

My Favorite Music Comes From Sesame Street

I'm not really hip with pop culture these days. Sure, I read my share of celebrity gossip whenever it happens upon cnn.com, but I'm really out of it when it comes to the latest tv shows and music. I am such a nerd that I had to wikipedia 'Jersey Shore' because I got sick of reading all these headlines about it and not knowing what the heck they were talking about. Sounds like kind of a dumb show, by the way, not for me.

Because I listen to country music, mainstream music is usually of no interest to me. But I couldn't help but take notice when a snappy tune came out of the tv this morning – it was Sesame Street, and there was a musical guest. I know that Sesame Street has celebrity guest-stars all the time, so I chose what seemed to be the title of the song and did a search on youtube.com. The song is "I'm Yours", and it's sung by Jason Mraz. Even all my reading of celebrity gossip didn't help me here – I've never heard of Jason Mraz, but I have to say that I like his sound. But that shouldn't really come as a surprise that I've never heard of him – I don't think he's a regular in my pop culture circle that includes such characters as Dora, Miss Spider, Little Bear, or Wow Wow Wubbzy. My 18-month-old son and I couldn't help but bounce and groove to this song; see if you feel the same. By the way, when Mr. Mraz performed this song on Sesame Street, the lyrics were changed to make the song be about playing outside, making it more kid-friendly. Cute.

A Not-So-Perfect End To A Perfect Day

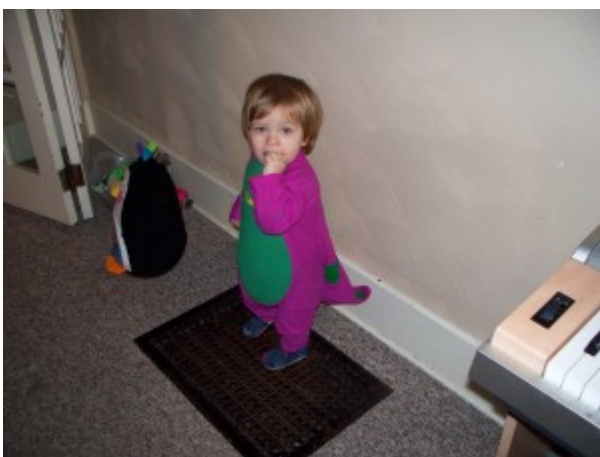
WHEW! I have to admit that we totally overdid it on Halloween, but in a good way – at one point in the evening, my 5-year-old said “how many parties are we going to?!?” We threw a Halloween-themed game night on Friday, complete with things like spider venom, truth serum, and rat vomit for drinks and snacks. Most guests wore costumes, and there was a wide collection of characters, from witches to fishes to Star Wars characters and a vampire – we even had a gay construction worker! Fun was had, but as usual, we stayed up too late and failed to rest up for our huge day ahead – HALLOWEEN!

We began Saturday by making the rats costumes and taking them to the pet store for a costume contest. No word yet how they placed in the contest, but Bobby Jack dressed as a zebra while Oreo was a Pink Lady from Grease – the kids had a blast! We took the rats home and headed out to the ice rink for the annual community Halloween party – one of my favorite things about living here. We get there right when it opens and head straight for the hayride, where we are driven around the huge park. Occasionally, creepy creatures run from hideouts among the trees and chase the wagon! Not as many people were in line this year, so we got to ride the hayride twice, and then the kids tried some of the games, the maze, and the bouncy castles, while Mom and Dad chatted with long-lost friends and sipped slushies and hot chocolate (everything at this party is free and donated by local businesses and organizations!) We got our hot dogs to go this year, and they told us to take a huge pumpkin home – we still have to carve our pumpkins, so we were more than happy to get one more!

We were able to rest for about an hour, then it was time for trick-or-treating. We moved into our neighborhood 3 years ago, and we learned the first year that it's not good for trick-or-treating. We love where we live, but come Halloween, it seems like many neighbors aren't home, so we'd have to make the kids walk blocks for only a few houses with porch lights on. So we drive across town and trick-or-treat in a friendly neighborhood where some friends live, and we started with their house. Our little guy dressed as Barney, Disney was Dora the Explorer, Sammie was a princess, and Taylor was a bloody prom girl.



Oh wait, you need to see Barney with his tail ☐



I absolutely love Halloween – of course I think my own kids were the cutest, but I love seeing all the kids dressed up. An honorable mention goes to the 4 teenage boys who were dressed as the Teletubbies – my 3-year-old daughter was asking

where the Teletubbies were all night, but we never did catch up to them...



We took in quite a haul with the 4 kids, and after the second house, our 15½-month-old had the hang of taking candy from strangers. Ok, that sounds really bad, but Halloween is a unique event, he was allowed, and it was really cute! We got in the car after we were done trick-or-treating and headed over to a party at our friends' church. The kids had a blast there as always, and we made out like bandits in the raffle! Years of not winning anything we entered apparently caught up with us on Halloween night because a few bucks in raffle tickets won us 2 value meals at Burger King and 3 really cool brand new toys for the kids!

But here is where things start to change from perfect to overwhelming – at the church we ran into my Kindergartner's friend Hannah from preschool. This child has many medical issues, and she's been in and out of the hospital her entire life for brain surgeries. Her mother was telling us how she doesn't like her preschool anymore and how she's been depressed because she doesn't have any friends. So who could possibly tell this little girl "no" when she asked if she could come sleep over again? Certainly not us, no matter how exhausted we were from the weekend's activities...

