

June 2010

Dave's World

Tuesday, June 15th

Our backyard baseball field may not have an ivy covered outfield wall, but it does have a wicked bean-covered trellis in Center.

Wednesday, June 16th

The East Wichita YMCA Cheetahs... Never has a finer team graced a baseball diamond. On the other hand, their Manager still has a lot of room for improvement. Go Cheetahs!

I resolve from this day forward to stop using my pants as a towel. Wiping my hands on my pants is a disgusting habit that I will overcome.

Sincerely,

Former-Wiper-of-Hands-on-Pants Dave

Thursday, June 17th

I don't care what sport it is... There is a certain beauty in a deciding Game Seven.

Friday, June 18th

Perhaps an appearance on the "Marriage Ref" would help the Paulsen boys work out their issues.

Saturday, June 19th

My doctor should issue a restraining order preventing me from being anywhere close to the "Party Pail" of ice cream in our freezer.

Sunday, June 20th

I am fearful of the potential long-term side effects of "brain freeze."

Monday, June 21st

Today was 95 degrees on the prairie. You could not find a better day to test if you can fry an egg using only sunshine. Tune in tomorrow to see the results. This program has been brought to you by the National Endowment for the Sciences.

Since I cannot avoid reality any longer... "Summer Tummy 2010" Update... The Good: the weight is fine... The Bad: Summer Tummy 2010 looks somewhat "doughy"... The Ugly Truth: dieting is not sufficient and many, many painful sit-ups will be necessary in my future.

June 2010

Tuesday, June 22nd

Results of the "Solar Powered Fried Egg Experiment"... Unfortunately, solar power has a long way to go, before it becomes a powerhouse in the egg frying arena. After five hours in the hot Kansas sun, some yolk remained overeasy, but the majority of the egg transformed into a plastic-like state. Grant funding for this program has been provided by the National Endowment for the Sciences.

I know that someday it will annoy me, but right now, nothing makes me prouder than seeing dirt tracked into the house from my son's baseball cleats.

Wednesday, June 23rd

Stay blessed!

Last night, my 6-year-old Jacob laughed himself to sleep, as his bedtime story was about Hall of Fame player Ty Cobb as a minor leaguer. Apparently his minor league team was awful and the players did not care. As a result, Ty once brought a box of popcorn with him to Centerfield. As if bringing a snack to Center was not bad enough, Cobb was so concerned about not spilling the popcorn that he missed a fly ball.

Thursday, June 24th

"Battle of the Eggs"... In this corner, the egg frying on a sidewalk and in this corner, the egg frying in an old ice cream sandwich cardboard box lined with aluminum foil and covered with plastic wrap... and the winner is (drum roll, please)... The egg in the box! Generous funding for this eggperiment has been provided by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

I love fresh kohlrabi!

Friday, June 25th

Our border security was ramped up once again after confirmation was received that a sizable rabbit was scouting our backyard for vegetable delicacies. The Paulsen backyard now ranks fourth all-time in border security efforts, behind the Berlin Wall, the Korean DMZ, and the Maginot Line.

Saturday, June 26th

Answering the age old question of "Which will bake: the cookie dough within the hot car or the cookie dough on the roof of the hot car?"... Taste tests indicated that after 2 hours and 30 minutes, the cookie within the hot car was on its way to baking. In order to achieve the proper texture, the cookie would have to bake longer. Perhaps 5 to 6 hours in the hot car would do the trick. This food adventure was made possible by a generous contribution from the Ford Motor Company.

There may be money to be made from an assembly line service that applies sunscreen to wiggly children.

June - July 2010

Dave's World

Sunday, June 27th

From the "Too Much Information File"... Yesterday, I was cleaning the bathroom and for some unknown reason became aggravated that we have had the same bottle of "Cucumber Melon Body Polish" for several years. Now, in an attempt to clear the house of clutter, I may win an award as the "Man Who Smells the Most Like Cucumber Melon" in south central Kansas.

Monday, June 28th

What a cruel play on words that I always manage to catch a "cold" in 90-degree heat.

Tuesday, June 29th

I am in a bad place... that is right, I am singing along to Kenny Loggins classics.

Wednesday, June 30th

Dave: "Give me that (baseball) bat!"... 3-year-old Sam: "Why?"... Dave: "Because you hit your brother in the head with it!"... Sam: "Can I have another one?"

Thursday, July 1st

Wanted: A ghost writer to provide Facebook "Status Updates," while I am on vacation.

Monday, July 12th

A Sad Statement from a University of Michigan Football Fan... "Is that soccer predicting German octopus available to coach the team?"

Tuesday, July 13th

Graffiti from a hand dryer: "1. Push Butt 2. Rub Gently 3. Stop"... I followed the instructions on the automatic hand dryer. I must admit that my bottom feels better, but my hands are still damp. This bad attempt at humor has been brought to you by a rest stop on I-29 in South Dakota, just over the North Dakota border.

Dear Abby,

I fear that I am in a bad relationship with a pair of blue shorts.

Don't get me wrong, they look nice and are made of quality fabric, but their pockets are just too small for my apparently gargantuan hands.

To top it all off, they were a recent gift, which makes me feel even worse about "The Situation."

Sincerely,

Not-Enough-Room-to-Carry-a-Wallet-Sufferer

Wednesday, July 14th

Since 6-year-old Jacob has started lifting 18-month-old brother Ben out of his crib, it looks like they are auditioning for an upcoming episode of "Prison Break"

Summer Vacation at Cotton Lake, Minnesota

Oh yes, it is time for Dave Paulsen's "Vacation-Status-Update-Palooza."

The pineapple shake at the Auburn, Nebraska "Dairy Sweet" almost makes the 13-hour vacation drive with the kids worth it... almost.

Dave Paulsen... the leftover Dairy Sweet shake disposal unit.

A revised quest for an "Indian Summer Tummy" might be more realistic.

For long family vacation drives, we should really consider having one of those "sliding limo divider" installed between the front and rear seats of the Freestyle.

I should get some serious spouse bonus points for agreeing to attend the Men's Bible Study with my father-in-law and then finding out that this week's topic is "Adultery."

Lebron James, you owe me for making it necessary to explain the "Salary Cap" to my 6-year-old.

Perhaps I should announce my 2010 State Fair Cookie Roster during a 60 minute Food Network special.

Nothing beats the sunrise alarm clock.

A great observation from the lady at the Cenex gas station... "I cannot get taste of sunscreen and bugspray out of my mouth."

This morning, I've had enough coffee to power a small island nation!

One good "butt joke" and suddenly I am the George Carlin of the Kindergarten crowd.

Memo to self... Do not eat the worms in the fridge.

Ah, cooking in the under-equipped "cabin kitchen" and the resulting "Hunt for Red Paprika."

Enjoying the ultimate in revolutionary fireside treats... The Uncooked S'more

If we start now, 18-month-old Ben could develop into a world champion "Chubby Bunny" marshmallow eater.

July 2010

Dave's World

Summer Vacation at Cotton Lake, Minnesota (continued)

Oh yes, the powerful nighttime marshmallow buzz and the 18-month-old.

The cold sunrise lake swim, perhaps the best way to wake up.

Swimming off from shore the terrifying thought struck me, how many Loon to Human attacks go undocumented each year?

Michael Phelps, I am not.

At least the paddleboat was close to shore, when it began to sink.

I must admit that the fear of "Fish on Human revenge during my next swim" crossed my mind, while cleaning fish.

Skipping a stone four times: check... Fishing off the dock: check... Eating healthy on vacation: perhaps next time.

Who knows what the long-term impact of continuous flip flop wear will be on my feet?

Amazing... a trip to Northern Minnesota and not a single post about mosquitoes.

Jasper the Beagle had done so well on vacation until his shocking and disappointing "diaper-eating/pee-on-the-floor" finale.

Wednesday, July 14th

Was it just me or did the American League's pitching staff fall apart, because Colbie Caillat's legs came into full view behind home plate for the entire top of the seventh?

Thursday, July 15th

I do not care what the supermarket tabloids say about our vacation pictures... I do not have a baby bump. My six-pack has simply grown into a pony keg.

Yes, it was so hot outside yesterday that you could cook noodles! This scientific adventure has been brought to you by GE "We bring good things to life."

Difficult Things in Life (1=easiest... 10=nearly impossible)

Reaching a fair labor settlement = 3

Running your first Marathon = 5

Sending a person to the Moon and returning them safely to Earth = 9

Potty Training = 10½

July 2010

Friday, July 16th

There is joy in Mudville! Word has it that Saturday's Farmer's Market will have watermelon.

Saturday, July 17th

It is truly amazing what we make in our kitchen... Forget about the Virgin Mary appearing in a piece of toast. Behold, the Antarctica Pancake!

Although it sounds wrong, it certainly is fun having the kids rock out to the "Bare Naked Ladies."

Sunday, July 18th

Well, there we have it. The first three miles are down and there are only a few hundred to go. Destination: the 2011 Chicago Marathon.

Monday, July 19th

I think that someone has been putting Rogaine in my ears at night.

Tuesday, July 20th

Hi, my name is Dave. I have been condemned to roam the halls of our house at night looking for a place to sleep, as a result of three children and a loud dog, who cling to our bed at night.

Wednesday, July 21st

Having three boys has reinforced my faith that... "There is but one game and that game is baseball." – John McGraw

The indoctrination of my boys into baseball culture continues to go well... Six-year-old Jacob demonstrating his frustration with the World Champion New York Yankees, "They buy it each year."

Thursday, July 22nd

After a day fielding questions about the Mexican drug war, skin cancer, and the sale of the Illinois Senate seat, I am considering writing a book entitled, "Our Messed Up World: A Current Events Primer for Six-Year-Olds."

Friday, July 23rd

Played catch with my six-year-old son; life does not get any better than that.

Saturday, July 24th

Two items that I forgot to pass along to six-year-old Jacob... At the dinner table, do not lick your bowl of ice cream clean and do not under any circumstance lick it clean in front of Mommy.

July - August 2010

Dave's World

Sunday, July 25th

Warning: Bad Pun Ahead... Last night, our beagle stole a corncob from a child at the dinner table and proceeded to devour not only the kernels of corn, but also the entire cob. Now, I guess we own a "corndog."

Monday, July 26th

"God never gives up on us. We shouldn't give up on ourselves." - John S. Kerr, Executive Director for Lutheran Bible Ministries

Tuesday, July 27th

Perhaps Charlene's strategy of "Retail Therapy" (i.e. shopping to reduce stress) has more benefits than my personal stress reduction plan of simply eating like a hog.

Wednesday, July 28th

With my "Rookie Pitch" managerial stint drawing to a close, I am left with one goal: complete domination of the Kansas State Fair Cookie Jar competition.

Thursday, July 29th

Loose lips sink ships at the dinner table... Six-year-old Jacob to his mother, "Daddy and I have already had three desserts today."

Friday, July 30th

A parting thought as Summer Vacation II begins... I wonder if it would be more economical for the Wichita Public Library to distribute earplugs to its patrons or muzzles to the Paulsen family.

Saturday, August 7th

3 kids + 2,000 miles in 1 car = 2 weary parents

Sunday, August 8th

Six-year-old Jacob has been showing progress in developing a strong sense of "Sports Sarcasm"... I was pointing out how dominate the Green Bay Packer teams were in the early days of the NFL, winning 4 out of 10 championships during the 1930s. Jacob responded, "Who was with them? Brett Farve?"

