

More Great Movie Titles

To keep up with both blogs, allow me to post some more wonderfully hideous titles and synopses. OR... lets make it even more fun. I will give a list of titles and synopses. See if you can guess which one contains the actual description.

1. Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me. The story of a young child who falls into a well and finds herself in another world populated by giant red ants.

2. Fat Guy Goes Nutzoid. A large man with a Mohawk haircut escapes from a mental hospital and becomes the friend of two rich kids.

3. Night of the Day of the Dawn of the Son of the Bride of the Return of the Terror of the Attack of the Evil, Mutant, Hellbound, Flesh-Eating Subhumanoid Zombified Living Dead, Part 3. A horror movie aficionado takes her fascination too far when she unearths the remains of Dr. Frankenstein, Count Dracula, The Mummy, and The Creature from the Black Lagoon.

Lions and Tigers and Bears Oh My

I am greatly anticipating our scheduled visit to the Toledo Zoo next week. My daughter needs a specialty dentist in the big city, so we've decided to throw some fun in there as well with a trip to the zoo. It will probably be my last one until after I have the baby, unless they have a wagon available for

rental that's big enough for very pregnant me AND the 3 kids. Since it's only March and I'm not due until July, I think I can still handle the large amount of walking it takes to get around the zoo – we'll see anyway. I naively thought that pregnancies would get easier with experience, but it seems that I forgot to factor in my increasing age – I am almost 10 years older than I was the first time I was with child – and I feel it!

Toledo Zoo is very large. It's a very nice zoo, but there is lots of walking. It remains one of my favorite zoos in the country however, and I've visited at least 20. Toledo has lots of animals, but they are pretty spread out. Also, because the zoo straddles a major road, you have to trek up and down a ramp and across a long pedestrian bridge; all of which is not so much fun if pregnant or in the heat of the summer. But overall, it is one of my favorite zoos. Even though the gorilla's indoor exhibit is pretty small, I really enjoy how close you can see them, and they don't seem unhappy being in a small exhibit... unlike a gorilla at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska. He had a really small indoor enclosure, and we witnessed him charge at a little boy – it was very scary and thank goodness that glass was thick! This was years ago, and I think Henry Doorly has since re-built their gorilla exhibit. Another zoo with a lot of walking is the Brookfield Zoo near Chicago, Illinois. Brookfield has lots of walking, but unlike Toledo, the animals are spaced further apart, so much of the walking is without seeing animals. It's been a few years since I've been there, so maybe they've changed this, but it's not one of my favorite zoos, unless we're talking about sentimental reasons – it was the site of my husband's and my first "unofficial" date. One zoo that sticks out in my memory as one of my favorites is the Folsom Children's Zoo in Lincoln, Nebraska. The name is misleading, they had quite an array of animals there; including red pandas, camels, reindeer, leopards, monkeys, a variety of reptiles, seals, sloths, emus that like to be pet,

and there are still many more I haven't named. All in only 19 acres, nestled right in the city. Which sounds large, but once you get in there, it was really the perfect size. Not much walking at all, lots of animals who all had lots of room in their environments, and it was very nicely landscaped with mature trees and such so that you forgot you were in the middle of the city. We used to live close enough to walk there, but the only problem with this great little zoo is that it was only open from April – October. If you are ever in Nebraska, the Folsom Children's Zoo is a must-see. Being a native Chicagoan, it's strange that I've never visited the Lincoln Park Zoo, which is also in the middle of a city, albeit a much larger one than Lincoln. But I've heard good things about it, and maybe one of these days, during one of our bi-yearly visits to the area, we will give Lincoln Park a whirl so I can add it to my zoo resume.

Before our trips to the zoo, I like to visit a really cool website to brush up on my animal facts. It really makes zoo trips more interesting if you know a little more about what you're looking at. Check out this online database that is maintained by the University of Michigan:
<https://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/index.html>

And finally, if you are still reading this, you must be an animal lover like me. If you also like to read, I highly recommend my favorite book written by my favorite celebrity: Jack Hanna, called "Monkeys on the Interstate". If you ever watch The Late Show with David Letterman, you know that poor Jack often comes across as a bumbling fool when he's on the show. He is an animal expert however, and he is much more entertaining to watch than most animal experts. He and Letterman tease each other mercilessly, and there is almost always some sort of animal mishap that occurs when Jack is involved, always with hilarious results. His book is a narrative of the same sort of episodes, all taken from his life as he was growing up and also from when he went on to

become the director of the Columbus Zoo. By the way, being an Ohioan, I've had the opportunity to visit the Columbus Zoo, and I will say that it did not disappoint. If you read Jack's book, you will read about how he brought the zoo from anonymity (he notes in his book that when he first arrived in Ohio, people would always ask him, "there's a zoo in Columbus?!?") to one of the most renowned facilities in the world. There was a lot of trial and error involved in achieving this, and again, many hilarious hijinks, all of which are detailed in the book – it is really entertaining reading. And it's not just a clever title – there really *were* Monkeys on the Interstate, thanks to Jack and one of his hare-brained ideas! Maybe I will take another look at it on the long ride to Toledo next week...

