

Vacation Diary – Chapter Two

Monday, October 20 (Disney's 2nd birthday!!) – Started off bright and early in Orlando with a time share presentation – yuck. We've been to a few of these, and we try to schedule at least one every time we're in the Orlando area because they pay well. This time, we got \$100 cash. It took over 3 hours, but hey, that's over \$30/hour – well worth it in my opinion. I could go on and on about time share presentations because there are always certain things they do to get you to buy one – there must be a formula to the presentations. And let's face it, they're one of the biggest rip-offs that exist. The last few we've gone to, we've played a little game where I think of a random word my husband has to say to the time share people. This time it was "gondola". Unfortunately, we didn't get the word in because the presentation took much longer than they said it would (big surprise) and we had our friend jamiahsh waiting for us. This also saw us getting to Epcot later than we would have liked, but we still got to do most of everything we wanted at Epcot. If you've been to a time share presentation (or 2 or 3 or more), then you should check out the South Park episode about it. I'm not a huge fan of the show, but the time share episode is hilarious. It was actually recommended to us by a time share salesman once!

The manatees are my favorite thing at Epcot. My husband makes fun because we have manatees right here at the Columbus Zoo in Ohio, but that's 3 hours away and I've only been there once. Besides, I've been to Epcot a bunch and I'm starting to get to know their manatees. Last time I was lucky enough to see them hugging! A peaceful feeling comes over me as I watch them swim. We did miss the Crush (from Finding Nemo) show, and we meant to go back for it but forget – oh well. And for those of you who've been to Disney World before, you should know that they've updated the Spaceship Earth ride – that's the one in the big huge golfball that is Epcot's signiture. I don't

like the new version nearly as much as the old one. The ride needed updating. It takes riders through the history of human communication, and one of the scenes had become outdated as time passed because people don't communicate in the ways that they visualized we would when the ride was built. Soarin' is my favorite ride at Epcot, but it always has HUGE lines. This time we were able to get a fastpass, but we could only ride once and my husband wasn't able to ride because our 2 year old was in a Daddy-clingy kind of mood. We ended the night at Epcot by running all over the park in a desperate search for a soft pretzel. Our 4-year-old was being so uncharacteristically well-behaved that I was willing to get her anything she wanted, especially since she was asking about it nicely.

Crazy Busy

In the past few days, I've been able to catch up a little, but I haven't written much before today and yesterday because we have been too busy having fun!

It started last Friday when we took the kids out to the [Fun Spot](#) in Angola Indiana. We had a great time, but I think I learned a lesson about taking 3 kids out for a full day of fun in the sun while I'm trying to nurse a full-term pregnancy. It was over 80°, and we ran out of water and I got sick. I think what pushed me over the edge was trying to watch my 20-month-old as she sat at the edge of a pool while my other children and husband went on the water slide. It's hard to explain to someone who doesn't know, but being this hugely pregnant is basically like being incapacitated – if my toddler had fallen into the water, it would have taken me way too long to get over to her. There was a lifeguard present, but still

I was a nervous wreck and the stress of the situation was too much, so I picked her up and took her away from the pool. This of course made her cry, and so the exhaustion came from trying to redirect her and do something else in the heat... it was all just too much for me when all I wanted was a seat in the air conditioned arcade. And for his part, my husband only got to go down the waterslide once which also made me feel badly because he had so much fun, but I just couldn't handle our toddler any longer in the heat alone.

After the water slide fiasco, we made our way to the animal area – they have a macaw parrot and a few baby deer and some big cats. They are rescue cats; lions and tigers and a cougar, and I'm not sure where they were rescued from. I was a little disenchanted with how small the animals' enclosures were, but since they are large cats and spend roughly 20 hours a day sleeping, I think it's a good thing that they've been rescued at all and get food and shelter every day.

Then it was time for more rides, and this place is built for kids my daughters' ages! They have about 10 kiddie rides which all 3 of them could ride, and my 8-year-old still really enjoys these since she's not ready for big rides yet. Her little sister, on the other hand, cannot wait until she is a little taller and gets to ride the 4 roller coasters the Fun Spot also has. Then they have several middle-of-the-road rides for everyone, like flying boats, a scrambler, a tilt-a-whirl, and even more I'm not mentioning. Compared to the carnival that just left our town, admission into the Fun Spot is a steal – it was \$4 for me, a non-rider who just wanted to visit the zoo. Our little toddler cost only \$4, and she was able to ride about 10 rides. Our 4-year-old was \$8, and my husband and our oldest were \$16 each. So for a grand total of \$48, it was a full day of family fun and much cheaper than the traveling carnival or even the county fair, based on what you get for your money. And I have to add that in June – too bad it's over now – but in June they had a special promotion where

