

Amusing Anecdotes about Leo

On June 7, 2005, a pounding sound was heard downstairs. Leo was downstairs in the kitchen pounding on a Hershey's syrup can with the pointed end of a can opener, holding the can opener in his fist and using it like a hammer. Kathy went down to see what was all the noise, took the can opener from him, levered the can open with Leo watching, and Leo said to her, "You suck."

In March 2004, Kathy asked Leo if he wished to be baptized at a church where he had become a regular attendee at a Friday night youth event. Leo replied that he didn't want "it" cut off. Kathy informed him that cutting "it" off was circumcision, not baptism, and that it had already been done.

On Dec 26, 2000, Kathy commented to Leo on some sand in his hair from playing at the beach that afternoon. Leo said "A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do."

In August 2000, when Norb was visiting SD, I went out to dinner with him, Dale, Kathy, and Leo. Leo was listening to the table conversation with half an ear when we were talking about Dale's spotty relationship history with women and a few joking remarks about its implications. Leo instantly piped up loudly in the restaurant with a question for Dale, "Are you gay?" Dale blanched and we proceeded to joke about how everyone in the restaurant now were mistaken about Dale's preference.

On Sept 29, 1999, Kathy was urging Leo to get out of the car and come into the house. Kathy said "Come on, Leo!" Leo replied "I'm come on-ing!"

On Sept 29, 1999, Leo forgot the word "sneeze" and replaced it with "bless you" as a verb, e.g. "I bless you"

On Sept 22, 1999, Kathy was trying to convince Leo to sleep in his own bed instead of ours, particularly since he was holding the kitten in order to bed down with it (and Kathy might be a bit allergic). Leo responded to Kathy, "She means no harm. She comes in peace."

On July 29, 1999, Peter was good-naturedly hassling Leo about why Peter has to look out for Leo's diet and why Leo always has room for eating junk and no room for good food. Leo replied "I have a candy stomach about that big" and opened his hands pretty wide. Leo said "I have a healthy stomach about that big" and opened his hands very little. Leo said "It's like a cow; I have two stomachs."

At the dentist June 15, 1999, clove oil was applied to Leo's gums in preparation for an anaesthetic injection. Leo asked "Is this non-toxic?"

By Summer 1999, Leo had grown sufficiently competent at skateboard parks that he could drop into bowls and half-pipes and can do 180 degree turns while going up their slopes.

June 1999: Leo was getting impossibly fussy at eating protein foods for dinner. Sometimes it seemed he would prefer to survive on GoGurt (yogurt in a squeeze tube) and hot dogs (without the bun please) as his only dinner protein.

At the beach on May 16, 1999, Leo was scampering about playing and singing "A pirate's life is the life for me, Yo ho ho and a sippy cup for me."

May 1999: Leo learned to ride his Zero skateboard competently at Carlsbad skatepark over many sessions.

On April 15, 1999, Kathy was playing Mancala with Leo, a game using pebbles. Kathy and Leo were playing by Leo's rules since Leo said he had played it at the YMCA after-school care all the time. Leo recalled the rules incorrectly because his version resulted in by-rote play where he always won. Kathy and I challenged him on his "rules" and noted that he always won. In defense of his win streak, Leo said "I've played it ever since I was a child.....Oops, I am a child."

On the morning of April 2, 1999, Leo told Peter about his dream the night before (close to his actual words but slightly paraphrased):

A candy monster was chasing me and trying to take away my candy. It took 800 already and I was left with 5. It looked like a big blob of candy with two eyes that looked like they were evil. Eyes were made out of candy. Mouth was made out of candy.

Leo crashed while skateboarding on March 24, 1999 and really skinned off an elbow. He crashed occasionally in learning skateboarding, takes his beating fairly well, and gets over it. At home that evening, Leo and Peter were looking through a skateboarding magazine and commenting on the pictures of the skateboard professionals doing tricks. Leo said that he was a professional at getting hurt.

Leo slept in our bed on March 15, 1999. In the middle of the night, Peter woke up to get a drink of water and commented to Kathy that Leo was "migrating" on the bed from one of us to the other. Leo said in his sleep "Migrating candy" and then followed it up with "It's made out of caramel apples" when Kathy asked him about the "migrating" candy. The next morning we told him what he said and he asked what migrating meant; it wasn't in his vocabulary.

