

Busy busy

With a new school year comes not just employment but things going on at my church as well. Okay, I haven't been *that* busy, but compared to just a week ago it seems like it. Also, I have been catching up on my internet reading since I was down for much of last week. It still goes down daily, but they tell me I have a perfect connection and it must be the work they're doing in the area. I can only hope it goes away after awhile proving them right, otherwise I'll be stuck since they'll never find anything with my "perfect" connection.

Monday I took a half-day job, but when I got there I found out the secretary put a teacher's request in for the wrong day. They then proceeded to remove the assignment from my job list so I can only hope I'll get some sort of compensation for it, but if not I least I can have the satisfaction of working only four periods today and getting a full day's pay for it (the norm for middle school is six periods). The teacher came in to work and decided he was too ill to work so I picked up the late assignment. I did not work first period as a result. Then I found out the teacher only has five periods, helping out in the office a 6th period. That is not normal and they didn't have me do it, though I did ask about it. To top it off, the teacher has a student teacher so he did most of the work. Cool.

Yesterday was an easy day too, though when I got there I was a little concerned as the teacher didn't leave any lesson plans. Fortunately I only had to teach one class. The rest were either co-teach classes (you know what that means- the other teacher does the teaching and I help as an assistant) or resource/study hall. As it turned out the one class they were just working out of a packet, so I just taught the next page of the packet and had them start their homework in class. Of course when I got home I found an email outlining the plans- apparently the system allows for a teacher to upload the plans

to the sub-system and have them emailed to the sub. Having never had this happen before, I never realized it could do this so I never bothered to check my email before heading to work. Fortunately for me I had pretty much followed the plans without realizing it! Whew...

Besides work I had my usual small group Monday night and tonight I had rehearsals for both children's drama, which starts up again this weekend, and choir. Since they overlapped, I had to miss a little bit of each. I just wish it hadn't been the first rehearsal as that is one that people shouldn't miss, even in part. Well, that's how it goes I guess. I have two more choir rehearsals next week and will have to miss small group as a result but they understand about that- it only happens a few times a year. I'll just have to make sure they are set on song lyrics as that's kind of my job- I usually set up a couple of powerpoints and bring my computer in. That's one of the nice things about this new computer. I guess I will just have to print something up and drop them off- I'll be in the same building after all. Someone else provides the music by the way in case you're wondering. My small group starts off each week with a couple of worship songs.

Well, that's it for now. Time to get ready for some sleep. It's going to be another early day tomorrow.

The Nerd

Since my friend C is in the play called The Nerd (hopefully still is, considering his medical troubles as of late) I thought I would share something I embarrassingly have enjoyed watching on the internet. Embarrassing because it's not

exactly family friendly. In fact, if you have young ones around, do not watch any of these shows. In fact, don't even go to the link I am going to provide. You have been warned. What does this have to do with The Nerd? Well, the one I write about is James Rolfe, otherwise known as the angry video game nerd. He unfortunately reminds me a little about myself playing video games sometimes. I can get really angry after playing a tough game for awhile. This is probably one of the reasons I don't play them much anymore, and when I do they are often easy ones made for kids. Anyway, Rolfe plays really bad video games on purpose just to show us all how bad they are, and to have a little fun with it. Unfortunately, his reviews are laced with profanity during the "angry" moments (just an act I'm sure) which is why I only grudgingly admit to watching them. Besides reminding me a little bit about myself, I am entertained watching video games which is probably why I continue to watch them. I download video game movies from [World of Longplays](#), [Speed Demos Archive](#), [Recorded Amiga Games](#), [TAS Videos](#), and more. This form of voyeurism, watching others play games, comes from when I was a young teen. I enjoyed arcades a little too much. When I would run out of money, I would stay and just watch others play. As far as I remember, I didn't get much strategy tips from this, just enjoyment.

