

It's STILL Scary!

When I was growing up, my parents pretty much operated as a pair, and my dad worked outside the home. Therefore, I only remember two times when he was left in charge – the time I went missing and the time I watched the movie *Poltergeist*.

Both incidents occurred when I was 4 or 5. My dad was having a meeting with someone I didn't know (think it was an insurance guy), so I didn't want to come in the house from playing and walk past the scary insurance guy because I was a really shy kid. So I waited for him to leave, and I waited, and I got sleepy, and next thing I know I'm waking up in our little red wagon in the dark garage and my sister is there saying, "I found her!" My parents had the neighbors all out canvassing the neighborhood calling my name, and so my babysitter came over afterward and I remember showing her how I had just learned to tie my shoes. My parents probably don't remember the incident in quite the same light...

As for the other time, somehow my sister and I were allowed to watch the classic 80's horror movie [Poltergeist](#) even though we were both under the age of 10. If you haven't seen the movie, then you wouldn't know about the terrifying clown scene that takes place in a kid's bedroom. My favorite stuffed toy at that time just happened to be a Ronald McDonald doll, which was no longer the case after I saw that movie. The Ronald McDonald doll went into the basement, and a few years later, I decided I was over it and went to look for my old friend. But he was gone, and when I asked my mom about it, she said that she had put him out for [Amvets](#) since I had decided I was done with him. But I had trouble explaining that I wasn't done with him; he was just on probation! So I felt badly, but it was probably nothing compared to how my dad felt when mom found out we watched *Poltergeist*...

So anyway, I was thinking about my Ronald McDonald doll after

seeing Mr. McDonald in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, so I decided to look it up on the internet. If you ask me, you can't really blame a kid for being scared and banishing this thing to the basement:



I Want A Customized Cupcake Car For Christmas...

I really don't, but try singing this blog post title to the tune of "I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas", just for laughs. And for further amusement, here is a picture of the customized cupcake cars, which of course come complete with candy caps for the contraptions' captains!



All joking aside, thankfully I don't know anyone who could or would blow \$25,000 on one of these, now that is just a waste. The title of the article I found this in was intriguing, ["9 Extravagant Holiday Gifts"](#), but honestly, I didn't find much amusement beyond the cupcake cars; maybe you'll disagree when you click on the link above.

The Popular Social Networking Site Called "Book Face"

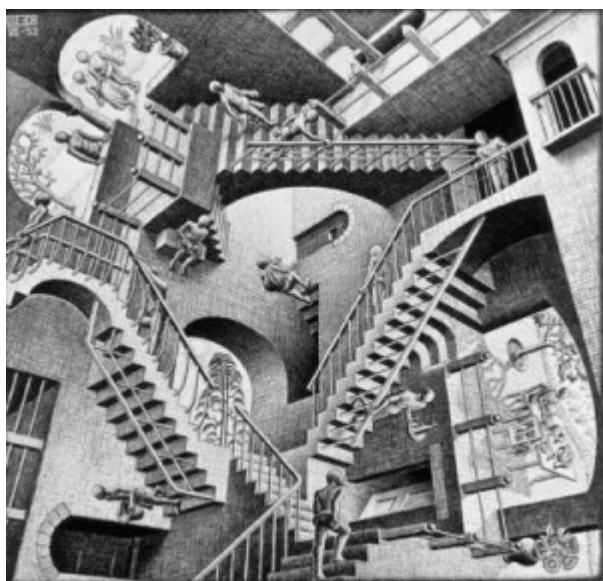
It's time for me to officially make my presence known on Facebook. If you watch the awesome NBC comedy "The Office", then you'll understand the reference in the title of this blog post involving a creative Halloween costume worn by Jim Halpert, a character on my favorite show – it was hilarious!

But back to me learning Facebook... some time ago I signed up for a Facebook account (don't even remember why), but then I stopped using it because it started doing freaky things behind my back – like randomly adding mere acquaintances and business associates as my Facebook friends. That was NOT the way I had envisioned social networking! But my youth group kids have been BEGGING me to join Facebook, and since I took pictures of them last week, we decided that my homework challenge is to

get on Facebook so I can post our pictures. So here I go, and the first thing I'll be doing is looking for a way to NOT invite everyone on my email contact list to be my Facebook friend!