Monday, August 9th

Corn Cob Holders: the Push Pins of the Future?

Tuesday, August 10th

How can anyone trust Wikipedia, when the listing for Joyce Randolph, who played Trixie on the Honeymooners, mentions that her great nephew Tim Redding still pitches for the Colorado Rockies? Everyone knows that Redding now pitches in Korea for the Samsung Lions. What a Wikishame!

Since I cannot attend my 20th high school reunion this weekend, I am providing the Top 20 Exaggerated Claims that I would have made during the festivities...

#20 - I helped negotiate peace in Northern Ireland (False, but I can find Ireland on a world map).

#19 - I was once that close to dating the daughter of the Kansas City Royals General Manager (o.k., maybe it was not THAT close).

#18 - I can drink water from a cup placed on my forehead without the use of my hands (sad, but actually true).

#17 - I was slated to be the Opening Day Second Baseman for the Battle Creek Golden Kazoos. Unfortunately, we were unable to reach an agreement on the terms of my contract.

#16 - I was the real brains behind that whole "Avatar" thing.

#15 - I "discovered" both Lady Gaga and Sarah Palin. Now, I wish that I could send them both back.

#14 - I was behind the whole "Happy Face" craze :-)

#13 - Since 2002, I have actually been a hologram.

#12 - I developed the formula for Vanilla Coke. Who would take credit for this, if it was not actually true?

#11 - I won the Governor's Cookie Jar competition at the Kansas State Fair. No, wait. I am going to win that in September.

#10 - I am the new Fabio.

#9 - I am currently serving a court ordered 40-year banishment from the Cereal City.

#8 - Y2K... I fixed it.

#7 - I appeared briefly on "Survivor: Upper Pottsgrove Township."

#6 - I am the voice behind Justin Bieber.

#5 - Oprah and Me: Close.

August 2010

Dave's World

Top 20 Exaggerated Claims that I would have made at my 20th high school reunion (continued)

#4 - I was engaged to Monica Seles for two months in 1996.

#3 - Twelve years ago, I found the lost "e" for "Dav" under a sofa cushion.

#2 - The secret behind my wealth? One word: Ponzi.

...and the #1 Exaggerated Claim that I would have made at my 20th high school reunion...
I was a strong candidate to fill the vacancy for Pope. Who knew that you had to be Catholic?

Wednesday, August 11th

With over \$60,000 in playground equipment at his disposal, my 1-year-old has opted to play with dirt, rocks, and a large stick.

Thursday, August 12th

Major Blunders in History: Volume 7... Germany's invasion of Russia during World War II... Plugging in the coffee maker on Apollo 13 (NASA under reports this fact)... Forgetting to bring towels to the pool, although my shirt was a decent substitute.

Friday, August 13th

Love is... seeing your child drop their "mystery flavored" lollipop in a blazing hot parking lot, picking it up, licking the dirt and asphalt residue off, and handing it back to your kid with a fresh layer of your germs and saliva coating the desired candy treat... OK, perhaps it is somewhat gross and not love, as originally proposed, but it is the thought that counts.

Saturday, August 14th

Who needs GPS, when I have a 1994 road atlas?

Sunday, August 15th

From the "Things that you do not ever want to hear" file... "Daddy, there is poop dripping on the floor."

Monday, August 16th

Lesson learned from Sunday School's "Carnival Theme" Rally Day event... Never locate the "Cup Stacking game station" next to the "Paper Airplane station"... Recipe for cup stacking tragedy!

Tuesday, August 17th

I am a Not-So-Merry Maid.

August 2010

Wednesday, August 18th

Baseball Card Quote of the Day, brought to you by Topps... "(Baltimore Orioles Outfielder Nick Markakis) can balance almost anything on his chin – from a folding chair to a shopping cart to a vacuum cleaner!"

Saturday, August 21st

During a morning jog, few things make you feel older than being passed by an entire high school boy's track team.

Sunday, August 22nd

6-year-old Jacob, having a Richard Nixon moment, "I am going to make a list of all of the people who are mean to me."

Your Guide to the Disastrous 2010 Chicago Cubs... Informational Tidbit #8: Interim Manager Mike Quade's name is pronounced KWAH-dee.

Monday, August 23rd

During a recent argument, I am pretty sure that 9 out of 10 parents would have sided with me, as 20-month-old Ben threw a fit, because I did not allow him to eat packing peanuts. I have heard however that "packing peanut butter" is delicious.

Tuesday, August 24th

Today for First Grade Show-and-Tell, 6-year-old Jacob is supposed to bring in an item beginning with the short "i" sound. I encouraged him to jump up and perform an "interpretive dance." Fortunately, his mom vetoed the idea.

Wednesday, August 25th

How do you spell old? D-A-V-E

Thursday, August 26th

Dear Facebook Nation,

Thank you for all of your awesome birthday wishes! In honor of my newly advanced age, I will be discontinuing my cookie commentary and replacing it with a review of Early Bird Specials.

The Wonderful World of Dave's Formal Explanations...

What is up with the Michigan references?

I am a Michigander through and through. Born and raised in Battle Creek (where my family lives), I went to the University of Michigan. By some miracle, I was accepted into the University of Kansas for graduate school and so the seeds were planted for my eventual Kansas State Fair obsession.

August - September 2010

Dave's World

Friday, August 27th

3-year-old Sam seems to be enjoying preschool, now that he has decided to stop vomiting at drop-off.

Saturday, August 28th

Thank goodness that the State Fair is still 12 days away. Realizing that all of your white paint has dried up is not a good thing, when painting sheep. Baaa.

Sunday, August 29th

Last night, after losing ten straight Topps Attax Football card games to my son, Jacob, I finally won 41 to 31. Of course, seeing a 6-year-old with a 10-1 record cry removed any joy from my improbable victory.

Monday, August 30th

Perhaps this will finally be the year that Congress comes to its senses and declares Cameron Diaz's birthday a national holiday.

Tuesday, August 31st

According to trending data, in ten years the Paulsen boys will be consuming 16½ loaves of bread everyday for lunch.

Wednesday, September 1st

I don't know if there was some change in the weather, which has driven spiders the size of squirrels into our basement.

Thursday, September 2nd

Bad News: I was unable to train the sheep, who will be appearing on my State Fair Cookie Jar entry, to juggle. Their legs are located too close together to master the ball transfers. This may be the reason that you seldom see sheep juggling in farm fields.
Good News: It turns out that this breed of sheep has natural climbing abilities.

Friday, September 3rd

Yesterday, when I picked up 3-year-old Sam from preschool, I saw his class taking turns making shadows on a large bed sheet, which was hanging from the ceiling. My initial thought was, "Cool. They must be learning about Plato's 'Allegory of the Cave.'" Judging by the teacher's look that I must be from the moon, I take it they were just playing with shadows.

The 2010 Kansas State Fair

Saturday, September 4th

2010 State Fair Cookie Jar Update... "I'm baaaaaack!"

Monday, September 6th

It may be the end of Summer, but the baking of cookies for the State Fair has just begun.

Tuesday, September 7th

It's Cookietime!

Wednesday, September 8th

2 days; 334 cookies; 10 varieties; 3 young children desperate for attention; 7 mountain climbing solar powered rotating sheep; 1 colossal undertaking: the 2010 Kansas State Fair

Thursday, September 9th

My assurances were not enough. The handlers at the State Fair Cookie Jar registration table appeared concerned about the rotating sheep on my entry. My guess is that they thought the sheep were powered by smuggled uranium, rather than oh-so-green-and-renewable solar power.

Friday, September 10th

2010 Kansas State Fair Newsflash... The planets aligned, the Earth stood still, people around the world rejoiced, and a miracle occurred as Dave Paulsen took 2nd Place in the Governor's Cookie Jar competition!

Saturday, September 11th

O.K., I admit that I really enjoyed the "Krispy Kreme Hamburger" at the Kansas State Fair. It was actually a very tasty treat with a taste similar to the McGriddle (the "Wichita Eagle" came up with the McGriddle comparison).

For the record, my Governor's Cookie Jar entry came in second to Ruth Cramer of Hutchinson, Kansas, the "Babe Ruth of Cookie Jar Competitions."

Monday, September 13th

During the drive back from the Fair, I heard parts of a conversation between Charlene and 6-year-old Jacob. They were discussing how color and size were probably factors used, while judging entries. Assuming that they were talking about cookies, I added, "Texture, too. How it feels, when you bite it. Is it chewy or flakey?" Charlene gave me a "you can stop now" look and said, "We were talking about rabbits."

September 2010

Dave's World

The 2010 Kansas State Fair (continued)

Friday, September 17th

Today, the winner of the State Fair Cookie Jar competition will present their jar to the Governor. Since I was runner-up in the competition, my jar is now just a "heartbeat away from being the Governor's Cookie Jar."

Saturday, September 18th

Freakonomics: the 2010 Kansas State Fair edition... a 2nd place finish in overall cookie baking at the Kansas State Fair multiplied by 50 States... equals (drum roll, please) the title of "One of the Top 100 Amateur Cookie Bakers in the United States"... Now, that is Freakonomics!

For anyone visiting Hutchinson, Kansas, I would highly recommend Bogey's Restaurant (located just off of the drive toward the State Fair from Wichita)... It has a menu featuring 132 different flavors of shakes! It is a miracle that I even complete the drive to the Fair, after a detour to Bogey's.

Still mildly disappointed that my 2nd place finish in the Governor's Cookie Jar competition did not come with an opportunity to meet the Lieutenant Governor.

Yesterday's State Fair Food Excursion... the Steamed Artichoke, served with garlic sour cream. The taste was fine, but it was a lot of work to eat and not very filling.

Surprising Attraction at the State Fair... 3-year-old Samuel and 21-month-old Ben were fascinated by a urinal containing a collection of used chewing gum.

My Favorite T-Shirt Slogan from the State Fair... a woman wearing an "I am Humid." T-Shirt. I guess this means that Humid is the new Hot.

Overheard Conversation of the Day at the State Fair... Setting: the \$1 hot dog and hamburger stand... Customer: "Can I get a cheeseburger?" Operator: "We only have plain hamburgers." Customer: "It seems un-American to not sell cheese on hamburgers." Operator: "They are only a dollar."

The Answer for Keeping Order in the Paulsen House Discovered at the Kansas State Fair... A \$5 three-foot-long Livestock Prod.

You know it is time to leave the State Fair, when the boys are getting in a fight over whose turn it is to push the "handicap-electric-door-opener-button."

The 2010 Kansas State Fair (continued)

Monday, September 20th

Times in Life that I have Driven Most Cautiously: 1) driving my new born baby boys back from the hospital, 2) pulling away from officers after receiving a verbal warnings for speeding, and 3) bringing my precious sheep cookie jar home from the State Fair.

As carnival rides are packed up and Pepto begins to overcome Krispy Kreme hamburgers, I reflect on the State Fair experience. As an award winner and three-time loser, I have tasted the joy of victory, after years of defeat. In order to share the wealth, I feel that it is appropriate to sit out next year's Governor's Cookie Jar competition, work on individual cookie perfection, and reload for a run in 2012.

Friday, September 10th

A sign that the push to teach Creationism in the schools may have gone a bit too far... 3-year-old preschooler Samuel, "God made the new bathroom at my school."

