

# Getting Old... Er, Growing Up

Wednesday November 9 is the 2011 Country Music Awards – an event once so important to me that I would put my schedule on hold so I could enjoy watching this annual awards show on tv. For a few years now, I have committed my Wednesday nights to leading a small group for church's student ministries. The past 2 years, one of my kids happened to be sick on the same Wednesday nights as the awards show, so I volunteered to be the parent to stay home with the sick kid and I didn't have to miss the show nor play hooky from youth group – I had a legitimate reason for calling in sick. This year, there is again a virus circulating through our family, and I think I have a mild case... but things have changed. Even if one of my kids was ill tonight, I would be the one to go to youth group and let Hubby stay home with the sick kid(s). Luckily, I think we'll both be able to make it to youth group tonight, and I am so excited! The new series we started last week is about demons, and it gave me a great connecting point with my girls – we had a great group time last week! Now that I'm back from maternity leave and free from the distractions of pregnancy, I am stoked to build relationships with my youth group girls and help them build their spiritual relationships with Jesus Christ. I am so excited about youth group tonight that the country awards show hardly matters to me – I might try to set up a recording device so I can watch it later, but watching it live doesn't matter to me at all when once it was dire for my entertainment.

Maybe I'm getting old... no, I think I'm growing up! It's so cool to me that God is teaching me about prioritizing and also about using my free time and leading me toward hobbies that glorify Him. How amazing is it that I can be entertained, relaxed, refreshed, and feel fulfilled, not by doing something that only **I** enjoy but by doing something that affects others in a positive way as well?

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# EVEN BETTER THAN I IMAGINED!!! (part 2)

*(This is a continuation of my previous post of the same title which can be [found here](#) in case you missed it.)*



*(This is us with Jack Hanna! In case you don't know who he is, I included a brief description of him in my previous blog post about the show!)*

Before we went into the theater to see Jack Hanna's live stage show, we were just standing there gawking at Jack Hanna signing autographs. Suddenly, a group of young people came up to him, and he was so thrilled to see them that he quickly grabbed his cell phone and called his wife backstage, telling her that their 'special friends' would be coming backstage to see her. The friends are then ushered away, and Jack announced during the show that they are the [Von Trapp Children](#), a singing quartet of descendants from the family who inspired the infamous memoir, stage musical, and movie *The Sound of Music*. Apparently they had been in the Chicago area to tape an episode of Oprah (which will air on October 29), and they're family friends of Jack's and stopped by his show to surprise him.



*(Me waiting patiently while Jack signs just one of my many books that I brought!!)*

Back to the show... we are seated in the Paramount, and Jack Hanna comes out!! The show itself was a mix of live animals being brought out on the stage and video clips shown on a large screen, all narrated by Jack with his trademark anecdotes and sense of humor. In fact, at one point near the beginning of show, Jack Hanna began to tell a story, and all of a sudden he stops and looks off to the wings of the stage. "Do I have time to tell this story?" He asked (presumably the producer backstage), but then he didn't wait for an answer and replied to himself: "Of course I have time to tell it – it's my show!" It was not said in an arrogant fashion, but rather it seemed as if he were almost reminding himself that he is in charge. It was glimpses of genuineness like this that made his show so special. Jack Hanna is very real and down-to-earth (when it comes to being a celebrity anyway – often he is dreaming about ways to help animals with his head on the clouds!), and these traits take precedent in his live appearances.