Well, back to AVGN. Rolfe often has themes for the reviews he does. When a popular movie comes out, he will do a series of games based on that movie. Yep, he has recently done Indiana Jones and Batman games. He also does some holiday themes, like halloween and Christmas. From a technical standpoint, they are really pretty good. I have watched nearly all of them (I skipped just one I think- a certain type of Atari game theme which makes his page pretty much not safe for family...). This guy is quite popular too as he has had some knock-off reviewers. One did I think just one video calling himself the Christian Video Game Nerd. He just mimiced one of Rolfe's videos substituting "nicer" words for profanity in places, but the "anger" is still there. There is also a Happy Video Game

Nerd, who reviews some of the better games. He stole the AVGN theme song, substituting his own lyrics. Anyway, if you haven't done a search yet by now, the Angry Video Game Nerd site is at... Hmm. I talked of one page, but it seems the page has moved. The reviews are now categorized by year so they are not all family unsafe, but still be careful. The site is at Cinemassacre.com.

Another review favorite of mine is a bit more family friendly. Someone took it on himself to review all Nintendo (NES) games from day one of its Japanese release in the early eighties. He calls his series [Chrontendo](#) (click for link). He as also just started chronicling Sega's SMS system from the same time. I am in the process of downloading episode two of ChronSega right now. If you have broadband, do yourself a favor and download the larger DIVX videos. The quality is much better than the MP4 streams.

Anyway, that's it for now for this look into the psyche of this substitute teacher. I wonder if I should get a job with Comcast. Still bad pay, but If I work eight hours daily I will start with what I am getting as a sub, plus I will have benefits and plenty of opportunity for overtime pay too..

First full day of the year!

And only day this week, partly thanks to my connection issues which are unfortunately still ongoing. I had no internet at all for yesterday afternoon and evening, while today it's been intermittent. I wonder if the signal is now too powerful if that's possible? I mean, it was going through a cable that was chewed or worn to the center wire, so it's possible that in the past they have had to increase it to compensate (the

cable didn't get that way overnight after all) and now that it's fixed, the signal may be too strong. Just throwing a guess out which is probably completely off. The tech who was here was unable to measure it as his portable reader needed recharging. Since the connection was up and I was getting nice speeds (around 19000kbps on speakeasy.net), he just let it go.

Still in special ed on Friday, but not due to meetings this time. Apparently the teacher had a bad case of bronchitis on Thursday so he wisely opted to take Friday off. It was actually a rather easy day. Four classes (well, three really- one was a typical two-period-long language arts class) were team teaching, meaning that a sub just takes the role of a teaching assistant while the other teacher takes over the teaching part. The other two classes were resource periods. I just gave them a topic to write about in their journals and once finished they just worked on homework. There was also a teaching assistant in these classes (a sub too, by the way) so as you can imagine it was a pretty light day. Next Thursday and Friday I have a job lined up for ELL in another district. This is a teacher I refused to work for last year or most of the year before. I am hoping things have changed since most of the students from that problem class have gone on to high school. I will let you know how it goes, hopefully with other stories throughout the week.

Finally back online.

Figures, to use a word Jamiahsh did on my last post. Why do I use it? Well, because the tech never showed up! That's right, no call, no nothing. And get this- I called Comcast and they said the appointment was canceled! What??

Actually, that was the second time I called. The first time I called the representative was helpful and even gave me a \$25 credit on the spot for their tardiness. She then got in contact with the local dispatch and I was informed they would call me with an updated ETA. As I said, they never did. Now I need to wait until Friday. Sigh. I am actually at my church right now using their wireless to write this. I wish the local office was as customer friendly as the 888 number...

The above post was actually written two days ago, but for some reason I must have hit the save button instead of the publish button. So, now that I am online again I thought I might as well post it. Today the tech came (according to him he wasn't the right tech- the one who had this job was tied up at another job- but who cares, I'm back up!) and I showed him the bad spot. Ten minutes later, after a couple snips off the bad section and a couple of connectors put in place to join the ends, I am back in business. Well, I am going to catch up on some news now. I'll post again later. And thanks Taylhis on the update on C. I did get the email, and read your comment on the last post. I am glad the problem has finally been identified and is being treated. Prayers that the biopsy tests come back negative.