if you bring in a report card with A's and B's on it, the kid that earned them gets in free! So subtract \$16 from our \$48, and our day of fun was only \$32 – we were really pleased. The only problem with the place is that they are at the mercy of the weather always, and with all the rain and storms we've been getting, our day of fun was no exception and was cut short when a sudden storm moved in. But it was only an hour and a half away from closing anyway. Also, we had been about to leave as it was, and the staff handed out half-price admission coupons, so we will definitely be back when I can enjoy some of the rides myself after the baby is born. And I will be able to give hubby another few rounds on the water slide! We were so pleased with the place that we tried to go back Sunday since we wanted to take advantage of the report card promotion one more time before June was over, but alas, the weather foiled our plans and we ended up at [Crazy Pinz](#) in Fort Wayne, Indiana instead. Still a fun day, but nowhere near the value of Fun Spot. Crazy Pinz is an indoor entertainment place, and they have an arcade, mini-golf, bowling, and a 3-story play area for the kids. We've been there before and really liked it, but this time, everything had changed and was MUCH more expensive. But, we had 4 little kids (brought a friend along) who really thought we were doing something really fun that day, so what could we do but spend the day at Crazy Pinz regardless. I have to mention that somehow, on the way to Fun Spot on Sunday, my husband and I got to talking I guess and somehow missed the exit and overshot the place by about 20 miles. (Sorry for not using you, Mr. GPS, I thought I knew where we were going!) Then Fun Spot was closed for rain, so we had to head down to Fort Wayne, and overall we ended up spending an extra \$20-30 on gas... Kind of a big oopsie with gas prices being so high in this day and age. It was a bad luck kind of day, but we did end up salvaging it, and overall, it was an AWESOME weekend.

Saturday we went with friends to see the movie [Wall-E](#) and then visited a friend who is recovering from heart surgery. He is

doing well thankfully, and we all enjoyed our visit together – even the kids, who played with cats and bugs and other creatures found around their house in the country. We ran up to their church which was having an ice cream social and enjoyed delicious food and homeade ice cream – a dream for a pregnant lady – YUM! Wall-E was pretty good and as it turns out, the Pixar people had a brainstorming meeting years ago, and this is the last film to be made from ideas presented at that meeting. Others are [A Bug's Life](#), [Monster's Inc.](#), and [Finding Nemo](#), so needless to say, that brainstorming lunch should go down in history! I have to say I was a little taken aback by the lack of human dialogue in Wall-E. Even after seeing the previews, I wasn't prepared for it. I think this is what may have finished off my 4-year-old since she had to leave the movie theater with dad before the movie was even half over. She's been able to make it through the last 5-10 movies we've been to in a theater, so that's why I think it was the lack of dialogue in this one that did her in. It was a cute movie though, but not on par with Pixar's latest features like Monsters Inc. or especially Finding Nemo, at least in my opinion. Then again, it was SO different, mostly because it was so futuristic that I suppose it's hard to compare to the others.

So yeah, fun extended weekend, even though piles of laundry await my folding. If you're anywhere nearby, head out to Angola, Indiana and visit the Fun Spot, it's well worth it especially if you have really little ones – it totally trumps a place like Six Flags with their high admission prices and long lines.

Time To Clean The Mothballs Out Of The Closet

Now that the latest Indiana Jones movie has hit the theatres and has already been dethroned at the box office, I began to start coming up with sure fire ways to relaunch other 1980s blockbuster movie franchises... many of which ended on a sad or horrible note. We have already seen a new Rocky as well as Rambo feature. I kind of appreciated [Rocky Balboa](#) as a nice homage and wrap up of the previous movies (it was far better than the deplorable [Rocky V](#)). I lost interest in the shoot em up Rambo series after the second installment. I think Stallone should have come up with a good story for both franchises to interact; however, that might have been asking a little too much for his acting prowess.

How about a nice return of *Jaws* (not the James Bond character with metal teeth but the shark). [Jaws the Revenge](#) (I think it was called) was just too horrible to even get into. Anything anyone comes up with surely would be better than that debacle. How about a wonderful sequel to both the *Jaws* series and *Finding Nemo*?

The [Beverly Hills Cop](#) franchise took a serious nosedive with the third movie in the series. Audiences expected to see Eddie Murphy be funny as the wise cracking Detroit to LA detective Axel Foley (with or without the foul language). The third movie was almost a family oriented feature taking place at a theme park. I suggest combining *Beverly Hills Cop* with many of the movies in which Eddie appears as several characters. Why not have Axel go in search of the people responsible for the travesty that is *Norbit* and arrest them? I do see that a *Beverly Hills Cop IV* is in the earliest stages of development.

I think it is about time to dust off the [Police Academy](#) shelf. This could be another collaboration with Steve Guttenberg and

company joining Eddie Murphy, Eddie Murphy, Eddie Murphy, AAAAAAND Eddie Murphy on a quest to find the villains who stole the careers of the other academy grads.

Or... how about *Revenge of the Killer Tomatoes*? I think we have had only *Attack* and *Return* so why not?

Of course most of these franchises were products of their time and reflected the period. Very doubtful that any of them would be able to start with anything near a fresh approach.

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