

One Foot Out The Door...

Changes abound! So many things happening that I can't keep up writing about them on my blog. It seems like every time I sit down to relax, I'm doing something with the kids – playing board games, homeschooling, doing puzzles, cuddling while we watch home videos together... Mommy and kid time is so much more important than blogging, of course, so I'm not losing sleep over it... but I do miss blogging, and I know I will miss having a chronicle of these days for future reading. I was just looking back at my blogs from the past; looking to see how I felt after my cesarean 3 years ago, hoping to maybe find some tips for recovery this time around. It was so nice to read about what was going on in our lives at that point, the challenges we were enduring, how the kids were growing, what they were doing, that kind of thing. But these days, if I have a kid in my lap, there is NO extra room to have a laptop nearby! As of Friday September 16, I am 36 weeks pregnant – home stretch for sure! While my belly is not bulging nearly as much as it did with my previous 4 pregnancies (I've actually LOST weight since July, but dr said baby is growing fine and that's what matters), I am looming large these days, and the seemingly most mundane of tasks is an effort on my part and seems to take me forever. I am blessed with an awesome Hubby who has really stepped up around the house to keep us running despite the craziness and challenges that a 4-kid household brings. Very Honorable Mention goes to my oldest daughter who has also been amazing lately with her willingness to help. She has gone above and beyond, not only doing everything that is asked of her but also coming up with her own ideas to pamper pregnant mom, following through with these ideas, and also excelling in our newly designed homeschooling program. A few weeks ago, Taylor surprised me with a manicure/pedicure, and she even kept going outside to check on the little ones while Mom's nails were drying. The other day, she came up with the idea and made me breakfast in

bed. Her emotional and spiritual growth lately has been amazing to see, and hopefully I will have the time to blog about the lesson in forgiveness that she taught our whole family.

So how is the homeschooling going for us? If you remember, we began homeschooling our two eldest this year – 6th and 2nd grades. Many people have asked how it's going, so it's time for a formal update on the blog... It's going GREAT! Thanks for asking! We began with a very planned out schedule, but we've found it necessary to be more flexible. We've also tweaked our planned curriculum here and there and attended our first homeschooling book sale and picked up some things to supplement our curriculum. All normal and necessary parts of the process, and we've seen the kids become closer with each other and us their parents, all while getting to watch them learn new things up close. I can't wait to jump in as a full time homeschool teacher, but my patience is being tested since I have to wait until I recover from my planned cesarean in October.

Now for the big news: a few blog posts ago, I wrote about many doors opening for our family. We were still determining at that time which paths to explore, and our prayers have been answered; the paths whittled down to an almost definite road. Loonngg story made very short is this: my husband was offered a job as a pastor at a local church, and he accepted. This means that we will be, in effect, switching churches. Talk about something that came out of the blue! There is nothing about our current church that I don't like, and I had planned on going there for years to come and raising our kids among our church community. But, as we all too often learn, God has plans for us. And who am I to argue? I KNOW His plans are so much better than any road map I could have drafted for myself and my family. So now comes the transition to the new church. It's a much smaller church, so among my husband's and my first duties will be to acclimate ourselves into the new

church environment and create a children's ministry. It will be challenging but also extremely exciting. My husband has one final meeting with the regional governing board of the church to finish out the interview process, but everything we've been told by the elders of the church is that this is just procedure. So, last Tuesday, I sadly gave my notice to my friend and mentor that oversees my 2nd/3rd grade girls Sunday school class. Oh, how I will miss those kids! I've known them and watched them grow for a year and a half now, ever since I had them as 1st grade students last year. But as I said, who am I to challenge God's plan? While this all happened so suddenly in our lives, the chain of events and circumstances that led up to my husband being chosen to lead this church was so obviously orchestrated by God that there is no need to doubt whether it was meant to be, nor is there need to go into detail about exactly how it happened. I will just say how much we KNOW that it was meant to happen, and that will guide me in the future if I ever begin to have fears or doubts in my own abilities to fulfill His work for me.

October 7 is when I am scheduled to have the baby, and 2 days later (while I'm still in the hospital) is when my husband is to spend his first Sunday at our new church. As soon as I feel up to it, I will join him there, and our kids will follow as soon as we set up our children's ministry. That leaves me 2 Sundays to teach my current Sunday school students, or possibly just one if I decide to go and meet more of the congregation at the new church before I go into the hospital. I may have one foot out the door, but I'm walking into a whole new world. Because it is the world that God has designed for me at this point in my life, I could not be more excited!!!

