

Happy New Year!

Happy New Year! Holy cow, 2009 already! I hope you had a good New Year's. Ours was wonderful. We hosted a bash, which is always great so that we don't have to pack up the kids and all their luggage just to haul them out somewhere to stay until the wee hours of the morning. We played charades and other games and ate lots of yummy treats. Our kids – #2 and #4 in birth order – fell asleep way early. The older one stayed asleep all night, but wouldn't you know it – the baby woke right as we crawled into bed at 4 in the morning. I was able to sleep for a few hours, but that's more than I can say for my husband who woke with the baby. But then he got a short nap while I ambled downstairs to do some much needed cleanup from the party. After that, we were ready to drag ourselves over to a friend's house for a New Year's Day chili feast – I'm told the beans bring good luck in the new year. More food, more fun, and we didn't plan on staying long but ended up getting home about 7 in the evening. I did miss the hockey game at Wrigley Field, but the Red Wings beat the Blackhawks anyway. I'm not a big hockey fan; I just thought it would be cool to see Wrigley all decked out for hockey. I wonder what they would have done if they had gotten some of that freak 60 degree weather again – how to maintain an ice rink in those conditions? Oh well, that's a tangent, good thing this site is called tangents.org

So the chili and rest of the food at our friends house was great, but I wish I could have enjoyed it more – seems I partied a little too hard the night before and felt a little tired and queasy come chili feast time. But it's my own fault – I should know that I'm getting older and can't handle the late nights (or early mornings for that matter) like I used to. But oh well – my friend did give me some delicious chili to take home, so hopefully it will be more enjoyable now that I was able to rest last night. Now I'll just have to get used

to writing 2009 instead of 2008 all over the place...

Bad Luck Turns Good!

We've been hit with some bad luck lately in our household. First, our beloved family dog of almost 11 years was diagnosed last week with a few potentially life-threatening illnesses. Aside from our obvious concerns about our dog's health, this has also incurred large vet bills. Next, we lost our expensive digital camera while trick-or-treating, and it contained priceless family photos, including the kids in their Halloween costumes. Finally (hopefully!) our car decided to conk out – engine wouldn't turn over. My husband did some research online and found that it was most likely the pass-key system, which can be quite costly to fix. While we were trying to jump start the car to fix it ourselves, the keys got locked in, which also stalled our efforts to fix it.

However, the bad luck is slowly changing to good, an unheard of phenomenon for us as people who have experienced more than an average person's amount of bad luck, I'd guess. For a few years, we really got dumped upon, one horrible thing after another, but we've also had more than our fair share of good luck in life as well, especially lately, and we count our blessings every day. But rarely has our bad luck turned good like this. Yesterday, as I was walking my daughter to school (no car, remember?), I found a \$10 bill on the sidewalk. I immediately felt guilty and thought about how much I would like the person who found our digital camera to turn it in, so we called the police – again – and asked if anyone reported it missing. So far, they haven't, which means I get to keep it. The police must be getting sick of us by now since we've called about 10 times in the last few days looking for our

camera and trying to get into our locked car... but oh well, in a sleepy rural town such as ours, I'm sure they're just happy to have *something* to do. So anyway, I find the \$10, and I think I get to keep it, and then I walked to the local car dealer yesterday, and they gave me a key to get into my car for only \$2.50 when we thought it would be at least \$35 for a locksmith! So we find money, save money getting into our locked car, and then today we find out that our car is still under warranty, so the expensive pass-key replacement system will be covered!!! H00RAY!!! And get this – we are under warranty for ***only 24 more miles!*** What a blessing of a coincidence, although it makes me afraid to drive the car for fear that something else will go wrong and next time, it won't be covered!

But anyway, besides the vet bills, as far as the car goes, I think we actually came out ahead on the whole deal. We saved \$ on gas these past two days when I had to do all errands on foot, I found the \$10, and there's no charge for repairs, so yeah, we're actually \$10+ ahead! Hopefully everything will go ok with the car repairs so that we can still make it to the early Christmas celebrations we had planned for this weekend in Illinois. And they say bad things happen in sets of three, so hopefully this is it for at least a little while anyway...