

# Something New

We were looking for a family-friendly activity to do with our kids on Saturday. The zoo was out since we're chaperoning a Girl Scout field trip there next Saturday. Our original plan was to take our very furry and smelly dog to get groomed, but when we called around for prices, the quotes were much more than we wanted to spend on something that will just have to be done again in a few months.

So my husband searched around and found [this: Roller Derby](#). Do you remember Roller Derby? It was popular in the 70's and 80's, and there was a recent movie about it called [Whip It](#), which was also Drew Barrymore's directorial debut. We saw the movie not too long ago, and it was enjoyable, but now I'm going to have to watch it again after seeing the sport played live.

Roller Derby is a sport played on roller skates by women. I asked my husband why men don't play, and he said they'd get carried away with the aggressiveness and kill each other. I think there are some men's leagues, but they aren't professional like the women's league. So anyway, a basic game of Roller Derby has two periods separated by a halftime. Each period has several "jams". Basic game play consists of a pack of skaters skating around a circular track. There is one "jammer" on each team, and she is supposed to break through the other teams' pack of players, scoring a point for each opposing team member she passes. There's more to it, but those are the basics. The action is fast, the sport can be brutal, and fights occasionally break out. It's a lot of fun to watch!! Especially if you're brave enough to sit in the "suicide seats" where you sit on the floor next to the track. Our friends were brave enough to try, and they came out in one piece! If you are interested in watching a bout or maybe even trying out to be a Derby Girl, check out the website of the [WFTDA – Women's Flat Track Derby Association](#) – they have a

list of teams so you can find one near you. Here is a video from their website explaining the very basics of Roller Derby:

It was a great time – fun for the whole family, and I highly recommend it as something different to do. Tickets are pretty cheap – we paid \$12 for each adult and \$7 for my oldest daughter – the rest of the kids (5 and younger) were free. For that, we got about 5 hours of entertainment. The atmosphere is family friendly (despite some of the dirty innuendos some of the players' names imply that would go right over most kids' heads), and there are clowns running around providing additional entertainment. At halftime, my kids got to go out in the arena and play a racing game with the clowns, and they also do skits and make free balloon animals. Each kid gets a little noise maker when they walk in the door, and they also have a Hokey Pokey time and do the bit where they throw beach balls around the audience. While it was family friendly, my little ones were bored at times (they didn't understand the sport) and our little guy, who is not even 2, kept us from watching much of the action with his shenanigans. The lady who was waiting for me to finish with the changing table in the bathroom said, "I'm never bringing her to something like this again!" as she pointed to her little girl who looked about my son's age. So you might want to prepare yourself with lots of snacks, activities, and candy if you bring your kids. The kids ended up having a lot of fun, mostly because of all the yummy concessions Dad bought them and the little toys they got to take home. Hubby and I are going to check out a bout sometime for date night without the kids though so we can actually get into it and watch the game. And hopefully, there will be closer scores with a little more excitement – we witnessed two blowouts. In the first game, the Fort Wayne SWAT team got creamed by a team from Rockford, IL (where we used to live, what a coincidence!), and we left the second game early since it was getting late and the score was Fort Wayne – 154, Dayton – 13. OUCH!!

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# Working On A Baptism Rehearsal For One

I am so glad that Mondays are one of my days off each week. I don't know if I could have made it this morning. A long weekend full of fun. I worked Saturday afternoon before mass after which Chloe was going to be baptized. Getting her big sister into a dress was a chore. Kyli was not impressed that she had to put on a pretty dress. Uncle Jamiahsh to the rescue! I volunteered to put the dress on! I almost got it up to my head... Thank goodness the 2 year old stopped me before I did.

During mass... more "controlled chaos" which made me question yet again the absence of a crying room at church. Not sure if a Saturday night school would be a good thing. But I do seem to remember a Sunday School for children up to 1st or 2nd grade that must have been done away with. But the ceremony was nice, quick, and I got the chance to go to the theatre and see *Working*. A very different show light on plot but the songs and the performers made it a surprisingly well delivered show. Glad I got the chance to see it!

