

Crazy Prices!

We live a little over an hour outside of Toledo, Ohio, so it's the 'big city' we visit for extra shopping, better restaurants, and of course, the zoo. We've discovered a little cafe just north of the Ohio toll road called [Nick's Cafe](#), and they have GREAT food (including Greek selections – YUM!!) that comes in HUGE portions at very reasonable prices. Just thought I'd give them a plug since the place is never hopping when we're in there and I would HATE to see them go out of business... Anyway, next to Nick's (well, there is an abandoned honky-tonk bar between them called Bootleggers) is an old Frank's Nursery and Crafts building that recently opened up as something called Crazy Prices. The first time we noticed it, we were too tired to check it out, but last week we had enough energy left to go in, and it's awesome! They have a variety of wares, from groceries and household items to furniture and clothing, all at discounted prices. Like any store like this, some things you have to be careful about since there might not be much of a discount, but when we went, they had a special sale – 50% off ALL grocery items!! We ended up with about 4-64 oz. bottles of juice for the kids, lots of snacks and granola bars for school lunches, and a whole bunch of other stuff for around \$21! Plus, they give each kid a little squirt gun as a prize for "being good and letting mom and dad shop", and they also give you a wooden token for each \$5 spent – the token is good for \$5 off your next purchase of \$10 or more! We will definitely be back! There is also a location in Bowling Green, and [if you go to their website](#), they don't mention the Toledo location but it's there on South Reynolds, just north of the tollway. Better yet, we learned that this is a Christian organization! Their mission statement: *The Vision of Crazy Prices is to see a chain of discount retail stores providing income to an ever-growing list of organizations that are supporting young people, many of whom are hungry and hurting, emotionally,*

physically and spiritually.

If you are in either the Bowling Green or Toledo Ohio areas and you like clearance shopping (my husband can't get enough – we spent over an hour here last weekend and he wants to go back this weekend – no complaints out of me, I like to clearance shop too AND this gets me yet another trip to the zoo!!), check out Crazy Prices!

Now I REALLY Hate Walmart

And my husband is on the bandwagon too. My husband is a clearance maniac – he loves finding good deals on stuff that's been marked down from its original price. He found he especially loved the clearance deals at the Defiance Ohio Walmart, which is not too far from us. But yesterday, that changed...

It turns out that the Defiance Walmart, which is only a few months old, by the way, changed their clearance prices overnight! They used to have some really good discounts, and it was fun to go there and try to find them. But now, they haven't just changed the way they mark stuff down; they've taken actual clearance items that were already marked down and marked them back up!

Case in point: My husband had a Plantronics Headset that he bought last week for \$5. It broke, so he was going to return it, but he forgot it at home. No problem, he thought, I'll just buy a new one for \$5 and return the old one another time. WRONG – unless he wanted to spend \$21 on the new one! That's right, they took a \$5 clearance item and marked it up to \$21 – more than **quadruple** the price!!! So he asked the lady in electronics if they raised their clearance prices, and

she said, "I'm not going to lie to you. We did raise the prices. They took away our clearance budget." Whatever that means. Not something I, the consumer, should be concerned with... except that they took all the fun out of clearance shopping at Walmart! And of course the people at customer service couldn't help us return our headset since we didn't have the broken one with us... their suggestion? Buy a new one for \$21, then return the broken one later for \$5 – thanks but no thanks! Here are some other examples of clearance items that they re-inflated: ATI Video Card from \$50 to \$115, Panasonic Cordless Phone from \$30 to \$69, and a US Robotics SkypePhone from \$5 to \$16. Each of these items had at least a 100% increase in price. I understand that the economy sucks and inflation and blah, blah, but I think Walmart should have kept these items on the clearance where they had them; then started their new clearance policy with new clearance items. I mean, come on, is Walmart really that worried about going broke?

The bottom line is, Walmart keeps finding ways to take away whatever fun is left in shopping. First it was by playing their little pricing games that get us to spend more and close down their competition, and now they've taken away their good clearance deals. Well, maybe their policies will bite them in the you-know-what come Christmas time when they don't have any room on their shelves for the new Christmas products because no one wants to touch their crappy clearance items at their not-so-clearance prices!