

# Birthday Miracle

A few months ago, I learned I had a second cousin in Florida who was killed in a horrific car crash. She was on her way to a fun outing with her daughter when out of nowhere, a drunk driver (mid-afternoon on a weekday – not that there's ever **any** appropriate time to drink and drive, but still) who was going the wrong way on the expressway hit her car head-on, killing her and gravely injuring her young daughter. The little girl persevered, came out of her coma and re-learned to walk and talk. She was recently in the news again because she just turned 5 years old and sadly, she still thinks her mother is coming back. Her courage and strength is inspiring, so I'd like to share this clip of her on the Florida news. Please keep Summer in your thoughts and prayers. [Click here to see the news story about Summer's 5th birthday](#). And please, **please**, if you're going to drink, **always** have another mode of transportation set up ahead of time!

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# Pedal To The Metal

Yes, a fun day indeed, if you read Jamiahsh's blog, then you know what I'm talking about. To get our minds off of certain medical dramas (not like House or Grey's Anatomy or anything like that – our real-life medical dramas taking place right now are much worse than some crappy tv), we decided to have a day of fun. It began with go-carting, which is always fun but even more so if you can fill up the track and drive with people you know – which we were able to do. I like the place we went to because they don't charge any extra if you take a kid along with you, and seeing as how we had a few nice adults who didn't mind chauffering some little kids, all 3 of our

daughters got to go around the track a bunch of times. But I'm the dummy who forgot my camera, so I didn't get a picture of my little almost 2-year-old in a go-cart like I wanted. It's funny because I had the camera with me, just forgot to use it, which should signal how scatter-brained I've been lately because of the worry and lack of sleep resulting from my husband's as-yet-unidentified medical condition. And while we're on that subject, we won't know anything until next week now, because they've ordered further tests for Thursday, and they won't get the results back until next week. But they've eliminated gallstones, so at least we know that much. He blogged a little update here.

But anyway, enough *tangents*, back to the fun day. After go-carting, we decided to practice in the batting cages for our upcoming annual theater softball game. The batting cages reminded me how hilarious last year's game was – I mean, theater people playing softball? It was a riot!

After that, we went to a nice little restaurant we like on the river. If you sit outside, you get to enjoy the beautiful weather, the view, and a game of cornhole while you wait for your food. I like cornhole; if anyone has a set, we should bring it to the theater family fun day and play that along with softball... Why is it called cornhole? Is that a NW Ohio term for it? They have that where I come from in Illinois too, but I don't think they call it cornhole. In case you aren't from NW Ohio and you don't know what I'm talking about, I'm referring to the game with the wooden ramps with holes in them... you have 2 of these and station them about 15-20 feet apart with half of the team at each end; then you throw bean bags into the holes – hopefully.

After dinner, the kids fell apart (what else is new? They've been acting HORRIBLY lately!), so we had to leave, but I hear the rest of the group went mini-golfing. I was actually tempted to mini-golf earlier in the day but I knew the kids would drive me nuts because they get bored of it after about 6

holes. So we left, thinking maybe the kids would fall asleep in the car, giving me and hubby a much-deserved and needed night alone together to watch a movie. Didn't happen. And starting with the kids spazzing out at the restaurant about bees (and there weren't that many – our almost 9-year-old is a wimp about certain things and her craziness got her sisters going – don't you love how they chain-react to one another? Hence the name of my blog), things went from bad to worse.

I'm going to blame Carol and Megan for this one, since they brought it up earlier in the day, but what a coincidence – we got pulled over on the way home. So thanks Carol and Megan for jinxing us!! Just kidding, of course it's not your fault... I guess poor Chris really got used to putting the pedal to the metal on those darn go-carts. The state highway patrol officer who pulled us over had the personality of a housefly, and she wasn't going to act like a human being and be thankful we weren't drunk driving or even think about giving us a break on labor day, so our fun day ended up being pretty expensive when you include the \$100 speeding ticket. Our luck SUCKS lately, but if we can get the all-clear on my husband's health, then I will stop complaining.

Oh yeah, so anyway, when we got home, our almost-2-year-old was the last one awake, and since she had only napped for about 10 minutes during the day, we thought we were almost home-free for a nice evening together – WRONG! About 30 minutes into the movie, our oldest came down, asking for a snack. No biggie, but "Did you wake your sister?" we asked her, panicked beyond belief because our 4-year-old has been a little hellian again lately. She said she didn't think she woke her up, but 5 minutes later, guess what happens? Sammie comes down the stairs, and now we're in the middle of an R rated movie with all 3 kids awake and downstairs. So much for our peaceful early night, sigh. We sent the oldest 2 upstairs, and that's actually the last we heard from Sammie, believe it or not. Disney, the youngest besides the baby (and

he's not old enough to cause any trouble yet, thank goodness!), got so OVER-tired that she started crying for about 45 minutes straight until she finally fell asleep. But then Taylor, the oldest, must have come down the stairs at least 3 more times because she was worried about various bugs that were in her room and in the house, according to her anyway. If this were still the age of the VCR, our movie would have been eaten by the VCR by now because of all the pausing and unpausing we were doing... but ultimately, we just gave up anyway because I was falling asleep during the first part of the movie, and we could tell Taylor was going to be "bugging" us all night... So we missed the end of [No Escape](#) – some crappy [Ray Liotta](#) action film from the 90's. I think it was crappy anyway, I really didn't see much of it – let me know if it's any good and maybe we'll go back to it.