3D Escher

Have you ever heard of the Dutch artist M.C. Escher? His famous works depicted impossible realities, often based upon mathematical and spatial challenges. Case in point, one of Escher's most famous works, titled *Relativity*:



Let me guess, even if you've never heard of M.C. Escher, you've seen the above picture, right? But have you ever seen it in 3D? Seems people have been recreating Escher's art in Lego form, which I think is pretty cool!



How about more of Escher's most famous works, done in 3D Lego style?



80s Toys

All that talk of California Raisins on my blog the other day got me to thinking about many of the toys I used to play with when I was a kid growing up in the 80's. I was a big fan of Fisher Price's Little People back then, and I generally liked playsets of any kind. The internet is a cool thing for many reasons, and it's fun for stirring up nostalgia now and then. I remembered this set of wind-up skill games they had in the 80s that were really small. After a few minutes of google searching, I found them: [T.H.I.N.G.S. by Milton Bradley](#) (Totally Hilarious Incredibly Neat Games of Skill – who remembers these?) . It's funny how most of these little toys look like just your everyday junk from China when you're an adult, but when I was a kid, I had the Sir-Ring-a-Lot game and wanted all the rest of the T.H.I.N.G.S.

I was also really into [Nerfuls](#) after sending away for one (visor guy) in exchange for cereal UPCs. These were little 3-piece figures – a body, a ball for the head, and a hat or hair. Some came with vehicles and the coolest parts were the stackable Nerfuls houses.

Legos were also really cool (still are!), and I'm thinking of getting my 5-year-old some of her own sets for Christmas this year.

Added link to [Weebles Mickey Mouse Clubhouse.](#)

Blast From The Past

Being a child of the '80's, I definitely remember the California Raisins – they were 3D-ish Claymation figures of

singing and dancing raisins, mostly famous for their rendition of "I Heard It Through The Grapevine". Thinking about this as an adult has me wondering if this was a successful ad campaign. I guess successful is not quite the word I'm looking for... I mean, of course it was ultra-successful in a sense; everyone in the '80's knew about the California Raisins, but did they really make kids want to eat more raisins? Later they began to do commercials for Post's Raisin Bran (Post only chooses the plumpest, juiciest raisins!), so maybe they helped to sell more boxes of cereal.

In the '80's, the California Raisins were celebrities and they had their own line of products that ran the marketing gamut: lunch boxes, stuffed toys, tv specials, t-shirts, Happy Meal toys, you name it. This is precisely the reason why I came across a California Raisin figure the other day at the thrift store. I had stopped in to get myself a few more little Halloween figurines for my front hall shelves (had an empty shelf after finally packing away the figurines of the bears playing baseball after the Chicago Cubs were eliminated from MLB's post-season – that is ALL I'm going to say about THAT!), and at this particular thrift store, you get a free Happy Meal-type toy with every \$2 spent. My husband and I did just spend 5 hours gutting out the girls' room and donating most of their toys last week, but I couldn't resist picking out a toy for my favorite little shopping companion – my 3-year-old daughter Disney. So anyway, we were pressed for time, and I found the California Raisin, so I grabbed him and gave him to Disney, promising her we would watch a movie of her raisin dancing and singing on the computer when we got home. True to my word, I loaded up youtube and found some great clips of California Raisins, which went over really well with Disney. She giggled and covered her mouth, and then she put her raisin on the computer to "watch" the other dancing raisins. He's been a presence in our household since last week, and of course her little brother likes him too. He is small enough so that I can put him in our "emergency" car box (full of

toys, snacks, band-aids, etc) when the kids tire of him in the house (the raisin, not the little brother!). He even makes a great bathtub toy! So anyway, while resurrecting the California Raisins last week, I came across this cute little commercial that I hadn't thought about in the 20 years since it was made. Enjoy this blast from the past!