Tuesday, September 14th

Don't cry over spilt milk, unless it is all over your morning paper's Sports Section.

Wednesday, September 15th

Reality TV just took another ugly turn... I would have been placed on the "Old Person" tribe for the upcoming season of "Survivor." Ouch! Time to fill out my AARP application.

Thursday, September 16th

I would like to thank the fine folks at KPTS public television for rerunning the Sesame Street episode featuring Cameron Diaz. As a proud supporter of public television, I would like to encourage KPTS to play that episode every day.

Tuesday, September 21st

Dave's D.I.Y. Tip of the Day – If removing a lawn mower blade for sharpening involves bruised and cut hands, muffled cursing, half-a-bottle of Liquid Wrench, a stripped bolt, a variety of tools, and a "frustration beer" over lunch, try turning in the other direction.
PS – "Lefty loosey" refers to your "left" and not the machine's.

Wednesday, September 22nd

If Elmo charged the going hourly rate for babysitting services, PBS would not need to hold fund drives.

September 2010

Dave's World

Thursday, September 23rd

Political Shocker! I was glancing through the latest edition of Newsweek, when 21-month-old Ben walked up. He looked at a small photo of Sarah Palin and said, "Mama." Gasp! I will not be issuing any statements, until after our upcoming tell all appearance on Oprah.

Friday, September 24th

Move over, Katy Perry! Turn up the synthesized-drum-machine-beat and get ready for D.J. Dave's just released semi-autobiographical hit... "Michigan boys, we're unflappable. Sun-deprived legs, t-shirt on top."

Saturday, September 25th

After trying on their elephant and monkey costumes, I probably won't have to worry about dressing Sam or Ben in anything else until Halloween.

Candidate for "Like Father, Like Son Conversation of the Year"... Six-year-old Jacob and I were enjoying some ice cream, which was starting to melt and become messy. Dave: "Should I go get napkins?" Jacob: "Let's just use our shirts. It is the end of the day."

Sunday, September 26th

Bend it like Paulsen? Oh yes, Saturday morning at the soccer field.

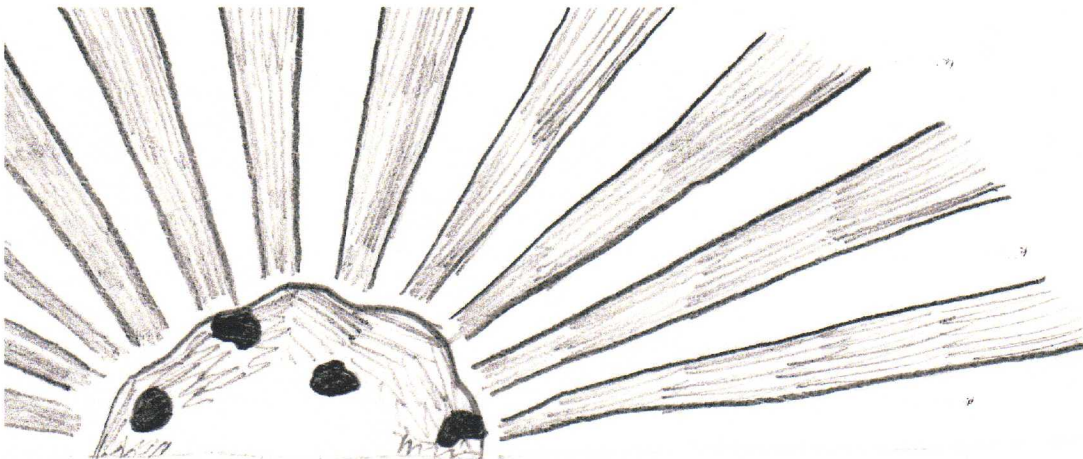
Monday, September 27th

Rejoice Cookie Lovers! I am in a "Meringue Zone."

Wednesday, September 29th

Ben Bernanke, send help! Due to future increases in global demand for wheat, especially in China and India, economists predict rising costs in the price of flour... and... (gasp)... (wailing)... (gnashing of teeth)... (tearing of sackcloth)... cookie production.

That's all folks! The journey begins to turn off the water in my favorite crawlspace in Northern Minnesota.



October 2010

Monday, October 4th

Eerie music. Screen shows terrified man exiting a pit. Man's voice, "I was able to leave the crawl space, but something changed." Screen shifts to man looking in a mirror. Shocking music. Screen shows close up of man discovering six white hairs perched on his head. Narrator's voice, "Paramount presents a M. Night Shyamalan Film. 'The Pit' October 2010 You can leave 'The Pit,' but you will never be the same."

Tuesday, October 5th

Today, I will need to pretend to be grownup. I hope that my "grownup" clothes still fit.

Wednesday, October 6th

It is never a good thing, when lunch is interrupted to review the washing machine's instructions "For Best Stain Removal Results," in the categories of "Blood" and "Feces."

Friday, October 8th

My vision of Hell includes an eternity spent on a metal folding chair in a cold gym.

Saturday, October 9th

Another good reason to pay attention in the kitchen... When reaching into the fridge to prepare Iced Coffee, make sure that you pick up the Half & Half and NOT the Buttermilk. Buttermilk and Iced Coffee do not mix.

Sunday, October 10th

I do not know if I like running in a half marathon better than watching a half marathon. I do however know that my legs feel much better after watching the half marathon.

Monday, October 11th

The Bad News: 3-year-old Sam ran into the T.V. cabinet, which resulted in a bump on the head. The Good News: By applying a bag of frozen mixed vegetables to the bump, it is the closest that Sam has been to a vegetable in months.

Tuesday, October 12th

Warning: Gross (but True) Status Update Ahead. Yesterday, every time that I changed 22-month-old Ben's diaper, the room would begin to smell just like a Sausage, Egg, and Cheese McMuffin. I do not know if I should be more upset that someone is feeding my baby Mickey D's Breakfast Extra Value Meals or that no one shared those Extra Value Meals with me.

Wednesday, October 13th

As I stopped myself from placing the telephone in the refrigerator, I realized that I am in need of a longer night's sleep.

October 2010

Dave's World

Thursday, October 14th

From the "Nice Try" file, here is 3-year-old Sam attempting to avoid cleaning up, prior to lunch, "I already washed my hands by licking them."

Friday, October 15th

From the chronicles of "Dave Paulsen: Part-Time Municipal Consultant"... Last we saw Dave, he was at a public meeting in which the following opinion was expressed, "You can't have a warehouse without whores." Thank you, sir. We will add that to our list of comments, but I do not believe we are talking about the same type of recreation.

Saturday, October 16th

Charlene is in California for 6 days and I am at home with a constipated 3-year-old... I was thinking that I got a bad deal, until I realized that I have been at home with the boys for 4 years, while Charlene has been working hard. Let's call it even.

Monday, October 18th

One baby tooth down... Nineteen to go!

Life Lesson for You... If your lawnmower has a wheel rusting out through the frame, you can continue mowing for an additional 20 minutes with the assistance of a rubber strap. A three-wheel lawn mower does a passable job mowing up to 1/8th of your lawn. On a related note, new Craig's List post just in: "3-Wheel Lawnmower for Sale. Cheap."

Tuesday, October 19th

Little Known Historical Fact... As early as 32 C.E., Jesus complained about stores that put up displays for his birthday in October.

Wednesday, October 20th

Yesterday afternoon, I was receiving lots of random smiles from people. I was feeling really good about myself, until I remembered the "Bert and Ernie" sticker that my 22-month-old had placed on the front of my shirt. The Moral of the Story: Nothing creates a happy first impression like Sesame Street.

Thursday, October 21st

Another sign of my domestication... I got excited when "Local-School-Trash-Bag-Fundraiser" time rolled around.

Friday, October 22nd

One of the silliest things in sports is how Major League Baseball players take the field after a victory to shake hands with their teammates. Why not shake hands with the other team? Such an easy opportunity to demonstrate sportsmanship wasted.

October 2010

Saturday, October 23rd

As we were getting the boys ready for the day, 3-year-old Sam returned to his bedroom. I asked Sam what he would like for breakfast. He responded, "I don't need any breakfast. I had some candy." I guess that it is time to secure the snack size Hershey bars, before there is nothing left for the Trick-or-Treaters or most importantly, me.

Monday, October 25th

While attempting to find out more about their kids music, I pray that my children do not conduct a Google image search for "Bare Naked Ladies."

Tuesday, October 26th

Oddly enough, the flyswatter has become the Paulsen Boys weapon of choice.

Wednesday, October 27th

I must be dreaming... Thank you, "Ad Astra Ale" from Free State, a beer that goes perfect with chocolate chip cookies! I'm in love!

The most dangerous thing on the road might be me driving around all three Paulsen boys... especially when one has decided it would be fun to throw his shoes at the driver.

Thursday, October 28th

24 - Paulsen House... 22-month-old Ben has just finished eating his sloppy joe dinner. Without warning, he bolts from his chair directly toward the "nice" couch. In a single motion, Special Agent Dave Paulsen leaps from his chair and grabs a wet wash cloth, while in hot pursuit. Seconds before the couch is permanently soiled, the suspect is apprehended and cleaned. 05:59:58 05:59:59 06:00:00

Friday, October 29th

Titanium Necklaces... Major League Baseball's Official 'Roid of 2010, although I have yet to see a relief pitcher wearing the popular "Hello Kitty" titanium necklace.

A Warning Sign that Your Child may have Mildly Exotic Food Avoidance Syndrome (MEFAS): Farfetched Excuses... Charlene offering 3-year-old Sam an additional topping for his fajita: "Would you like some avocado?" Sam: "Green things make me sick."

Saturday, October 30th

Hello, good night's sleep. It was nice to spend some quality time with you, old friend. I hope to see you again soon.

November 2010

Dave's World

Monday, November 1st

Little Known Historical Fact... The day after the Reformation, Martin Luther used his remaining nails to hang shelving in his garage.

Tuesday, November 2nd

It is that time of year again... Dave addressing 22-month-old Ben, "What would you like for breakfast?" Innocently pointing toward his Halloween basket on the counter, Ben answers, "Candy."

Wednesday, November 3rd

Only 22 days remaining to create a "belt surge capacity," prior to the Holiday season onslaught of delectable goodies.

Thursday, November 4th

Home Improvement Time Formula (in minutes)... Time required for home project = (((2.5 x original time estimate) + (drive time to home improvement superstore x 4)) / (0.85 x number of children in house)) + (0.005 * house in square feet * (number of children in house + number of pieces of sidewalk chalk inside house))

Friday, November 5th

At home, whenever anyone is yelling a question at me from another room and I cannot hear them, my default reaction is either a loud "What Hun?" (short for "honey") or "What Sweetie?" This happens so often that I do not even think about it anymore. Unfortunately however, I recently realized that it just does not sound right when you respond to your Mother-In-Law with a loud "What Hun?"

For the last few days in the Paulsen House, the "Complaints-from-Children to Reasonable-Requests-for-Service-from-Parents" Ratio appears to be running a bit high.

Yesterday's, "Unknown Name Unknown Number Caller of the Day"

Dave (D): "Hello."

Mysterious Female Caller (MFC): "Is Tiffany there?"

D: "No, I'm sorry. You have the wrong number."

MFC: "You don't know who she is anymore?"

