

Crabs, beware aunts bearing gifts, a photo with Cal Ripken, and what we need from the grocery store (7 Quick Takes)

~1~

It's not really summer around here without at least one taste of steamed crabs. Last weekend we headed to John's sister and brother-in-law's house for some amazing crabs. They were meaty and spicy and fun for the kids to try to open.

Our boys do really well with the banging and the cracking, but they miss quite a bit of meat. At one point someone asked me how many crabs I had had, and I had no idea. I had had parts of at least a dozen, but I wasn't sure how many I had actually eaten myself.

But I'm pretty sure I had enough until next summer.

~2~



I don't see my sister Treasa and her four children under 4 often enough. So yesterday I picked up lunch for us, snagged our well-loved water table off our back deck, and landed in at her house at lunchtime.

So I arrive like a whirlwind, toss food on the table, eat, spread bath towels on the kitchen floor, place a water table on top of them, fill it with just enough water to be sort of fun but not too messy (I hope), and head cheerily on my way.

Was my visit helpful? Maybe? I hope so? As I was driving away, I was thinking that even when I became a mother, I somehow still kept my tendency to be a totally impractical aunt who thinks setting up a water table in the kitchen is a great idea for keeping the toddler and preschooler busy. In my defense, I did ask before I showed up with it. But I found myself thinking back to a conversation last week where I admitted that I have never changed any of my nieces' or nephews' diapers.

But I am great at bringing Panera and water tables.

~3~

Last week I mentioned that I had a photo of myself with Cal Ripken, and—without really trying—I came across the photo. It's just as bad as I had remembered, and maybe even a little worse.



The kind lady in line at Borders with us who took the photo sent a note along saying that someone walked by while she was taking it. But I think it's double-exposed.

Nonetheless, it's the best photo I have of myself with Cal Ripken, and I didn't even think to take a camera to the book signing that day so many years ago, so I cannot complain.

~4~

We had to pick up a prescription last night, and the pharmacy was closing in 15 minutes.

"I don't know whether we can get there in time," I said.

"You can't," my husband told me.

"Let's go," said Daniel.

So off we went, driving safely under the speed limit and still making it just in time.

Daniel even took a photo of the sunset out the window on the way home.

There is nothing like beating the clock.

~5~



It's not Christmas or my birthday, so I was surprised to find a package in the mailbox that was addressed to me.

It was a gift from my friend Annie—a cup from Alcatraz! We are going to do so many wonderful things with it. I'm just not sure what. But how can you not be excited to have such an amazing souvenir?

And we didn't even have to travel to San Francisco or find a ticket to Alcatraz to get it.

~6~

My husband asked me to go through my boxes of mementoes to see if I could organize them a little better. Right now the boxes are stuffed full of photos and notes and birthday cards and blank books with 17 pages of fervent journaling and who knows what else.

I'm not sure he realized what fun I would have going through everything. It has all been so terrific, in fact, that I think maybe I should dedicate a blog a week to revealing something I uncovered in my archaeological dig.

I mean, I'm not sure you care about my latch-hook cat, but you might enjoy one of my earliest works, in which a princess is eaten by a crocodile.

We have no more toilet paper in the house. How do you run out of toilet paper? I can't even begin to explain it. I was just at the grocery store, buying essentials like strawberries and whipped cream and neon sour gummi worms.

Somehow toilet paper never crossed my mind.

So, if you come here to "Open Window" for ideas on how to run your household more smoothly or to get a glimpse at my perfectly organized life, you just might want to rethink that.

Or stick around and...well...just roll with it.

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