After the church, we headed over to the community theater where they were having a Wizard of Oz party. I was

completely exhausted, and we had to hurry home to meet up with my daughter's little friend, but I really enjoyed the Wizard of Oz party during the short time we were there. They did an AWESOME job with the decorations, and there were so many neat Oz-themed games and activities – even a yellow brick road! – that I will forgive the inclusion of some things from Wicked. I guess I should say for any readers who don't know – I'm a huge Wizard of Oz fan, but it's the movie that I really enjoy. I don't remember the book much, and what I've seen of Wicked did not impress me, to say the least, but that's another blog post altogether...

So FINALLY we get home, and Hannah is waiting for us. At this point, I was SO incredibly tired, not to mention my car full of garbage, pieces of costume, and spilled candy. All I wanted to do was end Halloween my favorite way – watching a scary movie with Hubby. So we got the kids (all SIX of them, since two daughters had friends over) as settled as was humanly possible after I-don't-even-want-to-think-about how much candy and were about to start our movie when Hannah comes down the stairs. We sent her back up, and checked email and basically killed some time until we felt confident we could start a movie without any kids coming downstairs or calling for us. Well, that never happened. Somehow, we had forgotten that Hannah is a friend who is very needy and also one who outright REFUSES to go to bed. We started the movie anyway, and we only had to interrupt it like 5 times (a late 80's thriller called [I, Madman](#) – both hubby and I recommend it!). But Hannah began one of her many descents down the stairs right during a climatic moment in the movie, which made my husband jump a mile high, which in turn made my heart stop and stomach drop. And that was when I knew I wouldn't be falling asleep for hours. Hannah finally fell asleep when there was only 15 minutes left in the movie, but she outlasted every one of the other kids, and by then, it was 2 am! I guess you could say I put my extra daylight savings hour to good use; I think it's the only hour of sleep I got! I had

trouble falling asleep, then I had terrible nightmares all night and kept waking up – one was about Hannah; I'm not even kidding! I woke up early to the sounds of kids playing and couldn't fall back asleep. So here we are, the Sunday after Halloween, dead tired with a messy Halloween-themed house and a trashed car. But at least our house once again contains only the 4 kids who live here, and the main trouble-maker has been sacked out all day – told you we overdid it!

Hope you had a GREAT Halloween!!!

Misc Kid Updates

My 10 month old's physical appearance is about to change dramatically. Well, first, let me start here – he's been suffering from lethargy, crabbiness, diarrhea, and diaper rash lately. You seasoned parents out there know what I'm talking about – teething! Sure enough, the other day when we were playing and he was upside-down, I saw not one, not two, but THREE little tooth buds on his top gums. Poor little guy. So pretty soon, he will have a *mouthful* of teeth! I just hope that's the end of his awful diaper rash – he's been taking about 3 baths a day; it's one of the things that helps his sore little bottom. And being 10 months old, he's been doing all sorts of other things: climbing stairs, pulling things down, pulling himself up on everything... they grow so fast and it seems that his trouble is just beginning!

His 2-year-old sister, Disney has gotten a Dora the Explorer obsession from somewhere. She wants to watch Dora constantly, and it's so cute to hear her talk back to Dora on the tv – she is even learning Spanish as a result!

And today is their sister Sammie's birthday! She is

officially 5! We already had her birthday party, but I think we will take her out to dinner and maybe to the store. She has been a little better behaved lately, but still not as great as she was a few months ago – her behavior comes in waves, I guess. At least we're not stuck in horrible-acting Sammie-ness as a constant any longer – there have been glimmers of hope! She is getting ready for Kindergarten in the fall and has been practicing writing her name. A note about this – she would have aced the writing her name part already if we had just named her "Maps", a word she writes over and over!

Taylor is 9 and almost ready to go to middle school next year. You read that right – where we live, kids go to the middle school for 4th-8th grades. She is VERY responsible with her school work and also when it comes to taking care of their 4 pet rats, so I think she'll do well in middle school. We have noticed an increase in her displaying a poor attitude – typical tween stuff, but I wish my child was somehow exempt. Is there an exemption card I can get for this?

So anyway, there's just been a lot going on with the kids lately, and I wanted to share some things before time passed me by and they moved out of the house before I had a chance to blog it. TIME FLIES!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SAMMIE!!!!!!

I'm Grounded

I will spare you the details, but apparently I've caught some sort of stomach virus (and it causes stomach pain – OUCH!). Of course, I can't call in sick to my job as a SAHM (stay at home mom), and just my luck that my husband has work today, so

I'm stuck with the two little ones. Actually, they're stuck with me – I don't feel well enough to go to Walmart or to take them anywhere else, so I can't even kill time that way – I'm grounded. And I do need to go to Walmart – I've already endured one tantrum about our lack of fruit loops. I don't think I could handle another one. Is there fruit loops delivery? I actually *want* to go to Walmart – like I said, it would kill the time anyway. At least I can blog like a maniac right now while the baby is napping. When he wakes up, I will be at his mercy. He gets really bored around the house and wants to be held all the time. But when I hold him, he just wants to grab things he shouldn't and bang on my computer keyboard. I guess I might say I'm bored. It's not that I have nothing to do; there are always blog posts to write (I'm sitting on 14 drafts right now!), newspapers from weeks ago to read, thank you notes and birthday party invitations to write, a messy house to clean, laundry to do, an anniversary photo album to put together... it's just that I don't feel like doing any of that. Or feel like doing much of anything, for that matter. I guess I'll sit here and watch Dora the Explorer all day. I'm getting hungry, but I'm scared to eat anything because of my stomach. I have a meeting I'd really like to get to later... sigh. Being sick sucks. I hope I feel better for date day tomorrow!!!