D: "No, I'm sorry."

MFC: "O.K. Goodbye."

I would like to add that unless the genetic tests come back positive, I will continue to deny any knowledge of the previously mentioned "Tiffany."

November 2010

Saturday, November 6th

I believe that I have discovered an appropriate punishment for my boys misbehaving at the grocery store: forcing them to listen to me loudly singing "Gloria" by Laura Branigan, during the drive home.

A sure sign of an attempted cover up: finding a Sharpie and a wet washcloth on the desk.

Sunday, November 7th

FYI... Barley flour, in addition to wheat flour, provides a great substitute for traditional white flour. Barley: it's not just for beer anymore.

Monday, November 8th

I must admit that I had feelings of happiness (every little bit helps keep the clothing budget down), concern (you found what? where?), and confusion (what were you doing under there?), when 6-year-old Jacob reported that he found a pair of his underwear beneath the basement couch.

Tuesday, November 9th

"Recipe for Life"

Have a plan.

Try your best.

Have fun.

Adapt.

Love.

Trust God.

(and of course) Bake cookies.

Wednesday, November 10th

Let this be a lesson to every swine in search of a yummy chocolate truffle... Recently during dessert, I felt pretty dim to learn that chocolate truffles do not contain even a trace amount of the fungus variety of truffle (my previous and completely ignorant belief), instead the chocolate variety received their name from their similar shape to the fungus truffle.

I have released a horrible beast! ... Recently in the car, I began singing a loud version of "Gloria" by Laura Branigan, as a punishment when my children misbehaved. Much to my pain and suffering, the kids have now begun singing "Gloria" around the house. "Gloria (Gloria), I think they got your number. I think they got the alias (Gloria) that you've been living under (Gloria)..."

November 2010

Dave's World

Friday, November 12th

9AM... a nippy 40-some degrees... 15 mph chilly autumn wind blowing across the infield from third to first... grey cloud covered sky... light drizzle falling... dead grass sparsely located across the baseball diamond... I windup to pitch to my 6-year-old son Jacob... He looks at me and says, "Dad, this is the best day off." Precisely.

Saturday, November 13th

A sign that Barry Bonds and Company have forever changed the dialog between fathers and sons... After hitting two monster foul balls, my 6-year-old son Jacob said to me, "You are hitting like you are using those drugs."

Monday, November 15th

The house has officially received its holiday cleaning. Now, I await the "Attack of the Christmas Tchotchkes."

Tuesday, November 16th

Excessive tumbling. Check. Spontaneous acrobatics. Check. Confusing dialog. Check. Glimpses of nudity. Check. I just need to teach the boys French and their morning routine will rival Cirque du Soleil.

Wednesday, November 17th

Announcing 2010's "Must Have" Holiday Toy... "Super Dad Action Figure" with saliva applicator and "Chocolate Covered Toddler Action Figure." Watch your child's excitement in reenacting the legendary trip to Kohl's when Super Dad forgot to bring diaper wipes and needed to utilize his own spit to "clean" Chocolate Covered Toddler. Chocolate syrup not included.

Thursday, November 18th

Everything is a little better, when you are sipping a Pumpkin Spice Latte.

Friday, November 19th

O.K., so maybe it is an ulcer. Let's see, that means that I must limit intake of alcohol, caffeine, spicy foods, and milk products. Oh dear, all that appears to be left is Cheerios in Maa-lox.

Saturday, November 20th

This lesson in the power of advertising is brought to you by the Chicago Cubs on WGN America... 3-year-old Samuel currently pretends that every beverage in his toy kitchen is a "Budweiser."

November 2010

Monday, November 22nd

In order to demonstrate to my 6-year-old that Michigan was on top of the college football world in the somewhat recent past, I purchased a DVD of their 1998 Rose Bowl game online. I soon realized that I had inadvertently purchased a bootleg copy of the game. Now, instead of simply being a sad and pitiful Michigan football fan, I am a common criminal sought by the NCAA for my heinous felony. I blame Rich Rod.

Tuesday, November 23rd

23-month-old Ben is beginning to demonstrate his independence by mounting loud protests. Yesterday at Target, I placed him in the seated area of the shopping cart. Unhappy with this action, he repeatedly shouted "No sit!" Unfortunately, to the untrained ear, this sounds a lot like "No sh*t!" As a result, Target shoppers no need to fear. You were not in the presence of a potty-mouthed toddler.

Wednesday, November 24th

Happy Thanksgiving! "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." – Philippians 4:6

Monday, November 29th

The tryptophan is finally beginning to wear off.

Tuesday, November 30th

Dave's Household Tip of the Day... If you are ever unfortunate enough to have purchased a box of Gillett Fusion Power replacement razor blades and return home to find that the security tag had not been removed, application of a sledgehammer to the packaging is an acceptable substitute.

2010 Michigan - Ohio State Football Game Reflections

I was so proud that my 7-year-old son Jacob selected watching the Michigan – Ohio State football game with me over a trip to the mall to see Santa.

The early attempts at brainwashing appear to have been successful, as I heard my 7-year-old son Jacob humming "Hail to the Victors" after he watched the 1998 Rose Bowl.

Why I am so sad... The last time Michigan beat Ohio State in football was 4 days before the birth of my 7-year-old.

November 2010

Dave's World

Dave's South Dakota Thanksgiving Vacation Ruminations

America's Little Known Facts... Iowa is actually 90% permafrost.

Another Source of Childhood Obesity in America... For visiting Santa at Lewis Drug Store in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, kids receive a can of Orange Soda and a full-size Butterfinger.

As I departed the condo complex at 5AM in 4-degree weather, partially asleep, and in my pajamas to let the dog out, I was struck with the irrational fear that I would not remember the security code for reentry and my frozen corpse would be discovered on Thanksgiving morning with only a half-witted beagle to tell my tale.

As the kids fought over a game, Charlene made an observation for the ages. "You are making Daddy sad and when Daddy is sad, he eats. Then he will get fat."

I realized that my problem with Thanksgiving is that it has structural opportunities for gluttony and I have gluttonous tendencies.

If anyone needs more turkey-based tryptophan, it is 3-year-old Sam.

Now that our dog has urinated on a sleeping bag and a child has defecated in the bathtub, it is officially time to leave Grandma and Grandpa's house.

One of the last things that you wanted entering the room at 3:15AM, while you are struggling to sleep on the rejected torture device commonly known as the hide-a-bed: two boys complaining about sharing an actual bed for their night's sleep.

To help boost the economy, perhaps they should swap the names of Black Friday and Good Friday.

Welcome to Dave's Bad Poetry Diversion Excursion...

"Return to Black Friday"

Put on your game face

Shower Thanksgiving night

Lights out by 10; up at 3:15

Contemplate the mall cop on a segway

Witness the first line at a Kmart, since 1985

Love a day where \$3 hand mixers are commonplace

Avoided temptation to throw cash, skip line, and run from store

I am the hero, who saved the economy for one more day

Welcome to South Dakota... The Place So Cold Your Windshield Washer Fluid Freezes

December 2010

Wednesday, December 1st

Barney and Grimace Separated at Birth?

Since everyone has a Christmas album, I have decided to release a Country Christmas CD with its first single entitled, "The Only Part of My Front Yard Reindeer that Lights Up is His Buck."

Thursday, December 2nd

Dear Mini Donut Maker,
I think I love you!

Friday, December 3rd

Nothing brings out birth order tendencies like "Christmas Tree Decoration Night."

In order to settle a lot of unresolved issues, I think that the world is ready for a wrestling cage match between Mannheim Steamroller and the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

Monday, December 6th

I knew this day would come... Yesterday, 23-month-old Ben officially attained the rank of Church Interruption Specialist (C.I.S.). Deep breathe. In only about a year and a half, this stage too shall pass.

Tuesday, December 7th

Breaking news from TMZ... Mr. Coffee and Mrs. Tea are photographed enjoying a "Couple's Vinegar Spa Treatment." Gasp! The whereabouts of Mr. Tea are unknown.

23-month-old Ben was tormenting 3-year-old Sam. I banished Ben to his crib and much to my shock, Ben hoisted himself out of his crib and landed on his head. Thankfully, Ben was not hurt, but as we attempted to comfort him, I asked, "How old will you be?" Charlene noted, "He would not be able to answer that, even without falling on his head." I really must prepare a list of head trauma questions in advance.

Wednesday, December 8th

Forget the anticipation of Christmas... only 54 more days to hear soon-to-be-4-years-old Sam talk non-stop about his birthday.

December 2010

Dave's World

Thursday, December 9th

Sure it may be a potential hazard of having a brother, but today I still feel a great deal of sympathy for 7-year-old Jacob. At last night's dinner, the poor guy was inadvertently served his brother's laxative laden milk.

Friday, December 10th

Oh, how quickly the "birthday-cake-ice-cream-presents high" literally came crashing down, as newly minted 2-year-old Ben decided to do a summersault off of his brother's bed. My fear is that in about 15 years, this same scenario will incorporate a pitched roof and a large pile of leaves.

Saturday, December 11th

For my 1,000th Facebook Post, here is a classic. 10 years ago, Charlene and I took a vacation and left our beagle, Gordon, with some friends on a farm. Upon return, we realized that Gordon had a few ticks. As we plucked the ticks off with tweezers, I found one on his belly that would not come off. Each time I tried to remove the tick, Gordon would cry. Sadly, I soon realized that the tick was actually a nipple.

Sunday, December 12th

Oh dear, I have a lot of careless Facebook posts to delete... Jesus speaking, "I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matthew 12: 36-37)

Monday, December 13th

I like to think that I can handle the verbal barbs of a 3-year-old with the best of them, but it stings when prior to the church Christmas play, a reluctant pint size actor playing Joseph the Earthly Father of Jesus says, "Mommy makes me happier than you."

Tuesday, December 14th

90% of health care professionals agree that it will take a minimum of 18 months for me to completely regain my masculinity, after a brief trip into an ULTA store.

Wednesday, December 15th

My computer that I dropped off for repairs appears to be older than the service technician assigned to the project.

Thursday, December 16th

Tom Jones on NPR's "Talk of the Nation"? Maybe the show is airing a rebroadcast from 1965.

December 2010

Saturday, December 18th

Due to the untimely death of my computer, my remaining 2010 Status Updates, will be scribbled on the back of used recipe cards and posted on the public bulletin board at the Rockwell Branch Library.

Wednesday, December 22nd

From the occasional postings of "Dave the Boy with a Broken Computer"... Jasper the Beagle has continued his holiday tradition of attacking presents under the tree. This year's victims: an unopened container of Play Dough and a Sushi Making Kit. With that kind of behavior, I don't see a California Roll (real or made ...of Play Dough) anytime in this little dog's future.

Friday, December 24th

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. – Isaiah 9:6

Friday, December 31st

3-year old Sam has two imaginary friends that are brothers: Greapsa (pronounced g-reap-sa) and "Big Dan." Trying to maintain a conversation in the car, I asked Sam if Greapsa and "Big Dan" are twins. Sam responded, "They are not Twins. They're Cubs."

Charlene's observation from the start of our 8 hour car excursion... "We generate a lot of garbage in 45 minutes."

From the Too Much Information File... Some men are, but I realized that I am just not a "Urinal Conversationalist."