At Least The Party Was A Success

This afternoon, the family made the @ 2 hour trek to our cousin's home in Huron... not a "fur piece" from the Amazement Park.. in fact once we exited, we had the choice of turning left to go to DRM's or right to go to the Point. This time, the left turn (at Albuquerque) won out. ☐ I had never been to the house before as I seem to have been involved in one production or another when the birthdays arose. For some reason, I am not involved in any shows so I was really excited to make the trip! I must say that it is a very nice place. Next time when there is not so much craziness, I will ask for the guided tour.

As usual, fun was had with some gentle ribbing among some and catching up with relatives and a friend I rarely get to see. Almost 20 years since *Annie*! WHAAAATTT??!!!!!! Food glorious food. An abundance of pizza, ICE CREAM CAKE (one of the greatest inventions ever), and more. Something unusual in the festivities... a pinata in which you pull streamers instead of hitting the object with a stick. Did someone see the youtube video of my brother attempting to hit Spongebob? Needless to say that the pulling of the streamers was a bit anticlimactic.

I must say that the 4 year old birthday girl made out like a bandit: Princess paraphernalia, My Little Pony (everything old is new again), the obligatory clothing, and a bicycle. FUN TIMES!

While the merriment of celebration continued, the highlight of the evening turned out to be a lowlight. The Buckeyes played (if you want to call it that) abysmally. Listening to it on the way home on the radio was bad enough, I would have hated to watch it. I read on my Nook most of the way (I was a passenger in the car not the driver).

Next summer, I think a trip to the park will be LONG overdue!
I've been to the Island since I have been to the Point!

Limping along

For the past week I've been limping along on my sore foot. Silly injury caused by yours truly. I'm still hoping that this makes me a bit more careful while doing household chores, but only time will tell.

I had play rehearsal tonight and I limped my way through the paces. I desperately need to get the script out of my hands. Time is moving quickly, and the show will be here before I can blink twice.

It does have the makings of a very good show. I'm looking forward to having an audience. It has been a while since I've felt that way about a show I've been in.

In other areas, things have been changing. Life is getting interesting. I do believe I like the changes. It should be fun.

And one other different thing this September, the Tigers are doing very well. Right now they look to be playoff bound. I'm looking forward to it.

But he's not dead...

Over the years I have wondered if I actually have any emotions. Besides anger. When my grandparents, one by one, passed away (one is still alive at about 90) I know I should have felt more than I did. I'm embarrassed to say that even when I lost my father I didn't grieve overly much, though maybe that's because of how he died. It wasn't sudden but spread out over weeks. I guess I did experience more during the drawn out days, but never the extent that I often see in others.

No one passed away this time, so what's going on? Well, it started the weekend before last. Eight days ago. Following the message by our campus pastor (the senior pastor was on sabbatical and returned this past weekend) the associate pastor went up to give an announcement. A very discouraging announcement. It would be inappropriate for me to go into the details but it turned out our children's pastor, a man who I called friend for several years now had to resign and was gone from our campus. I had just spoken to him the week before, as had many people, and we never knew what would become the basis of the announcement. Nothing illegal by the way, so don't let your thoughts go there friends.

So he is suddenly gone and I may never see him again. I do know from what another pastor mentioned during our children's leadership meeting that he and his wife are doing okay, attending another church, and definitely in contact with at least that one pastor. The discussion about him, the "elephant in the room" during a meeting where as far as everyone knew he would be too just eight or nine days prior, was yet an emotional one for our family pastor who will be taking on the duties he gave up to the now-former pastor several years ago once again.

He's grieving. I'm grieving. But no one died. Yet things

won't be the same. Can I call him? I have his number. I called him friend at church, but I never saw him outside of church. Not appropriate then? I don't know what I would even say if I called. Perhaps the best thing is what our pastor said to us- just pray for him and his family.

Okay, it's proven, I have emotion- now when will this feeling go away?

