



Fourth Quarter Dividends

On Columbus Day weekend, Melanie and I took our “very small basketball team”, five boys (Parker 7, Hunter 6, Lucas 4 ½, Ethan 4 and Bennett 18 months) to Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida. We were accompanied by two sets of parents and an aunt and uncle. For four days and three nights the boys had an absolute blast and we have lived to tell about it. Granted, once everyone left early on Monday morning Melanie and I fled to Sarasota to visit friends and have some serious recovery time. This trip was a dividend of living out the “Fourth Quarter” to the fullest.



Baby Bennett

This was my first trip to the Magic Kingdom in 35 years, having taken my sons, Jason and Adam, when they were seven and five. My how the Park has changed. Arriving at the entrance on Friday at 9 AM we entered a sea of people and the heat was just starting to build. The first thing that I noticed was a hundred or more strollers parked outside of every ride. By getting Disney “Fast Passes” we were able to avoid the long lines at the boy’s favorite rides. However, once they were used up, we waited up to 45 minutes for a two-minute ride. Space Mountain erased any fears that some of the boys may have had going into this trip. By early afternoon it was time to take our tired-out crew back to our hotel—The Yacht Club—for time in the pool. Their energy level quickly rebounded in the largest children’s pool that I have ever seen. The water slides were a big hit and kept them going for hours.



Parker & Lucas with Minnie Mouse

On Saturday we split up and I took my crew, Jason, Taylor, and family via water taxi to the Hollywood theme park. We learned from the previous days experience to get to this park when it opened at 6 AM. This turned out to be my favorite. The first stop was Toyland and it was awesome. The larger than life characters and oversized toys make you feel just like a miniature character from the movie. I went on a small roller coaster ride with one of my grandsons, clinging to him during the entire ride, praying that centrifugal force was not going to toss me off into space. He screamed with joy the entire time; my arteries are now free of any blockage.

Star Wars was the best attraction and it delighted all three generations. It is amazing that franchise has been around for over 40 years (1976). Getting there early, meant we only had to wait about 40 minutes to ride on the Millennium Falcon. For me it was one of the highlights of the trip. Disney has made the Star Wars park so real you feel like you are in an evolving movie. Characters are roaming everywhere. The boys got to meet storm troopers, Darth Vader, and Han Solo. By early afternoon it was time once again to retreat to the pool. Grandpa and Grandma got an umbrella table near the pool so we could keep an eye on all five boys while enjoying refreshments.



Hunter & Ethan with Minnie Mouse

Sunday morning was a defining moment, the character breakfast, at the Contemporary Hotel. We had two tables together that seated all 13 of us. The restaurant probably holds about 200. It is like one gigantic birthday party consisting of docile parents and screaming children. The screams are for the characters roaming around and spending time at each table. Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Goofy, and the rest of cast spend time with each child. Disney really knows how to provide the ultimate experience.

For Melanie and me it was the trip of a lifetime. The opportunity to enjoy all your grandchildren in that setting created so many memories that we will carry with us forever. Creating memories are what the “Fourth Quarter” is all about.