

# A Post About Nothing

This post is about nothing because I should be in bed. I'm writing as a way to vent because I can't sleep. We've let our daughter have sleepovers pretty much constantly for the past 2 weeks. We've run into some of her friends and figured what a better way to end summer in a fun way than with some sleepovers, especially with these friends we don't see often.

Problem is, all these girls seem to lose track of the rest of the world when they're together. They run up and down the stairs like a herd of elephants (I am SO not going to mention this out loud – what could scar a sensitive pre-teen girl more than comparisons to the largest land mammal??), they giggle incessantly, and they BURST into our bedroom at midnight complaining of a scary noise. And that's what led me here. Having a group of kids burst into my room as I'm trying to relax with some quiet reading time at midnight apparently set off my adrenal glands – big time. It's now almost 1 am, and I can't even think of laying down again for fear of my quiet bubble being burst yet again. My adrenaline is pumping so hard; I feel like I've just ridden a roller coaster or like I'm about to deliver a speech. The kicker is, with little or no sleep, how I am going to be able to supervise 6 kids tomorrow – with one of them being a VERY exploratory 10-month-old?? I don't know how it's going to work. All because of a scary noise. Well, unfortunately for this group of self-absorbed 'tweens, they're about to find out that a long day with a very tired and grumpy Mom is ***infinitely*** more scary than any kind of noise or bump in the night.

Good luck, girls.

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# Halloween Fun (Was Had)

It's officially mid-November already, and Halloween is over. Because Halloween is one of our family's favorite holidays, we try to take advantage of doing every Halloween-related activity we can, which often stretches the season. We began on the Tuesday before Halloween at the mall. They held a weather-proof (good thing too, the weather on Tuesday was so awful our tornado sirens were activated) trick-or-treat event in the mall, with costumed kids going from store to store receiving candy. Our kids had a blast, and our little guy got the hang of trick-or-treating REALLY quickly! He would receive his candy, and his way of saying 'thank you' was to give a little wave – it was adorable – see for yourself! He's the one in the Blue's Clues costume:

At first he was afraid of some of the scary masks, but he was quickly over that too. The rest of the week stayed relatively Halloween-free, until Friday, when we had planned a Halloween-themed game night. We requested guests to wear costumes (any excuse to dress up in a costume for Halloween – I really like to participate as much as I can!!), and we had quite a variety: from an escaped inmate (Hubby) to Flo the Progressive Insurance nurse, a nerd, a couple of hippies, a professor, a zookeeper on safari (me) – even a few members of the “real” Mafia made an appearance (we frequently play a game called ‘Mafia’ at game night and it’s tons of fun! A few of the regular game nighters decided to dress up as Mafia as a shout-out to the game). Fun was had, and we were able to rest up for Saturday, which was the annual community Halloween party. My kids loved the hayride, complete with monsters that jump out of the brush and chase the wagon, and we rode 3 times. There are all kinds of things to do at the community party, and it’s all free: from gourmet slushes (best wild berry slush ever!), cotton candy, hot dogs, and popcorn to carnival games, bouncy castles, and a maze for the kids, it’s all so much fun!

After that was time for Trick or Treating, and we had fun even if Hubby wasn’t feeling so well (he is better now – thanks for your thoughts and prayers!). Let’s see... don’t think I mentioned the kids’ costumes: my oldest (almost 11 already!) was a cowgirl, 6-year-old Sammie was a princess, 4-year-old Disney was a witch at the mall who switched to Dora for Saturdays’ events, and 2-year-old Christopher was Blue from Blue’s Clues. We had fun Trick or Treating, and Hubby and I chose an old favorite movie of ours to watch afterward: The Uninvited – not totally scary (we usually try to watch a scary movie together on Halloween), but we both felt like a great thriller more than a horror movie this year. Here is my little boy dressed as Blue:



Sunday saw church, and we had a blast in Sunday school as usual – except that poor Hubby had to stay home. Also, we were very tired on Saturday after trick or treating, so we didn't get a chance to get our annual picture of the kids in their costumes sitting on the couch. But we got one of all 4 of them in the mall, so here it is:



Overall, a very fun 2010 Halloween, one that I can't believe came and went so quickly – SO quickly in fact, that it's already been over for weeks! Unbelievable!! Hope your Halloween was safe, fun, and happy, and that your Thanksgiving will be the same!!

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**I have this and this, what**

# can I make for dinner?

Yes, my daughters have asked this question, or “What can I do with?”

If you ask any of my daughters, you will find out that I experiment in the kitchen. I tend to think of cooking as science with food. I like to find out what flavors go well with others. I often find out what flavors don't go well with others. Not all of my kitchen experiments work. My daughters may tell you that too. But over the years, a few of these experiments became family favorites. Our family meatloaf recipe is one constant changing experiment. Many different flavors made many wonderful meals. Through all of this experimentation, my girls learned that they could trust me if I said I tried this and it tasted good.

