

The Little Boy With The Black Eye

We took the kids to the county fair on Saturday, and we had lots of fun. It may have rained most of the day, but we stayed comfortable using an umbrella and our stroller awnings for the little ones. There was only one or two major downpours, and we spent those in the animal barns, looking over the fair kids' 4-H projects.

It's always amazing to us how much our 6-year-old loves going on all the most extreme carnival rides, and my husband and I took turns with her on this:

and this:

To her disappointment, she is not yet tall enough for this, but maybe next year:



My little guy took his nap at the fair, and when he woke up, we stopped for a snack. He began to cry; at first we thought he was just crabby from his nap and that his sister had taken his cookies. But then his cheek up near his eye began to swell up and turn black and blue. When he said, "Bug hurt me", we knew that he must have gotten stung. We made a precautionary visit to the fair's EMS squad, and they were excellent with him, even though he wanted no part of it. He soon got over his ow-ie with the help of some fair rides, but if you look at his right eye, you can see that he was sporting a minor shiner:



I know, the clowns are scary enough, but our son loved this ride despite how upset he looks – it was just his swollen eye. When the ride stopped, he got off the clown and immediately climbed into another one. Hey, you can't expect a 2-year-old to understand the concept of fair tickets being \$.75 each!!

I'm happy to say today that the swelling on his face is down a little bit, and good thing too – I got tired of the scrutinizing looks from people who were wondering, "How did that cute little boy get that black eye?!?"

Fearless At the Jubilee

AHHHH, my moment had arrived! What a great rush! It was almost like being on a roller coaster. Thank you Terry for the opportunity by donating the gig to the WCCT. Back in January while waiting for my pal to come over the radio during the Blizzard Auction, I heard the item up for bid. I thought it would be an extraordinary and priceless experience. A female bidder and I went at it and I finally got it for \$72,341.56. LOL ☐ If I had that much money, I am sorry to say that I would not be here.

Prior to the 8 o'clock start time, the director had a few words of encouragement and asked me for a bio. I actually thought about giving him one last night, but his intro was just fine. I had some family (biological and chosen) in the audience and apparently a sizable fan club as I heard a loud cheer come over the crowd as I was called to the podium.

After another helpful assist in starting the tempo, I was really ready to roll... no false start tonight. I was maybe the tiniest bit nervous until I gave the down beat and the opening strain of *The Stars and Stripes Forever* began. I was in control and I relished every moment of it.

After my conducting was done, Terry reclaimed the baton and told me that it was "Very Well Done!" I knew it was. It felt that good! After the concert was over, I greeted my family, friends, band mates, well wishers and walked with Megan, Carol, and Brock to the Little Theatre. I still had one mission to complete but I did not see him at the concert. I walked to C&Ls house after phoning them to see if it was all right to stop over for a few minutes. After I got no response, I KNEW they had to be there somewhere. After making a lap around the square, I decided to hang around with a few of the remaining band members. Within moments, here comes Tay and Sam. PERFECT! Strangely enough, they were really close to the bandstand and had a great view of my moment in the

spotlight!

Then I saw C, pushing Beebs and Dis in the stroller. I was not leaving until I gave my mentor and friend his birthday present (an hour or three early but who knows what tomorrow will bring). He admitted that he knew nothing about directing but said I looked good. Any compliment is a good one! Then we walked the grounds watching the little ones ride. I went on the Rock and Roll Wheel with the fearless one. Think a ferris wheel on which you are in a cage which flips around as the ferris wheel turns. It was fun!

Then at 11, a cart driven by Jubilee workers came around and told a group of teenagers to disperse as it was closing time. The adults with the four little ones were ignored.

Tired but not tired. It was so much fun. I wish my work schedule allowed me to be off Tuesday and Wednesday nights throughout the summer. Thanks Terry, Polly, and the Bryan City Band for an unforgettable experience. Another addition to me resume, too!

Jubilant Jubilee Time

Once a year, like many around the nation, our small town has a festival complete with carnival rides, games, and fried foods galore. Upon seeing how quickly our money disappears year after year, we vow to never return to our town's festival, called the Jubilee. But somehow, we find ourselves back there year after year, and the kids always do have a great time, despite the fact that a family could go broke because of this thing.

