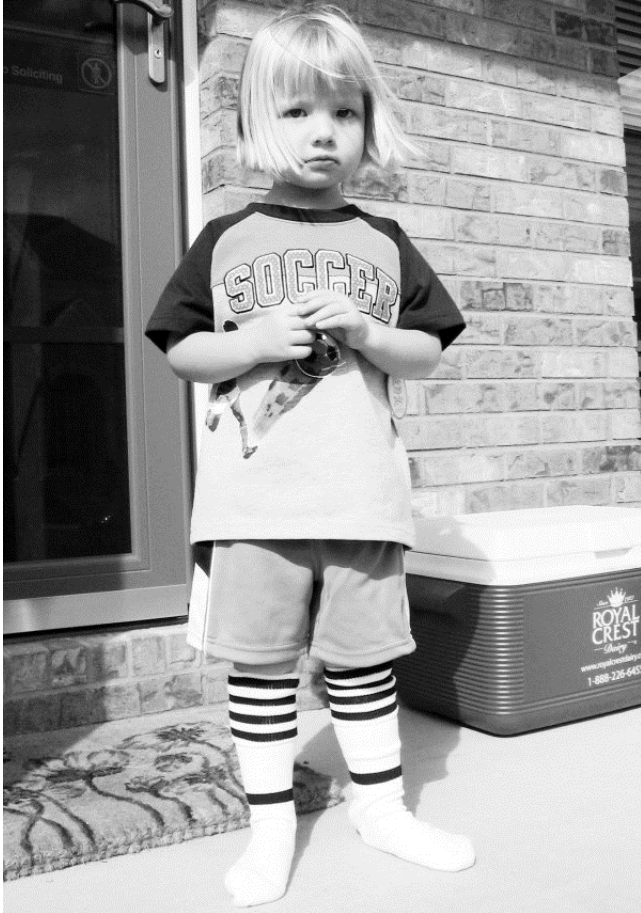


## Lily unsure about soccer



Lily approached her first experience with semi-organized soccer with pronounced skepticism.

"I don't want anybody else to touch my soccer ball," Lily said, the notions of passing and teamwork as meaningful to the 3½-year-old as national unity is to an Iraqi insurgent.

Lily also questioned the

### Bathtime revolutionized



point of running around chasing a small, spotted ball. This seemed a reasonable question to her father, who dedicated years of his life to precisely this endeavor.

Lily now attends Ms. Beth's Montessori school at nearby Stapleton, where Lily thrives. She overuses the word "dreadful," no fault of Ms. Beth's, and is a great fan of the Backyardigans.

Lily remains intrigued by her sister, whom she refers to as "Bug" and, sometimes, "Bugly." Sometimes she pats Bugly on the head, to which Bugly has begun responding with swats at Lily.

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## CAROL ATTAINS ENLIGHTENMENT

Carol, who spends her days working part-time to cover the mortgage while chasing a toddler and a headstrong preschooler around the house, has announced her attainment of enlightenment. She reached the Buddha state while fishing a pacifier from the leaves beneath a backyard ginkgo tree.

"I am now one with the cosmos," she said, as she scrubbed what onlookers hoped was dried raspberry jam from a high-chair tray.

Like the Buddha himself, Carol maintains her state of rapture by never sleeping past 6 a.m. and churning through large piles of miniature clothing and raspberry-jam-stained towels. Work-wise, she continues working as a contract programmer for Leanin' Tree, whose superb greeting cards we recommended wholeheartedly.

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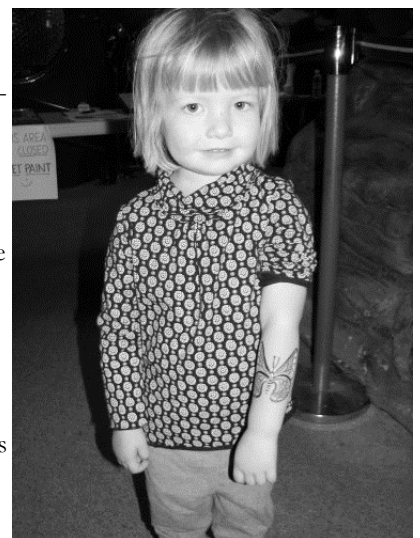


Carol, top left, in her permanent state of bliss.

