

New Tangents

Well, this is my second post with the new “backend” of the tangents.org website, and I have to say, so far I like it better! It really wasn't that difficult to get used to the changes, and so far anyway, I've found everything I need. If you've read my post called, “When Technology Attacks” then you know that I am reluctant to learn new ways of doing things on computers, etc. once I learn the original way to do them. It seems right after I learn something new, it changes, leaving me right where I started – feeling dumb, frustrated, and like I've wasted my time. But with the new tangents.org updates, I have to say that I'm pleasantly surprised since I've figured out everything I've needed to use so far by myself without it even taking any extra time! After that warning from O Mighty Admin, I have to say I was dreading the day when the updates would take effect, but now I see that my concerns were unfounded – for now at least!

Sorry Wrong Car!

So the other day I was waiting outside Walmart for my husband to get our Wii-fund... I know, I said I wasn't going to wait in the car with the kids anymore, but I dropped him off and went home to get some forgotten items for our Mother's Day excursion, so I wasn't sitting there the entire time. Good thing too, because I went home, bumbled around the house for a bit, came back and still spent a good 10 minutes waiting for him to make his return. But I turned the car off right away this time, and I was fully expecting it to take awhile because he was making a return at Walmart on a Saturday after all. I even made the joke, see ya tomorrow...

But while I was waiting, I heard the cargo door of our minivan open up, and I thought, that's strange, I didn't know he was going to be buying anything he'd have to put back there... so I look in my rearview mirror, and there's a strange lady standing there with a confused look on her face. "Sally?" she said. "Um, no, I think you have the wrong car..." I replied as my 2 little girls turned around in the back seat and stared at her. The van she was waiting for then pulled up beside us, with the driver – Sally, I assume – laughing hysterically while her friend loaded her items into the correct van this time and hopped in the passenger side. She rolled down her window and tried to justify her mistake, "See they look alike; I'm not crazy!" Well, her friends' minivan was a Chrysler Pacifica, whereas ours is a Chevy Uplander, and her friends was 2-tone with gray on the undercarriage, but I guess they were similiar in color... but still, it was a funny experience and probably really embarrassing for Sally's friend – just a testament to what a circus Walmart can be on a Saturday no matter where you live... Sunday I have to go there just to pick up my daughter's birthday cake, ugh. Maybe I'll send my husband instead... no wait, I'd better not – I'd like him to make it back in time for the birthday party!

Wiifunded the Wii...

It is official. Wii wiiturned the Wii for a Wiifund.

Although I had some fun playing it, I deifnately did not see the long term value and did not see it working well for a workout. Not better than the lower cost Xavix anyhow. So, it is now history but... Funny story!

When I entered the WalMart someone started to follow me from a

distance. It was obvious he was following me so I assumed it was security. As I approached the customer service desk to return the Wii he asked me “does that Wii work or is it defective”. I told him it works fine and I just didn’t like it.

I then proceeded to return the Wii. It took forever and right when I finished, that guy stepped up to the customer service counter and asked if he could buy it!

I left before I saw the result, but I assume he is the new owner of the Wiitarded video game system.

BTW – Once I tried Madden '08 on the Wii that is when I knew it was going bye-bye. The graphics were below that of my Xbox (not Xbox 360, just plain old Xbox) and the gameplay was just lame.

Goodbye Wii. Wii will not miss you!

Teacher’s Pet – All Grown Up

While serving on the board of a local community agency, a certain personality type came to my attention: teacher’s pet. Yes, these people are alive and well and living as adults. Surprisingly it’s not something one grows out of when he or she leaves school; rather, the behavior seems to evolve and follow the person into adulthood. I use the term “teacher’s pet” loosely here because I don’t know how else to describe it, so I will try my best to give examples. Back to this person on the board – it starts when the person stops the flow of the meeting to contribute to every item on the agenda. I think it’s good when people participate and share their ideas, but there is a fine line when their comments and “helpful”

suggestions cross the line into being disruptive. Case in point – at a meeting recently, an item on the agenda involved discussing traveling to Chicago for a board training seminar. The teacher's pet of the group spoke up and went into great detail about how the board of this organization should actually be taking more than one vehicle on trips like these in case something happens to the vehicle. He explained that if the vehicle carrying the entire board of the organization were to crash or something else horrible were to happen, we would no longer have a board if the President, Vice President, etc. were all riding together. Good point, but a little extreme, I would say... This board is not in charge of running a country or anything close to that scale. I'm not saying that it's not important or that steps should not be taken to safeguard the staff involved, however, I don't think dividing up into 2 vehicles has anything to do with preventative safety and actually seems like it might put a strain on the budget (**insert another gas prices gripe here**). It's a good idea for the President and Vice President of the United States and other heads of government to travel separately but when talking about this particular group it just doesn't seem like a logical idea, especially not an idea that should have taken 20 minutes or longer to discuss.

