

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!

Genius At Work

This evening I took a jaunt to our local community theatre for a combined play reading/production meeting. I believe that the entire meeting lasted 45 minutes and in those 45 minutes all I recall accomplishing is finding out that work we have done for nearly 3 months has gotten us nowhere man. In May, we were to submit by the end of June a proposal for the 2009-2010 season. Fine, we do that; HOWEVER, the board who was to vote on our proposal did not meet to vote on our proposal. In fact, it sounded like one (maybe even two) of our proposals would be nixed. One of the reasons presented for one of the shows to be axed is because an area high school may be doing it. Why should this matter? We are not a high school putting on an annual play. I still hear people comment that they do not know of the existence of a live community theatre house even from those who live in the town. High schools present shows to perform, mainly, for parents and grandparents (with some exceptions). Community theatre attempts to perform for a broader audience: the theatre-loving audience... not just those people who come to see a show to see junior on stage. It's also nice when it can attract more non-traditional audience members.

My question is this: If we are to ax a show because a high school may be doing it in the same season, then are we to survey each school in the area to see if any of the shows are identical? Who acquiesces and allows the other group to do the show?

Another issue was addressed on choosing directors for shows. I was floored when I heard that another person wanted to direct a show that someone else was planning and ready to submit for approval. How unfair?! A person who was concentrating on independently bringing a show and then all of a sudden someone else wants to direct it? This of course was one of the other possibly axed shows. I just don't know, but

it sounds like we have a lot of geniuses at work here.

Chris for President?

You guys have to see this...

<https://www.news3online.com/index.php?code=71ovE14FDX74r7XW12U9> (click link)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE BEST!

Today is my husband's birthday! Poor guy, he has to work. It stinks that when you become an adult, you can't take the day off on your birthday. When you think about it, each person would get only one day per year, it could be easily proven when your day is and if you've already taken it, but I guess in larger workplaces, it wouldn't be very economical when there are lots of employees. Plus, it's not like you can take a break from every responsibility in life for a day – though that would be nice! There's no 'off' switch on the kids, the pets still need to be cared for, bills are due, errands to run... the list goes on... so why draw the line at having a day off work?

But anyway, my husband is going to take a half day off tomorrow so we can celebrate just the two of us; and we're both really looking forward to that – I just have to make it through today. I've had a terribly stressful day so far, but I shouldn't vent about it to my husband on his birthday... so

instead I've recorded a time table of everything that's been going on in our house for the last hour. Normally, this wouldn't be that big of a deal, but since I'm now up going to the bathroom half the night and our kids spazzed about going to bed last night and kept everyone up late, today I was really looking forward to some downtime and maybe even a nap. I was hoping to just sit here and write a blog post or two, mostly about how wonderful my husband is on his birthday... but instead I find myself venting about the kids because they're being really needy. Not bad really, but I am so tired! I don't know how I'm ever going to find the energy to take them to the carnival tonight! So anyway, my hour that I've set aside to blog before lunch has gone something like this:

11:24 – getting youngest something to drink (*and there's been lots of stuff before this, this is just where I got frustrated enough to notate everything*)

11:27 – sat down again

11:29-11:34 – setting up youngest outside at the 'picnic'

11:34-11:38 – sat down to blog

11:38 – a request comes in for more Pringles

11:39 – After some discussion, it's decided that if they eat their sandwiches, they can have popsicles instead of Pringles

11:40 – whats this about giving their lunchmeat to the dog?!?

11:42 – About this time, I should be getting up to go take a peek out the window to see if I can determine the fate of the lunchmeat. But I have a big long day ahead of me, and it'd be nice if I could sit for a FEW mins! I will just have to trust the kids to tell me the truth. I have a bad feeling about this.

11:45 – The back door opens. This time it's the oldest with an update – "Sammie stepped on dog poop and she doesn't have shoes on." UGH – I make a quick note of the time in my blog and head outside to clean it up.

11:46 – turned the hose on right on my sock-and-shoed-foot while washing dog poop off of Sammie's foot

11:51 – Friend shows up for help in carrying furniture –

ringing the doorbell and making the dog go completely crazy. Shoot! I totally forgot he was coming today! Now my husband has EXTRA responsibilities on his birthday!

11:55 – UPS guy pulls up, dog still going crazy from friend stopping by

12:08 – Wow – have they really let me sit and type this for a whole 13 minutes?!? Uh, oh – back door opens again – “I have something in my hair.” – Guess who? Surprise – it’s the same kid who stepped in dog poop.