Offline for a couple of days

I was offline all of yesterday due to a cable problem. I have located the problem- it seems the outside cable is worn through in a spot. I have jury-rigged it to test it for now, and as you can see since I am writing a post that it is indeed the problem. Unfortunately I can't keep it up. Obviously they have a record that I am accessing the internet now, but I

can always tell the tech I was just testing the problem myself, and I was. I will have to remove what I did though. Unfortunately it means no internet for me for two more days since my appointment isn't until Wednesday afternoon. ☐

Hopefully I can get sub jobs for the next couple of days using the phone instead. Of course that means no blogs until then either...

Welcome back gift

As I said last post, I started working again this past week. What I didn't mention is my welcome back gift. In the past, I have received books at one of the district's workshops. Well, this year I didn't attend their workshop due to not planning on going back to subbing. I found out later that I couldn't have attended it anyway as this year they only allowed new subs. I guess they got tired of paying returning subs who already had the information. That's right, they pay subs to attend the workshop, then also pay for their lunches, materials, and extras like the books I mentioned. Another district workshop also pays subs to attend, but we have to work five days before receiving the pay for the workshop, and they don't give away books or even pay for lunch. Fine by me- I don't have lunch provided throughout the year, so why at the workshop? Anyway, you're probably wondering what gift I received this year since I didn't attend the one workshop? Well, the gift I received was a most unwelcome one- a cold. Colds any time of the year are depressing, but during allergy season when I'm already suffering it's downright oppressive. I kept waking up from the cold last night to a nose that would constantly run. Yes, I took Nyquil before going to sleep, but apparently that only worked for a few hours at best. Now I am

a bit miserable which is why I can feel free to pass along some other misery in the form of a little rant about one of the districts.

Yesterday I mentioned problems signing up with this district. They seem to want more information than other districts for people who want to sign up with them. Fortunately, since I was already on file from a few years ago they didn't need transcripts or a new letter of recommendation. Why do they even want them in the first place? It's only subbing, not a permanent position, and as for the transcript that's required by the state to get a sub certificate which is also required. It doesn't make a lot of sense that the district would want them too. I still had to fill out new forms for taxes, background check, employment eligibility, retirement, etc. I also had to fill out a new application. Well, at least they don't require a cover letter and résumé. In any event, the paperwork isn't even the main focus. What has been keeping me so far from employment there as a sub is fingerprinting. Fingerprinting is required by law for this sort of job. That's not the complaint. It's their execution of this requirement that making me wait. It seems they only do fingerprinting for 30 minutes on any given day, maybe 45. Say what? That's it?? No wonder they couldn't fit me in to do it for a week after I call. Then, when that day comes up, I get a call in the morning- sorry, we have to reschedule you as the people taking the prints are doing something else today. we can reschedule you for a week from now...

So, I am still sitting here with the paper work. I can only hope that I can start working right away after this is done, but they still probably have to wait for the results on that and the background checks. Well, I survived last year on three districts (realistically since the other barely called me) so I can survive another couple of weeks waiting for this one. I guess I can't entirely blame them- I did sign up at the last minute. For all I know they had a couple of full

days a month ago for fingerprinting. Oh, well. I will just have to be patient. With this cold as well as with work. I hate colds...