## Lily confident of butterfly tattoo's long-term appeal

Lily, who surprised her parents by having an impressively lifelike turquoise-and-purple butterfly dermatologically chiseled into her forearm, announced that that her body graffiti was a personal artistic statement she "will love the rest of my life."

"I am a fully formed person whose tastes are unlikely to change over the long-term," said Lily, who adores Clifford and breakfasts of Pop-Tarts and Rice Krispies.



## Maya discovers television



Maya, in a state of suspended animation, discovering television.

Maya's parents, who introduced her to television, have been shocked by the device's hypnotic hold over their 14-month-old daughter.

"I wanted to get dinner together and sort of parked her in her little chair, there," Carol said, waving at the miniature furniture piece and the inert child occupying it. "She hasn't moved in five hours."

Hopes were dashed when what appeared to be volitional motion proved to be a tuft of hair shaking in the furnace-generated breeze.

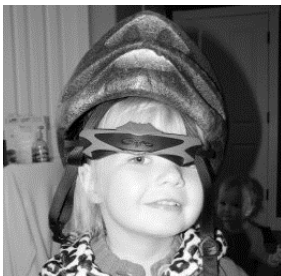
When animate, Maya

has proven a pleasant household addition when not attempting to eat mud from sidewalk cracks, wood chips, and various dried food remnants stuck to the kitchen floor.

Maya's verbal communication is limited to the word "dadadada" and various grunts, barks, yelps and yowls. But she has mastered a few dozen baby signs, and can confidently identify penguins and elephants, among other beasts. Such skills have proven helpful when running into penguins and elephants at the local park.

## Lily-isms

- "I may be getting bigger and I may have strong muscles, but I don't see you taking care of me."
- "Mom, everybody's mean sometimes. I can't help it. It's in my heart."
- "Dad, does this soup remind you of the spot on Jupiter?"
- "How big is the Grand Canyon? Is it bigger than 37 diplodocuses?"



## Todd still riding bus

Todd continued covering science and environment reportage for the Daily Camera, interviewing climate and space scientists as well as Cliff, driver of the 5:14 p.m. bus out of Boulder.

Cliff explained his aggressive turns as his way of making sure Newton's Third Law hasn't been overturned by the Bush Supreme Court.

Todd covered the New Horizons rocket launch at Cape Canaveral, which led to the launch of something even more important than humanity's first visit to Pluto and the Kuiper Belt: the Daily Camera Science Podcast. He is using, without permission, Bravo Hits '94 techno music for the intro.

Todd discovered fellowships in 2006. They exist because outside organizations interested in a healthy press have realized that, left to their own devices, journalists would learn nothing. One fellowship took him to Munich to attend a science conference. There, he learned that German conference centers are not necessarily air conditioned. A second had something to do with energy.

He is making progress on his book, titled "Long Shot," about the Deep Impact comet mission and the Boulder company that built the spacecraft.

Todd abandoned his family in June for a cultural fact-finding trip to Germany. There, he studied the strange ways of the Germanic tribe, which involve heavy drinking and soccer.



Todd, right, with aboriginal German

## TRAVEL REPORT

The Neffs finally have realized the difference between a "vacation" and a "trip." A vacation is something one does to recharge physically and mentally and often involves sleep. A trip is what you take with small children.

Besides Todd's solo jaunts for work and cultural-anthropological research, the Neffs believe they took a couple of trips in 2006, though they blend in memory with the grind of everyday child-rearing.

There was, they think, a baptism in central Ohio that included time in southeastern Michigan to visit Grandma Ardell, now 94. And then a trip to Todd's parents home near Phoenix, which involved Grandpa Doug and cacti as well as Maya's decision to wake up daily at 4 a.m., which is before the sun even hints at its existence.



Grandpa Doug, cactus, Maya