12:10 – bug detangled from hair

And the day is just beginning. So it will go on like this, and on, and on... So now maybe you have some insight as to why it takes me a good hour to write one blog post or get much of anything accomplished around here, really. But on to my birthday wishes for my hubby, since I only have 5 minutes left of my blogging hour.

So I have absolutely NO idea what to get him. I’d like him to have a gift to open, even though he says he doesn’t care. Everything he wants (and that’s not much, he’s not really into material things) he says he buys for himself and he’d be happier knowing that no money was spent on buying him any birthday presents. But the way I am, I like to give gifts; I like people to have something to open and to see them get gifts on their birthdays, so I feel badly that he doesn’t have anything. I was going to go out today and get something, but I really can’t think of anything to get him... I’ve had some good ideas in the past, but this year I’m at a loss... So I will just try to keep the kids good and out of his hair, which is actually much more difficult than it sounds for me right now. But my husband said earlier today that he wants to make my day extra special and good. He woke up early with the kids (as usual) and had the dishwasher emptied and the kids’ breakfasts cleaned up by the time I got up. Only the most wonderful man like my husband would go out of his way to make *my* day extra special on *his* birthday! And that’s why I

say Happy Birthday to the BEST!!!

Murder on Friday the 13th

With the kids out of town and Friday the 13th upon us, we found it to be the perfect time to break out a game we found at the thrift store months ago – a Murder Mystery Party. After a check to make sure all the contents were there, we started inviting friends to attend a murder mystery party at our house:

Dear *Name of Character Here*,

Hart's untimely death casts suspicion on us all. The police report has already been filed (see enclosed). We must meet quickly in order to solve the murder and clear our good names.

Hosted By:

on Friday, June 13 at 6:00pm

Please RSVP by Wednesday, June 11

Please bring a dish to share – no poison

We sent this email to each guest along with the police report detailing the homicide. We began with our game night regulars, then when some of them couldn't make it, we tried to cast accordingly. The casting, by the way, just happened to work out perfectly. Originally, we were going to have to make a male character female, but once we switched some things around based on which guests were coming, it all worked out. And in retrospect, the swapping male for female thing would not have worked well at all! My husband and I were originally going to be the married couple, but those characters were a few decades older than us, and the characters we did end up playing had a secret infatuation with each other, so we were both pleased to discover this in the course of the game.

Unfortunately, when my turn came to come up with a 'formal accusation', evidence dictated that I point my finger at my husband, aka, secret crush, but that's how you play the game. Each guest came in costume and character and stayed that way for the roughly 3 hours we played the game. All in all, a lot of fun, and we've already had several people who were disappointed that they couldn't make it. So, we'll have to scour the thrift stores and / or the internet in hopes of finding another one of these Murder Mystery games to play... providing we can get all (almost 4!) kids out of the house for an evening again... hmmm, that might be the REAL mystery!

It's HOT!

For a few days now and a few more days to come ☐ the temperatures in our region have been over 90°. For a pregnant woman of my girth, it is proving disastrous. I am so lathargic – I don't feel like doing ANYTHING, including eating! The house is a mess, and the kids have been cooped up because I've been cooped up in the a/c. It's not the best a/c though because we have window units, not central air, so it's still hot! Luckily, the kids are going on vacation with their Grandma and will get plenty of stimulation next week. After that, I have to hope and pray for an arctic streak until I deliver the baby in mid-July or we won't make it. Since I'm sitting here doing nothing, just as I want, I decided to post this poem as a distraction to myself in lieu of the heat. It's a poem by Shel Silverstein, and I had to memorize it in 5th grade. While I no longer have it memorized, certain lines keep running through my head as I sit here and boil. Enjoy and stay cool!

It's Hot!

By Shel Silverstein

It's *hot!*
I can't get cool,
I've drunk a quart of lemonade,
I think I'll take my shoes off
And sit around in the shade.

It's *hot!*
My back is sticky,
The sweat rolls down my chin.
I think I'll take my clothes off
And sit around in my skin.

It's *hot!*
I've tried with 'lectric fans,
And pools and ice cream cones.
I think I'll take my skin off
And sit around in my bones.

It's *still* hot!

Tevye No Longer

I had my ultrasound yesterday, and something occurred that has left me in shock; that's why it took me a day to blog about it...