How could I be anything but proud, as 7-year-old Jacob and 3-year-old Sam spontaneously began dancing in the grocery store, when "Play that Funky Music White Boy" began playing on the store intercom?

Perhaps not as significant as the discovery of the "Dead Sea Scrolls," but still a find... My lost notes from Thanksgiving Vacation in the glove box of my car.

Ranking high in the category of things that you do not want to hear in public... 3-year-old Sam speaking loudly in a crowded Wendy's, "I don't have a rash."

Well, let's see... 2010 cookie baking total of 3,166, which translates to 8.67 cookies per day or approximately 867 calories per day in cookies... I think that I have identified my problem in attaining the elusive "Summer Tummy."

January 2011

Dave's World

“Tales of a Boy who Survived 18 days without Reliable Computer Access...”

Saturday, January 1st

Let's see if four washings is enough to save 3-year-old Sam's blanky from a point blank vomit blast.

I would like it recorded for the record that the individual who vomited during “Homemade Sushi Night” was the only individual who did NOT taste any of the sushi.

I would like to thank Charles Schulz for teaching my children the phrase, “... or I'll slug you!”

Conversations only full comprehended in the Paulsen house...

3-year-old Sam, “No one plays with me.”

My reasoned response, “You hit people in the head with reindeer.”

Today's Battle Royal features a zinc supplement versus a house full of boys with colds.

After viewing a few Air Bud movies, I noted how the volleyball coach was goofy and the baseball coach was serious. 7-year-old Jacob clarified the situation by saying, “The baseball coach was a girl and girls don't fool around.”

I like to think that the hole in the backside of my jeans resulted from faulty construction, rather than the expanding size of my rear end.

I am afraid that 7-year-old Jacob is suffering from delusions of grandeur, as he declared, “Obey my commandments!”

Based upon the speed of production and shipping, I appear to have purchased the first PC ever manufactured on the moon.

””Two scoops.” - 3-year-old Sam's take on how much he pooped in the potty today. I expect to hear from Kellogg's team of attorneys shortly.

Never (I repeat NEVER) give a 7-year-old a homemade Mocha-Espresso doughnut for breakfast.

**“Tales of a Boy who Survived 18 days
without Reliable Computer Access...”
(continued)**

Saturday, January 1st

Christmas Timeline... 364 days of buildup... 20 minutes of unwrapping... 23 hours and 40 minutes of post chaos crash... Repeat.

The image that seemed to best capture the chaos of Christmas morning in the Paulsen house was Jasper the Beagle walking around with wrapping paper stuck to his paw.

Turning the wrong way on a One-Way street certainly is a Christmas lights tour buzz kill. Headlights from another car coming at you is not the kind of Christmas lights that you want to see.

Nothing jolts you from peaceful moment of singing “Silent Night” like hot wax dripping onto your finger.

For one instance the world held its collective breath, as experimental super glue hoof to knee surgery was utilized in an attempt to save the Rudolph Christmas tree ornament.

I have been feeling so liberated after the crash of our home PC that I have decided to begin making my own clothes and forgo the use of copy machines for carbon paper.

Agriculture Themed Religious Quiz of the Day... Is it easier to bring a greased pig or 3-year-old Samuel up for a communion blessing?

You know that it is Christmas time, when a ring of the door from the UPS man brings shrieks of joy.

Sadness is having a batch of freshly baked pizzelles slide off the roof of your car.

I love the fact that on Harry & David's web site, the default setting for mailing something to a location beginning with the letter “F” generates the “Federated States of Micronesia” rather than “Florida.”

For the first time in recent memory, the child crying at the Science Museum was not mine.

My questionable gift to the world... bringing my three Hyped-Out-Pre-Christmas boys out in public to unleash their destructive tendencies.

All I want for Christmas is a potty-trained Sam.

January 2011

Dave's World

“Tales of a Boy who Survived 18 days without Reliable Computer Access...” (continued)

Saturday, January 1st

I am concerned that 2-year-old Ben is already demonstrating strong squirrely tendencies, that I did not fully develop until my teens.

Listening to angst ridden 3-year-old Sam in the car, apparently he has been drafting teen rock ballads, “I don't wanna love anyone, 'cause they're stupid!”

I am afraid that my late night raids on the Chex Mix will soon be discovered and I will have no choice but to seek political asylum in Candy Land.

Just another difference between Warren Buffett and me... he never passed on a consulting project due to the rigors of potty-training.

Most memorable pre-Christmas quote from the Paulsen house... “Step away from the Christmas tree.”

The CIA should contract with 7-year-old Jacob and his grandpa to takeout Iran's computer infrastructure. I project that it would take them about 19½ minutes to do the job.

From the “Useful Formulas for Technology Professionals” file... A computer left in the care of a 7-year-old and his 70-year-old grandfather = one dead computer.

“Tales of a Boy who Survived 18 days without Reliable Computer Access... The Final Chapter”

Sunday, January 2nd

Bob Dylan's Christmas CD is sort of the audio equivalent of Egg Nog... Something just isn't right about it.

Warning: Bad Pun Ahead... After taking a jog in Kansas' 50 mph wind gusts, the Chicago Marathon should be a breeze.

Although alarmed, I am not prepared to call a surgeon just yet... I am certain that my nose appeared crooked during my morning floss.

January 2011

**“Tales of a Boy who Survived 18 days
without Reliable Computer Access...
The Final Chapter”
(continued)**

Sunday, January 2nd

I am pleased to announce that eating a tiny candy cane, just prior to communion, results in a delicious minty flavored burst of wine. During future marketing campaigns, the church should really use this to their advantage.

Although not required, a degree in mechanical engineering is useful, when assembling the Hot Wheels Jumbo Stunt Combo track.

I believe that Christmas morning may be the only thing that could cause 7-year-old Jacob to be fully dressed and ready for the day at 5:44 A.M.

Monday, January 3rd

It is scary, when your kids know you, better than you know yourself.. I proudly announced to my family that my New Year's Resolution would be “Self Control.” 7-year-old Jacob responded, “You'll never have that.” Perhaps, I should revisit my resolution.

Tuesday, January 4th

Mark down Monday, January 3, 2011, at 3:21 PM as a turning point in the Battle for Summer Tummy 2011... I actually resisted the temptation of a Snack Size Milky Way.

Not to alarm anyone, but the man in front of me in line at Sam's Club appears to be preparing for a nuclear winter by purchasing one of everything in the store.

I am...

- A) Proud - I won my family's season long NFL pool by one point.
- B) Embarrassed - I needed the lowly Seahawks to beat the butter finger Rams, in order to defeat my wife, father-in-law, and 7-year-old son.
- C) Redeemed - It takes some of the sting out of my preseason Bengals over the Vikings Super Bowl prediction.
- D) Sad - I found out that the pool actually extends into the post-season games.

Wednesday, January 5th

Words that you do not want to overhear in another room... 3-year-old partner-in-crime Sam talking to his 2-year-old brother Ben, “It's o.k., Ben. Daddy will fix it. He has glue.”

January 2011

Dave's World

Thursday, January 6th

Today, I will only be taking calls from the University of Michigan Athletic Department, just in case they would like to interview me for the football coaching vacancy. Hint, hint. Nudge, nudge.

Friday, January 7th

There they were; waiting for me during my jog. A gaggle of five ruffian geese hanging out on a sidewalk and waiting to enact revenge for my anti-geese efforts in a Pennsylvania park, years ago. Fortunately, they backed down when confronted (chickens, err cowardly geese), but now I fear for the safety of my family. This feels like an Alfred Hitchcock produced episode of "Candid Camera".

Saturday, January 8th

O.K. The Christmas letter may be late and it may be electronic, but we did get it out before Easter.

That's right... after winning last week's Argus Leader (the newspaper in Sioux Falls, South Dakota) Football Pool, I only have a few more hours to boast that I know more about football than everyone in the state of South Dakota.

If only space and time were not limitations, I sure would enjoy hearing Katherine Hepburn cover Lady Gaga's "Bad Romance."

Monday, January 10th

For about 15 minutes, 3-year-old Sam and 2-year-old Ben were on and off arguing about who would get to look at a certain book, until I finally lost my patience and went to help resolve the dispute. When I arrived, I discovered that the book's title was "Let's Share."

The Wonderful World of Dave's Formal Explanations...

Why cookies?

In October 2006, about two months into my stint as a stay-at-home dad, I figured it would be fun to bake cookies with 2-year-old Jacob. Since my only exposure to an oven was frozen pizzas and blueberry muffins, I naturally turned to the slice-and-bake cookies in the grocery store's freezer section. Later that day, we enjoyed some delicious slice-and-bake jaok o' lantern sugar cookies. Flash forward a week, as Jacob and Charlene are grocery shopping. Jacob asked Charlene for some cookies and Charlene explained that they could make some at home. Jacob then insisted that, "Cookies come from stores." Realizing that I had somehow misinformed my young son regarding where cookies come from, I was determined to bake my first batch from scratch (the Pumpkin Cookies found on page 45). With a great deal of encouragement and a love of friendly competition, my quest for Blue Ribbons began.

January 2011

Tuesday, January 11th

Yesterday, the Paulsen boys embraced their Scandinavian heritage by suiting up in snow gear.

Hot chocolate: check.
Snow angels: check.
Fire in the hearth: check.
Snowball fight: check.
Warm and fresh homemade bread: check.
Downhill sled skiing: check.
Homemade crab bisque: check.
Sled belly-whoppers: check.
Spending way too much time in my sweatpants: check.
Remembering that January can be fun: check.

Wednesday, January 12th

8 below just ain't right.

Open call to all inventors... Please, please, focus on the creation of a "Hot Cocoa Patch," which can heat your inner core without those pesky calories.

Thursday, January 13th

3-year-old Sam + Icy Surfaces = Increased Gravitational Pull

Friday, January 14th

Urgent Winter Weather Advisory... In Wichita, Kansas, the snow has just attained perfect snowman making consistency. This perfect snow-to-temperature ratio will not last long and individuals in Southcentral Kansas are encouraged to immediately take advantage of the situation.

I seem to have misplaced the "giddy" in my "up"

Saturday, January 15th

My 15 seconds of fame from last night's Wichita Thunder minor league hockey game... When the Fan Cam stopped on us, I provided 7-year-old, Jacob, with a spontaneous head rub. This probably scarred Jacob for life, but it did receive a laugh from the crowd, Jacob appeared happy to be on the big screen, and later I received a fist bump from a random fan, who recognized us. There is perhaps no greater honor in life.

January 2011

Dave's World

Saturday, January 15th

The thing I regret saying the most from last night's Wichita Thunder minor league hockey game... At one point, with the puck behind the Thunder goal, I remarked to my 7-year-old son, Jacob, "They have got to get the puck out of there." For several minutes afterward, Jacob would occasionally yell, "Get the puck out of there." To the untrained ear, somethings just don't sound right yelled by a 7-year-old.

My favorite fan heckle from last night's Wichita Thunder minor league hockey game...
"Next time, hit him with your purse."

Monday, January 17th

Yesterday, I was listening to Sports Talk radio with my 7-year-old. The announcer said that Jay Cutler of the Chicago Bears is not adored, because he did not "take a picture of his junk." My son picked up on the "take a picture of his junk" phrase and repeated it several times laughing. The ability to listen to Sports Talk with my kids in the car appears to be the final casualty of Brett Farve's comebacks.