A second example of adult teacher's pet behavior happens often in community theater. My husband and I are active in our local theater group, and while directing a few plays together, we've come across at least one individual who was a bit over eager to please the directors. Again, don't get me wrong, enthusiasm, especially for community theater, is a great thing. But when you interrupt the process of producing a play in order to offer "helpful" suggestions that aren't really helpful at all and just keep the entire group waiting for you to finish talking, then it's probably better if you just let the director do what he or she needs to do. It's also especially annoying when people offer things to help with the show; be it labor, props, etc. only to not follow through

and actually deliver the work and/or goods. Makes me think they were just sucking up to the directors!

So when I say 'teacher's pet', I guess I just mean those people who are so overzealous about showing and proving to others that they are participating in the group that they come forth with ideas that aren't always well thought out. Like I said, it's not that I discourage contribution, and by no means should people be made to feel that their ideas are stupid, however, they should use discretion in bringing up topics that are relevant to the conversations at hand and also make sure that they are going to follow through with what they say they will contribute.

POST DISCLAIMER: None of the above comments have anything to do with anyone who is a regular reader of my blog!!! □

Dinosaur movies

I have a 1992 version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Lost World". I tend to like movies about dinosaurs, especially campy ones. Rubber dinosaurs, stop action clay dinosaurs, lizards with frills attached are all good fun. Newer movies with good CGI effects are also fun for me. The movie I have is more of the rubber dinosaur type. If you now of the book, John Rhys Davies is Professor Challenger. I've like most of the movies with Mr Davies, and so far this is no exception. He is as bombastic and egotistical as the book. I don't remember the story having a kid along, but he hasn't got on my nerves too much yet. My biggest problem with the story so far is that they moved the location of lost world from the Amazon to the heart of Africa. I'm still curious as to why that was changed, but I guess it doesn't make much difference. More on this

after I finish watching.

Happy Mother's Day!

I had a wonderful Mother's Day weekend. We decided to celebrate Saturday in order to avoid the crowds at all the restaurants and other establishments; also it worked out well because my kids often need all of Sunday as a rest day to recuperate from the previous week and the weekend before returning to school on Monday. So, I slept in Saturday until I was awakened by the idyllic crow of a rooster... wait a minute... we do live in a rural area, but that was no rooster – it was a screaming parrot and it wasn't the least bit idyllic, just horribly annoying and not a fun way to get woken up. But, it was nearing 10 am, and I figured I had left poor dad with the kids long enough.

I was making myself some oatmeal for breakfast when I was greeted in the kitchen by cute little girl #1. "Happy Mother's Day Mom!", she said, and gave me a stuffed animal she had found in her room. I find the re-gifting really cute; it's her way of sharing what she has and also displays her thoughtfulness in wanting to get me something but being too little to go out shopping on her own. She also gave me the most adorable essay she wrote in school – I will share, though it's much cuter to see it in 8-year-old handwriting:

Happy Mother's Day! I love my mommy for many different reasons. One reason is that sometimes she gives me what I want at the store. Another reason is that she helps me do stuff around the house like make soft crunchy cookies. The last reason is she lets me have fun a lot like at the park! I think that my mommy is triffic, wonder ful, and vary funny.

by Taylor

Daughter #2 was next, and she handed me a singing gorilla from her room. "Happy Val-tine's Day, Mom!", she said, hugging my leg. She is almost 4 and apparently forgot the name of the day, only remembering that she was supposed to give me something and be well-behaved, but that's all that mattered to me! Don't be fooled, however... they are not perfect angels ALL of the time – my kids' Mother's Day sweetness was promptly followed by a HUGE knock-down, drag-out, screaming at the top of their lungs fight... The first of many throughout the weekend. We still had a great time though – my husband always does a great job of keeping his cool which is more than I can say for myself... but there was something going on with my oldest this weekend, and it showed!

Next, we decided to go to a neighboring city to go swimming in a hotel – my husband can get GREAT hotel rates online for most places, and the overnight getaway was exciting for the kids and around the same price as driving somewhere far away (**insert gas price gripe here**) and spending \$ for other entertainment. Besides, being in the water felt WONDERFUL for my aching pregnant body... I would love to have access to a pool during a whole pregnancy sometime; it's amazing how the sensations of all the aches, pains, and extra weight just melt away when under the water. The kids had a great time, and we all got some exercise also, plus when we got home on Sunday, they all took at least a 2 hour nap – can't put a price on that! My husband of course, catered to their needs all day too, so really I got a whole Mother's Day weekend out of it – 2 days when I was supposed to get 1! I only hope I feel up to it enough to give my husband as great a Father's Day as I got a Mother's Day. But since I'll be even more pregnant by then, we might have to reschedule... ever heard of Father's Day in August? ☐

Talking about the sunset

I don't know if anyone noticed the sunset I have on my blog page. This is a picture I took years ago on a late winter or early spring day (notice lack of leaves). This was taken on one of those old Sony cameras with the floppy disk to store the pictures, and also one of my early attempts at using the camera. I had 3 floppies of sunset pictures, this was one of the last and happened to be the best one. 1024x768 Jpeg file with a size of 110 Kb.