So the story he told was hilarious! It was about his appearance on "Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader", and... well, you can listen to it if you'd like:

So between video clips of a few animal causes that are near and dear to Jack Hanna's heart ([Rolling Dog Ranch](#) and Mountain Gorilla Conservation, among others), the following live animals were brought out on the stage for Jack to tell us about: a Red-Ruffed Lemur, blind Barn Owl, Flamingo, 2-Toed Sloth (did you know that there is a bed and breakfast in South America where you get to take care of a baby sloth in your room overnight? I just might get over this fear of flying thing quicker than I thought I would!!), 3-Banded Armadillo, Siberian Lynx, baby Coatamundi, baby Bennet's Wallaby (got to meet him earlier at the Jamboree Lunch), Grey fox, Fennec Fox (got to meet him at lunch also), Lesser Anteater, an albino Python, and the finale – a full grown Cheetah! Seeing the animals was great of course, and hearing live 'Jack facts' about them was even better. But I think my favorite part of the show was the end – we watched a blooper reel of Jack getting licked, bitten, squirted, tossed around, etc. by animals, and one clip was of Jack Hanna making an appearance on David Letterman's show in the '80s. Jack is showing Dave how to milk a goat, and as usual, Dave is cracking jokes. Jack Hanna (the live version) cuts in, saying, "I didn't even mean to do this!" and the video clip shows him accidentally squirting Letterman with a spray of milk from the goat's udder! There is only one more thing that can make watching Jack Hanna on Letterman even more entertaining, and that is watching Jack Hanna on Letterman WITH Jack Hanna while he narrates it!!

We laughed (plenty of laughs when Jack and animals are involved!), we cried (that video clip of the Rolling Dog ranch was so heartwarming – the ranch takes dogs who are seriously ill, and many of them have extreme physical ailments), and then it was time to go. But not before we got to hear Jack's bear spray story again, and he even called on one of his assistants to act it out. He told this story during his previous appearance on Letterman, and it was hilarious then as it was hearing it and seeing it live. Funny, that is, until

we found out during the live show what *really* happened during that previous Letterman appearance. Apparently it wasn't demonstration-style bear spray, but the real thing, and Jack got sprayed in the face, causing loss of vision for over 10 minutes and some minor facial burns. Jack warned us (and David Letterman!) that he is planning revenge for his next appearance on the show in December, so stay tuned!!!



*A sloth relaxing at a sloth sanctuary in Costa Rica. While we were on the subject of sloths, this picture was too cute to pass up!!*

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## **EVEN BETTER THAN I IMAGINED!!!**

We are back from Illinois; actually we got back a few days ago, but things here have been so non-stop that I'm not even unpacked from the weekend trip yet – working on that this week. But I had to take a break and write about the super fun Jack Hanna show that we were able to see while in Illinois – after all my anticipating, it was somehow **even better than I had imagined!!!**

We were the first ones to arrive at Aurora's Paramount Theater

(a lovely old-fashioned theater with beautiful architecture – in fact, it was chosen to be the setting for a few scenes of the Johnny Depp movie about the mobster John Dillinger called Public Enemies that was recently released), so we opted to stand in line rather than wait at the bar. This way, we were first upstairs for our “Jamboree Lunch” and got first pick of our seats. Seeing as how there were only two ways that Jack could get up to the second floor – stairs or elevator – we chose the table nearest both entrances. We went to go pick up our lunch – peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, cookies, fruit snacks, and chips situated in a safari hat – and came back to our table which had a bunch of little animal toys on it: lion rulers, a finger puppet zebra, coloring pages, and a parachuting tiger (oh how tempting it was to let him loose over the railing to sail down into the lobby... but Jack was due to arrive, so we were on our best behavior). Once we saw that all of the kids at the event were going to be seated elsewhere, I scooped up all of the jungle paraphernalia and put it in my purse. We put on our safari hats and ate our PB & J – did I mention that this event was designed for kids? Had we known before we got there, we would have brought our kids, but it wasn’t very well organized and so we didn’t really realize it until we got there – oh well. All was forgotten once Jack Hanna arrived!! If you don’t know who Jack Hanna is, here is a brief synopsis: Jack Hanna is an animal guy, and he was the director of the now world famous Columbus Zoo from 1978-1992. In that time, he put that zoo on the map; it went from being a place that even locals didn’t know existed to a world renowned animal facility, and attendance at the zoo increased by 400%! He now travels the world visiting endangered species, zoos, and making live show and tv show appearances (his monthly appearances on David Letterman’s show are always entertaining!!), all in the name of bringing awareness to wildlife conservation.