Where is this leading? Well, I thought that if I can get my daughters to read and reply, I'll give a few recipes from various starting points. My goal will always be 1 or 2 pan/pot meals that take very little prep time. I dislike washing dishes, so the fewer I get dirty, the better I like it. Since I'm not sure my daughters will reply, I will open this up to everyone. What do you have in your refrigerator? What's for dinner?

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## What about them oats.

I was allowed to attend a dress rehearsal of [“Wild Oats” at the WCCT's Little Theater off the Square.](#) (Is that a mouthful?) If you don't have a wedding to attend, a daughter to pick up, or some other things that will take up all of your time for the next two weekends, make some time to see this

wonderful little show.

Yes, this is a melodrama. Be prepared to laugh, boo and maybe even hiss. There were twists, turns and setups galore. Love, laughter and greed. And religion, we had religion too. And of course there was the sowing of wild oats.

I won't give anything away, but I really recommend this show. I would give a run down of the cast and crew, but I didn't see any programs yet, and I wouldn't want to miss anyone.

I really wish I could see this show with a full audience. It is one of those shows that will feed off the audience energy. So go, be prepared to have a good time and join in the fun.

One more word – Take in some canned food for the Food bank. 1 can of food will get you money off the admission. Great way to give to the community. One non-profit helping another. Great idea.

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## **Super (fun) Bowl**

I am much more of a baseball fan than a football fan (see my countdown timer to the first game of Cubs spring training to the right). But I will admit that I love watching football; mainly because my husband loves it, and I love to see him enjoy things that make him happy. Oh, that and the fact that whenever he watches football, it's become sort of a tradition with us that he gives me excellent backrubs! So while I couldn't care less who won yesterday's Superbowl, (although I chose the Cardinals to root for because it's always fun to pick a team and scream and shout and get into the game) I did have a great time watching it.

We had decided to have a get-together; a fun evening filled with friends and food (too much food! We had to have pizza for dinner again Monday and will have it twice more this week just to get rid of all the extras!). Because I have 4 kids, I didn't get to see all of my favorite part of the Superbowl – the commercials. But that's ok, I'm sure I can catch them online somewhere if I'm so inclined. The ones I did see were pretty good – I especially liked the Potato Head one (think it was for tires). It just cracks me up when Mrs. Potato Head changes into her 'angry' eyes, hehehe! I also really liked the careerbuilder.com commercial with the moose head on the wall – I won't spoil the rest of it because I recommend you go out and find it yourself if you haven't seen it. I missed the newest E-Trade.com commercials with the talking baby, so those I will have to find because I always enjoy those. Oh, and I'll have to see the latest chapter in the saga of the Budweiser Clydesdales...

As for halftime, I'm not a fan of "The Boss", so I wasn't paying attention to Bruce Springsteen's performance. I am glad to note, however, that he didn't incur a wardrobe malfunction ala Justin Timberlake and Janet Jackson circa Superbowl XXXVII in 2004. Also during halftime, there was a special 3D event. We had picked up enough pairs of 3D glasses for the party at a store ahead of time (we actually got enough to last us until Superbowl L!), but in my opinion, they should have given a few minutes warning for people to get their glasses ready. We had ours ready because they did mention it in the 2nd quarter, but I didn't get a chance to get my regular eyeglasses to wear underneath, which guaranteed an absence of 3D for me. But other people seemed pretty impressed... I have seen the preview for Monsters Vs. Aliens in the movie theater and it looks really funny – I'm looking forward to that movie coming out.

Well, anyway, much fun was had by all. We had originally intended to make this a game night / Superbowl party, but by

the time the big game ended, there wasn't any time for board games. Next time! And oh yeah, I should report that the Pittsburgh Steelers won the Superbowl, in case you're using my site for a news report ☐

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## A day with Family and Friends

I spent most of the day at the home of my eldest daughter and her husband. They were having an Open house for friend and family. Since it was close to 90 today, and they have a pool, it was a good day to be there. I spent too much time in the sun, I ate too much, and I had a wonderful time.

I met more of my daughter's in-laws (again for the first time, the wedding doesn't count). But since her husband is 1 of 17 children, I don't try to keep them all straight. I would just get them mixed up anyway.

I didn't count how many of the siblings were there, but there were a couple of faces I didn't recognize. There was also a friend or two that I didn't recognize either. So putting people into families was difficult. The funny thing I don't think it matters much at my daughter's house. It seems like the people who are invited in are family. They may be that long lost cousin you sometimes wish was still lost, but they seem to be family. It is a very inviting place to visit.

Now, over the years I've had reservations about my daughter's choice of friends. I don't recall mentioning this too often. This was of course due to fear of having her cling to them more than she was. We all know how some teenagers can get. If the parent approves, avoid. If the parent disapproves, attach. My eldest had this little quirk. If she still does, well when/if she reads this blog, she may avoid a lot of friends.



