

Daddy Daycare...Or Little Nuggie's Lucky Day...

I am lucky to have earned my wife's trust with our young kids. This weekend, Jennifer took a three day sabbatical to celebrate her grandmother's 80th birthday and to visit her sister in Indiana. That left me with two young kids and 72 hours to kill.

Most of you "Supermoms" would laugh at this task..."Three measly days with just two kids," you must be thinking, "I could do that with style and grace, even with the flu and four birthday parties to hit."

I don't know how you do it. Bravo.

So there I was at 7:15 a.m. Saturday morning. Two kids, crying because Mom just left, both ready to roll for the day. Sleeping in was not an option. So we got up and we watched a cartoon, cooked breakfast, got in the hot tub, practiced basketball, caught bugs outside for bug soup (we did not imbibe), built *Legos*, and went to town for a haircut. I was beat. I looked at my watch and it said 10:30...a.m. Panic set in.

I survived Saturday, but knew that my stamina and patience would not last. So I did what every other self respecting Dad would do, I started calling grandparents. My quest led me to an early Sunday morning trip to my father-in-law's hunting lease in Junction. Sir, as he is affectionately known by my kids, graciously offered to host a day of hunting a.k.a. "get out of town and get entertained."

We had a great day driving around the ranch, shooting cans with .22s, drinking "Dr. Coke," and generally goofing off. I would say that "hunting" would be a very loose term for what we were accomplishing. We were all having a great day.

Around dusk, we decided to make one last Jeep ride around the ranch. For whatever reason, the wind had picked up and there were animals moving everywhere. We wandered to the North side of the lease to double check a hog trap that had been set earlier in the week. Sure enough, there was a black and white eighty pound pig in the trap...perfect size to for the smoker on Thanksgiving Day.

In our family, taking an animal is an ethical business. My Dad always taught me, "If you kill it, you clean it and we eat it." Sir hunts the same way. Add to this mix a pig stuck in a trap, a rancher's orders to exterminate feral hogs "with extreme prejudice," and a three and five year old riding shotgun and the moral waters get really murky, really fast. If you've ever trapped pigs, you know what I mean.

As Sir and I were quietly debating what to do, we got plenty of input. Make no mistake, kids understand everything. "Dad, shoot him so we can pet him," Parker said, as he shook with excitement. "No, please don't shoot Little Nuggie!" Peyton exclaimed. The debate was over.

As we watched Little Nuggie run from the trap, all we could do was smile. Hopefully, the rancher would understand. No pork chops this Thanksgiving.

Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish at www.ParrishDental.com. Happy Thanksgiving!