hopefully she'll be feeling well soon!

Another Infamous List

I mentioned my infamous listing a few blog posts ago – I make lists of everything; including (rarely) lists of lists to make!

This list is for physical things, rather than everything that will change with the addition of a boy. Obviously, things like potty-training, long car rides, and even every meal time will be different while taking a boy's eating habits into consideration in our household full of girls.

Things That Will Change When We Add a Boy to Our Household

No need for baby-sized headbands or barrettes

Boys need only 1 pair of shoes. Girls love shoes, so they need at the bare minimum, a pair of sandals, a pair of gym shoes, and a pair of dress shoes PER GIRL – our 20-month-old daughter already likes to try on shoes – just for fun!

Accessories like hats, socks, belts are all different between boys and girls things

Pillowcases, bedsheets, pillows, blankets

Hmm, so far I only have wardrobe changes listed... I'm sure there will be a lot more differences and I will start another list so I can compare while I'm actually living with the differences every day!

About the Zoo...

Oops, I forgot to mention a few things about the [Potawatomi Zoo](#) in South Bend, Indiana in my post the other day. Even though it was small and not very well taken care of from an aesthetic point of view, we had some of the best animal encounters there – can't believe I forgot to mention them.

First, they have a white tiger, and he was right up against the glass. We could see his beautiful eyes and everything.

The African lions at this zoo have a small exhibit (but didn't seem to be unhappy in the slightest), which means we were able to see them pretty close up also.

The red pandas were very active and we got to see them climbing around. This creature is so agile, he made climbing branches of trees look like he was climbing stair-steps.

They had a baby Amur Leopard who was born in Decemeber and had just been put on exhibit 2 days before our visit. He was so cute and curious. He climbed all the way up the cage wall and tried to get on the ceiling, then he had a little trouble getting down, but he was so excited when he did it, and mom scolded him a little bit – it was awesome to see that kind of interaction.

So overall, it was a great zoo experience. A cute little zoo, even if it could use some touch-ups.

Jubilee Time

It's time for our town's annual summer fest; they call it the Jubilee. Every year I'm compelled to attend, even though I become more disenchanted with the whole affair as years pass. I just really like summer fest atmospheres, and I can't resist going when we live within blocks of it. It's fun to take all the kids there without having to pack up everyone in the car, spend a few bucks for gas to get there, or haggle over parking. But as every cost in our economy rises, the Jubilee is no exception. And if the kids had lots of fun, it'd be worth it, but every year it seems the Jubilee finds ways to cut corners and disappoint my kids.

Take this year, for example. "Wrist band day" was on the first day of the carnival; a day when you buy a wristband for one "low" price (now \$16, up \$2 from the \$14 it cost last year) and it gets you on "unlimited" rides. I think they planned wrist band day on the first day of the carnival for a reason – before anyone could get to the carnival and look around to see that some of the usual rides are missing. Not only that, but for small children, because of height requirements, there are only about 4 rides they were able to use their wristband on. My 4-year-old is a little daredevil and wanted to ride everything, including the "Kamikaze", a ride that goes upside down. She was too small to ride that one of course, and I completely understood the rhyme and reason for that rule, however, when she got excited about the Ferris Wheel only to be turned away, I began to lose my patience. Seems the rules require that she ride with an adult, no problem there, my husband would have rode with her even though he's not crazy about ferris wheels... except that the escorting adult had to have 3 tickets to ride! And at

\$1.50/ticket, we're talking about spending an extra \$4.50 *for one ride*, on top of the \$32 we had already spent on wristbands for my 2 daughters – just for my daughter to follow their rule and be escorted on the ferris wheel – no thanks. So after 2 disappointments, we went over to the other side of the Jubilee and found the “scrambler” ride, so my daughters went on it and had a good time. They got in line to go again, and 4-year-old Sammie was turned away because she wasn't tall enough – apparently she shrank while waiting in line to go a second time? Again, I'm all for abiding by safety rules, etc., but they need to adopt a uniform policy that will be in place the entire run of the carnival. Try explaining to a 4-year-old that she isn't tall enough to ride a ride that she just got finished riding! We actually ran into the same problem at Disney World, but they were very sympathetic and understanding and offered us ride passes as compensation. And as if all this at the Jubilee weren't enough, my daughters have a favorite “ride” at the Jubilee every year – the funhouse. They actually usually have 2 funhouses, but for whatever reason, my girls have their favorite. So they're standing there on the steps of their favorite funhouse, waiting to get in, and the ride operator is trying to tell them something, and that's when I see the signs. “No wristbands or tickets. This ride is \$2” WHAT?!? Why would they do this? To make money obviously, but that funhouse had no one there all night, was it really worth it to disappoint all the kids who go there year after year and look forward to that funhouse? And like I said, since wristband night was on the first day of the Jubilee, we didn't have an opportunity to tour the grounds to see what would be included in the purchase of the wristband – regrettably.

Despite all the disappointments, my daughters took them all in stride and still had fun. We ran into some friends, so we decided to take one of their daughters home with us for a sleepover. Even though we had bought the wristbands that were good until 11, we just wanted out of there after all the

disappointment and money wasting. I did get my Dippin' Dots, but the vendor forgot my root beer float this year ☹ I was pretty happy with the cookie dough that my husband got for me, and it was actually better than I remember. Not worth going back to the Jubilee for more, but still good. I think we're done with the Jubilee already this year. We usually go back Friday night for the karaoke contest and Saturday after the parade, but I think we can find something better (and cheaper!) to do this year. Next year, maybe we'll plan a vacation for Jubilee week and skip it all together!