You may ask why I'm explaining all this today. I would ask that if I didn't already know the answer. So I'll tell you.

This picture was one of my wife's favorites. She put it on our computer as the wallpaper (until she took many pictures of her chinchillas). I was happy that she liked my first attempt at digital photography. Anyway I now use this picture on almost everything that needs my personal stamp. I have it on my computer wallpaper, my cell phone wallpaper, I panel on the front of my laptop has this picture and so on. It is one little memory I have of the good times I had with my wife. And it is a picture in our woods that we purchased (a long way around) from my parents. It was my mother's wish to live in the woods as long as I can remember. When I was in High School, she finally got her wish. So that picture also reminds me of my mother.

So for the two mothers in my life that I have lost, and for all other moms reading ... Happy Mother's Day.

Those Wacky Wachowski Kids

After the whole family (siblings and their children) all took Mom out for Mother's Day brunch HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL! I decided to tag along and watch *Speed Racer*... following a brief play-reading meeting. Going in, I had little expectation. I only vaguely remember seeing repeat episodes of the 60s Japanese animated import. I most remember the little brother and the chimp popping out of the trunk of the race car. And since this was another Wachowski brother production, I was expecting a visually dazzling display with little plot, or character development much like the *Matrix* trilogy of a few years ago.

Here we have the Racer family (Pops, Mom, Speed, his girl Trixie, little brother Spittle, mechanic Sparks, and cute chimp Chim-Chim). Speed is offered the opportunity to race for a huge racing team that is reknowned for dirty racing. In fact, those who do not take the opportunity usually end up regretting their decision. In order to reveal the racing cartel, Speed joins forces with the mysterious Racer X (Matthew Fox from *Lost*) and a Japanese racer (whose name I do not remember).

The stylized fighting with Ninjas is comical. Watching John Goodman twirl one above his head as if he were tossing pizza dough created a huge roar from the audience. The entire production design resembled a comic book come to life. The colors were all super exaggerated: the sky a bright, bright blue. The sets all appeared to be futuristic... especially the racetracks). The races were fun to watch with the gadget enhanced speedsters flipping, swerving, jumping over each other, etc. In short, it was a fun movie to LOOK at. One of the downsides of the movie is the length. It ran over 2 hours and 10 minutes which is just too long for a movie to run aimed at families and there was a lot of downtime that would probably be a distraction to younger children. But, if you are

a fan of the computer generated wizardry of the Wachowski brothers then *Speed Racer* is fun to watch.

On a tangent, the Wachowski's must know their Bond flicks. One of the racers is poisoned by a Ninja in a scene which is played identically to one in *You Only Live Twice*.



Teacher videos

I was taking a look at [Teachertube](#) today and found something interesting. Now this is something I have yet to have to do as a substitute- play a video from the teacher. Apparently this teacher left **video** instructions on what the kids would do in class that day. If I were his sub I think I might appreciate it as he was able to go into some detail on how to navigate a website on the Pilgrims. Sure, I could follow written instructions and show the kids myself, but in case of an internet-illiterate sub this would be the next-best thing to the teacher being there. Take a look for yourself. Teachertube is not yet a valid site for embedding so you will have to click the link:

[Substitute Teacher](#)

Oh, and while you're there check out [The Amazing Dancing Sub](#). Now I once sang a bit for a class after I told them I was in a show and they wanted a sample, but dance? I don't *think* so... This guy definitely has a unique calling card for teachers (note the end of the video). ☐

[Link for our admin \(hint,hint!\)](#)

Reasonable Running Time?

How long does it take you to “run in” to a store? I suppose it depends on the size of the store and what you need. If you’re running into the gas station to pay for gas, then it will probably take a fraction of the time it would take you to “run in” to a Super Walmart and pick up milk, diapers, and say, deoderant, or something else that is usually located all the way on the other side of the store.

