

Scuffy the Tugboat, the school year that just won't end, an Elvis sighting, cicadas, fishing and more (7 Quick Takes)

~1~

Daniel and I walked into Kohl's last night, and I realized the Kohl's Cares stuffed animals that are currently for sale are stars of the Golden Books. I stood there staring at the Shy Little Kitten and the Poky Little Puppy, trying to decide what to do.

Our boys don't need them—though their mother would certainly like a Scuffy the Tugboat. But my 1- and 2-year-old nieces? They definitely did.

I reached for my phone and called my sister.

"Hello?" she said.

"Hi, I'm standing in Kohl's..." I started.

"Oh, yes," she said. "I already bought them all. Aren't they wonderful?"

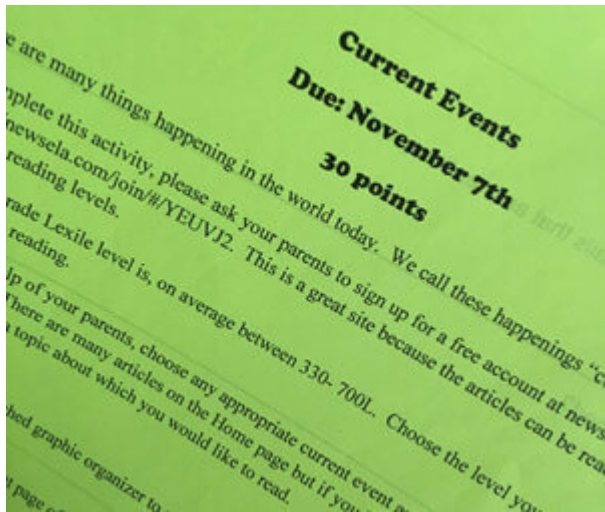
And they are.

~2~

Every morning when I get out of bed, I think, "I can't believe I have to pack lunches again."

The school year still isn't over. And even though the summer can actually be more complicated than the school year in many ways, especially in a household where

both parents work outside the home, we just need to get to that last day of school.



In good news, this week we found a missing homework assignment that was due Nov. 7.

I think we're all done here. Let's just plow through these last days—three full and three half—and get to summer vacation.

~3~

Before we could get there, though, each of the boys had a book report to finish. Is there anything that takes the joy out of reading like having to write a book report? Daniel's was easy. We read *Fred and Ted Go Camping*, a classic if ever there were one, and he answered some questions about his favorite part. But Leo's was harder. He had to read a biography and then dress up like the famous person for the report.

At least I thought that was the assignment. But after we ordered the Elvis Presley costume and wig, I sat down to read the instructions and realized the fine print included a second option. The student could skip dressing up and draw a picture of the person.

Well, that changed everything. Leo made a beautiful picture of Elvis—so intricately done that I'd like to hang it on the wall, but we can't seem to settle on the right location. And he happily gave his report, even though he was the only person to opt for the drawing over the costume. I love that he was so pleased to go a different route.

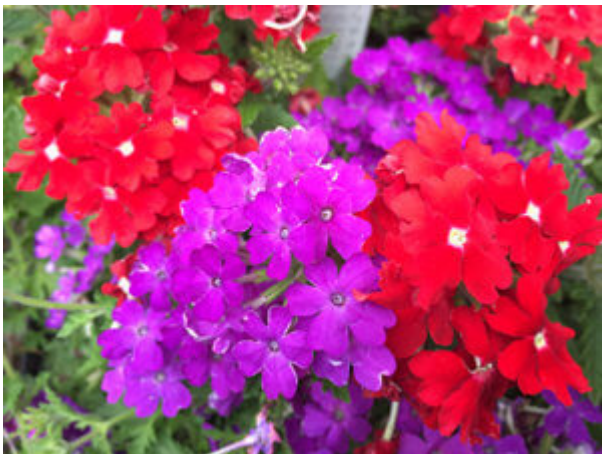


Now I'm just hoping his little brother—the one who's been strutting through the house in an Elvis wig and singing, "I can't help falling in love with you..."—will want to be Elvis for Halloween.

But I don't even care what happens now because the book report is done.

~4~

While it was still May, we went to the florist to pick out my hanging plant for Mother's Day.



I loved the one we picked, but I also enjoyed just wandering around admiring all the flowers.

I look forward to our trip there every year.

~5~

Are you seeing lots of cicadas this spring? We've had a few, but not as many as I had thought there might be.

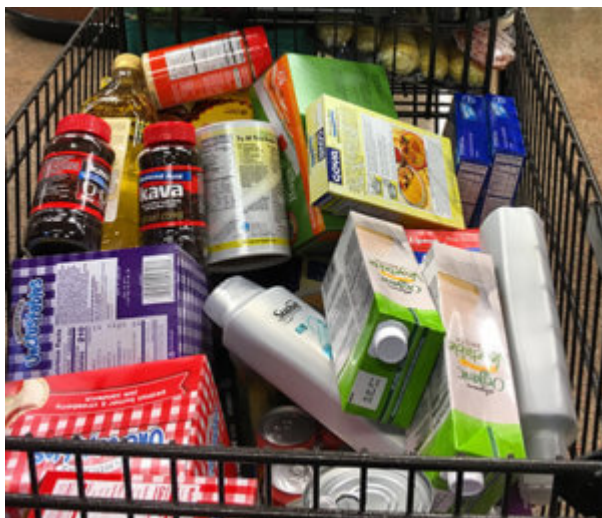
The last time we saw cicadas in large numbers was the spring before our wedding, so I'm a little sentimental about them, but also a little...well...relieved there aren't as many this time around.



~6~

For the first time in years—maybe ever—I had off on Friday while our children were in school. I didn't know what to do with myself. So I went to Mass and then headed to Wegman's and spent two hours doing the grocery shopping.

I met a friend for lunch and did a little clothes shopping since I can't do that with the boys. Then I picked the boys up from school, and we hung out together.



It's a wild and crazy life I lead, and I love it.

~7~

We went fishing again! We are still working on finding good places to fish. Apparently, although people go fishing at Loch Raven Reservoir, you can't fish from the shore at the Loch Raven Fishing Center. I'm not quite ready to rent a boat and put four not-great swimmers in it.



So the nice young man who told us we couldn't fish there suggested we go to Lake Roland, where we fished with great success—but not success that resulted in catching any fish.

One of these days we are going to land an actual fish, and when we do, it will be amazing.

Meanwhile, here's the column I wrote about fishing that was in a recent issue of *The Catholic Review*.

~Bonus Take~

This story of a woman who had an unplanned pregnancy at 16 and gave birth to a child who has many delays and challenges is absolutely beautiful.. Watch it somewhere where you can cry as you take a glimpse into the love and joy demonstrated within this family.

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

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By **Rita Buettner**

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