

My Bad Day

I'm taking yet another diversion from writing about my great weekend to write about a bad day I had today – I need to vent. And yes, it involves Walmart – when *don't* my bad days involve Walmart?!? First, my husband's business clients blew him off, yet again. We were on the verge of a big business deal, but now the clients are stalling and becoming difficult to get ahold of – not a good sign. So I took the kids to Walmart to get them out of the house so my husband could have some peace when he called the clients – not that it mattered; they “weren't home”. Sigh. So anyway, at Walmart, I discovered that they finally did it – raised the prices on diapers. I knew it was just a matter of time; the diapers have been the same price since my almost 5-year-old was a baby. So after absorbing the reality of the price increase on diapers (I have two kids in diapers! Time to rush the potty training, I guess.), I go to check out, and I'm next in line, ready to put my stuff on the counter, and an employee says “I can help you on lane 6”. So I went over to lane 6, but it turns out, the employee was wrong. They wanted her to take over on lane 5 instead of **open** lane 6. So I went back to lane 5, right where I had started, and now someone has gotten in the line with a SUPER-full cart in front of me. Of course. And I had hungry kids who now had to wait in a line with all that candy at eye level. Have I mentioned that I hate Walmart?

Then I get home and starting making dinner, and I have a crying baby underfoot – I don't know why he *always* cries at home. He's the happiest little guy everywhere else, but when we're at home, he only wants to be held, and I can't hold him while I'm cooking, doing laundry, cleaning or blogging, so... he cries a lot. I guess I can get rid of most of the toys that are starting to take over my living room since no one plays with them! And all day I've been looking forward to a

nice hot relaxing shower, so after dinner, I went to do just that. But apparently running the dishwasher, giving the kids a bath and hand-washing a dinner pot drained the (new!) hot water heater, and my shower was lukewarm with a cold rinse at the end. Of course it was. I can only hope that my day turns around when the Cubs begin their season-opening game tonight – I've been looking forward to this for months, so hopefully my bad day wasn't a precursor to the tone of tonight's game. To quote Tom Hanks from A League of Their Own: "May our feet be swift, may our bats be mighty, may our balls be plentiful..."
GO CUBS!

Earlier this morning, we ruined our chances of sleeping in (since our oldest daughter is on spring break) by signing up to bring a pet to my second-oldest daughter's school – we forgot about spring break when we signed up for pet day for first thing in the morning, oops – so adding to everything is the fact that I'm tired today also. We let our little ones play at my daughter's preschool; they had a blast, and we had fun watching them. My husband read a book to the kids, and we brought the rats for pet day – and it was SO fun to see certain teachers pale and shriek with fright – hehe!

So I guess the day wasn't all bad; it was just Walmart getting under my skin, AGAIN. Oh, and get this – I saw the store manager (I'll call him Mr. Palindrome, since his last name reads the same backward and forward) park in one of the handicapped spots right in front of the store. To be fair, he does have a handicapped tag, but I know from my sources that the handicapped tag is not for him but rather his elderly mother whom he cares for. But I still think he should only be able to park in the handicapped spots when she is with him, and I definitely don't think he should take those spots away from his customers when he is perfectly able-bodied. Well, just my opinion, the guy irritates me because of all his dirty price games he plays at the Walmart and the small businesses the store pushes out of the way. Not that it's a small

business, but Kmart is the latest victim of Walmart in our town – it's closing for good in May. What a shame – and to think the Kmart in our town was opened as the test store to see if Kmart would work in small town America. The test was successful, but that was decades ago, and times have changed – just like Walmart's prices!

