

What Daddy Does

What does my 6-year-old daughter think I do every day? I decided the best way to find out was to interview her

At a recent school function for my 6-year-old daughter, I overheard one of the moms ask my daughter what her father did for a living. My daughter, Lily, answered, "He's a golfer."

Although I did rather appreciate the first admiring look from the woman as she gave me a double take, wondering which pro golfer I was and if she had recently seen me on television, I had to correct my daughter, stating that I'm not a golfer but a golf course superintendent. The woman was clearly not as impressed, but gave me a bit of a smile, albeit uninspired.

This got me wondering how much my daughter actually knows about what I do for a living. During the summer months, I occasionally take her to work with me on some of the more casual days. Although I tend to have a light workload on these days, she does see some of the things I do at the golf course. We each talk about our day at the din-

ner table in the evenings, so surely she must consume some of the verbal dribbling I offer to the family about my problems with golfers, turf disease and drainage concerns.

But what does she truly know? What does her young mind think her daddy does every day?

I decided the best way to find out was to interview her. The only way she would agree to do this was if she could continue to watch "Prehistoric Planet" on Discovery Kids during the interview. I consented.

The interrogation of my daughter had the initial intention of leading her, through a series of brilliantly conceived questions, toward unveiling her

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BY RON FURLONG

Superintendent Ron Furlong talked to his daughter Lily while she played with her dinosaurs and watched "Prehistoric Planet."

PHOTOS BY: RON FURLONG



What Daddy Does



Lily wants to grow up to be a paleontologist, not a golf course superintendent.

“You tell the workers what to do. And work on things.”

— LILY FURLONG

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true feelings about my job and what my job means for her, as well as her feelings about the game of golf. However, after the questions I felt more like she led me through them than the other way around.

Daddy: Lily, what do I do for a living?

Lily: What do you mean?

Daddy: What do I do for a job?

Lily: Golfing.

Daddy: Golfing?

Lily: Golf superintendent, I mean. Actually, I'm not sure. You tell the workers what to do. And work on things.

Daddy: Like what things?

Lily: I'm not sure.

She's straining at this point to give me any concentration. A snarling T-Rex has most of her attention.

Daddy: Well, you've come with me to work, right? What do we do?

Lily: You and me?

Daddy: Yes.

Lily: Sometimes I play on the computer. I mean my Web sites. And we eat in the restaurant. Uggh!

Daddy: What?

Lily: Look, Pop! This is where the ants attack and eat the baby dinosaur. (She has seen this episode before.) They're flesh-eating! Arrggh! Here they come! Look at that! (After the action dies down I continue the interview.)

Daddy: What's your favorite part of going to the golf course?

Lily: When I get to golf.

Daddy: What do you like about golfing?

Lily: I like to whack it really far.

Daddy: What do you think about golf?

Lily: It's fun. A lot of people do it.

Daddy: Is daddy a good golfer?

Lily: Yes. What?

Daddy: What do you know about my job?

Lily: That you're good at it. (Did I mention she's sweeter than sugar?)

Daddy: Thanks, honey. What do you think about my job?

Lily: I don't know.

Daddy: What are your feelings about chemicals?

Lily: They're dangerous. Look! (The ants have consumed all the flesh and are moving off in a massive swarm.)

Daddy: Dangerous like the ants?

Lily: I guess.

Daddy: What's important about golf courses?

Lily: I don't know.

Daddy: What's important about my job?

Lily: I don't know.

Daddy: What's your favorite color? (I had to check to make sure she was still listening to me.)

Lily: Pop! You know. Pink!

Daddy: What is the worst part, for you, about my job?

Lily: That you have to work on weekends.

Daddy: What do you want to be when you grow up?

Lily: Either a marine biologist or a ... what's it's called again? The dinosaur job?

Daddy: Paleontologist.

Lily: Yeah. Paleontologist.

Daddy: How about a golf course superintendent?

Lily: Like you?

Daddy: Yeah.

Lily: I don't know. Maybe. Are we almost done?

Daddy: A couple more, sweetie. Who is your favorite golfer?

Lily: You. (She got a hug for this answer)

Daddy: How about a favorite golfer that is on TV?

Lily: Tiger Woods.

Daddy: Can you name another golfer?

Lily: Hmm. No.

Daddy: Have you heard of Michelle Wie?

Lily: I don't think so.

Daddy: Last question. What's the most important thing a golf course superintendent has to do?

Lily: (With almost no hesitation). Make the greens quick. (The girl has been listening at the dinner table. This is the same answer my boss would have given, by the way.)

Lily: Oh, Pop, I know a good question you should ask me.

Daddy: What?

Lily: What movie do I want to see that I've never seen before and should have by now?

Daddy: OK. What movie do you want to see that you've never seen before and should have by now?

Lily: "The Wizard of Oz"!

Daddy: Thanks, honey.

Lily: Do you think any dinosaur eggs survived, and there might be dinosaurs that are going to hatch soon and they might walk the earth again?

Daddy: Unlikely.

Lily: But possible?

Daddy: Possible, I suppose.

I'm not exactly sure what conclusions to draw from her answers, except to say that perhaps your children may not know as much as you thought they did about your job in regards to some things. But in regards to others, they may know a heck of a lot more than you gave them credit for.

Although I hold out a small fraction of hope that Lily will follow in my footsteps and become a superintendent, my money is on paleontology.

I should also mention that my 6-year-old daughter will *not* be watching "Pre-historic Planet" again until she turns at least 10.

Flesh-eating ants devouring baby dinosaurs! What kind of father am I? ■

Contributing Editor Ron Furlong is superintendent of Avalon Golf Club in Burlington, Wash.



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