A Day Of Heroes... Ten Years Later

It just seems surreal that we are already remembering the tenth anniversary of one of the two days that "will live in infamy." It seems like only yesterday when I rushed out into the beauty shop (on a Tuesday... don't remember why Mom was working unusually on a Tuesday) to tell everyone that a plane had just crashed into one of the twin towers. I'm sure, like millions of others, that this had to have been a horrific accidental however, minutes later it became clear that the United States of America was under attack! Like everyone else, we were glued to the television.

A few years ago, I travelled with some friends to Ground Zero and saw first hand the remains of the horror. I remember vividly standing at the site where a few years ago, I was on tour with the BGSU Men's chorus on Spring Tour. Totally stunned! Walking through the building which houses items from the site, video clips, recordings, fragments of the buildings, and a myriad of other memorabilia was very emotional. Seeing the skyline from outside our hotel complex was haunting. Remembering, what to me, was the worst day in the country's

history. The worst day perhaps but not without a sense of pride in hearing America's response to the attacks. he hundreds of firefighters, police, and other rescue personnel bravely, selflessly rushing in to deadly environments to rescue the living and search for the departed. Hearing the voices and hearing the stories of those who fought back when their plane was hijacked. TRUE heroes who do not wear capes or leap tall buildings in a single bound!

This weekend, I was presented with a brilliant question: "What do we tell the little ones who may or may not understand the why and consequences of September 11, 2001?" How are the children of those who sacrificed their lives remembering their parents or do they even remember them?

Today, let our nation remember those heroes not in the spirit of retaliation of those who were responsible for the devastation but in a spirit of forgiveness. This morning's readings and Father Art's sermon could not have been poignant. How many times must we ourselves forgive others? Seventy-seven. Drawing from the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32): [We are] still a long way off.

Remember and forgive.

Well It's Been A Long, Been A Long, BeenaLong (Few) Day(s)

Started on Wednesday afternoon. Dad came home from his crossing guard duty and headed to his bedroom (in itself not unusual) and fell asleep (which is a little strange). Around

6, he came out for a bit and told us that he was not feeling well and shortly turned in for the night. Around 11, I heard the parents talking and all of a sudden, I hear Mom calling my name. So I run to the bedroom and see her holding him up trying to steady him in an attempt to get him to the restroom.

Before I get to him, he (not so gracefully) tumbles to the floor. To me, he looks kind of pasty and sweaty and he is mumbling but coherent (unlike the stroke adventure). Call 911 and by 11:15 he is on his way to the hospital. Mom and I get there about 11:45.

While sitting in his ER room, his heart rate goes on a roller coaster. Up and down, down and up. The lab tech came in and attempted to draw blood and wouldn't ya know... he was being stubborn and didn't want to give any... but eventually cooperated. Around 3:30AM, we are finally informed that he is going to be admitted (course, we didn't see THAT coming at all). So, 4AM finally get to bed. I got a few hours. Mom got 45 minutes.

Thursday, he was given a pint of blood. About 3-4 years ago, he had to be given 7 pints after suffering a bleeding ulcer.

We had to wait until the battery of meds he has to take everyday to travel through his system before they can do anything extensive to determine what his problem is.

Friday morning, Dad is scheduled for a colonoscopy. I had to go over for my own lab work so I arrived in plenty of time for his voyage to the OR. Mom arrived shortly before the procedure began as Dad made sure. The procedure did not last long and showed that he had suffered another bleeding ulcer, nowhere near as bad as the previous one. In fact, it had stopped. Apparently, he is really prone to these because of his susceptibility to the acid in high acid foods: citrus fruits, tomatoes and the like. I guess when we order fruit from our school's FFA later this season, he will not sit and indulge in 2-3 huge grapefruits in one sitting. Back up in his ICU room (it seemed a bit different than the last time I

was there), he fell asleep so I did not feel guilty when I left to meet some friends around the corner for lunch.

Today, at least we know what the problem was and is being treated. He probably will not be able to come home today as his "numbers" are still not where they need to be. But with the help of the doctors, prayers from loved ones and with HIS guidance, I'm sure Dad will be back to his "normal (?)" self in no time.

It Was A Dark And Stormy Night

Ok... backtrack post... Saturday night after church, I tagged along with my parents to watch the little ones in their new house. While it was fun to have the family stay at the house after their return from "The Last Frontier", it was a relief for all concerned when they moved into their new abode a short walk away. Nice house that has been well taken care of.