Sunday after work. I had rehearsal. What was supposed to be "Eve" and I, turned into the director and I. Beth had a late game night/early morning on Saturday but we read through the play which helped me so not a bad rehearsal at all. And the short practice allowed me to go out to dinner with the 16! by 9PM when it was over, I was ready for a break! Let's just hope my "daughter" shows up tonight ☐

Here's the only picture not featuring red eye from the baptism:



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# Controlled Chaos

The past two weeks have been filled with visitors from the north... 4 additional family members and the three of us makes SEVEN plus more relatives and assorted friends and you get what can only be described as somewhat controlled chaos. (and that might be pushing it). Charnel, Rich, Kyli (age 2 going on 22), and Chloe (9 months) arrived the day after Easter from Alaska where Rich is stationed and is on leave from his deployment in Afghanistan. I was asked if the noise kept me up at night... What noise? I admit that I haven't needed a traditional alarm clock for the past 14 days but I haven't been awoken at all hours, either. Here are a few of the highlights:

- Dinner made by Rich's bother. Charnel and others wanted some fettucini alfredo with chicken and bacon. I said that I would try it. I took a little sample and as politely as I could decided to make a frozen pizza. I'm usually open to new things but something about it just did not appeal to me. I was amazed that my oldest brother (one of the pickiest eaters... second only to his oldest) tried some; not so amazingly, Jeff didn't care for it, either.
- Cosmic bowling while I watched kids. Honestly, I did not think that the alley allowed children after a certain hour or I wonder if two of the four kids would have gone. I decided to sit that one out to help watch the little ones so the parents could go to bed early.
- Dinner at Texas Roadhouse. Apparently, they do not have them in Alaska. Might they have an Alaska Roadside

Igloo where the serve moose steak? But 17 people with 7 little ones. I felt sorry for our poor waitress... I gave a larger tip than I should have. Ok... so there might have been a bit more involved than pity. Peanut tossing by a BIG KID not me caused a bit of chaos before we were called to our table.

Well... the visitors are here until Wednesday... let's see if more "controlled chaos" ensues.

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## Not just one book

There are times I will recommend an author to someone just to make sure they read the whole series. Of course, I would recommend the complete "Lord of the Rings" books by Tolkien and The 7 Harry Potter books by Rowling. There are other authors I have talked about too.

My recommendation this week is not for a series of books, even though this author did have a few books that had a continuing story line. No, I started to read some of his other works, and I found them to be just as gripping as any other stories I read by him.

Look up the works of [Sax Rohmer](#). He is chiefly remembered for his [Fu Manchu stories](#), but he wrote other mystery novels that were as compelling. Stories are generally set in the early 1900's through the 1930's. This week I finished the stories ["Bat Wing"](#) and ["Brood of the Witch Queen"](#). They are mystery/suspense stories with a little bit of the Occult or Voodoo thrown in. Both can be found at [www.feedbooks.com](http://www.feedbooks.com).

I found that while I expected certain endings to both stories (I tend to do that reading mysteries), I was kept in the story

by the plot and characters. I will be reading more of his books/stories in the future. I'm glad I took the time to examine his stories that did not involve Fu Manchu.

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## 2010 Academy Of Country Music Awards

Today is one of those days that come only twice a year – one of the two annual country music awards shows. I've been super excited all week, well, for months actually; even if a few of the nominees are anonymous to me. Country music is changing, and I just don't have the time to keep up with who the new artists are and what their sound is like. Consider that my disclaimer for doing badly on my picks, haha. Here is the list for the major nominees with my picks in green. I will change them to red as the show airs if I get them wrong, but I'm being optimistic by putting them in green – as winners are announced, I will change the category color to red for wrong and green for correct. Good luck to everyone, guessers and nominees alike! Whatever happens, I know I will have a great time watching as always!!