When Forwards Are Addicting...

I'm talking about email forwards. And just about everyone knows someone or is someone (even if they won't admit it) who just can't seem to resist forwarding EVERY forward they get to EVERYONE in their address book. I've mentioned before that my mom's neighbor from about 5 years ago *still* forwards me stuff... and it's not like I knew them all that well to begin with. They just got my email address from a forward list one time (I think), and just forward every forward to everyone they know – and some people they don't know, apparently. I get about 3-5 forwards in my email per day from various people. I don't read them all – who has time for that? Some of them I pass along, and others I don't. I always feel a little guilty when I do pass them on though because there is a slight chance they could contain viruses or just be incredibly annoying to those poor people I do send them to... So, with my apologies ahead of time to those who don't like it, here is a

link that I got as a forward the other day. It links to this really fun and addicting mini golf game that my husband and I have had lots of fun with. So far, my top score – well it's golf, so my low score is a 42... holes #14 and #18 kill me every time. See what you think: <https://www.ibogleif.dk/spil/flashspil/minigolf/minigolf.swf>

[swf]<https://www.ibogleif.dk/spil/flashspil/minigolf/minigolf.swf>[/swf]

Oh, yeah, and DO NOT open this at work – I do not want to be responsible for getting anyone into trouble on the job! I know I can't put the game down... enough of this posting, the baby needs a diaper change... I'll change her after one more game, just gotta play while holding my nose...

Come On, Get Happy

The last job I would ever even consider having is a school bus driver. Not only do you have to put up with crabby, rowdy children for up to two hours a day while trying to get them safely to and from school, you have to put up with their guardians. My mother drives a school bus. She is up at 6am ever morning. She drives a morning route, a kindergarten route, and the afternoon route. Last Tuesday NIGHT, the grandmother of one of these tykes visited our humble abode. It seems that her car was totally ruined and completely undrivable after my mother backed into it with a bus that morning. The woman stated that she was outside in the yard at the time of the incident. Yet she did not attempt to stop the bus or call the school or police after she watched the bus damage her vehicle. Not only that, but who would wait until 9

o' clock that night to do anything about it. Plus, if the car was damaged as badly as it was claimed to be would the bus driver or kids not have noticed hitting it?

The next day the sheriff's department came to the house to investigate. Apparently, the victim's automobile was not nearly as damaged as everyone was lead to believe. To make matters seem funnier or more ironic, the woman is the mother of the rather plump boy who broke my sister's arm in phys ed nearly 20 years ago when he sat on it while playing scooterboard hockey. It does not take a genius to realize that you should report an accident immediately after it happens and not 14 hours later.

What a Day!

We had our annual board meeting dinner banquet last night, and it went well; dinner was delicious. However, we didn't get home until late, and as I already posted, the kids have been having trouble settling down at night, so we didn't get to bed until very late. Today was no exception with the early morning whisperers, so I did not get much sleep last night. I was planning on napping today, but it didn't happen and the following is a lengthy explanation of why:

We made the rare decision to go out to lunch. We never do that because my husband never gets a lunch break from work. But our local bowling alley was advertising the best reuben sandwiches in town, thru St. Pat's day only, of course (even though I've heard reubens were invented by a Jewish person, go figure), so we decided to take a lunch break to check them out. The sandwiches were excellent, and it was well worth the trip, UNTIL...

It all began when 2 of our 3 dogs decided to follow us out the door and into the car. Since it's nice out, we figured, why not, let them come with for a change. When we got to the bowling alley, somehow, and I'm not going to place blame here – except to say that it wasn't MY fault, I wasn't driving ☐ – the keys got left in the car. It would not have normally been a problem. We live in a nice safe area, I really don't think someone would have stolen the car, especially since the dogs were in it – wait, the DOGS were in the car, and they jumped on the power lock button and LOCKED the doors with the KEYS INSIDE THE CAR!!!

