

Jubilee Time

It's time for our town's annual summer fest; they call it the Jubilee. Every year I'm compelled to attend, even though I become more disenchanted with the whole affair as years pass. I just really like summer fest atmospheres, and I can't resist going when we live within blocks of it. It's fun to take all the kids there without having to pack up everyone in the car, spend a few bucks for gas to get there, or haggle over parking. But as every cost in our economy rises, the Jubilee is no exception. And if the kids had lots of fun, it'd be worth it, but every year it seems the Jubilee finds ways to cut corners and disappoint my kids.

Take this year, for example. "Wrist band day" was on the first day of the carnival; a day when you buy a wristband for one "low" price (now \$16, up \$2 from the \$14 it cost last year) and it gets you on "unlimited" rides. I think they planned wrist band day on the first day of the carnival for a reason – before anyone could get to the carnival and look around to see that some of the usual rides are missing. Not only that, but for small children, because of height requirements, there are only about 4 rides they were able to use their wristband on. My 4-year-old is a little daredevil and wanted to ride everything, including the "Kamikaze", a ride that goes upside down. She was too small to ride that one of course, and I completely understood the rhyme and reason for that rule, however, when she got excited about the Ferris Wheel only to be turned away, I began to lose my patience. Seems the rules require that she ride with an adult, no problem there, my husband would have rode with her even though he's not crazy about ferris wheels... except that the escorting adult had to have 3 tickets to ride! And at \$1.50/ticket, we're talking about spending an extra \$4.50 *for one ride*, on top of the \$32 we had already spent on wristbands for my 2 daughters – just for my daughter to follow their rule

and be escorted on the ferris wheel – no thanks. So after 2 disappointments, we went over to the other side of the Jubilee and found the “scrambler” ride, so my daughters went on it and had a good time. They got in line to go again, and 4-year-old Sammie was turned away because she wasn’t tall enough – apparently she shrank while waiting in line to go a second time? Again, I’m all for abiding by safety rules, etc., but they need to adopt a uniform policy that will be in place the entire run of the carnival. Try explaining to a 4-year-old that she isn’t tall enough to ride a ride that she just got finished riding! We actually ran into the same problem at Disney World, but they were very sympathetic and understanding and offered us ride passes as compensation. And as if all this at the Jubilee weren’t enough, my daughters have a favorite “ride” at the Jubilee every year – the funhouse. They actually usually have 2 funhouses, but for whatever reason, my girls have their favorite. So they’re standing there on the steps of their favorite funhouse, waiting to get in, and the ride operator is trying to tell them something, and that’s when I see the signs. “No wristbands or tickets. This ride is \$2” WHAT?!? Why would they do this? To make money obviously, but that funhouse had no one there all night, was it really worth it to disappoint all the kids who go there year after year and look forward to that funhouse? And like I said, since wristband night was on the first day of the Jubilee, we didn’t have an opportunity to tour the grounds to see what would be included in the purchase of the wristband – regrettably.

Despite all the disappointments, my daughters took them all in stride and still had fun. We ran into some friends, so we decided to take one of their daughters home with us for a sleepover. Even though we had bought the wristbands that were good until 11, we just wanted out of there after all the disappointment and money wasting. I did get my Dippin’ Dots, but the vendor forgot my root beer float this year ☹ I was pretty happy with the cookie dough that my husband got for me,

and it was actually better than I remember. Not worth going back to the Jubilee for more, but still good. I think we're done with the Jubilee already this year. We usually go back Friday night for the karaoke contest and Saturday after the parade, but I think we can find something better (and cheaper!) to do this year. Next year, maybe we'll plan a vacation for Jubilee week and skip it all together!