It's official- summer is over

And mostly due to my laziness I am subbing once again, and that is good news for this blog. I have been on hiatus from this for too long. I still intend to have some posts of my life outside of teaching, but for a while I have just been turned off from writing during the best time those post would have fit. Well, to tell the truth my life outside of teaching really hasn't been too exciting. Remember back in June when I went to camp? Well, I am finally making the DVD I have done for my cabin for the last few years. I have two slideshows and a video finished, along with a video I borrowed from my DVD two years ago in which I just had to modify the end to fit my more recent cabin. I have been using Ulead VideoStudio which I got free with this computer. It really is a nice program, and not ridiculously high-priced like some packages out there. Last year I used a 30-day demo of a \$250 DVD authoring package which was nice, but not worth that price in my opinion. Maybe \$100 like this one, but not \$250. I also used a slightly buggy freeware program to do one of the slideshows, and maybe another one. I haven't decided yet what to do about this last one to make it different enough from the first two. Well, I still have a week to put the DVD together before the next church time. This weekend is the last one of the month, so 4th and 5th grades don't meet.

As for subbing, I was actually able to get three half days during this first full week of many districts. Apparently the special ed meetings started right away. I could have had a

fourth, but they called me after 8:00 to arrive there at 8:30. Well, I might have been able to do that if I was ready to go when they called, but since it was 25 minutes away and in fact I was woken up by the phone call, that wasn't going to happen. Besides, I had to take my car in that morning for a new muffler. Anyway, the three days I did have were pretty similar. They were all at different Junior Highs (that district doesn't call them middle schools) and were 8th grade, or a 7th/8th mix. Two of them were 7:15 AM jobs (too early!) but fortunately I got to sleep in for the last which was an "afternoon," starting at 10:45 AM. I didn't have to leave notes for two of them either, which is always nice, since the teachers came back. Surprisingly one of these times was the "afternoon" job. I guess she came back from her special ed meeting for the weekly school meeting. Since school started last Thursday in this district and the meetings are on Wednesdays after school, this may have been the first one which would probably make it important to attend. As for the other morning job, that teacher only teaches there in the morning, so I she wouldn't have come back. I would presume she teaches somewhere else in the afternoon.

All in all the three half-days went well. Hopefully I will have more work next week even if there is one day off for labor day. I am signed up again in three of the districts I worked in last year. The last was still on the hired subcaller system and barely called me so I switched them for another district that is computer-based so I have more of a chance for work. That is, I am still working on being signed up there, but that is for a rant in another post...

Poll

As a Christian, I believe we, as individuals and as a country, should put our trust in the Almighty God. That's why I was a bit disappointed to see that, though not a majority, a large number of people in this country do not believe this trust should be shown on our money. This is the email forward I got today. I removed some of the message, such as email addresses and other comments except the last. Yeah, I know- where have I been. Well, I've just been taking a break I guess. Regular posting will resume soon.

MSNBC is taking a poll on weather we should remove In God We Trust from our currency. Thought you might want to give your opinion too. As Greg says a little lower, I am saddened by the results of this pole.

Here's your chance to let the media know where the people stand on our faith in God, as a nation. NBC is taking a poll on 'In God We Trust' to stay on our American currency. Please do it right away, before NBC takes this off the web page.

[MSNBC poll is still open so you can vote.](#)

VOTE SEE RESULTS HERE:

<https://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10103521/>

What does an enterprising entrepreneur do?

He writes an app that does next to nothing called "I am rich." I kid you not. Someone wrote an app for the iPhone that just sits on the iPhone home screen. If you run it, a picture of a glowing red gem displays on the screen. That's it. This app was apparently made as a status symbol (hence the name) and costs the maximum allowable price at Apple's app store: \$999.99. At least it did- Apple has since taken down the application, but not before eight people purchased it. Yep, eight people with nothing better to do with their money. Click the link for the full story.

[Apple removes \\$1,000 featureless iPhone application](#)

Mark your calendars

The day: August 27

The show: Mythbusters

The myth: Was the moon landing faked?

That's right. The Mythbusters, famous for taking on myths of all sizes, are taking on the giant-sized myth that says the original USA moon landing was faked. As it has not aired yet and their findings have not been revealed, this news is completely unbiased for those on both sides of the fence. Yes, there have been documentaries on this topic, but they didn't involve Adam and Jamie, now did they? ☐

Here's some sneak previews I ran across:

