

EVEN BETTER THAN I IMAGINED!!! (part 2)

(This is a continuation of my previous post of the same title which can be [found here](#) in case you missed it.)



(This is us with Jack Hanna! In case you don't know who he is, I included a brief description of him in my previous blog post about the show!)

Before we went into the theater to see Jack Hanna's live stage show, we were just standing there gawking at Jack Hanna signing autographs. Suddenly, a group of young people came up to him, and he was so thrilled to see them that he quickly grabbed his cell phone and called his wife backstage, telling her that their 'special friends' would be coming backstage to see her. The friends are then ushered away, and Jack announced during the show that they are the [Von Trapp Children](#), a singing quartet of descendants from the family who inspired the infamous memoir, stage musical, and movie *The Sound of Music*. Apparently they had been in the Chicago area to tape an episode of Oprah (which will air on October 29), and they're family friends of Jack's and stopped by his show to surprise him.



(Me waiting patiently while Jack signs just one of my many books that I brought!!)

Back to the show... we are seated in the Paramount, and Jack Hanna comes out!! The show itself was a mix of live animals being brought out on the stage and video clips shown on a large screen, all narrated by Jack with his trademark anecdotes and sense of humor. In fact, at one point near the beginning of show, Jack Hanna began to tell a story, and all of a sudden he stops and looks off to the wings of the stage. "Do I have time to tell this story?" He asked (presumably the producer backstage), but then he didn't wait for an answer and replied to himself: "Of course I have time to tell it – it's my show!" It was not said in an arrogant fashion, but rather it seemed as if he were almost reminding himself that he is in charge. It was glimpses of genuineness like this that made his show so special. Jack Hanna is very real and down-to-earth (when it comes to being a celebrity anyway – often he is dreaming about ways to help animals with his head on the clouds!), and these traits take precedent in his live appearances.

So the story he told was hilarious! It was about his appearance on "Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader", and... well, you can listen to it if you'd like:

So between video clips of a few animal causes that are near and dear to Jack Hanna's heart ([Rolling Dog Ranch](#) and Mountain Gorilla Conservation, among others), the following live animals were brought out on the stage for Jack to tell us about: a Red-Ruffed Lemur, blind Barn Owl, Flamingo, 2-Toed Sloth (did you know that there is a bed and breakfast in South America where you get to take care of a baby sloth in your room overnight? I just might get over this fear of flying thing quicker than I thought I would!!), 3-Banded Armadillo, Siberian Lynx, baby Coatamundi, baby Bennet's Wallaby (got to meet him earlier at the Jamboree Lunch), Grey fox, Fennec Fox (got to meet him at lunch also), Lesser Anteater, an albino Python, and the finale – a full grown Cheetah! Seeing the animals was great of course, and hearing live 'Jack facts' about them was even better. But I think my favorite part of the show was the end – we watched a blooper reel of Jack getting licked, bitten, squirted, tossed around, etc. by animals, and one clip was of Jack Hanna making an appearance on David Letterman's show in the '80s. Jack is showing Dave how to milk a goat, and as usual, Dave is cracking jokes. Jack Hanna (the live version) cuts in, saying, "I didn't even mean to do this!" and the video clip shows him accidentally squirting Letterman with a spray of milk from the goat's udder! There is only one more thing that can make watching Jack Hanna on Letterman even more entertaining, and that is watching Jack Hanna on Letterman WITH Jack Hanna while he narrates it!!

We laughed (plenty of laughs when Jack and animals are involved!), we cried (that video clip of the Rolling Dog ranch was so heartwarming – the ranch takes dogs who are seriously ill, and many of them have extreme physical ailments), and then it was time to go. But not before we got to hear Jack's bear spray story again, and he even called on one of his assistants to act it out. He told this story during his previous appearance on Letterman, and it was hilarious then as it was hearing it and seeing it live. Funny, that is, until

we found out during the live show what *really* happened during that previous Letterman appearance. Apparently it wasn't demonstration-style bear spray, but the real thing, and Jack got sprayed in the face, causing loss of vision for over 10 minutes and some minor facial burns. Jack warned us (and David Letterman!) that he is planning revenge for his next appearance on the show in December, so stay tuned!!!



A sloth relaxing at a sloth sanctuary in Costa Rica. While we were on the subject of sloths, this picture was too cute to pass up!!

CHEAP (yet ingenious) RATINGS PLOY

SPOILERS AHEAD:

IF YOU HAVE NOT SEEN THE 3-27 EPISODE OF ARE YOU SMARTER THAN A 5TH GRADER (AND CARE TO) SKIP THIS POST)

Last thursday night on the coming attraction for tonight's "Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader", it was announced that someone gets to the million dollar question and answers it. I was totally flabbergasted that they would actually announce that someone would finally win the top prize more than a year

after the show first aired. Then I remembered watching "Live with Regis and Kelly" (or was it Kathie Lee at the time... who cares). On one particular morning, Regis announced that on that very night someone would win a million on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." At the time, it seemed exciting and of course I watched. I even remember the question (Which president made an appearance on the television series "Laugh In?"). Over the past few years, it seems like a cheap way to increase ratings.

It seemed like deja-vu while watching 5th Grader until the contestant who graduated from UCLA and has an MBA from USC got to the second question:

"What is the subject of the following sentence? Sierra baked a cake for Olivia." He even got the three choices:

A: pronoun; B: proper noun; C: common noun

Unfortunately, this smart (?) guy thought the subject of the sentence was "cake" so he chose answer C. Sorry to say, the fifth grade student who could have saved him also chose the wrong answer. So the bright guy who knew he would be the first million dollar winner on the show flunked out on the second question and went home with nothing.

AH, but wait.... since the man was sooooo sure that he would not only get to the top question but answer it correctly, Jeff showed the question and it was answered correctly.

I guess the advertisement did not say that the million dollars was actually won only that the question was asked and answered. CHEAP RATINGS PLOY. If it were five days from now, some would have shouted "**APRIL FOOLS!!!**"

I May Be Smarter Than But I Am Not A Better Gamer Than A 5th Grader

Tonight I had the privilege(?) of watching my brother's three children (ages 3, 9, & 12). Pretty wild until about 8 o'clock when I stated that it would be silent while we watched "Smallville" after playing the Wii. I did pretty well but got my brains beat in by a 5th grader playing Super Smash Brothers Brawl. This is DEFINATELY NOT my Super Mario Brothers game. Speaking of getting beaten by a 5th grader., I allowed the two oldest tykes to stay up and watch "Are You Smarter than a 5th Grader?" This is a very fun show with America's redneck, Jeff Foxworthy, serving as host. Tonight's first contestant was a very pregnant female who seemed to draw inspiration by rubbing her belly. I hate true or false questions: "Africa is the only continent where elephants exist naturally in the wild."

Katherine eventually answered enough questions with the help of 3 of the five 5th grade students to win \$50,000. The second contestant did not fare as well. The orange grower needed help on his first three questions. If not for the assistance of two 11 year olds, Vince would have been one of the poor, unfortunate souls who left the show with zip, zero, nada.

"How many times does the letter z appear in the word (lizard)?" Vince's answer: 2. Two other equally challenging questions followed. The orange man did however manage to go home with \$25,000. All in all a comparatively calm night to some I have had with the three little darlings. Since spring break begins tomorrow, I do not think big brother would mind the kids staying up one hour past their bedtime. Who knows when he will return from his poker game?