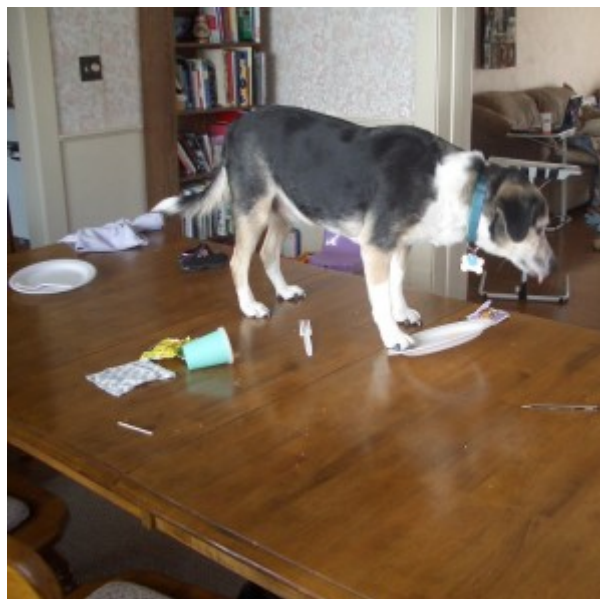
UPDATE – The Cubs are on, and they're winning – YAY! Soriano opened the game with a home run **on the first pitch of the game!** How cool is that? But, for some reason, the game is not on ESPN 2 like tvguide.com said. My husband bought me mlb.com, but that seems to be broken at the moment – they're showing video during the commercials and nothing during game play. Not only that, my husband's clients have called (but I guess that's a good thing), leaving me with the two little ones at their crabbiest time of day. So I have 2 screamers and no Cubs game. At least they are winning (I think). When I put the little ones to bed here pretty soon, I'm tempted to join them just so I can start over tomorrow – every attempt I make at relaxing tonight has just made things worse!

My Dog Is Not A Cat

... but she thinks she is! We used to have a cat, but she passed away last year. We got our dog as a puppy just 4 months after we got the cat as a kitten, and they lived together for 10 years, so it's no wonder my dog thinks she's a cat. Despite her old age, she will jump on the furniture, and even walk on the top of the couch – very cat-like behavior. She is also more independent like a cat, and she'll only come when called to snuggle if she wants to, like a cat.

The other day, she decided she was done waiting for the kids

to eat their lunch. We had left it out because the kids hadn't eaten well, and we thought they could come back later and have a bite – WRONG! Our dog Charity (the cat in disguise) took it upon herself to climb **UP ON** the dining room table and get their lunches. She is our spoiled rotten baby; what were we going to do, yell at the old lady? So we took a picture instead, note how she uses her feet to tip up the plates and hold them in place so they don't slide away while she's licking:



And Charity has such a personality; she hates being laughed at, so I think she learned her lesson. Besides, once the motivation to get the food was gone (eaten), she was stuck up on the table. We wrestled with the decision to help her down; she is 11 years old and I didn't want her breaking bones or worse, but in the end she got herself down successfully. First she kind of growled and grunted around up there while we giggled at her from the living room, then she used her new vantage point as a barking stool, but just as I got sick of it and went to help her down, she got down herself. She is such a jerk but what a personality that dog has... We love you Charity!

And now you need to see how cute she really is, one blue eye

and all. So here is one of my favorite pictures of her in a Chicago Cubs shirt – opening day is on Monday, so GO CUBBIES!!!



The Haunting In Connecticut

We saw [The Haunting in Connecticut](#) at the movie theater for date night (after refusing pizza from “Carlos Zambrano” at the mall pizza shop – seriously, the guy looks just like the famously hot-headed Chicago Cubs pitcher!) and the movie made for a pretty good ghost story. I had heard it was based upon a true story, but after seeing it, here is my guess on what about the movie is true: a teenage boy has cancer, his family rents a house (a former mortuary) near the hospital where he is receiving treatments, and they had strange happenings while staying there; probably due to stress or lack of sleep or even just plain exaggerations but not hauntings, is my guess. This is the basic plot of the movie, but I left out many events that could not have possibly happened in real life and would also be considered spoilers, so I will not go into details. I will say that the movie opens with all kinds of vintage photographs of deceased people – I know this because of my friend who attended a lecture on the subject. I had wanted to

go with her, but we found out about it last minute and I reluctantly had to pass. But my friend went and came back with all kinds of interesting info which is how I knew what the pictures were that opened the movie. For instance, many people back then (the movie takes place in the 80's, but the pictures were from the early 1900's) didn't have their photograph taken often, so when a loved one passed away, they would get their family portrait taken *with the deceased* – better late than never, I guess? Not only that, sometimes they would pose as if the person was still alive – kind of morbid by our standards today, but then again, things are very different and taking pictures is so much more common; it's difficult to imagine past attitudes about this.

