

Busiest Weekend EVER! Part Two

(continued from a previous blog post)

So here's a recap of Sunday – church, brunch, Hannah Montana movie – and that is where I left off.

So we get to the Hannah Montana movie, and of course our 9-month-old son wakes up from his nap just in time for the movie (couldn't be awake to play at church, couldn't be awake to indulge in brunch, alas – that's always the way when you have kids – they sleep thru everything good, and I swear it's a rule – they always wake when the irony is thick!) But, because the Hannah Montana movie is a musical, our 3 youngest were kept too busy to perform their usual awful antics at the movie theater. It was a girly movie, especially with a double love story plot, but our little boy is only 9-months-old, so he didn't notice the girlishness. Instead he loved the musical interludes, and he clapped to each one enthusiastically. For some reason, and I've written about this before, the movie theater turns our normally sweet 2-year-old into a little stripper. Luckily, by the time the idea to take her clothes off occurred to her today, it was near the end of the movie, so she only got as far as taking off her socks and shoes – although she did make sure to note (yell) while doing so, “Don't look at me – I take clothes off!” Ok, Disney, if you don't want people looking, why are you taking your clothes off? Such is the logic of a 2-year-old, I guess.

We had no major spills this time (I'm referring to our last experience when we saw Monsters Vs. Aliens and we somehow dumped an entire soft drink into the lady's purse who was sitting behind us – major oops!), and today our baby was on his best behavior as well because of all the music in the movie – something that I think saved us as far as our 3

youngest kids' behavior at the movies today. As for the movie itself, I enjoyed it more than I did Monsters Vs. Aliens, probably because I actually got to watch this one. But an extra nice surprise for me was the country music add-ins – surprise performances from Taylor Swift and my favorite group, Rascal Flatts. They sang one of their best songs acoustically as if they were relatives just sitting around jamming at a family get-together (can this be MY family get-together?), and it was thoroughly enjoyable. Miley Cyrus even showed her country roots in a song which attempts to revive line-dancing; I guess kids these days (now I sound like I'm 80 – GREAT, when did THAT happen?!?) have a dance they do to this song, but whatever, I kind of liked the song. Overall, I truly enjoyed the country theme that was abundant in this movie – groovin' country music, gorgeous farm fields, cowboys ropin' horses... what's not to like? There was also a surprise (for me) appearance by Jan Levinson Gould from the tv show, The Office. Of course in this movie, she wasn't Jan – she was some southern belle who played Miley's dad's love interest – almost as far away from Jan as one could be, but I still enjoyed the Office reference. Also, keep in mind that this is a Disney film, so there are LOTS of prat-fallish types of humor, as well as recurring movie themes. For example, 'lobster trouble' (ala Splash, circa 1984), 'switching identities for different dinner dates' (ala Mrs. Doubtfire, circa 1993), 'major celebrity comes in to save a town' (ala Wayne's World 2, circa 1993 or ala Mystery, Alaska circa 1999), it's always best to be yourself' (ala... wow, WAY TOO MANY TO MENTION – take your pick...)

So anyway, I have to (reluctantly) admit that I was pleasantly surprised with the Hannah Montana movie – plenty of stuff in this one for the parents as well as the tweens and even the stripping two-year-olds. But the movie wasn't as plot-less as I had hoped – in other words, we didn't get home until 2:55 – just 20 short minutes before we had to leave for a class we had signed up for through church. So for the next 20 minutes

we scrambled around – letting dogs out, repacking diaper bags, changing diapers, etc. We arrived at our class pretty much on time, though a bit exhausted, thank you very much!

The class was great! We learned a lot about our church – their beliefs, their history, as well as their foundations for building a relationship with Christ – a very well-spent 3 hours. And we got to meet other couples at our table too – which is memorable for me because they were surprised to learn we had 4 kids – and I quote, “You don’t look old enough to have 4 kids!” NICE!