### Entertainer of the Year:

• Kenny Chesney • Toby Keith • Brad Paisley • George Strait • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Keith Urban • Zac Brown Band  
*(Now that hurt. I'm not a big fan of Taylor Swift, but she won Entertainer of the Year at last fall's CMA awards, plus she is favored to win by industry experts Reba McEntire and Blake Shelton. Unfortunately, this is not about who I **want** to win, but who I **think** will win.)*

### Top Male Vocalist:

- Kenny Chesney • Brad Paisley • Darius Rucker • George Strait
- Keith Urban

#### Top Female Vocalist:

- Miranda Lambert • Reba McEntire • Taylor Swift • Carrie Underwood • Lee Ann Womack

#### Top Vocal Group:

- Lady Antebellum • Little Big Town • Randy Rogers Band • Rascal Flatts • Zac Brown Band

*(Another ouch factor pick – I love Rascal Flatts and want to see them win – they deserve to win; they’re awesome! But Lady Antebellum has so much buzz, so again, logic prevails for this pick. I actually hope I’m wrong here, but only if Rascal Flatts takes the prize.)*

#### Top Vocal Duo:

- Brooks & Dunn • Joey + Rory • Montgomery Gentry • Steel Magnolia • Sugarland

#### Top New Solo Vocalist:

- Luke Bryan • Jamey Johnson • Chris Young

#### Top New Vocal Duo:

- Bomshel • Joey + Rory • Steel Magnolia

#### Top new Vocal Group:

- Eli Young Band • Gloriana • The Lost Trailers

#### Album of the Year:

- “American Saturday Night” – Brad Paisley • “Lady Antebellum” – Lady Antebellum • “Play On” – Carrie Underwood • “Revolution” – Miranda Lambert • “The Foundation” – Zac Brown Band

#### Single Record:

- “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “People Are Crazy” – Billy Currington • “Red Light” – David Nail • “Toes” – Zac Brown Band • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert

### Song:

• “Cowboy Casanova” – Carrie Underwood • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “People Are Crazy” – Billy Currington • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

### Video:

• “Boots On” – Randy Houser • “Need You Now” – Lady Antebellum • “Welcome To The Future” – Brad Paisley • “White Liar” – Miranda Lambert • “You Belong With Me” – Taylor Swift

### Vocal Event:

• “Hillbilly Bone” – Blake Shelton featuring Trace Adkins • “Honky Tonk Stomp” – Brooks & Dunn featuring Billy Gibbons • “I Told You So” – Carrie Underwood featuring Randy Travis • “I’m Alive” – Kenny Chesney with Dave Matthews • “Seeing Stars” – Jack Ingram featuring Patty Griffin

TOTAL SCORE: 5/13 – Not my best, but slightly better than I thought I would do, I guess... FUN SHOW, and that’s all that matters! Don’t think I’ll be winning the \$1,000 from CBS.com though!

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## Was it me?

Okay, it has been a little over a week since my last post and it’s time to post, and now that I have deleted the spam comments that have shown up in the last week I can begin. I see that some of you have been posting machines over the last few days, so hopefully mine will be seen among all your furious activity. ☐ Let’s start with a quiz- which of last weeks videos were actually of my church choir and not just songs picked from the web by someone else? C’mon- the post mentions one directly, and you might be able to logically deduce another one even if you don’t watch/haven’t watched

them. The answers are in the order of the videos in the previous post. Good luck! Answers will be forthcoming.