So anyway, at the Jungle Jamboree lunch, Jack goes from table to table (preceded by a woman carrying a baby wallaby in a

pouch and a man with a fox), and he comes to our table first!! He had limited time at each table of course, but he autographed a little picture of himself, and we did have time to tell him how we saw him at Sea World on our honeymoon in 1999. He asked if we liked animals, and my response went something like this: "Duh, huh huh huh". As much as I had been thinking about what to say to Jack, it happened to me again. When I finally met him, I was dumbfounded and couldn't think about the most important things to talk about in such a little time. No matter; we would be meeting him AGAIN later that same day!!

So after that, we went back downstairs to the merchandise table, and Hubby bought me Jack's new book (My Wild Life – it's kind of a re-write / update to my favorite book, Monkeys on the Interstate. But I didn't have this new book yet, and needless to say now that I have it, my reading of the Harry Potter series has taken a backseat!), and we waited for Jack to finish at the lunch tables upstairs. He came downstairs, there was just a few minutes wait, and then we met him AGAIN and he signed my new book, plus ALL of the books of his that I had brought along – and I had a huge purse full. We explained to him that he is our favorite celebrity ("Oh, I'm not a celebrity!" he said.), and the nice guy behind us took this picture (note that Hubby still has on his safari hat!):



Not sure what to do with ourselves after our autograph session, we were SO tempted to get back in line. After all,

Jack Hanna, our favorite ~~celebrity~~ animal conservation personality was sitting within 10 feet of us! But we wanted to give other people a chance to meet him, and I'm glad we chose to just stand there and gawk at him from the sidelines for 25 minutes rather than getting back in line – turns out that some people didn't get a chance to get his autograph since he was whisked away to get ready for the stage show. It just wouldn't have been fair for us to be in the line twice. He announced later that people who didn't get a chance to get his autograph could just email his website and an autographed pic would be sent out. No offense, Jack, but that's just not the same as meeting you in person! I am SO thankful that we got to meet him, and he is even more humble and down-to-earth than he seems on tv!!

Well, this blog post got lengthy, and I haven't even talked about the stage show yet, so I think I will cut this into multiple posts as my little guy is finished with his 'quiet time'. Unfortunately for me (and my ever-growing list of housework), my 2-year-old has outgrown his naps so I don't have nearly as much free time during the day as I need to get everything done. So you'll have to wait until my next post (or two or three) to read about the actual Jack Hanna stage show (best show I've EVER seen!!!) and the other stuff we crammed into our jam-packed super-fun Illinois weekend. Until then...

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## Good Riddance To Lost And Celebrating...

...the end of my desire to re-watch the run of the show on dvd. Here I thought the finale would be so ground-breaking, so

explanatory, and so intriguing that it would make me want to re-watch the entire show again, just to see how it looked after it was pulled all together. But I was wrong. I don't want to watch it again, and they didn't pull it together. In fact, my feelings couldn't be further from what I had hoped – I want to forget that I was ever hooked on a show called Lost, and I want to forget that a show called Lost ever existed.

The tv show Lost premiered in 2004. The premise always seemed intriguing – a group of people survive a plane crash only to be faced with unforeseen mysterious challenges that await them on a mystical island. I meant to watch it during its inaugural season, but I had a new baby in 2004, and tv was not one of my top priorities. After Lost's first season ended, however, the water cooler buzz just became too intriguing for me to resist, so my husband and I began to catch ourselves up on the first season, thinking we could always drop the show if we didn't like it. But like millions of others, we were hooked – Lost was great. WAS. Somewhere along the line, the show **lost** (haha) quality and many viewers at the same time – I'm thinking this was around the time of the infamous Hollywood Writers' Guild strike of 2007-8. Many tv shows went on an indefinite hiatus at that time, some did not return, and some, like Lost, were never the same. Lost became famous for throwing out a ton of loose ends, new characters and questions each new episode – without ever offering answers or resolutions. Many viewers **lost** (ahem) the ability or desire to follow the show, and Lost **lost** (cough cough) much of its fan following. And that's when Darlton (the collective name of the show's production / writing team Carlton Cuse and Damon Lindelof) announced an end date to Lost – all of our many questions and loose ends would be concluded at the end of the 2010 season. And my husband and I, like many other almost-lost Lost fans decided to stick around. After all, we reasoned, we had invested all this time already, why not a few more seasons, especially if we were going to get our answers? We were anxiously awaiting the finale tonight, but unlike the

