

A love of nature, pizza delivery, National Donut Day, a moment of fame, and more (7 Quick Takes)

~1~

During our visit to my in-laws on Maryland's Eastern Shore last weekend, I took our boys on a trip to the store. As we were driving, I saw something move out of the corner of my eye and my younger son yelled, "STOP!"

Two deer bounded across the road in front of us.

As they disappeared into a field, I started driving again, looking anxiously for more deer as we continued on.

From the backseat came a contented sigh from our deer-spotter.

"I just love nature," he said.

~2~

My father-in-law picked up on our third grader's enthusiasm for nature and gave him a bird feeder for our yard. My husband and son set it up on Sunday evening, but no birds came.

One of my colleagues told me you have to wait a week or two for the birds to figure out that it's there. So, we waited. And I haven't actually seen a bird at the feeder yet, but the seeds are disappearing and my husband saw a bird coming toward the feeder this morning. We are excited to see the crowds gather over the next few weeks.

~3~



Our fifth grader graduates or “moves up” to middle school next week. Yesterday was the fifth grade picnic at Merry Meadows Farm.

Back when we started elementary school and I received a list of dozens of different volunteer opportunities, my sister Maureen told me to set it aside.

“Those are not for you,” she said.

She knows me so well. I always want to volunteer at school, but somehow I take on too much.

This time I looked at all the slots for picnic volunteers and didn’t know what to do. Then I saw that they needed someone to bring the pizza at lunchtime. That seemed doable. You had to go to a pizza place, pick up the pizza, drive it to the farm, hand it out, and leave.

How could I botch that? I mean, I know how to pick up pizza.

I arrived at the pizza place, where a kind man loaded the pizza in the car. I started driving and realized the pizzas were slipping all around, so I stopped the car, adjusted the pizza, and kept going. My GPS stopped working in the far-off wilds of northern Baltimore County, but it hung in there enough to get me to the entrance gate, where the voice on the intercom said my name wasn’t on the list.

“Aha!” I thought. This is where I will fail. But even then, my friend who handled almost all of the planning for the picnic was on the phone telling me it would be OK.

And the gate went up. Just one wrong turn later and I was delivering the pizzas. It was a fine success.

The best part, though, was seeing my son with his friends and thinking of how they

are all about to transition to middle school.

~4~

It wouldn't be a Quick Takes entry without a food photo, so here's the most decadent, delicious treat we ate this week. We ordered churro donuts from Vida Taco Bar on our first visit there, and they came with chocolate and caramel dipping sauces—totally unnecessary for the sweet donuts, but it would have been rude to send the sauces back.



Happy National Donut Day!

~5~



My prayer group met this week, and we had the most beautiful evening of conversation and fellowship. I look forward to our gatherings and receiving the updates on prayer intentions and new ones to take home with us.

I stopped in the host's powder room at one point and saw her soap dispenser. It made me smile.

Jesus is, indeed, everywhere.

~6~

Last week Ashley Carroll Conway, the valedictorian at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School graduation, referenced my blog where I wrote a commencement address from the perspective of the rider-less Preakness horse.

I'm so touched—and a little in awe that that post has been so well-read. What is it

about this time of year that makes us all crave a little inspiration, even if it comes from the horse's mouth?

~7~

This little league season is coming to an end soon. Our son has a playoff game tonight. If his team wins that game, they go to the championship game next week. It has been a terrific season. It has been fun, the coach has been fantastic, everyone has learned so much, the parents on the sidelines have been friendly and not-intense, and no one had to volunteer to bring a snack at the end of every game.



I'm a little sad to see it come to an end. But I'm also happy to end it before we get tired of going to the games. And it will be amazing to have more of our weeknights at home with normal dinners and family time.

Read more quick takes at Kelly's blog, This Ain't the Lyceum, and have a wonderful weekend!