[poll id="6"]

So on to the post topic (and all said- "finally!" ☐ ), last night we had the ~~second~~ first of my small group events for the 4th-graders at my church. Why the ordinal confusion at the beginning of this paragraph? Well, last Saturday was the first scheduled event, for the Saturday night boys but one of the leaders backed out due to work so we are rescheduling it. Last night was for the second-Sunday-service boys. Or as it turned out, boy. That's right- out of over a dozen 4th-grade boys that service only one showed up. So it was two leaders and one boy. The chosen event was indoor mini-golf on a glow-in-the-dark course. Being really nice out, and with outdoor courses starting to open, it was quite dead for a Friday night- no one in front of us though people started to come in behind us. So since it was just the three of us, we kind of spoiled the one boy. His mom gave him extra money for food or whatnot, but told him not to spend it on the video and redemption games, so what did Brian and I do? Spent a few dollars on tokens for him of course!

About the title of this post, even though last Saturday was canceled, I still can gather a statistic for that day as the one at church who was going to notify the parents of the cancellation failed to do so for some reason, so as far as the parents and kids knew it was still on. The result? Only the two confirmed students would have been there (only one showed up only to be disappointed since I called the other one personally as I had their number). Lesson learned- if the parents don't RSVP, the kids most definitely will not be there.

So what was the deal? I know warmer weather kept people away who would have otherwise dropped in, but these were planned events. Do boys not like mini-golf? Was it too expensive? Do all of them have full plates outside of church to prevent participation in any event? Well, the last can't be true as there were plenty of kids at the official movie night last year and at the winter retreat. I hope it wasn't me! ☐ Okay, not likely. I really want the next one to be successful. To be safe, I think we will not make it mini-golf. Plus, hopefully something cheaper than the \$8.50 this one cost. Maybe we could have an all-ministry event again like a picnic and games (maybe hiking) at the forest preserve-something to perhaps bring up to the leadership.

Edit: I asked the kids tonight about it and they pretty much agreed that mini-golf would have been fun, but the outdoor kind not indoors. So, we will likely try this again for the middle of May. Of course, this was the kids talking. I didn't get a chance to question the parents so who knows if cost or transportation was a consideration? In any event, now to locate a local, fun outdoor course..

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## **Dove Tale**

For the past month or so, our family has been keeping tabs on a mother dove sitting upon her nest, nestled way high on a ledge upon the neighbor's tall house.



This is the nest after Mom  
had left it

She sat there all day, every day; through rain, shine, and even a few nasty thunderstorms. And then one day, she was gone. I thought about her all day, wondering if she had abandoned her nest, especially since we never got to see the hungry open mouths of the baby doves (squabs?). A few hours later, I spied this scene in the tree right in front of our house:



It's Mom with two babies! I guess doves grow faster than the traditional robins whose nests we are used to watching. The dove chicks, er, squabs (as a quick internet search led me to believe they're called) hatched and left the nest before we even realized it! A day after the above picture was taken, Mother dove was gone and the two babies sat in the same place, cuddling and preening. They sat there for about 2 days, and I was worried that Mom had left them too early and they would

starve. Some more quick internet research told me that Mourning Doves grow rather quickly, and that the mother leaves the babies shortly after they leave the nest – so our doves were behaving normally. I also learned that the mother and father doves take turns sitting on the nest. The male usually takes care of the daytime duty, while the female relieves him at night. Since both genders look alike, unless you are watching the nest constantly, you won't notice the switch. I was wondering how she didn't get extremely bored sitting up there 24/7!

Every day these little guys grow by leaps and bounds, and this picture was taken only one day after the above picture, note how mother has left the babies to fend for themselves:



The day after this picture was taken, there was only 1 baby left in the tree, and now there are none. We enjoyed watching these little guys grow up, and I hope it's true when they say that a pair of mated Mourning Doves will reuse the same nest over and over again – I'll be watching the nest and waiting!