You see, I approve of her friends. They are characters to be sure, and they would tend to agree with that statement. But they are good friends to my daughter. And as with everything in my family, that is important.

It doesn't really matter what I think, or don't think of the people my girls hang around with. What is really important is how they treat my daughters, and what my daughters thinks of them. It has been that way for as long as I've had daughters. This is one of the reasons I never said anything about my daughters' friends. As long as they were happy, it was good. Even if I noticed something a little off, it was good. Now that 3 out of the 4 are legal adults, and 2 out of 4 are actually of legal drinking age, I've noticed that this way of thinking about things really paid off. All 4 can make very wise decisions on who they want to hang with. They know who they like, and they try to avoid those they can't get along with. It's good to see parenting work out right every now and again.

Now I guess I should write about the food. They really did it right. Burgers, dogs, chicken, salads, deserts, chips, drinks, everything for a summer gathering was available. (except nobody brought watermelon, I should have gotten watermelon, why didn't I get watermelon... Oh yes, the last one I brought was turned into a vodka-watermelon slushy.) We ate well. There was one funny thing. I was thinking of having an iced coffee today. Normally I think iced coffee is to be left somewhere, not to be ingested. Every once in a while I get a taste for it. My daughter had some freshly made when I walked in the door. What a lovely coincidence. I couldn't have planned that better if I had called ahead. So today was a good day...

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# A little before midnight

I thought today was going to be a real downer. Work seemed endless today with barely a break for lunch. If things could go wrong, they all waited for today. But with some luck, I had a much better late afternoon/early evening.

As told earlier, I went to a movie. I went with not 1 but 2 of my daughters. We all had a good time, it was just a fun little show to watch. Then we went to dinner. Dinner was Pizza Hut, so I didn't find it very good, but the girls seemed to enjoy it. Then off to the Putt-Putt. With two free game one at an earlier time, we were able to putt with no money down. One of my daughters doesn't like putt-putt, but is willing to keep score. Except for 2 miss-played holes (really badly mis-played, I had a good game. I was able to break par by 1 stroke. I think I figured out my problem with putting. I get too sure of myself at times, and don't concentrate on what I am doing. Makes be flub up sometimes. I guess I should be more careful.

Then we had Ice cream at the Creamery again. Still good stuff, a bit expensive, but it is good to splurge every now and again.

Time to run.. or sleep as the case may be, it is now a bit after midnight.

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## What a day...

This day actually started some time yesterday evening. During a thunderstorm in the area and a tornado close to us, 4 outlets in our house went out. I'm thinking something in the

storm caused it, because to was only part of a complete circuit. Looked like I would have to replace at least on outlet. I couldn't tell from a exterior glance as to which outlet shorted out. So I put a trip to the hardware store on my Saturday to-do list. The first thing on the list was getting my daughter to her SAT testing.

Now on to Saturday Morning... Storm damage from the previous night's storms caused some rough driving. A normal 40 minute drive took closer to 1 hour. We just made it just in time to the SAT testing site. Hmm, day not starting off well...

I had to wait around for at least an hour for the hardware store to open, so I stopped for coffee. Those who have known me for a while, know that my favorite coffee shop closed for good a little over 2 years ago. This was the place my dear wife and I spent many happy times, just getting away from the kids, planning for future things, getting to know one another again after 4 children. Good memories in that little place. I have yet to find any coffee shop that comes close to the atmosphere, quality of the coffee, food ect. and the people who frequent the shop itself. The place I stopped in today had a very nice atmosphere (except for the big screen TV, but I went around the corner from that). The coffee was very good. The food I had ok, but nothing special.. Not many people there, so I couldn't say anything about that. Too bad it was a 40 minute drive... Too far for a once a week type of thing.

After the coffee, I could get the things I needed to replace at least 1 outlet. I got 4 new outlets just in case. I still had at least 2 hours to wait for the SAT to finish. Stopped at another store and was able to find some water filters for our office at work. I installed an older water filter on the tap at work, but the filters have been hard to find. I try to pick up extra whenever I see them on the shelf. Filtered water makes better coffee ya know... Now only 1 1/2 hours for the test to let out...

Got a call from my daughter in FL, we talked until my Cell battery almost died. Then I got a notice that I had 3 messages... Two were from the day before!!! They weren't there when I got up in the morning, I checked... Storm must have hit a local tower or something?? Anyway a friend wanted to get together to (in his words) "just get out of the house". Great!! How does one decide what to do when I was already invited to oldest daughter's place for fun and games... Hmmm. Well, I was expecting a call from the oldest earlier in the week to finalize the plans. It never happened. I let my youngest test goer decide... Friend won the toss.