Following the class was a great dinner of homemade pasta provided by a local chef. Following the delicious dinner was a tour of the north campus of our church – we worship in the south campus, so it was nice to learn the ins and outs of the north campus – so awesome! Our oldest daughter was so excited to show us where her Sunday school was held, and their rooms for youth were VERY impressive! There was a room with a stage for youth productions, and it even had backstage areas, which is almost more than I can say for one of our community theater’s stages, haha! Also, there was a game room with multiple foosball tables and ‘carpet ball’ – something new to me, but a game I’d definitely like to try! One of the youth rooms had state-of-the-art stage lights and restaurant-style booths for kids to ‘hang out’ in... Overall, it was a fun evening, and I learned a lot. But, as became common for today, we had to rush from the church class in order to be home in time for the community theater’s play reading committee meeting and my much anticipated Cubs game. I was looking forward to this game for days. It was a long series (most are 3 game, some are 2 game, this one was 4 game) against the Cubs rival – the St. Louis Cardinals, with whom the Cubs are vying for first place. The game was at night, which is rare for a Sunday, so I was VERY excited about rounding out my weekend with such a game. But alas, the darn rain had its way, and the game was postponed. So only play

reading meeting to look forward to for me – at least I didn't have to rush the meeting and kick people too hard to leave my house since there was no Cub's game! And for once, I think we actually achieved a lot at the play reading committee meeting. Probably because of the fact that there were only 4 of us in attendance – but hey, maybe that 's what needs to be done in order to achieve something... too many people get in each others way, I guess. It will be interesting to see what the absent members think of the decisions the four of us made while they were absent – I hope the decisions stick!

In summary, a great, if extremely exhausting weekend. Come on now, would I have it any other way?

They're lovin' it



It's been a while since I wrote a church post, so here we go. A while back I mentioned the 4th and 5th grade moving into a new room. The old one was getting kind of cramped and so when the church redesigned the area in the front of the church, adding a mini-café and some TV screens for the live video feed from the worship center, we were able to take the room where the live video feed was. This room doubles as a junior high room on Sunday afternoons and has a large portion dedicated to games. There are four TVs for video games, thankfully not used for our group. There are also two carpet ball tables, four foosball tables (not all in good shape), two air hockey tables, and one of those mini-basketball games. Now you may have heard of most of what I listed, but you may not have heard of carpet ball. This is a game that uses ten pool balls plus the cue ball. each player gets five balls. The field is

long and narrow (about one foot wide by ten feet long) and the object is to knock your opponents balls into his pit (each side has a pit). The picture above shows a game in progress. No, the kids aren't from my church- I just grabbed the pic off the web. As you can imagine the kids love these games. Of course it makes the parent's job harder, peeling them away at the end... ☐

Besides the games, the new room has a divider that cuts off the games during the main time, a projector hanging from the ceiling that broke down this weekend, a better sound system than in the old room, and some couches to sit on during small group time, though some groups leave the room to hold their small groups. We did this in the old days too when we had this room, before we were moved upstairs when the upstairs was new. The teaching and worship area is larger as well. Large enough that some forward-thinking person decided to set up the chairs in three sections. You see, in the old room we only had room for two sections which kind of became the "boy's side" and the "girl's side," distinctions we never had in mind. The first day one of the leaders was watching the kids as they claimed a chair and commented on how it was fun watching them try to puzzle out which was the boy's side and which was the girl's side. ☐

The student from Moody Bible Institute who was a leader a few years ago when he was in high school and now came back as a study for his class, taught today at the second service and recorded himself for his class. He was a little nervous at first I could tell, but he got into it and did a fine job. One of these days I'll get a chance to teach in the new room, but the children's pastor, Steve, wants me to record the kids and make weekly shorts to show at the beginning of class. I did a little too good of a job on the DVD I made for my cabin... ☐ As soon as he gives me a camera on which to do it, I will, probably in two weeks as I am doing drama next week. The camera I used at camp really isn't good enough as it was made

to be a still camera first.

The calling idea is working well too. I have called at least the parents of each member of my small group once so far and I should be giving another call either this or next week. There is one student who gave me an unreadable number so I haven't been able to call him yet though and I totally forgot to ask him this weekend about it. I hope I remember next weekend.

Well, I think that's enough for now. Until Tuesday most likely. Due to small group, Monday is a bad time for me to post.