This year's Jubilee was great. My girls were looking forward

to it for an entire week. Once they began to pull up the trailers and set up the rides come Sunday, the kids' excitement was unstoppable. And because we formulated a careful budget plan regarding the Jubilee this year, Mom and Dad were happy to see the little ones so excited. But there was one problem we did not foresee nor did we warn the kids about – the possibility of rain. And you know what I'm talking about – these traveling amusement companies are not going to refund your money just because it rained a little and they had to shut down some rides. It was quite a gamble – dash the hopes of the little ones or take our chances with the rain (and judging by the radar, we could tell it was probably going to rain all night). We decided to take our chances with the rain, especially since we were assured that they would keep the rides open unless there was lightening. Luckily for us, the gamble paid off, and we were all able to enjoy many (wet) hours riding the rides, sampling the food (including my favorite Jubilee treat, Root Beer Float flavored Dippin' Dots), and mingling with friends we bumped into along the way.

The kids had a great time, and so did my husband and I, even though we rode ourselves sick. A ride called the Hurricane (boats that fly in a circle) was the one that did in my hubby, while the Orbiter made me feel like I suddenly aged a decade or two. Immediately following the Orbiter, with my head spinning, I made the unwise decision to get on a ride called Rock O Plane which is essentially a Ferris Wheel with circular cages instead of benches – and as the large wheel turns, the small cages with the passengers in them spin around independently, going upside down and sometimes trapping the riders facing head-first for what seems like forever... fun, but the combination of all those rides made my head spin for the rest of the night!

We returned to the Jubilee with my parents when they came to visit on Saturday when there were live bands to listen to, and it was just a nice atmosphere. The kids each got to ride a

few more rides, and they were satisfied until next year...

Saturday In The Park

I think it was the 20th of June.

HELLO EVERY PEOPLE. Morat is a back in country of strange people. I a come to go to the Droobile with sister of strange person and the little people. I a would a like to go to parade but I a go to the church to hear a strange person sing. I a ride many rides that go a very fast and I a get dizzy, but they were a very fun. Morat also a meet people from other country who a work for the people at the Droobilee. Two little people win a blow fish when they pop a balloon. In Liswathistan, we a have Droobilee. Morat almost ride one ride. You a get in car and it goes over a steep cliff. WOOLY SHEEP! I a no try that.

Later, a woman yell out a to Morat. She a say she saw Morat on tv box and say Morat and friend very funny. She a ask if group do hiring out for a party. Morat say he a not know so woman give Morat card and Morat say he ask around. She say she and her husband were a planning party for little people and a like Morat very much. Maybe Morat no ask group and find out when a dis party is and ask friend to help... if he a free (OH, SURE!) Morat a think about this. I a not sure how long he a be in OHHO. I a guess some people want a more Morat, yes? Others a not so much.

At a ten of clock, we a watch the show of LASER. I a no see anything like a dis before. Lots of light and a smoke, and music. I a see map of America country, picture of a Superman, and man bopping head (he a strange laser man). I a hear number one song of Liswathistan, *Jack and Diane* by Cougar man.

Strange person he a say tomorrow is day for fathers. I a not know what this a mean. Another strange custom in OHHO. And it also the day of birth of brother of strange person

Vacation Diary – Chapter One

Because Disney World and the Orlando area in Florida are our favorite places to vacation, we make it a point to go as often as we possibly can. The last few trips we've made, I've been careful to keep a trip diary – a notebook log of things we do as well as hints that might help us make the next journey. Each trip to FL sees me taking a notebook for our trip diary, and I write about various things in it, depending how much downtime I have to write while the kids are sleeping. Here is an excerpt from the diary for this trip:

FRIDAY OCT 17, 2008 – Left town about 5:30pm. Unfortunately, our local Burger King we decided to get for dinner took about 30 minutes! Kids were rambunctious, so we stopped at a McDonald's Playland in downstate Ohio, wondering how we were ever going to make it the remaining 1,000 miles and back again (at least I was!). The good news is, the Playland seemed to tire out the kids and they fell asleep. They woke around midnight, but a trip into the gas station seemed to comfort Disney (almost 2 year old) and the kids slept until about 8 am Sat morning.

