

Uh Oh, Snow!

There is a kink I did not foresee in my housebreaking-the-new-puppy plan – snow. We are currently getting nailed by a snowstorm – about 4 inches on the ground and much more expected. The snow engulfs our poor little shivering puppy, and I've had to shovel first every time before I take him out. It's quite challenging to find the time to go out and shovel and take the dog out, all while taking care of 4 kids – changing diapers, feeding lunch, breaking up fights, helping them do homework and Valentines... But today school was canceled, and this time it's actually been more of a good thing than a bad thing. The new puppy and the Valentine's projects are helping to ward off cabin fever, plus the older girls are helping to walk the puppy. Adding some fun to the snow storm is that my husband and I started watching [Storm of the Century](#) last night; which is an excellent scary movie that we watch every year during heavy snows. I'm looking forward to watching the second part of the movie tonight, but only if I make it through the dinner rush. My husband gets home from work around 5, and the kids are always starving by then, but it's nearly impossible to start dinner before he gets home with my 18-month-old underfoot. Complicating today's dinner rush is the fact that my husband will have to finish the shoveling when he gets home, and I also have to send him on an errand – stupid me didn't stock up on certain essentials before the storm hit. Most of the region is experiencing the same weather, so stay warm, stay dry, and most importantly – stay safe!!

You Live In Chicago If...

Even though I don't live in Chicago anymore (thank goodness because I'm not a big fan of crowds or traffic, two things which help define the city!), I still appreciate the humor in the following forward sent to me by a relative who ironically also moved away from the Chicago area a few years ago. If you've ever lived in or near the 3rd largest city in the country, or even if you've just visited Chicago a few times, you will be able to appreciate the humor in the following one-liners:

If your local Dairy Queen is closed from September through May, you live in Chicago.

If you've worn shorts and a winter coat at the same time, you live in Chicago.

If you've had a telephone conversation using more Spanish than you thought you knew with someone who dialed a wrong number, you live in Chicago.

If "vacation" means going anywhere south of I – 80 for the weekend, you live in Chicago.

If you measure distance in hours, you live in Chicago.

If you have switched from "heat" to "A/C" in the same day and back again, you live in Chicago.

If you can drive 75 mph through 2 feet of snow during a raging blizzard without flinching, you live in Chicago.

If you carry jumpers in your car and your wife knows how to use them, you live in Chicago.

If you design your kid's Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit, you live in Chicago.

If the speed limit on the highway is 55 mph – you're going 80

and everybody is passing you, you live in Chicago.

If driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled with snow, you live in Chicago.

If you know all 4 seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter and road construction, you live in Chicago.

If you have more miles on your snow blower than your car, you live in Chicago.

If you find 10 degrees “a little chilly”, you live in Chicago.

Diving For Victory

For those habitual readers of my blog who couldn't make it to our regular game night last night due to the blizzard, you missed an 'event' – one of the funniest things I've ever seen. I've been chuckling about it all day! But before I get to that, I will start at the beginning of the evening.

One of our guests showed up with a dog. Not just any dog; *our* dog Beesly. If you've read my blog post called Pet Roll Call, then you know that Beesly is an escape artist. But imagine our friend's surprise when he came across Beesly a few blocks away from our house as he was walking over for game night. He was glad he remembered her name, and he brought her back to her grateful family who didn't even realize she was missing. Maybe we should have named her Houdini...

So then we played some games, including a new one a friend brought called Left, Right, Center. I really liked it; especially because it was very simple and easy to learn. And then we brought out Pit. We don't play Pit very often because it's not really appreciated by some members of the game night

crew. It's a very loud game that is played at a frenzied pace. I really like to play it, but I don't think I've ever won a hand of Pit. My friend had the same issue, but last night while we were playing, she finally got a winning hand. In Pit, when you have a winning hand, you are supposed to ring a little bell, much like a bell you'd ring for service at a front desk of a hotel or at a store. My friend (who shall remain nameless; I don't want to embarrass her, but I'll give you a hint – her name rhymes with “feral”) was **extremely** excited to have a winning hand, but there was one problem – she couldn't reach the bell from her seat. So what does she do? This sweet, very quiet, normally passive person lunges... no wait, let's be honest. She *dives* across the table for the bell. I mean, it was a feet-off-the-ground, laying-on-the-table, horizontal, head-first dive across our dining room table, and *she landed on my arm* in the process. She was immediately embarrassed and apologized profusely, maybe because I was crying. But mine were tears of laughter because her behavior was so shocking – my arm was fine. I guess Pit is such a crazy game that it can bring out the insanity in anyone. And by the way, she did win the round ☐ So congrats, _____, on winning your first round of Pit. Please forgive me for publishing this story on the internet, but I thank you for giving us such a fun memory.

I'm sorry it snowed, but I'm glad our absent friends stayed safe. We missed you a lot, and we really hope to see you next time!

Sleepwalkers

With the exception of [Thinner](#), I've liked most of the [Stephen King](#) movies I've seen. My favorite is [Storm of the Century](#), a

Prime-Time Emmy Award winning made-for-tv mini-series that aired in 1999. Every winter when a big blizzard is predicted in our corner of Ohio, we plan on being snowed in watching our Storm of the Century dvd. It never happens though; I think it has to do with trying to watch a 240 minute movie that's not for kids when we have 4 of them. But anyway, if we ever get time to watch Storm of the Century in the near future, I'll definitely blog more about it – it's awesome!

One of Stephen King's lesser known films, [Sleepwalkers](#), is a movie I saw as a teenager. I liked it back then, so when I happened to see the dvd on the library's shelf the other day, that's what I quickly picked up since I was in a hurry. My husband and I watched it the other night, and we both had the same opinion. A fun little horror film, nothing great but still entertaining. It is Stephen King-creepy, as only he can do, and much of the movie's creepiness has to do with the mother-son relationship; I won't go into detail except to say that it's extremely disturbing. [Brian Krause](#) and [Alice Krige](#) play the mother and son monsters who need to feed on a human virgin in order to survive. They morph into strange cat-like creatures, which is even more strange because cats are drawn to their house, yet deadly to the monsters at the same time. The special effects are extremely cheesy by today's standards and even laughable, but sometimes I'm a sucker for that kind of thing and really enjoy bad special effects – my favorite example of this is [Jaws 3-D](#).

While we're on the subject of Stephen King, as I mentioned, I like most of his movies that I've seen. I tried to read the book *Carrie* a really long time ago, but I found it hard to follow, either because I was a teen or because of the religious ramblings inserted throughout the book which were done in such a way that it's hard to follow because it's depicting Carrie's mother's craziness. But anyway, Stephen King is very talented, of course. He has a gift of making movies extremely creepy without stooping as low as many of

today's horror movies do with the constant blood and gore.

An interesting event took place in his life that almost reads like one of his novels, well, actually it does since he wrote about it. On June 19, 1999, his life was changed forever when he was hit by a car while walking down a Maine road. There are two creepy coincidences about this incident. First, earlier that year, King had finished most of *From a Buick 8*, a novel in which a character dies after getting struck by a car. Second, the driver of the car, Bryan Smith, who was only 43, was found dead in his trailer just over a year later of an accidental overdose. He was found dead on Stephen King's birthday, September 21. The accident was inspiration for the *Dark Tower* series of books, and King is in talks with *Lost* co-creator J.J. Abrams to do an adaption of the series. Since I'm a fan of *Lost* and Stephen King, that might be something I'll have to check out. Until then, I'll probably be planning another snowy viewing of *Storm of the Century* this winter that won't come to fruition.

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!