In early February 1999, Leo and Peter were discussing some collectible cards that Leo wished to get. Peter said that Leo could get them with his own money and that Peter didn't mind if Leo did so. To paraphrase Leo's response, he said that "...K or P money should be used for it and not L money." Leo also started using the phrase "easy smeesy" in addition to "cinchy."

Leo got his first non-training-wheel full-size bicycle on January 17, 1999. He started learning to ride it more seriously because his previous kiddie bike was too small; we also lived on a hill until the previous summer which hindered bike riding for him. He was able to ride for a two or three pedal turns pretty quickly but stopped the initial training session after several crashes and injuries. Injuries were to a knee after which he changed from shorts to pants and also a handlebar end jabbing him strongly in his chest. That was enough. Three weeks later after practicing on some weeknights and weekends, he was riding well enough with only occasional tumbles.

Leo vacillated back and forth for a week in deciding whether to accompany his best friend Ray and his family to Mammoth and Lake Tahoe for a week over Christmas 1998. After Leo decided firmly that he didn't want to go at one point, he changed his mind two days later and he did indeed want to go. When asked why he didn't want to go two days earlier and now wanted to go only two days later, Leo explained away the reversal of his earlier negative decision by saying "I was younger then."

In December 1998, Leo picked up the word "cinchy" to refer to something that is easy to accomplish. He uses it for homework assignments, PlayStation games or moves, etc; he used it a lot.

At bedtime November 29, 1998, Leo read his first easy-reader book completely; it was entitled "Where is Nat?"

In October 1998, Kathy was doing a brainteaser game with Leo. She asked "Who were the first Americans?" Leo answered, "Our grancestors !" Kathy also asked "What's the word for someone who works?" Leo answered "A librarian !"

Sept 21, 1998: Kathy took Kayla out for a walk and when she came back, Leo had managed to get himself and Speed (his kitten) stuck and "lost" inside a sleeping bag. Leo was in an absolute panic by the time Kathy got him out -- drenched with sweat and very scared. He had somehow managed to get the open end of the bag folded under and stuck beneath the adirondack chair. Once he calmed down, he announced to Kathy, "Don't worry, Mom, I'm a survivor. My heart was beating like a drum, I was so scared. But I'm okay now!"

In Fall of 1998, some new words appeared with frequency undoubtedly picked up from school. General purpose is "rad." "Whoopsie" when he makes a mistake. "Chickie-mama" to refer to Kathy or someone in his version of being hip including males. Use of "cool" became much more frequent.

Summer 1998: After we moved into the condo, Leo went crazy over the June bugs buzzing through the patio on warm days. We caught them by flinging a tee shirt over them.

1998: Leo commonly responds "I know that" when you tell him something including something you know he doesn't know. You can count on him to claim to understand already whatever you are telling him.

On May 18, 1998, Leo was playing with a toy soldier garbed in the uniform of the Continental Army (our side) in the Revolutionary War. We explained the Revolutionary War and Leo launched into singing "America the Beautiful" with Kathy which he learned at school. After the singing ended, Leo played with the soldier as he sang to himself; Peter heard him sing "Our purple mountains' majesty agreed to have a war - bam - bam -bam."

On 4/17/98, Leo had dinner with us at La Bruschetta, a nice restaurant near Scripps. After his dinner, Leo had a piece of white chocolate cake for dessert. Leo ate as much as he could but didn't eat it all. He offered the remainder to us, saying "You little lovebirds can eat that all up."

In April 1998, Leo's mispronunciations are limited. We hear "Frucky Fried Chicken" for "Kentucky Fried Chicken". He still slips out with "aminal" instead of "animal" too.

In 1998 "dammit" seemed to be his favorite word.

On 2/17/98, Leo was admiring a Godzilla toy in Peter's office and asked if he could have it. Peter said "No, I want it. You'll get it when I die." Leo said "I hope you die soon."

On 2/12/98, Kathy mentioned doing some belated thank-you letters for Christmas presents to Leo. Peter said that he didn't bother with thank-you letters. Leo asked "Why don't you write thank-you letters?" Peter said "Because I'm lazy and I'm bad." Leo replied "Cool, can we do bad things together, big boy?"