Tuesday, January 18th

Considering the declining number of subscribers and the fact that it is chilly this morning, would it be too much to ask to have my morning newspaper delivered to my kitchen table, opened to the Sports Section, and perhaps accompanied by a fresh hot towel?

Wednesday, January 19th

After I accidentally dropped some change in my hot chocolate, it hit me. The U.S. Mint should unveil a series of "scratch and sniff" quarters.

Thursday, January 20th

"What People Do on Thursday Nights on the Great Plains"

(Idea courtesy of my First Grader's class.)

They find out the answer to the question...

What will happen if you microwave a bar of Ivory Soap?

Answer: It puffs up like a cumulus cloud.

Thank goodness that answer was not, "You will need to replace your microwave."

As I saw 3-year-old Sam raid the fridge and leave eating a fully cooked, but rather cold piece of bacon, I realized that he may be ready to move into a dorm.

Friday, January 21st

Time to teach my child that "Honesty is NOT always the best policy"... Last night, I was helping 3-year-old Sam get ready for bed. After he brushed his teeth, I asked to smell his breath and lovingly remarked, "You smell like bubble gum (the flavor of his toothpaste)." In turn, Sam asked to smell my breath and said with a smile, "You smell like a trash can." Bust out the Listerine, Paulsen.

January 2011

Saturday, January 22nd

3-year-old Sam reported that a classmate brought a book about Justin Bieber to “show and tell” time at pre-school. I asked Sam what he had learned about Justin Bieber from the book and Sam reported that, “He (Justin Bieber) is a very nice man.” Nice, perhaps. On the man issue, however, he appears to still need plenty of ripening.

Monday, January 24th

Another reason I love my wife...

3-year-old Sam: “Is Elmo on T.V., today?”

Charlene: “Only football is on T.V., on Sunday.”

Tuesday, January 25th

Tales from the Boy with an Iron Stomach... Amazing, but true; it appears as if 2-year-old Ben has devoured an entire pack of Extra sugar free gum, with no negative side effects.

Wednesday, January 26th

The playground at 2-year-old Ben's preschool may need a little more supervision... When I picked him up yesterday, Ben enthusiastically reported his activities, “Eat. Rocks.”

Thursday, January 27th

From the long list of “Things that I would rather do instead of working on our income tax returns”... #48 - Inspect the gutters to ensure that nothing has died up there.

Friday, January 28th

Let's see here... one baseball to the head... several basketballs to the head... yes, early (black and blue) signs of Spring have begun to appear in the Paulsen family backyard.

Saturday, January 29th

Nothing says Spring day in January like wearing shorts, cooking some brats, enjoying a cold beer, and being way too close to a fireball bursting from your grill... I did not need that hair on my left forearm anyway.

Happy Kansas Day to All and to All a Good Night!

Sunday, January 30th

Who dat bakin' scrumptious crumpets? Baker D makin' crumpets!

Monday, January 31st

After praising 7-year-old Jacob for wrapping his toy car transporter to give to his 4-year-old little brother Sam for his birthday, Jacob's intentions became all too clear, “He sneaks into my room to get it anyway.”

February 2011

Dave's World

Tuesday, February 1st

Think, think, think. There must be a way to list diapers as a business expense or charitable donation on my Federal tax return.

Wednesday, February 2nd

In an act of self preservation, I have banished the boys to a temporary tent city in the basement for the duration of the snow days.

Untold Drama of the 2011 Blizzard...

Location: Paulsen house (Wichita, Kansas)...

Brown Sugar: Out...

Chocolate Chips: Under a Dozen Remain...

Vanilla: A Few Drops Left...

Butter: Running Dangerously Low...

Desperate times call for desperate measures...

That's right (gasp!), Crisco-based Oatmeal Cookies.

A man has gotta do what a man has gotta do.

Thursday, February 3rd

I woke up this morning, heard that school is canceled, turned on the coffee, feed the dog, updated my Facebook status... Wait a second. This is the same as yesterday. Is today Groundhog Day?

Friday, February 4th

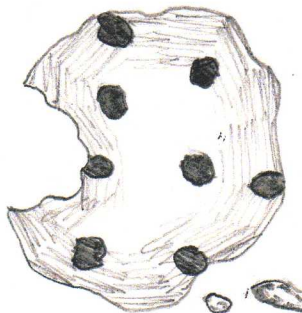
I liked string cheese, before it was cool to like string cheese.

Saturday, February 5th

Last night, I survived "camping out" on the floor of our basement's "tent" with 7-year-old Jacob and 4-year-old Sam. One order of Excedrin Back & Body, please.

Monday, February 7th

As we sat down in front of the Super Bowl to eat dinner, 3-year-old Samuel offered the following table prayer, "Thank you, God, for football. Amen."



February 2011

Tuesday, February 8th

Nothing says "Bedtime Stalling" like 2-year-old Ben selecting the 310 page Children's Encyclopedia for his bedtime story.

Wednesday, February 9th

I may need to reconsider my current diet plan...

- 1) Starve myself for seven days...
- 2) Discover that I have only lost 1/2 pound...
- 3) Bake and eat an entire batch of delicious, warm, and buttery cookies...
- 4) Gain 1 pound...
- 5) Repeat.

Thursday, February 10th

Early Candidate for 2011 Topps Baseball Card Quote of the Year: Washington Nationals Pitcher, Stephen Strasburg. Commenting on the difficulty of his early workouts at San Diego State, "I spent a lot of time puking."

Friday, February 11th

I am bracing for tourists, now that snow pile in my backyard (4'2") has temporarily surpassed Mount Sunflower (3'10") as the highest point in Kansas. This development has led to rumors that the State of Kansas is amending its state motto to read, "Kansas: Almost as Flat as a Pancake."

Saturday, February 12th

I saw an ad for a local bowling alley, featuring free autographs from Jack Parr. Curious about the former Tonight Show host's connection to Wichita, I discovered that he died 13 years ago. There is a rich tradition of "after death bowling alley appearances." Lazarus was a mainstay at "Bethany Bowl," Elvis performed several shows at "Kalamazoo Lanes," and Elijah said he would like to bowl a few more frames.

Monday, February 14th

Four beautiful words of Spring: Pitchers and catchers report!

Tuesday, February 15th

"General Hospital" Sneak Peek

Pediatrician: "What seems to be the problem?"

Concerned Father: "I am very worried about my 7-year-old. I was putting away Valentine's Day treats and I discovered (tense music begins) a stash of Halloween candy. How can a healthy child keep a pile of perfectly good candy around for over one hundred days?!?"

(Father begins weeping, as he bites into a banana flavored Laffy Taffy)

February 2011

Dave's World

Wednesday, February 16th

Although under reported by mass media, having a 2-year-old and 4-year-old crawl into your bed at night is an extremely effective form of birth control.

Thursday, February 17th

Spring Project of the Day... I have been informed by the CDC that I will be required to en-case our home in an E.T.-Style Bubble, until our resident virus stops attacking members of the Paulsen house.

Friday, February 18th

Cooking homemade pudding made me feel a lot like Bill Cosby, except without the really snazzy sweaters.

Answer: A 60-minute long Chinese fire drill.

Question: What closely resembles Dave's attempts to shop for groceries with children?

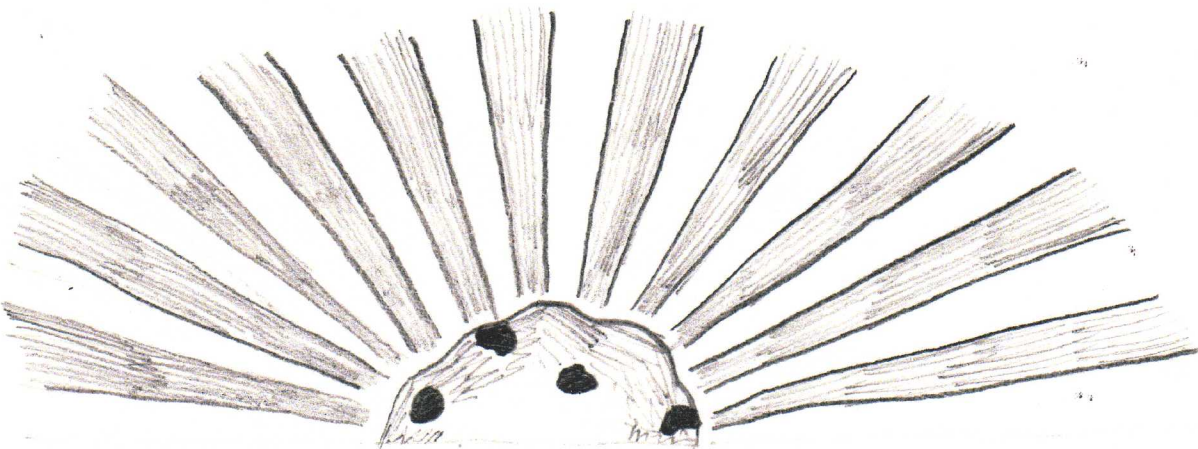
Saturday, February 19th

4-year-old Sam's mealtime conversation skills are definitely still under construction... Last night's dinner featured a description of how one of his friends at preschool, Finley, does not use tissues. Instead, she just "sucks the boogers back in." More lemon pudding, anyone?

Monday, February 21st

I ordered "Sweet Lou and the Cubs" for my 7-year-old, which covers the 2008 baseball season. Charlene was worried about the book's language, so I decided to read some of it in advance. The first sentence concludes "... Reaching, and then winning, the World Series is a real b!tch!" It appears as if I am going to need some whiteout and creative word substitutions before Sweet Lou is ready for bedtime.

4-year-old Sam's first foray into social activism, the placement of an "Ice Cream Truck STOP Here!" sign in our front yard.



February 2011

Tuesday, February 22nd

I quickly learned the first and perhaps only rule for conducting a floor-to-ceiling cleaning of 7-year-old Jacob's room. Never, and I mean never, ask the following question: "Is it OK to get rid of this?"

Wednesday, February 23rd

Help Wanted: a Translator for our Marriage (or at least a good message courier)...

Charlene speaking to me over a hairdryer, talking child, and through a bathroom door, "I'm going to call Ann."

My puzzled response, "How do you spell 'aneurysm'?"

Thursday, February 24th

I had a dream about losing one of my teeth. At first, I was excited, because I would get money for it. Then, I became sad when Charlene informed me that I should not be losing teeth. This could mean several things:

- A) I am mourning the passing of my youth,
- B) I want to sell my teeth for cash,
- C) I need to floss, or
- D) I have suppressed sexual desires for dental hygienists.

Friday, February 25th

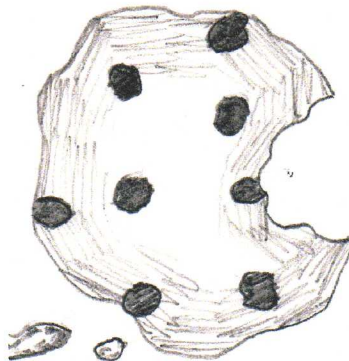
A New Record for the Paulsen House: 19 hours before the freshly cleaned carpet suffered a spill! Impressive, but let's strive for one full day next time.

Saturday, February 26th

I may need to contact the U.S. Patent office, since 4-year-old Sam's latest creation was a big hit with the little child lunch crowd. Yes, that's right. Coming soon to your neighborhood: a "Ketchup Sandwich Kitchen." A roll, ketchup, and all good.