So, like desperate idiots, we stood outside the car, trying to coax the dogs back onto the UNLOCK button this time, but to no avail. So, we went into the bowling alley and called the taxi company, of which there is only one in town. It was busy, and busy, and busy again, but luckily the owner of the bowling alley knew the taxi guy, so he tracked him down at the bar he owned (!) – all the while so nicely using his own phone because (surprise!) our cell phones were BOTH locked in the car with the dogs. Luckily, I had sense enough to bring my purse inside with me, so throughout the ordeal at least I had diapers and a stash of toys and candy to occupy our toddler. Finally got ahold of the taxi, and he's on his way when I realize that the garage door opener is in the car, along with the house key, and of course, all the doors in the house are locked! So the taxi picks up my husband (I really don't know why we didn't call a friend – we blanked at the time and couldn't think of anyone in town who would be home during the day. In hindsight, we thought of 2 people of course, but too little, too late), and I'm waiting at the bowling alley for 40 minutes, wondering how he's going to get into the house. At this point, I knew it was going to be too late for me to get a nap for the day (sigh), and it's becoming clear that the baby is really in need of one and soon! I was just out of candy and toys when my husband the hero walks thru the door, holding the extra set of car keys. Turns out, he

found a window to crawl through that we had never fixed – I guess thank goodness for that! When we got into the car, we were like, what is that AWFUL SMELL – something like a dead fish! WARNING – THIS IS EXTREMELY GROSS!!! If you want to know more about this (must be a dog-lover and have a strong stomach), see explanation of canine anal draining [here](#). Otherwise, you can just take my word for it, we had to shampoo the car carpet when we finally got home. I also stashed a spare set of car keys in my purse – now I just have to make sure my purse is with me at all times because sometimes, I leave it in the car. What would happen if the spare set of car keys is locked in the car?!? Tomorrow will be better, I'm sure, it's the community Easter egg hunt, and a Saturday, we might go see Horton Hears a Who at the movie theater also – can't beat that!

Kids VS. Daylight Savings

No one likes to lose an hour of sleep. Usually I take it as it comes, however, because I do enjoy the extra hour of daylight. This year is another story. The kids have NOT adjusted well to the time change AT ALL! My oldest, an 8-year-old, comes into our bedroom EVERY morning and whispers, "Dad... Dad... DAD... Is there a delay?" This is partially the school districts fault. For awhile, we were having 2-hour school delays due to weather at least weekly. So now, she can't get used to the fact that the weather is finally nice enough to start school on time. Either that, or the district is sick of the heat of all the missed school and won't delay anymore... But much of it is because of the time change; my daughter just wants there to be a delay so she can go back to sleep for an hour or two.

My 3-year-old is back to staying up later than us. She has always been a toughie to get on a proper sleep schedule, and wouldn't you know it, we had her in an awesome sleeping groove until this darned time change happened. She is back to refusing to go to bed, and she is a crabby zombie in the mornings. The other night, she was sneaking peeks as we tried to watch Poltergeist in the living room – THAT'LL get her right to sleep! That movie scared me awake for years – that clown part is STILL scary!

The baby – actually, she is now an almost 17-month-old toddler – is the most affected. She cannot fall asleep before 10 at night, and she actually sleeps in a little bit in the mornings, kind of. She'll wake up at 5 or 6, then fall back asleep when Dad lays on the floor with her – poor Dad! Have you noticed a trend? They go to Dad when it comes to sleep issues – they KNOW better than to mess around with me – I get kinda grumpy when I don't sleep well. Unfortunately, the pregnancy has made me a light sleeper so I get woken up anyway.

Something tells me we'll get it all worked out, but then we will just have to change the clocks back an hour the very weekend the kids finally adjust, starting all over again!

The Office and The Anniversary

Our wedding anniversary is coming up – this year marks #9! – and there's a pretty cool gift we get this year: the first new Office episode in months! Steve Carell gave an interview with TvGuide, and said that his character Michael Scott is hosting

a dinner party, and it goes terribly awry. If you know anything about the show, then you know how hilarious this will be and are looking forward to it as much as we are. So on April 10, check out the first brand new Office episode since the writer's strike saga!

And that reminds me, on April 10, 2009, we are hopefully going to have the time and resources to put together a "second wedding" for our tenth anniversary. We didn't know any of our Ohio friends when we got married way back in '99, so we'd like to renew our vows and "get married" all over again in Ohio, 10 years later! And, luckily for us, April 10, 2009 falls on a Friday! So, this year we will be watching the Office. Next year, we will be "getting married" again, hopefully!

Gas Gouging in NW Ohio – Alive and Well

My fellow Northwest Ohioans, this is a call to action!

