

Roots in Ripon

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Chuck Roots

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Grandkids Say the Darnedest Things

A great blessing in our lives is being geographically near all of our grandchildren. Our two daughters and their families live within twenty-five miles of us. Either Isaura or I are involved in caring for these delightful kids each day throughout the week.

So, the other day Isaura is down in Turlock taking care of nine-year-old Brook, and five-year-old Colson which is part of her weekly schedule. Brooklyne (she apparently prefers to go by "Brook" now) was engaged in one of her drawings, a gift that jumped from my father to her. The grandkids call Isaura "Meema", so she says to Brook, "You're a very good artist. What would you like to be when you grow up?" Brook says, "I want to be an artist." To which Meema says, "That's fine, but is there something else you'd like to be? Maybe a doctor? You're a very caring person. You'd be a good doctor." Brook says, "Nah! I don't want to be a doctor. I want to be a lawyer." Meema asks, "Why do you want to be a lawyer?" Brook's reply is classic! She said, "I want to be a lawyer because I like to argue. And I'm good at it!"

If you knew our Brookie, you'd say, "Amen" to that confession!

This week Isaura and I have Brook and Colson with us through Wednesday. School doesn't begin until next week, so this works out really well for us.

This afternoon (Sunday), Josh, our son-in-law, dropped the kids off with us. A small suitcase for each, and games were all carried into our home. No sooner had they set foot in the house than Colson wanted to play with his new nerf gun. Well, let me tell you! These are the coolest guns ever! There were, I believe, three nerf guns, plus a new nerf gun, which was the latest model. After tearing open the package I began the process of trying to figure out how the fool thing worked. You see, this newest whiz-bang nerf gun didn't fire just one spongy projectile. Oh no! Nothing so mundane as that. This gun fires three different types of sponge bullets, all exiting the gun from different portals.

I sat out on the back patio with the directions spread out on the table in front of me. I figured out how to fire two of the bullet types, but was having a doozy of a time trying to load the 10-clip magazine designed for rapid fire. Well, I fussed over this silly play gun for about half-an-hour before I figured it out. I felt ridiculous

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struggling with this harmless play gun. Rather embarrassing for someone who qualified expert in both the rifle and pistol in the Marine Corps! It was humbling, to say the least.

So, we loaded up the four (or was it five?) nerf guns and prepared to do battle in the back yard. With nerf guns at the ready, Colson, Brook and I stalked each other around the back yard, firing at will. I commented that Brook had hit me several times, to which she said, "That's because you're a bigger target, Granddaddy!" It wasn't said to be mean or insulting. She simply stated the obvious: next to a slip-of-a-nine-year-old girl, and a five-year-old boy I do look pretty big, presenting an obvious target.

After frolicking in the yard dealing out death to each other, I returned to the safety of the home. Even the kids took a break.

We are having guests with us most of this week, so Isaura had Brook help her change the sheets on the guest bed and put out the fresh towels and wash cloths. Then Brook asked Meema if she could make a jelly roll. So, all on her own, Brook mixed the ingredients into the correct consistency for the batter. Now, mind you, Brook has never baked a jelly roll before, either at our home, or at her own home. She did ask Meema to help her roll out the dough, but otherwise she did everything herself. And it was delicious!

But we weren't done with the nerf guns! Next thing I know Brook has talked Meema into playing war in the back yard. I was stunned and delighted at the same time. Here is my wife of 41 years with a nerf gun that can shoot multiple projectiles standing in the middle of our back yard, feet spread apart, gun held at hip level, facing her three antagonists, dealing out imaginary death to those of us who dared tread on her domain. You had to see this! She was a female version of Rambo! Except the kitchen apron didn't quite fit the image.

Brook and Colson are sound asleep on the floor at the foot of our bed as I bring this article to a close. We have plenty of beds for them to sleep in, but they much prefer to sleep in our room. And you'll have no argument from either of us!

Proverbs 17:6 says, "Grandchildren are the crown of the elderly." To which I say, "Amen!"