anticipation of true Lost fans, we were just excited that we could have our Tuesday nights back. Much of the buzz compared Lost to reading a good book – when you get near the end, you think, what am I going to do when this book is over? It's so good! I can certainly identify with the good book analogy, but I would not apply it to Lost – we were just happy it was ending. So I guess disappointing isn't really the word I would use to describe the finale. I was half-expecting no real answers, considering the original bait and switch, but I couldn't really believe that they could get away with such a thing. And I am disappointed that I wasted a whopping **four and a half hours** (count 'em) on this tonight!

The first 2 hours were a re-cap special, which was less helpful than I thought. The first half of it was the actors reflecting on the show and giving inside info about filming techniques, etc. I'm thinking, why would they show this before the final episode airs? It didn't make sense to me. Now I'm thinking it was just another way to grease the wheels of Lost fans to overwhelm their tiny minds and brainwash them into being happy with the craptastic finale. There were also these "Lost Transmissions" – letters from audience members incorporated into scenes of Lost. They used footage from old episodes of Lost to make it look like Lost characters are actually reading fans' letters – for example, a scene with computers had a fan's letter written on a computer screen and the characters reacting to the "letter". It was really stupid, and no, I'm not just upset that my letter wasn't chosen. I didn't care enough to write a letter, just as I don't care enough to stay up really late, pointing out every one of the clues I found that the cast and crew of Lost KNEW their finale would be incredibly awful and disappointing.

So anyway, then the finale episode itself was TWO and a half hours, and NONE of the questions were answered. NONE. All of the "true lovers" were paired up, and that provided enough fluff to keep Lost fans preoccupied and happy with the end, or

so the producers hoped. Not the case in this household. In fact, if you ask me, in many of the interviews with the actors, you can catch hidden statements that they were not happy with the ending and didn't think the fans would be satisfied. In fact, Darleton themselves made a series of disclaimers during the re-cap special. I'm not going to waste more time on Lost by pointing everything out though. I stayed up until 11:30 to watch this garbage and another 30 minutes writing this, and that's long enough. Goodbye Lost – and GOOD RIDDANCE!

Oh yeah, a quick list of the few of **many** Lost loose ends they failed to tie up, just off the top of my head there are plenty more:

The temple and the guy who was in charge of it.

Sayid and Claire changing, having something dark inside them.

Drug smuggling with the Mary statues on the small plane that crashed – a man named Echo and his brother appearing to Lost survivors – for example, Hurley in the mental hospital.

The Numbers

Walt

Walt's Comic Books

Whidmore's connection to the island

Polar Bears

Miles' father – Dharma guy on Dharma Initiative training videos

The whole show in general – the ending didn't make sense to me at all

And I have one last thing to say – the 10 seconds of the water-skiing squirrel on the news after Lost was more

entertaining than the Lost finale. At least my night was redeemed – thank you, water-skiing squirrel!

\*An addendum – it was too late last night for me to write about the extremely entertaining Jimmy Kimmel Lost special, so I'll just share the alternate Lost endings he had on his show – they are very funny and although meant as jokes, any one of them would have been better than the REAL series finale. Sigh.

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# The Popular Social Networking Site Called “Book Face”

It's time for me to officially make my presence known on Facebook. If you watch the awesome NBC comedy “The Office”, then you'll understand the reference in the title of this blog post involving a creative Halloween costume worn by Jim Halpert, a character on my favorite show – it was hilarious!