But for what it was worth, the day provided a nice distraction from the worries that have been plaguing us lately, so thanks to all who participated. Now we just have to wait *another* week to find out more medical test results... ugh, I hate the waiting!

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## **10 DUI's in 16 Years**

I feel very strongly against drunk driving. It's one thing to make the choice to drink too much; that's up to the individual, but when they make the choice for others and expose them to the danger of an intoxicated motorist on the road, that's extremely selfish and dangerous. It's also very preventable; if you really want to drink enough to make yourself unsafe behind the wheel, there is absolutely no reason why you can't plan ahead, find a driver ahead of time, walk home, call a cab, call a friend, take a bus, stay home

and get drunk in the first place... the list of ways to prevent driving under the influence goes on and on. That being said, there was a story on [dailyherald.com](http://dailyherald.com) (suburban Chicago newspaper) recently that caught my interest. It was about a man who had been caught drunk driving 10 times in the last 16 years. How does this happen? I believe the guy had a serious problem, and I'm a person who believes in getting people help before throwing them in jail, however, it seemed that this guy was not going to learn until he killed someone... and unfortunately, that's just what happened – and it was himself that he killed. I don't know why he was out roaming the streets still after getting busted that many times; especially when you read the article and see that in 1996, he had drunk driving arrests on April 7, April 14, April 26, and May 1. 4 times in less than a month?!? I don't understand how he was released between each of these instances and not only that, but after all this, he was sentenced to a total of one year in DuPage County jail. He got out early, of course, had a few more busts, and then this latest one on July 2 of this year, which is when his story caught my attention. A few weeks later, he died while in police custody. In the article, they say he had seizures and a brain bruise, and it's my theory that his alcohol withdrawal caused his seizures, which led to him hitting his head and causing the brain bruise. Whatever happened to him, it's a very sad story; a man with a severe problem who never got help. At least his family never had to deal with the added grief of his causing injury or death to another person. Here is the story and the mugshot, he's not the healthiest looking fellow. And note the oxygen tank; he had cirrhosis of the liver but still kept drinking:

Patrick J. Kolman, who was arrested for DUI at least 10 times in the past 16 years, died from chronic alcoholism Wednesday night, the Cook County medical examiner's office said.

Besides alcoholism, the Arlington Heights resident also suffered from a brain bruise and seizures, the medical

examiner said. It was unclear when the contusion occurred.

Kolman, 58, had already been convicted of DUI nine times when police spotted his car weaving between lanes a few blocks from his home around 2:30 a.m. on July 2.

Kolman had DUI convictions dating back to 1993. Though he'd been in and out of jail, he received one-year sentences for many of his drunken driving crimes. He had also been convicted of bank robbery, for which he got a much longer sentence, and faced domestic abuse charges.

Kolman's downward spiral began in spring 1992. He was arrested for DUI in Rolling Meadows with a blood-alcohol content more than three times the legal limit at that time.

"I am an alcoholic," he told law enforcement officials then. "I can't drink at all."

Kolman was once diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver, but continued to drink after treatment and against medical advice. He appeared in his July booking photo with an oxygen tank.

Details about the length of some of Kolman's DUI sentences is sketchy. A 1995 DUI arrest resulted in a one-year jail sentence and placement in a drug and alcohol program. But in 1996, he was charged with DUI on April 7, April 14, April 26 and May 1. He was sentenced to a total of one year in DuPage County jail.

Kolman likely served only half that time because of good behavior credits. He was stopped again in mid-1997 for driving after his license had been revoked. He was sentenced to two years and served time at the Dixon Correctional Center, according to corrections department records.

Kolman, of 124 S. Vail St., appeared in bond court for his most recent DUI arrest in Rolling Meadows just last month. After he told the judge he was unable to post the \$150,000

bond, he appeared to suffer from a medical problem and was rushed to Northwest Community Hospital in Arlington Heights.

After the bond court hearing, Kolman was transferred to the Cook County Jail's infirmary where his health likely declined, said Cmdr. Nick Pecora of the Arlington Heights Police Department.

Kolman's car, a 1991 Lincoln, is still in police custody where it will remain until one of Kolman's family members pays the \$500 fee to get it released, Pecora said.