But *The Haunting in Connecticut* is a very entertaining, edge-of-your seat nailbiter with plenty of startles. To its credit, it's scary and creepy without the gore. Worth checking out, if you like that sort of thing, but not one of my favorites – it did give me some ideas for a haunted house though... Now if I can just remember them until 2010 when we actually have the time to DO the haunted house...

Ahh... A Relaxing Baseball Game And A... LOSS?!?

I had a really stressful day yesterday. The kids went completely crazy at night – was it a full moon? I didn't check. Even if that was the case, other little things kept going wrong also. Little things – things that really shouldn't matter. Except that when those little things are added up, they equal *one bad day*. So I thought I could beat my stress by looking forward to watching some BASEBALL on TV.

Yes, that's right, I said BASEBALL on TV! And it's only early March – we haven't even changed the clocks yet!

I just happened to look on tvguide.com yesterday to see if I could look forward to a new episode of Lost, and I noticed that my favorite baseball team, the Chicago Cubs, were set to play their cross-town rivals, the Chicago White Sox and it was going to actually be on tv in our little corner of NW Ohio! Even though it's only spring training, that brightened my mood considerably since it's been MONTHS since I've gotten to watch baseball. With the way my day was going, I was sure something would go wrong – the tvguide had made a mistake and we didn't get it, Vegas (where the game was played) would disappear into a sinkhole, something like that. But 10:00 finally rolled around, and the game was on! AND, the teams were putting in their starters rather than their scrub players, which meant real, actual baseball to watch! So I felt better; I relaxed and sat down to watch the game, and of course, that's when my two middle children (the trouble-makers of the brood these days) decided to start fighting. So it wasn't peaceful, but I did get to watch the game. And it was a good game – the Cubs were down, but then they tied it up, but of course the Sox came back to win. A disappointing outcome for such an otherwise great game. But the good news is, it was only spring training so who cares who won!

After the game I left WGN on the tv, and I was treated to an episode of the old tv show Alf. Remember Alf? It was a sitcom from the 80's about a family who discovers an Alien Life Form (ALF), and takes him in to live with them. Alf is a furry wise-cracking puppet with an affinity for cats (to eat!), and the family must keep him secret so he doesn't get taken away. Alf was a huge fad in the 80's; there were toys, lunchboxes, a cartoon spinoff, you name it. After the Alf episode, on came the Steve Wilkos show (he's the former bodyguard from the Jerry Springer show who now has his own trashy talk show – I wrote about this in a previous post,

probably because of my disbelief that they would actually give this guy air time). And that was my cue to hit the sack for my lovely 4½ hours sleep. So far, today has been a little better, although our trouble-making 4-year-old is at school. Tonight I'm looking forward to a brand spankin' new Office episode – YIPPEE! But first I have to get through a few boring meetings. Sure hope I don't doze; I am awfully tired!

It's THAT Time Of Year!

Shortly after this blog post is published, the countdown timer on my site will change – but that's a great thing. It used to count down until the [Chicago Cubs](#)' first game of 2009 Spring Training, but since that game is TODAY (!) that countdown timer will soon be edited to count down until the first real SEASON Cubs game of 2009 – YIPPEE! So here's to hoping the Cubs win today (and every day!), even though it's just spring training!

Now I have to go see if I can find the first game of spring training on a tv channel in the rural expanse of Northwest Ohio! GO CUBBIES!!!

Awesome Anthem Of Moms Everywhere

Apparently while people are on Christmas break – off work or just home with their kids – they like to send email forwards.