But back to me learning Facebook... some time ago I signed up for a Facebook account (don't even remember why), but then I stopped using it because it started doing freaky things behind my back – like randomly adding mere acquaintances and business associates as my Facebook friends. That was NOT the way I had envisioned social networking! But my youth group kids have been BEGGING me to join Facebook, and since I took pictures of them last week, we decided that my homework challenge is to get on Facebook so I can post our pictures. So here I go, and the first thing I'll be doing is looking for a way to NOT invite everyone on my email contact list to be my Facebook friend!

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## Busiest Weekend EVER! Part Two

*(continued from a previous blog post)*

So here's a recap of Sunday – church, brunch, Hannah Montana

movie – and that is where I left off.

So we get to the Hannah Montana movie, and of course our 9-month-old son wakes up from his nap just in time for the movie (couldn't be awake to play at church, couldn't be awake to indulge in brunch, alas – that's always the way when you have kids – they sleep thru everything good, and I swear it's a rule – they always wake when the irony is thick!) But, because the Hannah Montana movie is a musical, our 3 youngest were kept too busy to perform their usual awful antics at the movie theater. It was a girly movie, especially with a double love story plot, but our little boy is only 9-months-old, so he didn't notice the girlishness. Instead he loved the musical interludes, and he clapped to each one enthusiastically. For some reason, and I've written about this before, the movie theater turns our normally sweet 2-year-old into a little stripper. Luckily, by the time the idea to take her clothes off occurred to her today, it was near the end of the movie, so she only got as far as taking off her socks and shoes – although she did make sure to note (yell) while doing so, "Don't look at me – I take clothes off!" Ok, Disney, if you don't want people looking, why are you taking your clothes off? Such is the logic of a 2-year-old, I guess.

We had no major spills this time ( I'm referring to our last experience when we saw Monsters Vs. Aliens and we somehow dumped an entire soft drink into the lady's purse who was sitting behind us – major oops!), and today our baby was on his best behavior as well because of all the music in the movie – something that I think saved us as far as our 3 youngest kids' behavior at the movies today. As for the movie itself, I enjoyed it more than I did Monsters Vs. Aliens, probably because I actually got to watch this one. But an extra nice surprise for me was the country music add-ins – surprise performances from Taylor Swift and my favorite group, Rascal Flatts. They sang one of their best songs acoustically as if they were relatives just sitting around

jamming at a family get-together (can this be MY family get-together?), and it was thoroughly enjoyable. Miley Cyrus even showed her country roots in a song which attempts to revive line-dancing; I guess kids these days (now I sound like I'm 80 – GREAT, when did THAT happen?!?) have a dance they do to this song, but whatever, I kind of liked the song. Overall, I truly enjoyed the country theme that was abundant in this movie – groovin' country music, gorgeous farm fields, cowboys ropin' horses... what's not to like? There was also a surprise (for me) appearance by Jan Levinson Gould from the tv show, The Office. Of course in this movie, she wasn't Jan – she was some southern belle who played Miley's dad's love interest – almost as far away from Jan as one could be, but I still enjoyed the Office reference. Also, keep in mind that this is a Disney film, so there are LOTS of prat-fallish types of humor, as well as recurring movie themes. For example, 'lobster trouble' (ala Splash, circa 1984), 'switching identities for different dinner dates' (ala Mrs. Doubtfire, circa 1993), 'major celebrity comes in to save a town' (ala Wayne's World 2, circa 1993 or ala Mystery, Alaska circa 1999), it's always best to be yourself' (ala... wow, WAY TOO MANY TO MENTION – take your pick...)

So anyway, I have to (reluctantly) admit that I was pleasantly surprised with the Hannah Montana movie – plenty of stuff in this one for the parents as well as the tweens and even the stripping two-year-olds. But the movie wasn't as plot-less as I had hoped – in other words, we didn't get home until 2:55 – just 20 short minutes before we had to leave for a class we had signed up for through church. So for the next 20 minutes we scrambled around – letting dogs out, repacking diaper bags, changing diapers, etc. We arrived at our class pretty much on time, though a bit exhausted, thank you very much!