So after a good lunch youngest, and I head out for some fun. We played games (all sorts), and just had a lot of fun. We played a miniature bowling game. The balls were slightly larger than a softball, no holes, and the pins were on strings/wires. If you ever see one, try it out. They are very fun. We also played indoor mini-golf (black lit area with dark black 'greens', and glowing colored bumpers and obstructions). This was fun to, but it did make it hard to 'read the greens'. I ended up with a hole in one on the last hole. We also played a number of arcade games for 'tickets'. It was a fun afternoon/evening... Good idea C...

Now I'm tired and ready for bed.... What a Day...

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## A Day of Mini

Finally the snow has stopped (quick, where is some wood for knocking?!? Our snowblower has been put away, which is enough of a jinx, but add a comment like the above, and I'm asking for trouble!), and the weather is finally being cooperative enough for some outdoor fun. So this weekend had us taking in

the first mini-golf game of the season with friends. Unless, of course, you count the mini-golfing we did in Florida in January, but I don't count that since in Florida the mini-golf is more like a distraction to the lizards hopping around the course and the captive alligators you can feed at our favorite mini-golf place in Orlando.

I did not do very well this weekend. Of the four of us actually playing (the kids futzed about the course), I came in last. I will blame it on my pregnancy bump – it's getting quite large lately and is throwing off my balance, not to mention my stamina. I was distracted by looking for a bench to sit on after every hole. Yeah, that's it, I can't mini-golf while pregnant. Nevermind all the practice I got on my computer this winter (see previous mini-golf posts of mine where I have links to (mostly) cool computer versions of mini-golf), I just can't mini-golf while pregnant. Oh, just kidding, I've done it before, it's no big deal and not that much different, just gotta swing around the bump. I just lost because I was rusty, and I didn't take my time putting. Besides that, my husband did extra well this time, and he usually comes in last, so last place had to go to someone. I don't really care if I win or lose, for me, it's just about learning what the ball does in various situations, gaining that experience, and most importantly, having fun! I did win the mini-bowling we played afterwards though... I really want to get one of those for my basement. I've always liked bowling, and here is a way the physically impaired (as I am for a few months here) can still enjoy participating in the sport. Pipe dreams, of course... if I had that kind of money or space in my basement, I could think of a dozen better things to put down there... mostly animals...

But anyway, I looked for cool mini-golf shots on youtube, and I actually didn't see any... just a lot more people worse at mini-golf than I am who don't even realize it. But I did come across this pretty cool contraption at a mini-golf course in

Colorado, check it out:

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# I did the Macarena with a phone because Big Bird said to and he's my leader.

The subject of this post, my friends, is the result of an email forward I got today. It's one of the stupidest forwards, yet somehow irresistible at the same time. I posted it below if you want to try it. I didn't have the nerve to bother my friends with this at work, so I decided to post it on my blog instead. Imagine my surprise when I got an email from a neighbor my mom had like 4 years ago (I somehow got on her forward list) with a subject of: *"I love an ipod because I think I need some serious help."*

*This is funny, and silly but fun..keep it going..Type the sentence you end up with, in the subject line and forward to your friends... Pick the month you were born: January——I kicked*

*February——I loved*

*March——I karate chopped*

*April———I licked*

*May———I jumped on*

*June———I smelled*

*July———**I did the Macarena With***

*August——I had lunch with*

*September—I danced with*

*October——I sang to*

*November—I yelled at*

*December—I ran over*

*Pick the day (number) you were born on:*

*1——**a birdbath***

- 2---a monster
- 3---a phone
- 4---a fork
- 5---a snowman
- 6---a gangster
- 7---my mobile phone
- 8---my dog
- 9--- my best friends' boyfriend
- 10---my neighbour
- 11---my science teacher
- 12---a banana
- 13---a fireman
- 14---a stuffed animal
- 15---a goat
- 16---a pickle
- 17---your mom
- 18---a spoon
- 19--- a smurf
- 20---a baseball bat
- 21---a ninja
- 22---Chuck Norris
- 23---a noodle
- 24---a squirrel
- 25---a football player
- 26---my sister
- 27---my brother
- 28---an ipod
- 29---a surfer
- 30---a llama
- 31---A homeless guy

*Pick the color of shirt you are wearing:*

*White---because I'm cool like that*

*Black---**because that's how I roll.***

*Pink---because I'm crazy.*

*Red---because the voices told me to*



Blue———because I'm sexy and I do what I want  
Green——— because I think I need some serious help.  
Purple———because I'm AWESOME!  
Gray———because Big Bird said to and he's my leader.  
Yellow——— because someone offered me 1,000,000 dollars  
Orange———because my family thinks I'm stupid anyway.  
Brown———because I can.  
Beige———because I a NICE person!  
Other———because I'm a Ninja!  
None———because I can't control myself!

*Now type out the sentence you made, in the subject line and forward to your friends.*