In early 1998, playing the card game Crazy Eights at bedtime was a rage with Leo. He learned it during the Christmas 1997 holidays.

On 1/18/98, Kathy asked Leo to take a newly-purchased shampoo bottle into Leo's bathroom. Leo responded "I'm not your servant. You must be a poor, poor woman. You can't even hold it. You don't know where your arms are?" Leo's response took us by alarm (and amusement) and we applied the patient approach and discussed the matter calmly with him to get compliance.

1997 and 1998: Asking questions on any topic under the clear blue sky is especially preferable in the bathroom including public bathrooms. Once Leo asked me what was the name of a person who entered a public bathroom while Leo was in the stall; I tough it out and don't act embarrassed.

During 1998, Leo preferred chicken drumsticks, candy, hot dogs, candy, hamburgers, candy, orange juice, candy, macaroni, yogurt, fruit, etc. He liked beef jerky too which he calls "black cow"; salmon jerky is called "black fish." Oatmeal became favored too.

During 1997- early 1998, Leo regularly posed questions about who would be stronger, Batman or someone he specifically names. We discuss it thoroughly and both of us feel quite strongly that Batman is stronger except for Superman who is the strongest. Leo and I went to a lot of movies together; he likes action movies. Leo told me that he doesn't like movies where people only talk and that his favorite movies are anything with good guys and bad guys.

In December 1997, Leo asked where one of his toys were and Kathy responded that she had put it away in the toy bin under his bed. Leo responded "Dammit, woman." Leo received a lecture from Kathy.

In December 1997, we heard Leo's first usage of the F word.

In November 1997, Leo was singing along to the Village People's "Macho Man" song with the words "nacho nacho man."

In late October 1997, Peter explained the movie rating system to Leo and asked him what he thought about the people who decided on the movie ratings to keep children out of some movies; Leo said that "he would beat them up."

On October 26, 1997, Leo and Kathy were watching TV when a long ad came on for a home electrolysis (hair removal) device. Leo said, "Mom, you should get one of those." Kathy wanted an insight into his little brain (maybe he thinks my eyebrows are out of control?) and asked him why. Leo replied that then Kathy could just use that to cut his hair--we'd do it once and the hair would never come back! Kathy told him that would be fine with her, except that then Leo would be bald. A slow smile from Leo--"Never mind, Mom!"

During one of Peter's Antarctic trips, probably the 1997 trip, Kathy was talking on the phone to Peter in Antarctica. Leo was overhearing the conversation and piped up with a comment, when Kathy was telling Peter about something Leo did. Kathy said to Leo, "No comments from the peanut gallery." Leo responded back, "No comments from the vagina gallery." Kathy said "What!!" and asked Leo what he meant. Leo said that he was responding to Kathy's comment to him about no comments from the penis gallery. Kathy pointed out Leo's mistake, and Leo responded "Never mind."

Towards the end of July 1997, Leo asked Kathy for something and received it without saying "thanks." Kathy coaxed him "What do you say?" Leo sang back "God bless you please, Mrs Robinson, Jesus loves you more than you will know." Kathy said that she should probably play that Simon and Garfunkel tape a bit less in the car on the way to school and back. Since his response met with an uproarious response, Leo has been turning it into a general rubric for laughs on occasion. Within a few days, it came out "God bless you Steve Robin Hood."

July 1997: Kathy spotted an alligator lizard in our back yard in mid-July 1997 and Leo caught it. Peter assembled a terrarium for it and Leo spent considerable hunting bugs for it to eat. The lizard was ferociously interested in crickets and Leo was very absorbed watching it eat crickets that he caught.

On July 9, 1997 after a long series of behaviors trying to put off bedtime and in response to Kathy's persuasiveness that it was indeed bedtime, Leo said "OK, I'll go to sleep but I'm going to go to sleep with my eyes open." He was asleep within one minute.

July 7, 1997 Leo can be indecisive for awhile when considering between two highly desirable options. His tie-breaking technique is to ask us "What would you do if you were me?" He was particularly having a hard time choosing between two toys and we declined to advise him when he posed the question above several times. Finally, after we declined again, we heard him say "What would I do if I were me?"