The class was great! We learned a lot about our church – their beliefs, their history, as well as their foundations for building a relationship with Christ – a very well-spent 3

hours. And we got to meet other couples at our table too – which is memorable for me because they were surprised to learn we had 4 kids – and I quote, “You don’t look old enough to have 4 kids!” NICE!

Following the class was a great dinner of homemade pasta provided by a local chef. Following the delicious dinner was a tour of the north campus of our church – we worship in the south campus, so it was nice to learn the ins and outs of the north campus – so awesome! Our oldest daughter was so excited to show us where her Sunday school was held, and their rooms for youth were VERY impressive! There was a room with a stage for youth productions, and it even had backstage areas, which is almost more than I can say for one of our community theater’s stages, haha! Also, there was a game room with multiple foosball tables and ‘carpet ball’ – something new to me, but a game I’d definitely like to try! One of the youth rooms had state-of-the-art stage lights and restaurant-style booths for kids to ‘hang out’ in... Overall, it was a fun evening, and I learned a lot. But, as became common for today, we had to rush from the church class in order to be home in time for the community theater’s play reading committee meeting and my much anticipated Cubs game. I was looking forward to this game for days. It was a long series (most are 3 game, some are 2 game, this one was 4 game) against the Cubs rival – the St. Louis Cardinals, with whom the Cubs are vying for first place. The game was at night, which is rare for a Sunday, so I was VERY excited about rounding out my weekend with such a game. But alas, the darn rain had its way, and the game was postponed. So only play reading meeting to look forward to for me – at least I didn’t have to rush the meeting and kick people too hard to leave my house since there was no Cub’s game! And for once, I think we actually achieved a lot at the play reading committee meeting. Probably because of the fact that there were only 4 of us in attendance – but hey, maybe that ‘s what needs to be done in order to achieve something... too many people get in

each others way, I guess. It will be interesting to see what the absent members think of the decisions the four of us made while they were absent – I hope the decisions stick!

In summary, a great, if extremely exhausting weekend. Come on now, would I have it any other way?

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## Ryan Started The Fire

In lieu of a new Office episode tonight (another rerun, GROAN!), I'll supply the following youtube.com Office video, "Ryan Started the Fire" for you to watch. I read about it in a suburban Chicago newspaper who featured the story because the video was made by some local high school students. It's well-written, nicely sung (good Billy Joel impression), and very well edited. The video was featured on Jenna Fisher's blog (the actress who plays Pam Beesley), and I can see why even a celebrity such as herself took notice – it's a great tribute to my favorite show! Before you enjoy it, however, I should warn you that it contains events that took place in the series in the current season, so SPOILER ALERT! If you don't want to know the current happenings in The Office, I guess you'll have to wait to see this video! Otherwise, ENJOY!

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# Sick Of Being Sick

The past week and a half in our house has been awful. It all came to a head last Friday when our two-year-old got sick in the car. Last weekend, when she wasn't sleeping, she was throwing up or in the words of Chandler, played by Matthew Perry on the tv show Friends, "visiting a town a little south of throwing up...". Later in the weekend, her baby brother was afflicted with the same illness, and now we had huge messes x2. Big sister Sammie got it later in the week, but luckily, the little ones started feeling better. Add in a snow day and a couple of weather delays, and our house was chaos for what seemed like forever. On top of everything, I had some sort of extreme fatigue. I was so worried about it that I even made a doctor's appointment and went in, where the doctor ran some blood tests and even gave me a neck xray since I had a strange achiness accompanying the fatigue. I guess it didn't occur to me that I could have the same virus that struck down the kids, mainly because I didn't have the same (disgusting) symptoms they had, but I did look up some stuff on the internet in an attempt to ~~scare~~ diagnose myself. The good news is, my xrays and blood tests came back normal (well, I'm actually still waiting on one of the tests, but it's Friday and the nurses are out to lunch and won't be back until Monday afternoon – what is that? Can I have a job like that?), but the tests that did come back show that there is nothing wrong with my thyroid or my iron levels, both of which I thought were possibilities. So that's good... I guess. If there was something wrong with my body chemically, we'd be able to fix it, and then I'd have the energy I need to keep up with my 4 little kids. Now that most things came back normal, I don't know where to start to feel better... Although I do feel much better today, but still no where near normal, and that makes