Monday, February 28th

I don't know if I should be more concerned that 4-year-old Sam tried to start a conga line or that none of his friends decided to join him.



March 2011

Dave's World

“Parents of Small Children Bill of Rights”

Forget about labor disputes, budget crises, and Middle East chaos. It is time for a “Parents of Small Children Bill of Rights”

- 10 – Right to hide in a quiet place for 5 minutes per day
- 9 – Right to refuse the use of my shirt as a napkin (or handkerchief) by others
- 8 – Right to dispose of any toy, which has exceeded my personal level of annoyance
- 7 – Right to not be crawled upon or otherwise grabbed at the dinner table
- 6 – Right to “go to the bathroom” alone
- 5 – Right to fall asleep, while putting children down for a nap
- 4 – Right to weep openly at the mention of potty-training
- 3 – Right to complain about the DH, whenever I want (I'm sorry, this one belongs on the “Baseball Purists Bill of Rights”)
- 2 – Right to serve chicken nuggets, ketchup, cheese sticks, and Goldfish crackers at every meal
- 1 – Right to refuse answering the question “Why?”

Tuesday, March 1st

After insisting on being carried around for the past day and a half, my doctor has now officially diagnosed 2-year-old Ben as a permanent appendage sprouting from my right hip.

Wednesday, March 2nd

21 years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the world gasped in wonder as the childproof locks were removed from the cupboards at the Paulsen house. The only remaining lock is intended to prevent future raids on the kitchen trash can by Jasper the Beagle, who is still facing U.N. Sanctions.

Thursday, March 3rd

Coming soon to Carnegie Hall... “Dave's Bi-Weekly-On-Top-of-the-Commingled-Recycling-Bin Stomp”... I had better find out if I need to bring my own ladder or if they'll include it as part of the gig.

Friday, March 4th

Forget about the rising price of gas. Stop to consider the skyrocketing cost to reward (er, bribe) two small boys for behaving in the grocery store... one bag of Skittles, one bag of M&M's, one sprinkled doughnut, and one free sample chocolate chip from the bakery...

Total cost per child: \$1.34 or 2.2 ¢ per minute. Come to think of it, 2.2 ¢ per minute for a sorta peaceful trip to the grocery store isn't too bad.

March 2011

Saturday, March 5th

Welcome of Sci-Fi Saturday... Yesterday, I appear to have slipped into a parallel “opposite” universe. My 4-year-old fell asleep for an unprompted nap, while my 2-year-old did not sleep a wink. I now fear my inevitable encounter with “Opposite Dave,” who is well rested, productive, and does not post Facebook status updates.

Monday, March 7th

A Life Lesson for Parents with Boys... Who would have thought that “Connect 4” could be a contact sport?

Prior to church and unbeknownst to me, someone appears to have replaced 4-year-old Samuel's larynx with a trumpet.

Tuesday, March 8th

...and the winner for the “Edge of Your Seat Moment at the Wichita Garden Show” goes to... 2-year-old Ben, who inexplicably approached a \$1,000 painting with the clear intention of licking it! Stopped just a fraction of an inch from tasting the “orange tinted forest setting,” this nail biting moment was the hands down champion.

Wednesday, March 9th

7-year-old Jacob suggested I give up baseball or University of Kansas basketball for Lent. Rejected... miss Opening Day or the Final Four? Why don't I just flog myself and give up air for Lent? Charlene suggested that I give up baking cookies. Rejected... heresy. Although unpopular with the family, I will suffer by growing a scratchy beard and learning what I would look like as a finalist on Survivor.

Thursday, March 10th

Everyone, take a deep breath. No need to worry. In spite of 2-year-old Ben's proclamation (shout?) of “Look! Jesus!”, during the otherwise somber Ash Wednesday service, Jesus' second coming did not take place last night in Wichita, Kansas. Ben was just very excited to discover a drawing of a bearded man in the hymnal.

Friday, March 11th

Yesterday, 4-year-old Sam expressed an interest in helping me rid the yard of dog waste. As we were taking turns picking up, Sam said in a worried voice, “Save some poop for me.” Oh, don't worry little one (insert sinister parental laugh). For the next 14 years, this job will be all yours. Next up, establishing a fondness for taking out the trash.

March 2011

Dave's World

Saturday, March 12th

Dave's Money Saving Tip of the Day... In these challenging economic times, we are all looking for ways to cut down the grocery bill. Try having your kids clean out the car at snack time. The Paulsen Boys discovered a Cheerio, cracker, pretzel, and 2 M&Ms for their efforts. To summarize "Automobile Hunting and Gathering" makes a tasty and affordable treat, which is easy on the wallet and always full of surprises.

Sunday, March 13th

Warning: Bad Pun Ahead... In church, 4-year-old Sam indicated that he needed to use the bathroom. Upon our return to the worship service, we found that communion had begun. After jumping in line, Sam and I were soon kneeling at the communion railing. At this point, Sam informed me that he had forgotten to button and zip his pants. This experience provides a whole new meaning to the term "open communion."

Monday, March 14th

Some would say that it is an indication of nurturing, but I think that it harkens back to something more primal on the expanse of the savanna, when an injured gazelle came within range. On Saturday, my 7-year-old Jacob and I heard unmistakable music from an ice cream truck. Without a word, we shared a glance and sprinted to the curb. This time, that speeding barge of tasty frozen treats didn't stand a chance.

Tuesday, March 15th

My Internet Explorer "Favorites" list might provide some insight into my problem... A link for "Tips for a Flat Belly" is located next to another link for "How to Win an Eating Contest."

Wednesday, March 16th

From the look of it, my belly appears to be growing faster from training for the Krispy Kreme Doughnut Eating Competition than my Lenten Beard at One Week.

I will need a zoologist's confirmation, but I believe that my 7-year-old son waking up might be grumpier than a grizzly emerging from hibernation.

No need to panic. There are still 7 days until the Krispy Kreme Doughnut Eating Competition, but it appears as if I will need to hone my skills. My first training session yielded mixed results with 5 doughnuts consumed in 120 seconds (24 seconds/doughnut). I am thinking that I need to down around 8 (15 seconds/doughnut) to have a fighting chance. It is time for some serious doughnut consumption training.

March 2011

Thursday, March 17th

March Madness, indeed... The name of the Men's Basketball Coach for the Bucknell Bisons is Dave Paulsen. Since Bucknell made this year's NCAA Tournament, my Google ranking for "Dave Paulsen" has fallen off the map. Now I know how people named Mike Krzyzewski feel.

Friday, March 18th

One indication of a successful St. Patrick's Day... your bedtime dental floss generates a nice return of corned beef... wait a second, this is perhaps better classified as "One indication that my teeth need straightening"

Saturday, March 19th

Responding to a shriek of pain in the kitchen, I discovered that 2-year-old Ben had fastened a chip clip to his lower lip. I am proud to report that I suppressed my first instinct to take a picture of the incident and instead removed the offensive sealer.

Monday, March 21st

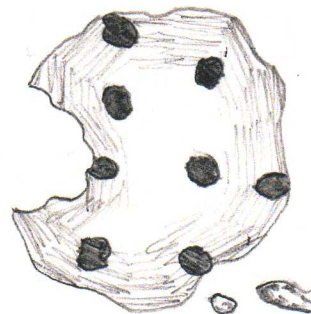
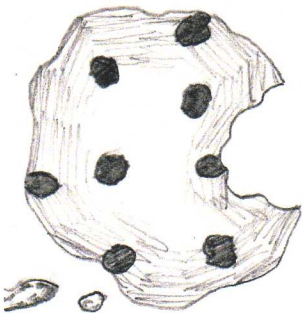
It is official... Kansas Governor Sam Brownback has declared my NCAA bracket a disaster.

Tuesday, March 22nd

One little known benefit of video games... I credit many hours spent playing Frogger on an Atari 2600 for my ability to walk three young kids across a busy YMCA parking lot.

Wednesday, March 23rd

In honor of Ron Jaworski's 60th Birthday, here is a little "Polish Rifle" trivia... after 10 seasons with the Philadelphia Eagles, "Jaws" took his "talents to South Beach" for 2 seasons with the Miami Dolphins. His tenure with the Dolphins may have been soured from the start, as a result of his 60-minute ESPN prime time announcement special, "The Decision."



March 2011

Dave's World

Thursday, March 24th

Victory was not mine in the Krispy Kreme eating competition. After eating 8 plain doughnuts in 2 minutes (the winner ate 10 and 2nd ate 9), I landed in a tiebreaker for 3rd. In OT, I ate 5 jelly filled doughnuts in 2 minutes, which placed me in a tie for 4th out of 25 eaters. 3rd place, last year's champ, ate 6 jelly doughnuts in OT. Nothing ventured, nothing gained... except maybe a few extra pounds.

One benefit of the doughnut eating competition was that I certainly gained a wealth of knowledge regarding competitive food eating, including the finer points of "dunking," "chipmunking," smashing bread, and my patented "half-moon doughnut" technique.

Friday, March 25th

Oh, yes. Good morning, my coffee and donut friends.

It appears as if 7-year-old Jacob has embraced the art of sports trash talk. During a father-son backyard soccer game, Jacob defended his "hand ball violation" by saying, "I didn't want to be stepped on by an old man." Ouch.

My Lenten Beard at two weeks... it appears to have grown some, as a result of mass doughnut consumption.

Saturday, March 26th

Recently, 4-year-old Sam has expressed an interest in being Santa Claus, when he grows up. Sam has also indicated that he wants his little 2-year-old brother, Ben, to be an elf and push his sleigh. I am not sure if this is an attempt to make Ben a deputy or place him in servitude.

Sunday, March 27th

Dear Lord Almighty,
Please, accelerate the beginning of the Major League Baseball season.
Sincerely,
This Depressed Kansas Jayhawks Basketball Fan

Monday, March 28th

From the "You're not as young as you used to be" file... Who would have guessed that my nightcap consisting of a heaping bowl of Cocoa Krispies and a large glass of red wine did not sit well?

Tuesday, March 29th

Temporary setbacks for great artists: Yo-Yo Ma snaps a string on his cello, the last bristle falls from the paint brush of Henri Matisse, and my oven will not heat.

March - April 2011

Wednesday, March 30th

As a tribute to the end of the Wichita Thunder (minor league hockey team) regular season, here are my two favorite answers from the "Know the Players" video board segment...

Question: "What is your favorite meal?"

Answer: "Bacon."...

Question: "What is your favorite city to visit, while playing on the road?"

Answer: "Missouri."

Thursday, March 31st

Newness fills the air. First place is shared by all. Let the world rejoice! It is Opening Day... Play Ball!

Week Three of the Lenten Beard... Sorta like a Chia Pet that has not received adequate sunlight.

Friday, April 1st

It is Friday... The sun is shining... Baseball is being played across this great land... It is so easy to smile.

"5 Eggs"... The Sundance sensation starring Kate Winslet as a lonely woman wandering the Scottish countryside, with her prized hen, in search of her lost innocence. Featuring Patrick Stewart as Clem, the reclusive gardener. "5 Eggs" also accurately describes all that remains in our fridge. We need to do some serious grocery shopping.