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# Dead Forever

A cute Spring video I shot the other day of my 3-year-old daughter Disney explaining what would happen if a ball rolled into the street and got hit by a car:

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# A Break From The Stinker Trend

My husband and I have been watching some stinky movies lately. Many of them have had something in common, but I don't want to say which ones or what their common trait is for fear of making these movies predictable and even worse for people who might decide to watch them. I will just name the titles of the movies we've watched lately that weren't any good along with some quick notes:

[Edge of Darkness](#) (recent Mel Gibson mess), [Shutter Island](#) (so looking forward to this one and it let me down), [Memento](#) (man loses memory and uses Polaroids to remind himself of his mission in life), [Fight Club](#) (made us permanently question imdb.com's rating system – this one got an 8.8 and we hated it), [The Skeleton Key](#) (Kate Hudson voo-doo flick – need I say any more?), [The Machinist](#) (the best part of this movie was Christian Bale's acting – what does that tell you?), [Angel Heart](#) (more voo-doo, this time from the 80's with Robert DeNiro and "Denise" from the Cosby Show which will never be the same for me again – I saw more of Denise than I ever needed to see; there was little about this movie that wasn't disturbing – why they are bothering with a remake in 2011 is way beyond me), [Surveillance](#) (I liked this one a little, but my husband did not. One of the rare movies upon which we disagreed. Bill Pullman was pretty good), [The Collector](#) (a horror movie that wasn't quite as bad as the other mentioned above. VERY gory, and the amount of squirms and gore did not outweigh the good things about the movie).

Some of those movies are newer and we saw them in the theater; others are older releases watched at home. There just isn't

much coming to the theaters these days. The Nightmare Elm Street remake is coming soon, but my hopes are not high for that one – the Halloween remake was awful, and the redone Friday the 13th wasn't much better. I did enjoy My Bloody Valentine 3D that came out a few years ago, but then again, I never saw the original.

At least we've been offered a break from all the stinkers. We saw the Steve Carell / Tina Fey comedy-adventure flick Date Night for **our** date night the other night, and it was enjoyable. Better than I thought, actually. Steve Carell plays an everyman suburban husband who takes his wife out for a date night, and they say they are another couple in order to get a table at a swanky restaurant. Problem is, the couple they pose as are mixed up in no-good business – hijinks ensue. Steve Carell wasn't given much to work with for his character, but it amazes me how he brings life to every one of his roles and makes every character different from one another – how does he do that?

And surprisingly, we got a break from our stinker-streak for at home movies too with a Sarah Michelle Gellar suspense thriller that was actually quite enjoyable, despite my usual disdain for the actress. It's called [Possession](#), but don't let the title fool you – it was a pretty good suspense movie with a crummy title. The movie follows a young couple who are very much in love and celebrating their first wedding anniversary. Complicating their lives however, is the husband's convict brother, who has just been released from prison and is staying with them. There is a horrible car accident, and both brothers end up in comas with the brother-in-law waking up thinking he's the husband... sounds like a cheesy soap opera, but it was well done, and we liked it. From what I've been reading, it's a remake of a Korean movie called Addicted; I might have to check out the original. There is also an alternate ending, but I'll stick with the ending I saw – the alternate sounds dumb.

I'm just glad that we broke our stinker-streak, even if it did have to involve Sarah Michelle Gellar. Consider this blog post your warning to stay away from the ones I listed above – some were almost bad enough to add to my “horrible movies” list; one that includes such bombs as The Love Guru and The Night Listener. You've been warned!!

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## **Even with all those movies...**

I was looking for a collection set to add to my movie library. A few years ago Universal studios released their “Monster Collection” as a boxed set (DVD or VHS). 8 movies in all. Since I had the ones I thought I wanted, I didn't bother with the set.

Now some of my old VHS tapes are showing there age, and I thought it may be time to pick this up if it was still available anywhere. I did a quick search and found used DVD sets going for over \$200. And a new “In the box” set going for close to \$500. NO WAY would I pay that much for these movies, I can get them cheaper buying them one at a time when I see them at video stores. The Wolf Man at Wally World was only \$7.50

A further search found that those same movies will released as a collection again at the end of this month. Pre-Orders are less than \$50. I'm sure if I time it correctly, I can get if for less than that. Here is a toast to patience. ☐