My doctor is a female who has 3 sons. Actually, 2 of her sons are the exact same age as 2 of my daughters, because our dr. was 9 months pregnant when she delivered my 4-year-old, and she was on maternity leave when her replacement doctor delivered my 19-month-old. But anyway, during my ultrasound yesterday, she was talking about how her other dr.

friend came to visit over the weekend, and he has 4 daughters. He was wistfully throwing around a football with her sons and she was talking about how into sports girls are in this area, trying to console her friend because he didn't have boys. She was telling this story because we have 3 daughters and one on the way, and my husband is starting to feel like the character Tevye from Fiddler on the Roof who is famous for having 5 daughters. So anyway, the dr. gets to the point in the story where she's talking about lots of girls in our area being active in sports. All of a sudden, she kind of pauses, then she goes, "wait a minute... what's this?" Seems the ultrasound had picked up a certain little "bleep" on the radar that hadn't appeared on the February ultrasound... Seems our little Lyndsey or Evangeline is going to be Christopher Vincent instead!!!

It's especially funny because my dr. has a reputation in the area for being wrong about these kinds of things. I've heard stories of at least 5 of her patients' babies whose gender was predicted wrong; including one from the delivery room nurse I had when I delivered my second daughter. I am glad this "misdiagnosis" happened now rather than at birth, otherwise our firstborn son would be going home in pink – after 3 girls, pink and purple onsies are all I have! And in the past 24 hours since I found out, I've been looking around the house, noting how easily and unnoticeably we've emerged ourselves in pinks and purples over the years. We have pink blankies, bedsheets, clothes, stuffed animals, doll's clothes, furniture, carpet, curtains, pillows... the list goes on and on and on.

We are ecstatic; we've never had a little boy in our house, so it should be interesting to say the least. And my greatest wish of course is for a healthy baby anyway, gender is not a concern. But now that we know he's a boy, I do feel kind of lost. I've never had a boy baby before, and I had gotten into a sort-of comfort zone with my girls... I even had a nice

system worked out with their clothes. The clothes that my 19-month-old was growing out of weren't even getting packed away in the basement – I was just keeping them around for the new baby to use! My girls are close enough in age where I was just putting all their clothes in one closet, and they would make the transition to the next size seamlessly – I thought I had it all figured out! The good news about the clothes is that my sister has graciously offered us the use of her boys' clothes. She has a baby who will be $2\frac{1}{2}$ months older than baby Christopher, so if we can keep the transportation line open between her home in Illinois and mine in Ohio, we shouldn't have to put our baby boy into any pinks or purples.

And that reminds me... I got my husband to promise me (somehow, we have both forgotten how!) somewhere between the last 2 baby girls that if we were to ever have a baby boy, I would get to name him Christopher after my husband. Now that it's a reality, he is getting cold feet about the name, but I am not letting him out of this one! People have suggested using Christopher as a middle name, but Vincent was decided upon way back in 1999 when my husband's father fell ill and passed away – I was pregnant with our first child when he was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), and we agreed that when we had a boy, he'd have the name Vincent... little did we know it would be 9 years later!

So anyway, I just wanted to share our happy news with everybody... Doctors can be wrong, and it seems our family is the latest victim of our doctor's reputable gender inconsistencies. And here is the poll we took way back when in February (before our first "gender revealing" ultrasound – or so we thought!) of some of our family and friends' predictions. It was just for fun, no prizes or anything, but the people who thought they were right really were not (including our whole family except Taylor – good job, T!), and vice versa!

Gender Prediction – Feb. 2008

GUESSES:

Mommy – g
Daddy – g
Taylor – b
Sammie – g
Mary Beth – b
Great Grandma and Great Pa – b
Shirley – g
Keith and Trudy – g
Linda – b
Jamy – b
John – b
Elizabeth – b
Jenny – g
Tracy – g
Gerry – g
Tim and Kim – g
Austin – b
Sharon – b
Lilly – b
Vickie – g
Kristen – g
Sue – b
Megan – b
Carol – b
Grandma B – g
Cathy – b

12 guesses for girl – 14 guesses for boy

FEB 11, 2008 – ULTRASOUND / DR. says IT'S A GIRL!!!

JUNE 3, 2008 – ULTRASOUND / DR. says IT'S A BOY!!!

“New” Kids on the Block?

Does everyone remember this boy band from the 80's? I remember them well because being a young preteen girl at the height of their popularity meant that their marketing was pointed directly my way. I went to 3 of their concerts, had my bedroom wallpapered in New Kids posters, and had everything from tapes (for younger readers – that's what we played music on in those days), buttons, t-shirts, books, magazines, and stickers to trading cards, shoelaces, and even a Joey McIntire doll. Yes, it was ridiculous and more than a little embarrassing. But girls will be girls, and the group had a clean-cut, boy band image, so my parents willingly obliged my fanfare.