Have you noticed that we are being taken advantage of? Yesterday, the national gas price average was \$3.22 / gallon for unleaded. Yet here in NW Ohio, every station in this town had gas for **\$3.39 / gallon**. The price of gas in the Northern suburbs of Chicago has reached \$3.27. We (especially in our family since we have loved ones in that area who we have to watch pay through the nose for EVERYTHING) have always prided ourselves on having lower prices than they have, MUCH lower actually. We used to have gas prices about \$.25 / gallon lower than Chicagoland. This is no longer the case! Their gas is now \$.12 **cheaper** than ours! What will follow? Will we no longer have cheaper food than they have? Will we

soon be paying \$10 for a hamburger, have an average restaurant bill of \$30 for lunch for two, movie theater tickets at \$10 each? Where does it end? I can't help but feel the gas stations have called our bluff. We can't boycott them, because let's face it, we're an island. We get to enjoy our relatively crime and pollution free existences because we are so far from the nearest large cities. However, the local gas stations are starting to take advantage of this, because they know it will cost way too much for us to get out of town to get some gas somewhere else. The average price in Toledo yesterday was \$3.22 / gallon , but to get to Toledo, it would cost about \$5-\$10 in gas, depending on your car! And who has time to run to Toledo for gas, anyway? But why is it that Toledo has cheaper gas prices than we do? Everything was always cheaper here... at least it used to be.

I'm just worried about how they will gouge us next. I looked into filing a complaint with the attorney general of Ohio, and their website said to contact the stores first. So I guess it's only fair that we first let the gas stations know that we're terribly unhappy. I would write to the newspaper here in town also, but they've never printed my letters. Maybe I complain too much? Actually, one letter was very nice thanking the person who turned in my lost wallet with all the money still in it, but they still didn't print it. Anyway, if someone else wants to write to the paper, that'd be great. The more the merrier on this, I say, what could it hurt? Complain to the local gas stations and ask them questions, write to the newspaper, write to the attorney general, anything and everything anyone can do will help. Remember, driving season hasn't even officially started yet, and when it does, the price gouging at the pump will only worsen! Here is a link to the complaint section of the Ohio attorney general's website – it tells you how to fill out a complaint online, and also gives phone numbers and email addresses:

<https://www.ag.state.oh.us/citizen/consumer/complaints.asp>

Please help me – let's do SOMETHING!

Rollbacks Are Extinct!

Just a short little venting post because I made my weekly stop at Walmart today... and not one, not two, but **THREE** price increases awaited me!

1. drawstring kitchen garbage bags – when I started shopping at Walmart in Ohio only 5 years ago, these were \$1.33 / box of 20. Last time I went to Walmart, they were \$2.88 for the same box, and today, they are \$2.98 for the same box that was \$1.33 not more than 5 years ago! That is more than DOUBLE the price in 5 years!

2. bananas – when they opened our brand new SuperWalmart a few years ago, they pretended like the regular price of bananas was a cheap \$.29 / lb. but the truth is, I haven't seen them at that price since! They have gone up and down constantly, and are now a whopping \$.67 / lb – the most expensive bananas I have ever seen and I refuse to pay it! And let's face it, Walmart has the worst looking produce I've ever seen!

3. dryer sheets – before today were \$.88 / box. Today, they decided we should have to pay \$.96 / box. If they go over \$1, I will no longer be getting my dryer sheets at Walmart.

To complete my complaint session, I actually had to email Walmart the other day to complain about their photo service. I used to get all my digital photos made into prints at Walmart because it was cheap and convenient. I would order between \$1-\$10 at a time. Since I have a lot of kids, they (used to) get lots of business from me. But now they won't

let me pay for my orders in the store. I like to order the pictures when I take them; sometimes there are only a few at a time. And I refuse to sit there and make teeny weeny charges on my credit card over the internet every few days – it's a bookkeeping nightmare, not to mention how little trust I have in Walmart after all the other crap they always pull.

About the grocery prices, I understand that there is something called inflation, but this is ridiculous! No wonder Walmart has abandoned their "rollback" campaign – rollbacks are extinct!

Dodged a Bullet

Ohio was on the national news last week, and it wasn't for politics. CNN and the Weather Channel were talking about our state because of the major snow storm that befell Cleveland, not to mention the rest of the state – except us, for once! Here in the Northwest corner of the state, we dodged a bullet this time. Got about 2 inches only, and it didn't affect driving conditions. My husband didn't even have to shovel since the wind blew it all off the sidewalks this time! I hope it will stop snowing for the season soon, but if it doesn't, any more "storms" like this are welcome any time!