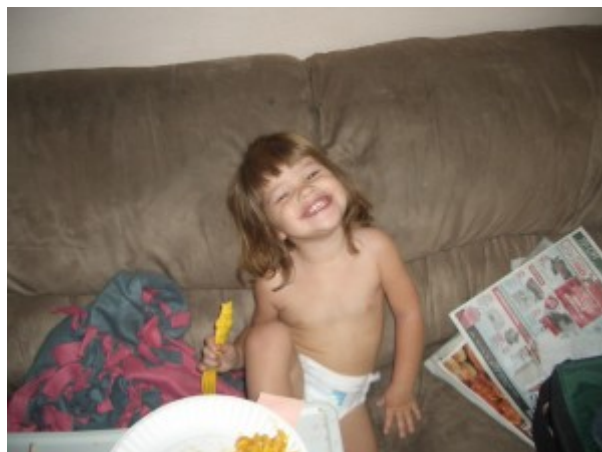


Me Want Cookie

Jamiahsh, a fellow blogger friend of mine, had a point when he noted that it's been a long time since one of my famous anti-Walmart posts. I hate the place, but as a mom of 4, I don't have any other options that compare to the time and money I reluctantly have to admit I save shopping at Walmart. It's just their dirty tricks that drive me crazy, and I've ranted about those long enough – if you're interested, flip through my blog posts and search for Walmart. Right now, I need to address my most current Walmart disappointment: no more free cookies for the kids.

Those of you who have kids know that Walmart used to give out cookies at the bakery as a sort of rescue for tiresome kids whose parents are taking too long with their shopping. I shop at Walmart once, sometimes twice a week. It is a familiar habit for my two-year-old to get her cookie at the bakery while we shop. If I'm lucky, it will keep her busy until I hit the dairy section. But the other day during my weekly visit to Walmart, imagine my surprise when the lady in the bakery said they didn't have any cookies. Not only that, she thinks they won't have them anymore, ever. She wasn't sure because the lady who usually handles the cookies (?) was on vacation. Sounds like a cop-out to me... I mean, is there really a lady who regularly handles the cookies? I think she just didn't want to have to tell this angel-face 'no cookie':



My daughter actually took it quite well... of course, I bought her a pack of donuts instead... It's not that I'm a softie, but I just don't think it's fair that a two-year-old should have to bear the brunt of a mega-company's policy change. They gave cookies every time before this, and she has had to sit in the shopping cart and be good and do her time, and now all of a sudden, no cookie? So I HAD to buy her a replacement treat, at least for this shopping trip. Maybe in the future, I'll try to prepare her ahead of time or just bring my own treat from home. But in the mean time, their little plan worked, didn't it? Lure all the housemoms over to the bakery to get free cookies for their kids... over time, they will grow to expect it, and then one day, no free cookies will cause them to *pay money* for something else for their kids – \$CA-CHING\$!

I admit it was a nice gesture on Walmart's part to offer the free cookies in the first place. Then again, we do spend enough over there; they should be able to afford it... But it was a nice little perk, and as I said, something for the kids to look forward to about shopping at Walmart... But in the end, it ended up being just another disappointment from our favorite big box retailer.

Our local non-Walmart grocery store still has free cookies for the kids, AND they're fresh baked... If I find more time and money, maybe I will make it a point to do more of our shopping over there...

How about your grocery store? Is it a small mom-and-pop-owned place or a big box retailer? Do they give free cookies to the kids?

Butts On The Floor – In The Grocery Store?

I don't know how this memory came about, but recently I was thinking about how acceptable smoking used to be in our society. You were allowed to smoke anywhere and everywhere – airplanes, restaurants, bowling alleys, and grocery stores, to name a few places. Yes, I said grocery stores. I have distinct memories of being a kid and playing with the floor at the grocery store. I was playing with the floor because it had colored tiles on it that resembled a maze, and grocery shopping is so *boring* for a kid that there really isn't anything else to do but look at the floor and play with it. While navigating my maze on the floor, I distinctly remember seeing – and stepping around – cigarette butts. People used to smoke cigarettes while shopping for food – ew. So does that mean that all the food that was brought home had packaging that reeked of cigarette smoke? It's hard to imagine, especially given society's view on smoking today. But I remember it, and I'm really thankful that we've come such a long way. I can no longer stand the smell of cigarette smoke, and if I had to smell it while shopping at Walmart, it would make the place that much more unbearable.

And while we're on the topic of inappropriate places to smoke, that reminds me of something I forgot to mention in my Mummy movie review post. While watching the movie, we kept smelling cigarette smoke; 2 or 3 times. Someone was definitely smoking in the theater, but my question is, who would do something like that? Was their addiction so out of control that they honestly couldn't make it through an entire movie? And we're not talking about The Dark Knight, a movie that runs 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. The new Mummy movie was not even over 2 hours, and someone couldn't make it that long without a cigarette (or two or three)? That sounds like a problem they should get help

for. At the very least, they should have stayed home then, where they could smoke all they wanted without bothering anyone else. I was really irritated. Not just because I hate the smell and wasn't expecting to have to deal with it at a movie theater, but mostly because I had our new baby with me and I didn't want his innocent lungs poisoned with cigarette smoke. I never saw who was doing it, but I suspected maybe it was some rebellious teenagers doing it because they could get away with it. But I didn't see any teenagers leaving the theater. I tried to smell everyone that walked by, but I came up with no suspects. Oh, well... if it happens again, I think I'll report it; I just didn't feel like missing the movie. And I really didn't think that after the first cigarette they'd go ahead and light another... How utterly rude and completely thoughtless. I hope the culprit saw the baby on the way out and felt guilty... but I'm sure that someone with the nerve to smoke in a movie theater wouldn't care enough to regret it.

Return To Shaffer Value

All riiighty then. Tonight, I started a new old job. It seems I was in the right place at the right time last week when I went into my local grocery store to fax my resume to a few possible job locations. It seems that the store was in need of some part time help as most of the school age kids were going to be involved in sports this spring. So, I said until something more lucrative came up, why not.

Old job you ask. Yes, because the grocery earned the nickname "Shaffer Value" after my two older brothers, my mother, my younger sister, and myself worked there at some point. I will not say how long I worked there initially (at least 4 years).

The funny thing was, the minute I walked in today, they had already received a phone call for a reference for me. Unfortunately, none of the employees I worked with previously were there to take the call. They gave me a glowing review from personality alone since the person calling did not understand that it has been many years since I graced the store with my services.

Some things had changed while many others seemed to have remained basically the same. The minute I walked into the stockroom, I was totally shocked. Gone were the piles and piles of overstock which had previously been there to be worked and reworked until they could not be worked anymore. There were two small stacks which contained items for all four aisles (yes, a four-aisle grocery). I could have only imagined having such a nice backroom in my day.

The cash register was also much more advanced (from my previous days, anyway). Before, the store only accepted cash, checks, or paper food stamps. Now we take credit (debit, too), food stamps are now done electronically, and WIC is accepted, as well. Plus, they have scanners which we did not have. The store has finally gotten out of the stone age.

One thing did draw me into reality. The stock boy working there who is a senior in high school is someone whom I remember being brought in by his mother when he was a baby. Of course, the lady running the register when I arrived today used to change my diapers so I guess it is all relative. So... until something better comes along... Few may remember the days when it was known as Shaffer Value, but it will do. I know there are people who remember the space being the local movie theatre.