

Another Perspective

Written by Lori Pankonin

What a web of entertainment

Sometimes the simplest things provide hours of entertainment. The old familiar saga is repeated again and again when children end up with thrills of playing in the box that packaged the expensive toy.

I think back 20 some years when I picked up a \$1.50 cork gun for a young boy when I realized it was his birthday. He played and played with that while the big truck (that surprisingly actually picked up CB signal) sat unattended. The much cheaper toy probably didn't last real long, but it certainly got its value played out and sparked a great deal of imagination.

Sometimes the old simple non-automated toys do create more need for using the imagination. There's nothing like good old-fashioned mind stimulation. We've built many forts when blankets, boxes and clothes pins created quite a camping environment. Or sometimes they're our military headquarters.

My grandson was visiting one day. I wanted to get him interested in something other than T.V., but I had some things to accomplish so couldn't give him my undivided attention all morning.

I realize how much I don't know about superheroes, but Austin definitely introduces me to the characters. When he does watch the movies or cartoons, he has to clue me in as to who are the good guys and the bad guys as they all look pretty scary to me.

Anyone who's familiar certainly knows the heroes that will always save the day.

We were eating breakfast and who knows why a spool of thread was sitting on the counter. When we got done, I suggested that we make a spider web. So I got Spiderman started as we reached the thread from one chair to another, back to a stool and over the counter. That's all it took. He took it from there, and I played along as I got down on the ground to crawl under, then over the web to go get something as I got my work done.

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He got more and more creative and soon my escape around the back side of the table was no longer clear. In fact I missed getting to the phone once because I couldn't master the web fast enough.

He was occupied for hours, and then we had some scenarios where Spiderman had to save me. Yes, if someone would have shown up, my house didn't look very orderly, but we had a great excuse.

It wasn't that hard to clear away, and Austin didn't seem to mind that we had to destroy his creation. After all, superheroes deal with constant destruction.

The next time we anticipated Celeste coming home from college, I went down to change the sheets. Lo and behold, her bed was covered in more of Spiderman's web creation. Austin evidently had wanted his aunt to be included in his play time as well.

More recently, Austin and I were talking on the phone about his upcoming t-ball game. I asked if he wanted me to yell out, "Go Austin," or if I should just cheer. He said to cheer for Tony because that's his name.

I'd been down that route before. You see Tony Stark turns into Iron Man, and he was playing that role again. Sometimes his kindergarten papers were identified with "Tony" on the name line.

Well I confirmed that I would be at the t-ball game to watch my grandson whose name is Austin. He still insisted that he was Tony.

His sister, on the other hand, has her own roles. We were at an event where she was connecting with another little girl. The mother asked my granddaughter what her name was, and I stepped closer as I didn't know if she'd understand "Tayvin."

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I soon realized that Tayvin, age 3, was very convincingly telling them that her name was Cinderella. Oh yes. Her Cinderella dress and glass slippers are her most frequent attire and she quite impressively flutters her eyes as she sings and sings while she dances with her imaginary prince.

Oh the beauty of watching young minds develop. It's precious!