Before I had decided to make my way home, it began to storm. AND STORM IT DID! Before the storm began, the two girls were asleep. However, the biggest baby was still up and you never saw such a sight! Big 120lb. Bandit decided to take refuge across Mom, Dad, and I on the sofa. He was shaking like a leaf and whimpering like a infant! Big old softie. Although, I have heard tell that he will let a stranger know that he does not like them specially when they are around "his girls."

Just not during a thunderstorm! I can only imagine being actually attacked by the Burmese Mountain Dog when a greeting from him seems like you are being attacked. ☐ The only thing missing was the camera.

Finally, after the storm turned into a sprinkle, I braved the hazardous walk home.

It has been a while, but I wish it had been longer.

I don't usually have the need to visit the local hospitals, especially for myself. As far as an unexpected trip to the hospital, or emergency room has been years. The last time, I think I was 4. I really don't remember it. So almost 50 years later, I was back for more stitches. Last time was my head, this time my foot. So I've had stitches from top to bottom.

WHAT!! I went to the emergency room? I didn't call my kids? Yes to the first, no to the second. Why not? Why didn't I let anyone know? Well, the first part is that I was hurt. Serious enough to warrant some stitches, but not life or limb threatening. If push had come to shove, I would have been able to drive myself to the hospital. Luckily, I was with someone who could drive. Trip to hospital taken care of.

The emergency room staff were very pleasant and efficient. I was in very good hands. A little clean up, some pain killer, and 4 stitches later, I was out and on my way. My plans for the day were shot, but I will be back to doing what needs to be done soon. I can't really complain.

So after 200 words, I have yet to say exactly what happened. The best I can come up with is that I used tools without the proper equipment. Canvas deck shoes were not made to stop a sharp axe. My foot was able to stop it, but only after suffering some damage. My good work boots would have stopped the blow with ease. After years of working with tools, I

failed to follow the simplest of rules. Dress properly. Be prepared for those accidents. Use the proper safety gear. Hmm, you would think I didn't know any better. I guess even at my age, one can live and learn. At least I hope I can.

One Labor Day Institution Comes To A Close

Well... another summer is UNofficially over. It seems that once Labor Day is here, the kiddies are back in school and the county fair is about to begin, the scene changes. However, it is my favorite season. This holiday weekend is considerably different and I did not even realize that it was set to change this time last year. Since 1966, Jerry Lewis has been the face of the Muscular Dystrophy Association as HIS telethon began airing locally and has spread Nationwide since. In total during his reign, he helped raise \$1.66 billion to find a cure to the number of diseases which affect millions of "Jerry's Kids" around the world. Apparently, last fall it was announced that the 21.5 hour telecast would be chopped down to a six-hour broadcast on Sunday night from 6PM-midnight. That was not the only change to come.

In May, Jerry announced that this year's star-filled extravaganza would be his swan song but he would appear to close the show with his traditional take on "You'll Never Walk Alone." In August, the organization announced that not only would the comedian/philanthropist not "be appearing on the telethon" but also "had completed his run as [MDA's] national chairman." Dunno but it sounds like some water under that bridge especially when little has been heard from Jerry himself.

I had to work last night and went to a bon fire after so I was unable to watch any of the shortened broadcast. However, I have learned that in the 6 hours \$61.5 million was raised (two million more than last year's total). I think it will be interesting to see if this version will be as successful as the last 45 years. I realize that 22.5 hours is a long time and technology exists that can get word out and raise \$2 million more than a year ago; however, it should be interesting to see if this year was more of a farewell for the decades long chairman.

Plus the fact that 2 days ago it was 100°+ and today's temp barely reached 60° has not been lost on me! I love the autumn season but a gradual fall into it is greatly appreciated ☐

They missed the wolfbane...

Even a man who is pure in heart and says his prayers by night, may become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms and the autumn moon is bright.

Finally saw the latest Wolfman movie. I know it was a disaster in the box office and critics generally disliked it, but I found it to be an enjoyable romp in the werewolf legends.

While it was different than the 1941 original, the writers gave us a good story. Some tension, some mystery and excellent performances from all the lead actors. I enjoyed the film craft of the movie as it harkened back to that 1941 original.

I would recommend this movie to any fans of the horror movies of the 30's and 40's. A wonderful way to spend an evening with someone.