After seeing "Men in Black" on Fourth of July weekend 1997, Leo seemed most impressed by the angry response of the alien in the bull terrier disguise while being interrogated by Kay, one of the Men in Black: "You can kiss my furry little butt." Any use of the word "butt" is getting considerable currency lately since "butt" is a favored humorous pejorative with Leo (and several of his friends). We don't encourage it but we do overhear Leo and his friends having extensive discussions calling each other creative names incorporating the word "butt" as many times as possible.

1997 and first half of 1998: Bug hunting rules supreme. Mostly Leo hunts bugs in the backyard. Darkness doesn't stop him; he hunts at night too. Peter got tired of replacing flashlight batteries and purchased Leo his own rechargeable flashlight for hunting. Leo is very proud of his flashlight, bug jars, bug hunting tools, etc. Leo learned to flood a cobblestone border around our lawn with water in order to flush the bugs out as they ran for high ground. Flooding out those cobblestones became a regular part of bug hunting. Caterpillars were one of Leo's favorite finds. Leo found several worm salamanders which we never knew lived in our yard; they look just like worms until you look closely and see tiny legs and other amphibian features.

Leo's favorite words in the first half of 1997 seemed to be "idiot" and "dammit".

On Sept 22, 1996, after Leo's usual bedtime (meaning he was tired), Leo was in full superhero regalia, wearing his Black Power Ranger outfit plus his Batman cape. He needed to pee so Kathy unzipped the back of his Black Power Ranger outfit. Leo went to his bathroom and we heard him flush the toilet. Then he ran to his room crying, utterly distraught, saying "I can't fight bad guys anymore. I don't have the power. It's gone." and on and on with this theme. It was hard to get out of him why he lost "the power". He finally sobbed out that it was because we had not zipped up the back of his Black Power Ranger outfit before he flushed the toilet.

On Sept 15, 1996, Leo was crabby before bedtime. As he stomped into his bathroom, he announced to us in a loud voice "I'm going to leave my pee in the toilet and I'm not going to flush it".

Leo was maybe four (1996) when Peter took him to Sea World to play and look at exhibits. They were standing in line to purchase fish to feed the sea lions and a woman in front of them was using a crutch because one of her legs was amputated. Leo asked Peter quietly why she had only one leg and Peter explained that it is normal and diseases or accidents cause it. To Peter's horror, Leo started saying in sing-song loud enough for everyone to hear while rocking on his feet "She has only one leg, she has only one leg, she has only one leg..." Peter was aghast and cut Leo off.

1995: When Leo was 3, Peter took him to see the movie, Babe, which is about a little pig. Several days later, Leo began insisting that Kathy should pee on Leo's shoes. Wanting to understand the reasoning behind this sudden fetish, Kathy asked why Leo wanted her to do this. It turned out that Leo was trying to replicate one of his favorite scenes from "Babe" -- where the farmer picks up the baby pig to guess its weight and the pig pees on the farmer's shoes. Needless to say, Kathy refrained from urinating on Leo's shoes!

1995: Leo, aged 3, and Kathy were crossing a busy parking lot. Kathy asked him several times to hold her hand for safety, but he kept resisting. Finally, after Kathy asked once more, he replied, "No! I'll hold my own hand!" He then clasped his hands together and held them out in front of himself. After that, Kathy had to resort to pretending to be really afraid of parking lots and begging Leo to hold her hand so that she wouldn't be so scared.

1995: Leo was being driven to preschool daily by Kathy on the freeway. Cars cut in and out and Kathy can vocally react to drivers. One day, a car cut closely in front of Kathy and Leo, Kathy jammed on the brakes, and Leo looked at Kathy and asked "Shit, Mama?"

1994: Early mispronunciations at the two year old level that come to mind are "conculcated" for "complicated" and "mogurt" for "yogurt". About the only vestige left at five years old is "cacuzzi" for "jacuzzi", "aminal" for "animal", and "Percules" for "Hercules." Leo also had a problem with volume control and Peter continually reminded him to whisper in a movie theater.

1994: When Leo was two, we were waiting in a line of cars at a drive-in movie theater for the drive-up ticket booth to open. When it was past the time to open, all the cars in line started honking horns and some were shouting out their windows. Leo was absolutely delighted with this chaotic symphony and was leaning his upper body out the car window, shouting and screaming along, free-associating anything that came to his mind. We heard him yell out at one point, "I have stinky bottom !" The people in the next car cracked up.