You may have heard that the band has reunited. Yes, I'm serious, and yes, I'm talking about now, in 2008, when the members of the group are over the age of 30 and some are pushing 40. Why now, you ask? Probably because pop culture has a way of recycling itself. They often resurrect fads decades later when people who were kids at the time of the fad can now enjoy them again as adults (now that they have their own money to spend) and share them with their own kids. They did this with a number of fads from the '80's – My Little Pony, Cabbage Patch Kids, Strawberry Shortcake, Transformers, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, and now, The New Kids on the Block. What perplexes me most of all about this whole thing, is that they didn't change the group at all. They are out there, singing the same songs they sang as teens and early twenty somethings, about dating girls and “Hangin' Tough”. They are attempting to perform the same dance moves they made popular decades ago, and results are not pretty. I was one of the biggest fans of the group way back when, and now I say they're terrible. I don't like the music anymore (it was of a genre they used to call bubblegum pop – and it's definitely the type of music you grow out of), they sound terrible singing it, the

lyrics are ridiculous, if not downright creepy, coming from near-middle-aged men, and the dance moves are horrible. They are actually going to tour this (circus) act come fall.

So why now? Why do we need an updated version of New Kids on the Block? Actually that's not even right. There's nothing updated about this group except their ages. Everything else is EXACTLY the same! An updated version would be better musically and probably make a whole lot more sense. There's what I talked about earlier – the fad revival tactic. I guess that's why they did it. But I find it amazing that they found enough people who thought this was such a good idea that they made it happen – including the 5 original members of the group. Some have gone on to mildly successful movie or solo music careers. Some have raised families. But how someone got all 5 to agree to resurrect the New Kids on the Block circa 1991 is astounding.

If you don't believe me about how terrible they are or if you just like to watch train wrecks in action, check this out. Help me figure out who looks more ridiculous – the group or the fans. This video is part one of three, but you'll only want to see the first part, if that, trust me:

To Do

This seems a little strange to me, but the other day my husband suggested that I should put everything into my blog. Every to-do list, shopping list, etc. Anything I'm putting into my computer should be in my blog, he says. I'm a person who makes a lot of lists. I've even been known to make a list of the lists I need to make! It might sound dorky or anal, but it makes me feel better and more organized – I'm a busy person with a terrible memory, so any way I can feel a little closer to keeping my head above water when daily life becomes overwhelming is worth trying for me. And often I do so with lists. So, upon the advice of my husband, a person whose knowledge of everything seems to know no limits (and no, I'm not being sarcastic!), here goes – hope it doesn't bore you too much, but here is my To-do List for when Grandma has my kids for just under a week – an event I am anticipating so anxiously that it seems to have SLOWED the passage of time... We were going to take a trip to New York, but we declined it because of gas prices and in favor of getting things done around the house, sigh. Besides, I don't know how a woman who is 35 weeks pregnant would fare walking around such a big city! Such a shame, though, it's the LAST time we will be kidless for a long period of time because Grandma can't fit 4 kids into her car to take them all at the same time ☐

To Do While Kids Are Gone

RELAX!

clean game closet

organize kids room – clean out their toys, add toddler bed, create play room

hook up hose

clean out laundry basket o' junk

clean out playpen

~~wash baby's clothes~~ – (now that we just found out we're having a boy instead of a girl, I have no boys' clothes to wash!)

pack away Disney's clothes (now that we won't be needing them for the new baby!)

fix pipe in upstairs bathroom – and the light that got broken and flooded because of the pipe!

Newhart Nightmare

These pregnancy nightmares I'm having are out of hand. Not only is my sleep interrupted, but the dreams are getting just plain weird! Before this pregnancy, I would rarely have dreams that I would even remember when I woke up, let alone have dreams so vivid that I'm unable to sleep after waking from them. It's funny how a nightmare can make one wake with such an unsettled feeling... I've had a few now where I wake up scared – too scared to even get up to go to the bathroom. And I can't explain why. Some of the nightmares are just plain scary, like the ones involving guns and violence. But some of the crazy ones that have me waking scared actually make me laugh later in the light of day. Last night's was a real whopper – seems [Bob Newhart](#) wanted to steal my husband's organs. He had a surgical setup all ready to go with dishes out for the organs and everything. We packed up our family and fled our house just in time, thank goodness, but the vision of Bob Newhart peering out the front door and trying to not let us leave was a creepy image that I couldn't shake for about 15 minutes until I did finally get back to sleep. I have no idea what caused this craziness to rush through my head at 4 in the morning. It's not like I've seen Bob Newhart anywhere lately; and I especially haven't come across a scary Bob Newhart – until last night in my dream, anyway. The good

news is, scared as I was at 4am this morning, I'm now laughing about this, and I hold nothing against Bob Newhart!