I've gotten a burst of them lately, and 2 caught my eye so I will share them. The first is another personality quiz, but it had some different questions than ones in the past, so I'm posting it. Second is a really cute youtube video of a lady doing a marvellous job singing a song with which every parent will identify. She is very talented, and it's a good performance. Not only do the lyrics ring true, but the woman has a nice voice, and she just performs the song very well. It's amazing to me that she was able to memorize all those words – they come awfully fast!

Here's a copy of the personality quiz email with the answers I wrote:

A little fun thing to do.

44 ODD Things about you! If you opened this, FILL IT OUT! Learn 44 things About your friends, and let them learn 44 things about you! Send back to Me and to several more friends !!

1. Do you like blue cheese? yes
2. Have you ever smoked? yes
3. Do you own a gun? NO!
4. What flavor of Kool Aid was your favorite? mountain berry
5. Do you get nervous before doctor appointments? yes
6. What do you think of hot dogs ? like em – especially Vienna Beef or Nathans
7. Favorite Christmas movie? Elf
8. Favorite thing to drink in the morning:water
9. Can you do push ups? barely
10. Favorite piece of jewelry? my wedding and engagement rings
12. Do you have A.D.D.? I just might
13. What is one trait you hate about yourself? that I can be high strung
14. Middle name ? Marie
15. Name 3 thoughts at this exact moment. My Grandma's Christmas village is cooler than the one they're showing on the news – I can't wait until Christmas – I can't wait until

Chris gets off work

17. Current worry? money

18. Current hate right now? arrogant, self-absorbed people

19. Favorite place to be? home

20. How did you bring in the New Year? with friends

22. Name three people who might complete this. Jamy, Megan, Mary Beth

23. Do you own slippers? no – I wear imitation Crocs around the house

24. What shirt are you wearing? a red sweatshirt with snowflakes on it

25. Do you like sleeping on satin sheets? yes – but only in the summer

26. Can you whistle? yes

27. Favorite color? green

28. Would you be a pirate? I've got a parrot... but I don't really know what this question means. I would not hijack ships and steal from people, so I guess not

29. What songs do you sing in the AM. Country

30. Favorite girl's name? Taylor

31. Favorite boy's name? Christopher

32. What's in your pocket right now? a piece of Barbie fake dog poop – don't ask

33. Last thing that made you laugh? My girls seeing their baby brother jumping in his bouncy

34. What vehicle do you drive? minivan

35. Worst injury you have ever had? emergency cesarean with a blood transfusion

36. Favorite Season? Spring

37. How many TV's do you have in your house? 6

38. Who is your loudest friend? Lisa H. I guess

39. Do you have any pets? 2 dogs, a parrot, and one hibernating ladybug

40. Does someone have a crush on you? does marriage count as a crush?

41. What is your favorite book? Monkeys on the Interstate by Jack Hanna

42. Do you collect anything? board games, Legos, Cubs stuff, local historical memorabilia and books
43. Favorite sports team? Chicago Cubs / Bears
44. What song do you want played at your funeral? Whatever other people want to listen to, I guess... it's not like I'll be enjoying it!

And here is the Mom's Anthem video:

Close Enough That You Can Hear The Ball Hit The Bat

I know that the baseball season has ended and legions of Cubbies fans are still mourning the playoff showing (not trying to rub it in; honestly, there is a point to this madness). Tonight at work, I was chatting with a friend and customer whose daughter lives in Chicago. I told him that some of my best friends moved to this area from the Chicago 'burbs. Greg's daughter lives within breathing distance of the hallowed ivy covered outfield walls of Wrigley Field in Wrigleyville. Her apartment building is near the Budweiser sign where a game can be seen right out the window. Coolers and grills are frequently seen going while games are going on. I said, "Don't tell my brother." "Don't worry, Chad and I have already discussed it." But don't be asking to use any connections anytime soon. The apartment complex has been purchased to be redeveloped into something more lucrative (just don't ask me what).