SAT OCT 18, 2008 – We stopped at another McD's Playland to blow off some steam, but it was raining, so their outdoor playplace was closed. The kids handled it well. This was north of coastal Brunswick, GA, so we made pretty good time the night before – thanks to sleepless driver Chris! Since the weather was nice, when we saw a sign around Jacksonville, FL that the beach was only 4 miles away, we decided to stop.

We had a great time, and the kids had lots of fun wading in the ocean and collecting seashells. After that, it was on to Orlando, and we stopped and picked up the key for our condo rental when we got there. We then made it to the condo – which was over 10 miles away, much to our surprise – where our faithful driver promptly crashed leaving me to facilitate the activities of 4 well-rested kids. But no problem, I was glad to do it. After all, I had been afforded a nice nap in the car on the way down, a luxury my husband didn't get. Of course, I'm a person who does best with 8-10 hours of sleep, not that I ever get close to that, but still... So I'm doing my best to summon all the patience I have so I can watch the kids who would not let me nap, and I ended up taking the younger two to Walgreens with me to get some supplies. The place we stayed in was very nice, but it didn't come with anything – no soap, shampoo, paper towels, beverages... for a family of 6 staying for a week, these were necessities I would need at the local Walgreens. I killed some time there, got lost on the way back, and by the time I had unloaded kids and groceries, my husband was rested and ready for some fun. We went to Golden Corral for dinner... delicious. Reminder for those of you who live in urban areas – we're not used to a variety when it comes to eating out. So, when we eat out, even at major chain restaurants, we appreciate them in a way we never did when they were available constantly.

SUN OCT 19 – slept in, had lunch at Golden Corral. Read my post about the previous night's activities if you don't understand why we had two meals in a row with Golden Corral. I would say the lunch is even better than the dinner. So then we went to Old Town, which is a row of shops fashioned like an old fashioned Main Street – there's even a general store where they sell little glass bottles of Pepsi for 50¢. When we first started going to Old Town 10 years ago, those little bottles were a quarter, but I'm not complaining – there's something about the glass bottle that makes that Pepsi taste extra good. Maybe it's the thirst quenching relief it

provides after walking around in the Florida heat, or maybe it's the always much needed caffeine boost – whatever the reason, that little bottle always hits the spot. The Main St. part of Old Town is about 4-5 blocks long, and at each end, there are carnival rides. The roller coaster is jerky but fun, and I went on the swinging boat ride which was scarier than it looked! My fearless daughter, who always wants to try the big rides but isn't tall enough yet, was shaken enough on the swinging boat ride that she cried. We sat on the end, which I knew would be more thrilling than the middle, but I didn't realize how much more mild the middle would be until I rode there with our friend Jamiahsh. We had lots of fun at Old Town and kinda lost track of time. We wouldn't have been late for the dinner show Arabian Nights if we hadn't left the tickets back at the condo... oops. We had to walk around in the dark and missed the first few minutes of the show. At least they let my husband in, who let us out at the door and had to park the car. The worker in the parking lot told him to give all the tickets to me, but when my husband tried to get in, they gave him a hard time without a ticket! Thank goodness he was able to get in and also find us in the dark. [Arabian Nights](#) is a great show. Think Medieval Times (if you've been there) without the chivalrous games. Well, there is a chariot race, but there are more acrobatics and horse dancing – the horses are gorgeous. My husband calls it Medieval Times for girls, and all us girls in the family love it. My husband was able to get a good deal on tickets online, so the show cost less than a regular dinner! And their food is really good. It's served with all-you-can-drink pop, which backfired a little bit because in the dark with the show going on, it was difficult to notice that our 2-year-old Disney was drinking A LOT of pop. So next thing I know, she's walking around, and she starts going up the stairs and tells me she'll be right back. I said, no, Disney let's stay in our seats, and then she YELLED at me – "I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!". It wasn't a really angry outburst, but if you know sweet little Disney, it was so out of character for her that it was hilarious. She

was all hepped up on sugar and pop. So there's our first 2 days in Florida. We started Monday off with a time share presentation – ugh – so I'll take that as my cue to stop posting for now. This post is long enough, wouldn't you say?