Saturday, April 2nd

This morning, after seeing 2-year-old Ben and 4-year-old Sam play with water in the sandbox, I believe they are genetically predisposed to get filthy.

As I responded to 4-year-old Sam screaming in his bedroom at 7AM, he informed me that he could not sleep. My sage parental advice, "It would help if you stopped screaming."

Monday, April 4th

I had a dream, where I was very upset that my cable provider replaced public television with the Golf Channel. This dream can have only a few possible meanings...

- 1) I am concerned about Federal funding cuts to public broadcasting...
- 2) I need to purchase a better cable package...
- 3) I wish to relive my youth through Sesame Street...
- 4) LPGA golfer Sandra Gal is too delicious for even my subconscious.

April 2011

Dave's World

Tuesday, April 5th

Responding to distressed calls of "Help" from 4-year-old Sam, I discovered him trapped in the bathroom, because he could not turn the doorknob with wet hands. Apparently, the two dozen or so towels located in the room with him had gone unnoticed. I had never realized that washing hands could result in imprisonment.

Wednesday, April 6th

Upon picking up 4-year-old Sam from preschool, you can imagine my shock and delight, when he told me, "Daddy, did you know that my school has Budweiser!" Since this is a sure sign of a good time, I should have just said, "Here we go!", rather than investigating to find out he was referring to a beverage dispenser containing cans of root beer.

Thursday, April 7th

The other day, my 7-year-old son, Jacob, indicated that my Lenten Beard made me look like Phillies pitcher Cliff Lee. I can sort of see what he means... both Cliff and I have a beard, blue eyes, and a wicked four-seam fastball.

As 4-year-old Sam asked about the hot tub at the YMCA, I did an amazing impromptu performance of "Eddie Murphy as James Brown entering a hot tub." I could not get even a partial smile or simple chortle out of any of my sons. Another fine example of early '80s humor wasted on Generation @.

Rumor has it that most great innovations involve pain. For instance, this morning I learned that pouring a half pot of scalding hot coffee onto the back of your hand wakes you up faster than simply drinking it.

Friday, April 8th

As I was grocery shopping with the boys, another shopper approached me and gave me a homemade stress ball. I consider this an early warning sign that I really need to work on my demeanor, before strangers start providing me with their prescription drugs.

Saturday, April 9th

Dryer sheet buzz!

We were outside on a beautiful day, when 4-year-old Sam asked, "Daddy, can I go inside and get a drink?" Those simple words marked the humble beginning of what would become mighty "Lake O.J." on the kitchen floor.

Monday, April 11th

Parents Beware... At first, I did not recognize the threat. It seemed like a simple request from the kids to purchase a box of Cheez-Its featuring Lightning McQueen characters. Little did I know that it was the initial ripple in the oncoming tidal wave of "Cars 2" merchandise.

April 2011

Tuesday, April 12th

When opening the door to meet with a contractor to discuss refacing some kitchen cabinets, I discovered that he was a spitting image of Ty Pennington. After determining that he was not actually Ty Pennington, I realized how fortunate we were that I was home, instead of Charlene. Otherwise, contracts may have been signed without any discussion of price. Hopefully, the next quote will come from Amy Wynn.

Wednesday, April 13th

Someone appears to have pressed 4-year-old Sam's "Continuous Play" button and 2-year-old Ben's "Repeat" button.

Thursday, April 14th

One unanticipated benefit of the Lenten Beard at Week Five... Whenever you like, you can enjoy leftovers by simply licking the beard at the sides of your mouth. Barbeque and marinara sauce convert particularly well to leftover treats.

Unbeknownst to me, last night between midnight and 4AM, 4-year-old Sam and 2-year-old Ben scheduled a series of relay races between their room and our bed.

Friday, April 15th

Few things beat "Homemade Pasta Night!"

Things that just don't add up... The strong smell of burnt marshmallows as I jog past a Best Buy... Perhaps, a "Storewide S'mores Employee Appreciation Event" gone awry.

Saturday, April 16th

It is going to take a lot more than switching pillows to trick this Tooth Fairy... (clearing throat)... That's Mr. Tooth Fairyman to you.

Monday, April 18th

Just a hunch, but judging from 7-year-old Jacob's eight meals-per-day, he is experiencing a growth spurt.

Tuesday, April 19th

It turns out that the "Power of Pine-Sol" is no match for a bathroom utilized by three young men. Perhaps the "Power of Raw and Nasty Ammonia" will do the trick.

April 2011

Dave's World

Wednesday, April 20th

Oh yes, just a few days remain for the scratchylicious Lenten Beard.

Roll of toilet paper: \$0.58

Drain snake: \$9.99

Being married to a wise wife, who informed me that no one on Facebook wants to see a photo of the huge wad of unused toilet paper that was causing the slow running potty: Priceless

Thursday, April 21st

Archeological records indicate that this morning is the first time in five years that I have had to dress like a grownup for two consecutive days.

Friday, April 22nd

Forget about spelling and basic math skills, after last evening's church service, my children are going to focus on learning the "Art of Whispering."

Saturday, April 23rd

On the way to Good Friday services, we were going over the "Rules for Church" with the Paulsen boys. No running (check). No yelling (check). No fighting (check). Suddenly, 4-year-old Sam adds with a laugh, "No taking off your clothes in church." Uh, o.k. I don't remember this ever being an issue at our church, but I also don't see a problem with adding it to the list.

Sunday, April 24th

The Bible "Facebook Style"

O.T. - We sin.

N.T. - Jesus saves!

To celebrate their resurrected football program, I wore a University of Michigan dress shirt to church for Easter. Go Blue!

After 46 days of the Lenten Beard, my face has been reborn. What a difference a day makes!

Monday, April 25th

Monday's "All Eggs, All the Time" Menu

Breakfast: Hard boiled eggs with salt

Lunch: Egg salad sandwich and jelly beans

Dinner: Deviled Eggs and Cadbury Eggs

Perhaps Monday's menu will steel my stomach for Tuesday's menu.

Tuesday's Menu – See Monday's Menu

April 2011

Tuesday, April 26th

Today is the day that I do not eat a half batch of freshly baked and oh-so-delicious cookies.
Today is the day that I do not go back for seconds (or thirds) at dinner.
Today is the day that I begin to bring sexy back (I will get an affidavit to prove it).
Today is the day that I do not eat the entire chocolate bunny.
Today is the day that I take a stand for "Summer Tummy 2011"... before it is too late.

Wednesday, April 27th

My beagle really needs a "snooze" feature.

Thursday, April 28th

Perhaps, if I present a copy of my birth certificate, it will finally put to rest disputes over my birthright as the "Baron of Byron Street."

"It's a beautiful day for Facebook... Let's post two!"...

2-year-old Ben's loud dinner table burp resulted in an appropriate response from acting-like-a-parent 7-year-old Jacob, "What do you say?" Ben's immediate answer, "Thank you."
Well, I guess his belch was a primitive form of saying "thank you" for a delicious quesadilla dinner.

"It's a beautiful day for Facebook... Let's post two!"...

I like to think that 4-year-old Sam was attempting an innovation in cookie baking. When the partially dissolved green apple Jolly Rancher dropped from his wanting mouth into the mixing bowl full of oatmeal chocolate chip cookie dough, I felt like Watson receiving the first phone call.

Friday, April 29th

Just thinking... It would have been so cool if Prince had performed at the wedding reception. I cannot wait to see Prince Charles do the traditional wedding reception Chicken Dance.

I love a Royal Wedding, especially when it diversifies the gene pool.

All day, as my Royal Wedding gift to Charlene, I will refrain from using my pitiful attempt at a British accent.

Saturday, April 30th

This morning I am suffering from a "Royal Wedding Letdown"... What no pyrotechnics? Acrobatics? Slight of hand illusions? Snoop Dog? Where did all of the money go? Potted plants in the sanctuary and a pretty dress. Really. Is that all we get? (Please, note that this post is in jest. I beg for mercy from the Queen and plead for no retaliation.)

April - May 2011

Dave's World

Saturday, April 30th

As I prepare to take my turn riding on a garbage truck for our neighborhood's annual cleanup, Las Vegas set odds at 2-to-1 that this will be my final post, as a result of an inevitable compactor accident. Oh well, it has been a good run. (Deep breath.) Over and out.

Somehow I survived my tour of duty on the "Neighborhood Cleanup Day" garbage truck.
Some select findings...

Item making coolest noise in the compactor: a toilet

Most entertaining item to watch being crushed: A tie between a metal wheelbarrow and some metal utility shelving (both were kind of like watching huge soda cans getting crushed)

Most disappointing item in the compactor: a chiminea

Monday, May 2nd

After placing myself on the 15-day marathon training DL with a painful lower calf, I realized I should have purchased the extended warranty on my body.

Tuesday, May 3rd

...and the award for "Monday's Most Ridiculous Tantrum" goes to... (drum roll)... 2-year-old Ben Paulsen, who maintained a tearful insistence that he is allergic to carrots.

Wednesday, May 4th

At first, I was hesitant, but I am beginning to warm to Charlene's idea for keeping the kitchen floor clean: have the boys eat their meals over the sink.

Thursday, May 5th

This morning, an embarrassing moment was generated, when my neighbor and I both awkwardly retreated to our homes, after simultaneously collecting our morning papers in our pajamas. I believe that the only way to settle our rattled nerves and build our confidence is to schedule a Neighborhood-Wide Pajama Party.

Friday, May 6th

After my second attempt, I believe that I am starting to get the hang of the intimidating desert Tiramisu.

While visiting my doctor to have a strained calf muscle examined, he observed that I have a "big (calf) muscle." Well, the good news is that my calf muscles are in shape. That only leaves about 319 more muscle groups to work on.

It appears as if my "Task of the Day" will be hunting down the bird sized moth that has invaded our home. I wonder what Navy Seal Team 6 charges for the hour?

May 2011

Friday, May 6th

Too many tasty burritos on Cinco de Mayo has resulted in less than festive feeling on the Seis de Mayo.

Saturday, May 7th

Yesterday, I took pride in two facts...

- 1) I managed to make it 2,719 days as a parent without any of my children requiring stitches and
- 2) I was able to get the blood out of his shirt.

Monday, May 9th

I must admit that I considered leaving our garden-raiding beagle locked in the strawberry patch, as he barked for assistance. What a fitting punishment for a devious pup, "Eat up, little dog... until it runs out." Apparently, his genetic programming did not include an exit plan, prior to embarking on his first fresh produce binge of the year.

Tuesday, May 10th

In order to increase the efficiency of household snack time, I am considering the installation of a food trough in our kitchen. The plan is to fill it with goldfish crackers at 10AM and 3PM daily and yell, "Come and get it." No fuss. No muss.

Wednesday, May 11th

Based upon their screeching protests during a much needed nail clipping, I can only assume that my children will attempt to turn me in for violations of the Geneva Conventions.

Thursday, May 12th

Little Known Fact that I Learned the Hard Way... Other than losing digits, the greatest danger in mowing barefoot is the permanent "greening" of your feet.

Monday, May 16th

After spending 37 hours in a car over the last 4 days, I suspect that I have now fulfilled NASA's training requirements for space travel. Will someone please hand me some freeze dried space ice cream?

Tuesday, May 17th

According to Sesame Street, cookies are a "sometimes food." I assume that this means that sometimes, I should refrain from eating the entire batch of cookies myself.