me think it might be the illness my kids had after all. But it was a bizarrely lengthy version of the stomach flu, and it will take us weeks (at least!) to catch up on all the work that didn't get done in the week and a half of illness, sigh.

My husband had to take off from some of his work so he could watch the kids while I rested, and especially with all the laundry we've had to do around here, Mt. Washmore is once again threatening to take over the second floor of our house. All this catching up, and I'm still exhausted... My husband seems to think I have sleep apnea, mostly because I snore often and loudly and I'm always needing more sleep. I forgot to bring this up to the doctor, but if I ever get ahold of her and that last test comes back normal, maybe we can go from there... I do seem to need an awful lot of sleep to function. Well, anyway, that's my story – sorry if I grossed anyone out (especially body-function-joke-hater Derek), but I thought people should know where I've been for the last two weeks. At least the kids are feeling better – it was beyond sad to see them crabby, lethargic and not able to keep anything down... Is it time for summer yet?!?

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## KidsSpeak

Kids say the darndest things, as we all know – they even made a tv show about it. Here is a list of some of the cute mispronunciations my kids have made and their ages when they said them.

“ah-cro-poose” said by Sammie, age 3. Translation: octopus

“Taylor lelled at me” said by Sammie, age 4. Translation: lelled = yelled

“Beeber” said by Disney, age 2. Translation: Christopher (her baby brother). This has actually led to Christopher having nicknames of Beeber and Bees.

“Kipper” said by Disney, age 2. Translation: Christopher. She moved out of the Beeber phase and now calls him Kipper.

“may-sa-peer” said by Sammie, age 3. Translation: disappear

“tormado” said by Sammie, age 4. Translation: tornado. Look closely at how I typed the word – she replaces the “n” with an “m” sound.

“ith ith” said by Taylor, age 1. Translation: kitty.

“diaper call off!” said by Disney, age 2. Translation: Help! My diaper is falling off!

“gggg” said by Christopher, age 5 months. Translation: various. I just wanted to put his sounds in this list too.

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## Frumpy or Stylish?

What follows is an insignificant blog post about nothing of particular importance – pure fluff! And this post is for Office fans only! Have you noticed that Pam Beesly has changed her look? When you watch episodes of The Office from Seasons 1, 2 or even 3, you’ll notice that Pam used to be frumpy. Her hair was blah, and she wore the ugliest shirts, sometimes two at a time! But nowadays, she has a nice chic hairdo and dresses less like a 60-year-old librarian and more like a young woman in her late 20’s or early 30’s. At first, I was wondering if the popularity of the show and the character was the inspiration for the change in her character – you know, make her more appealing to her adoring fans. But

The Office is my favorite show, and I don't like to think that it's sinking to that level – I prefer to attribute the change in Pam to her finally being happily in true love. In the first few seasons, she wasn't yet in love with Jim (that she was consciously aware of, anyway), and she was unhappy being a receptionist because that's a far cry from her calling in life – art and illustration. Now she is truly happy, she is in love, and her looks-update reflects this. Ironical that as the character Pam Beesly finds love, the actress who plays her, Jenna Fischer, is in the process of a real-life divorce from her husband, James Gunn. I don't know, what do you think?

All I know for sure is that I am happy to see Pam's old wardrobe go by the wayside. It was truly hideous and sometimes even difficult to watch – as you can see by watching some of the older episodes!