

# Switching Planets

This year, I've decided to join my local MOPs group (Mothers Of Preschoolers). We've only had two meetings, but so far, I really like it. At this last meeting, we had a video speaker who discussed the move between "Planet Me" and "Planet Mom". It was discussed how important it is for moms to maintain some of their personality traits and hobbies, even though time might be lacking. After all, as the video pointed out, the word "Mommy" sounds like "Mom" and "me" put together. After the video, one of the discussion questions was "What are some of the activities you gave up when you moved from Planet Me to Planet Mom?" Most of the women at my table agreed that we can no longer do our crafts, but we didn't really have time to be more specific. The crafts I used to enjoy before I really lost the time for them were oil painting and Legos. True, I don't really have a natural artistic knack, but I would get those paint-by-number kits (back when they were a little bit higher quality than they seem to be nowadays); I would complete them and they'd turn out so pretty that I'd hate to have to tell people that I painted-by-number.

Another thing I enjoyed before I had kids was sorting and building with my extensive Lego collection I amassed over the years. It took just one curious toddler to make me abort that hobby, and the Legos got packed away years ago when my oldest began to toddle. Little pieces are the most fun part of the collection, and we couldn't risk her putting those little pieces into her mouth or who-knows-where-else. So I packed away the Legos, and somehow the entire collection followed me throughout our moves around the midwest and resides with me today, albeit packed away in the basement. There hasn't been a shortage (blessfully) of little ones in our house for the past 10 years, so the Legos probably won't see the light of day for at least a few more years – gotta wait until the little dude is old enough to play rather than destroy or get

hurt with them. So let it be known that I miss my Legos, but I am thankful to still have them and even to be adding to the collection whenever I can catch a cool set on a great sale – usually after Christmas. Many empty-nesters turn their kids' bedrooms into something of their choosing when the kids grow up and move away, like a gym, an office, or a rec room, but I already have plans for a Lego studio, where I hope to one day be able to build super-cool things like this:



I'd also like to build a replica of my house as well as a local historic building:



Now that would be cool, but very difficult. But if I had more time, the sky is the limit! My favorite sets are house or city-themed sets, and I also really like vintage Lego sets. Does anyone remember [Fabuland](#)? It was a series of more

colorful Lego sets that featured animals as characters rather than the popular and better known Lego “mini-figs”.

Just because I don’t have the room now to be able to spread out and work with my Lego collection, doesn’t mean that I can’t look at cool things other people have built online, especially now that I’ve officially and publicly declared myself a dork on my blog!

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## Road Kill Etiquette?

Saturday morning started off completely crazily of course – it was the morning of our oldest daughter’s ninth birthday party. We were running around like lunatics, trying to take care of our own 4 kids and getting last minute details for the party worked out – we didn’t even know how many kids were going to show up since people refuse to RSVP, but that’s a separate post altogether. I had invited 25 kids – I know that sounds completely crazy, but my daughter’s school has a rule that you have to invite the entire class if you’re handing invitations out at school (understandable, don’t want any kids’ feelings hurt) – so with the 17 in her class + Brownies + outside of school friends = meant almost 30 eight and nine-year-olds could have shown up at my house on Saturday. But thank goodness, only about 6 or 7 showed up (they never stood still long enough for me to count them), which is another reason why I invite every kid my daughter knows – if we had only invited 5 kids, none of them would have been able to come probably.

So Saturday morning was hectic, to say the least. Various kids were melting down in anticipation of the party, and adults were scrambling to decorate and plan games for

somewhere between 5 and 25 kids. My husband is brilliant and came up with an idea to do a craft, and luckily we have a pretty big supply of craft items. So we threw a bunch of stuff together, and the kids made Christmas ornaments out of small red plastic cups and whatever else we found and had an awesome time doing so. I was feeling much better after the craft idea was hatched, because it was almost time for kids to arrive and now everything was ready. My dog started barking, so I went to the window to see what the barking was about this time. Just as I got to the window, a squirrel ran out in front of a car and got hit – right in front of my house and my eyes – ugh. What an awful way to start a birthday party – I'm really sensitive about those kind of things. I wanted my husband to go out and move it – it was right in front of our house – but he refused. I can't say I blame him, I wasn't going to go near it for anything, and I made him tie the party balloons out front. But I knew at the very least, kids (especially boys) would be talking about the dead squirrel for the entire party. At least it wasn't warm out, which would have increased the chances of the party spilling outside, further leading to more attention on the poor unlucky squirrel. So I don't know, what's road kill / birthday party etiquette? Should we have removed the squirrel? Never had to deal with THAT problem before. And I hope I never have to again; it cast a terrible shadow over my day. But as it happened, no need to worry about the squirrel – by party time he was flat as a pancake and no one noticed him. By the end of the party, he had disappeared completely. I'm just glad none of my kids had to see it happen; I think that would have been rough on them. And I'm happy to report that the birthday party was a HUGE success with several kids exclaiming that it was the best birthday party they had ever been to... of course one of those comments came from a kid who was at his first birthday party ever. But we did catch one kid lying about calling her grandma to come pick her up. She said grandma wasn't home but it turns out that she had never dialed – I'm glad I'm well-informed of that trick now. This same

kid's grandma didn't show up last year until an hour after the party was over, hmmm... As President George W. Bush would say – Fool me once, shame on... fool me twice... if you get fooled, you'll be fooled again.

Happy 9th Birthday Taylor!