But apparently the phrase “running in” has different meanings for different people. To me, it means ‘get in the store and get what I need as quickly as I possibly can’. To my husband, it means ‘get some shopping done so my wife doesn’t have to get out of the car, and we don’t have to bother unloading the kids’. The problem here lies where my husband is the *slowest shopper you will ever meet*. This is **not** an exaggeration. I’m very thankful sometimes that I was blessed with a man who doesn’t mind shopping, in fact, he even likes it, depending on what we’re shopping for, of course. But it takes him **forever** to get *anything*. I still can’t figure out why... is it because he reads every package of every brand of every product in which he’s interested in order to comparison shop? Is it because he is unorganized and doesn’t remember what he’s at the store to get? Is it because he gets sidetracked and ends up shopping for three items when he’s in the store to buy only one? It could be a combination of all the above; I haven’t figured it out yet. But what I have figured out is to no longer put myself in the situation of being the car babysitter while my husband’s 5 minute “run in” to the store turns to 10, 20, sometimes upwards of 30 minutes!

Now that I'm in the third trimester of my pregnancy, I don't always want to go in the store, whereas normally, I don't mind... like most women, I don't mind shopping, even if hubby is taking forever and a day in the electronics section. Which reminds me real quick – TANGENT ALERT – a brand-new Super Walmart in a town nearby has the right idea. They put a really nice big magazine section right by the electronics department with benches in between for the wives to park themselves while the husbands wishfully browse the electronics – Walmart doesn't often earn my kudos, but this is an example of some good store planning! Anyway, back to my venting...

So before the pregnancy, for some reason I was never the one who got to "run in" to the store – I always got the 'babysit-for-the-3-bored-kids-in-the-car' job, ugh. I finally put a stop to it because hubby's "running in" took so long, and then I got pregnant and don't have the foot power to last very long in stores anyway. So the other day, we're coming out of a store, and he says, very smoothly as he's already walking toward the Office Max and away from the car, "I'm just going to 'run in' real quick and check for something." Uh-oh. Did he say 'run-in real quick'? You may take me for a fool, but I believed him. I thought he would be really quick because we had a meeting with a start time about an hour away, and he knew I wanted to make a few stops before the meeting, so surely he wouldn't jeopardize my errands by letting Office Max take too long... So I was under the impression that after I waddled to the car and pulled up to Office Max, he'd be ready to go... WRONG! I've been through this enough by now to know not to worry... I used to sit there and seriously think, 'what if he's being held hostage in the Office Max or what if he's passed out and gotten hurt or something? But we've been together for over a decade, so I now realize he's just a "forever shopper". I finished reading the daily newspaper and glanced around – no husband. I put on the radio and listened to a song or two... no husband. I checked the time and started to get irritated, dreaming of the ice cream stop that was

going to be one of my errands before the meeting... no husband. I put on the mp3 player and listened to about 3 songs, trying to keep calm and not cry out of frustration (impatience+pregnancy-ice cream = easy tears) ... no husband. Now our new car starts to rumble and shake. Since we got rid of the Ford months ago, I didn't think it was a mechanical problem... then I remembered that the gas light had come on earlier, before my husband "ran in" to Office Max. I turned off the car, and waited some more. Finally he came out of the store - empty handed. I hadn't thought to turn off the car while waiting for him since he was just "running in", and now we were out of gas after idling for a good twenty minutes or longer - I hadn't been keeping track. Luckily there was a gas station right across the street, and instead of walking there and having to buy a gas can, he pushed the car and I steered it over to the gas station... it gave us time to blow off some steam... well, me anyway. I was also wondering what could possibly take a person so long in a store only to have them come out with nothing?!? But, I was literally too peeved to ask and I didn't want to talk about what happened at Office Max. All I knew is that my errands weren't going to happen and I was going to the meeting ice cream-less.

In my husband's defense, he doesn't do this because he's not thoughtful or considerate; it's actually the opposite. He wants to save me from having to go into the stores, and save me from the trouble of having to deal with shopping hassles... and he takes long in stores even when I'm with him, that's just how he is... He just doesn't have a very good concept of time, and he doesn't realize that I'd much rather entertain the kids and myself in the store than in the car. Also, being a woman makes me prone to thinking ahead, while he is impulsive. If he had thought ahead about the Office Max errand, we could have discussed it, and I could have planned to get my errands done at the same time, or even gotten gas while I waited. Instead, since the Office Max errand was brought up at the last possible second when I couldn't even

say no because he was too far away to hear me, I thought it'd be quick enough where I could leave the car on and not run out of gas. The good news out of all this is that the meeting ended early enough that I was able to get my daughter's birthday party stuff before that store closed, so really the only errand I missed that day was my ice cream. And I can do without putting more weight on my poor feet right now anyway, I guess... And this experience reinforced my mantra that I will NOT wait in the car while my husband "runs in" to anywhere ever again. At least not without a full library of reading materials or a laptop so I can blog about him while I wait... In case you think I'm being too hard on him by the way, I told him I was going to be blogging about this incident – he took so long we ran out of gas, for crying out loud!!! And NEVER will I wait in the car for him to 'run in' anywhere while the kids are with us!