This brought about a discussion of my brother's devotion to the team. Every spring, he conveniently becomes ill at lunch on opening day (or takes a vacation day from work)... EVERY YEAR. One would think that the school would catch on. In our youth, Chad and I shared a bedroom. He would spend hours in the room making towers of baseball cards. Invariably, these towers would be placed right beside the closed door. Consequently, the door would open and the towers would come crashing down. THIS was not done purposely. Periodically however, I have a cousin who would stay overnight and we would have some fun by going into the bedroom and mischievously knocking over the cards. OH, My... you would not want to be caught dead after Chad discovered his hours of work destroyed

(intentionally or not). And guess who was first on his radar? To this day, I never understood why he stacked and restacked those cards when he could have been protecting them and probably would have some money in them. Even less did I understand his practice of personally autographing the cards that did not have a signature on them. I do not know how many cards he has but we have speculated that it has to be in the millions (I'm not kidding). He would also get entire sets of cards for Christmas year after year which he would open and mix in with all the other cards or trade with friends. AH... YOUTH.

Terror In Terror Town

This weekend saw another tour of the area haunted fare. Since our haunted theatre was nixed by the local bureaucrats (something about the theatre not being coded correctly... whatever), it has been great to visit the attractions within reasonable drives. However, this weekend's extravaganza was a little weak. Let's just say that I think that the fearless four-year-old who was part of our group just might have enjoyed going through it. [Terror Town](#) at the Lucas County Fairgrounds is a four attraction for one price haunt. In the first building, the thrillseeker is treated to a display of freaky paraphernalia throughout history (Sasquatch, the KFC trio, the lampshade from [Ed Gein's](#) house of horror, and other oddities). The next was a slaughterhouse in which our group traveled with the use of a flashlight. The problem being, the light was controlled by an unseen force. The third was entitled The Beast which was a tunnel of fun. fINally, came the House of Horror. Let's just say the smell was the scariest part of the whole attraction.

My biggest problem with the site was the ratio of animatronic devices to live actors. You can only stand and watch a mechanical prop jump out at you before it becomes not only UNscary but lame. the actors (no more than 5 in the 4 buildings) just did not have their heart in it. There soul purpose seemed to be to direct the traffic created by the audiences. WAY too many "pop-up" scares and WAY too few human actors feeling their parts created very few chills and spills. So few in fact, that the three of us who usually are psyched and ready for more were hesitant to venture 10 miles to another attraction. Also, the miniature golf course was not yet complete. The let down of the terribly un-terrifying Terror Town led the group to return to watch the [Cubs game](#) which was also a let down. But the Buckeyes won and are now 5-1 overall and 2-0 in the Big Ten.... GO BUCKS!!!

Disappointment Is An Understatement

I am still a Cubs fan; I will admit it. Even after the 2003 Steve Bartman episode, after the 100+ (now it's officially time to add the + to 100) year World Series drought, and the disasterous playoffs of the 2007 and now 2008 seasons.

I just cannot believe the season is over. The season started off so promising this year, and picked up momentum all summer, only to leave us bewildered and disgusted in October once again. So what happened that made them look so terrible during all the playoff games?!?

You know what? I don't even want to talk about it. At least I don't have to worry about missing the World Series while I'm

in Florida! Frickin' Cubs. Maybe next year... UGH!

My Kids

Everywhere we go, I get the comment, "You must have your hands full." Since I usually only have my younger two with me while the older two are in school, people have no idea how right they are! Here are some recent pictures of my angels – they grow so fast and this is for relatives and people who haven't seen them in awhile:

Christopher is a Cubs fan, of course!



Good thing I checked on Christopher during his "tummy time" – this is what I found and he wasn't even making a peep!



*Disney loves her Homer doll even though she calls him
"SpongeBob"*



*Here are all 4 of them together: Disney is almost 2, Sammie is
4, Taylor is 8, and Christopher is 2½ months*



*Christopher doesn't have the hang of holding his own bottle
yet*



*Everyone says Sammie and Disney look like twins, years apart.
Sammie really wanted us to take this picture
of them holding her Samantha sign – no one had the heart to
tell her it was backwards*

