

# ...and get their parents in trouble!

Two news items in one day after a drought! This one is about several parents being arrested- because their kids racked up too many unexcused absences. I am not really sure how to feel about this one. After all, parents do have a responsibility to make sure their kids are educated. But handing them over to the police? (shakes head in bewilderment). As long as this doesn't involve criminal charges- unless they were doing something illegal with the kids- I guess it can't hurt to scare them a little in front of a judge.

[15 Fla. Parents Arrested In Connection With Children's Unexcused Absences At School](#)

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## Kids do stupid things...

Just a quick third post of the day. I just read this one- kids do really stupid things in school. Here is the latest:

[Student Accused Of High-Fiving Teachers With Tacks](#)

I think I will skip giving middle-school students high-fives for awhile...

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# So what was the assignment?

The assignment I took for today at that furthest school was art and drama. Interesting combination as usually drama is the realm of the music teacher. It was actually a pretty easy day. School started at 8:00, so I was there at 7:45. My first class? 9:30. That's right, I had over an hour and a half to kill reading, answering nature's call, eating free food in the lounge...

This is teacher's appreciation week, so the PTO provides food all week for the teachers. Well, I certainly wouldn't want to offend the PTO by not doing my part here. Bagels, doughnuts, fruit, juice- a second breakfast! Okay, I didn't eat *that* much, but suffice to say I was satisfied with my mid-morning snack.

9:30 rolled around and the first of three classes came in. Now three doesn't sound like much, but remember this was art and drama so I had to teach two of the classes both, so it was really more like five classes- still an easy day though. This first class was 2nd/3rd grade, and it turned out I had subbed for this class before earlier in the year, which had its own interesting tale of two subs showing up for this one job. The teacher had requested a particular sub, making the arrangements herself, then proceeded to put the job in the system as sub needed but not filled so I took that job when it showed up. The principal chose to side with the system, so the requested sub had to do work elsewhere in the building. She wasn't too happy because this apparently was the second time this had happened to her.

Anyway, back to today they just completed a project for art- in fact all three classes did, though differing projects of course- and then I got to teach some drama. Well, play some drama games with them. We did a game called "Change Three Things" which was an observation game. They partnered up and

observed each other for several seconds. Then they turned around, changed three things about their appearance then turned back and tried to figure out what changed. It could have been something as simple as closing an eye, or as obvious as, well I will use one of the students as an example for this- one boy unbuttoned his shirt and put it on again, backwards. Yes, he held up the game doing this- it took as long as you can imagine. Now if it was a t-shirt like most kids wear it would have been quick. Oh, well. This was a pretty wild group so we only did one round of this. Next we moved on to a murder-mystery game, where one person is throwing a party (his/her choice of type of party) but there is a killer at the party. They walk around shaking each others hands while at the same time acting like the type of party it is- pizza, tea, whatever. The killer would "kill" someone by tickling another player with his/her finger while shaking hands. The "victim" would wait ten seconds before "dying" dramatically. The ten seconds being so we wouldn't catch the killer in the act. Of course, being 2nd and 3rd graders this more sophisticated game didn't go quite so smooth. Sometimes they would forget to wait ten seconds or the killer would forget to be discrete. And of course **everybody** wanted to guess at once.

6th grade was only art, so I will move on the the last class, 4th/5th grade. This class was supposed to be a pretty bad class, but to be honest, aside from a few boys who just wanted to make origami "[fortune tellers](#)" because they were finished with the project then go and bug everyone around them with their fortune tellers, I had more trouble with the 2nd/3rd grade class. In any event, for drama I didn't get to choose the mystery game, so for them we did skits about three items. In groups they would pick three unrelated items (example: frog/basketball/telephone) and make a skit around these three things. The trick was they were not allowed to say the names of these objects in the skit. When a group finished, the rest would try to guess the three objects. Of course the goal was

to make the objects easy to guess and this would be an indicator of how well they got their message across in the skit. In the end, many were easy to guess but there were a few tough ones. In all, I would say they did a pretty good job with it. Only some audience participation left something to be desired.

Well, I was able to find another job in the same district tomorrow while writing this. More free food I hope. ☐ Same school as the rejected job, a school I will be at on Friday as well. So far four days in this same district this week.

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## **Computers, sometimes I just hate them.**

Over the weekend I was updating the hardware on one of my computers. While I had the case open, and my hands busily putting in many different parts, my daughter told me that the family computer wasn't working. Grumble Grumble. I seeing it I thought that the video card was a goner. It looked like the hard drives were still working, the key pad would display the proper lights when hitting the NumLock and ShiftLock keys. So I took out the card and swapped it with another. Still nothing. I think after 2 1/2 days of tinkering with the stupid machine, I found the problem to be a bad install of DirectX. Grumble, it wasn't the hardware at all.

Why don't I just use linux????

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# Movies I watch (that others don't?)

I've been told I have a different taste in movies. I know that I watch and like some movies that others do not. The reason for this is simple, I go to movies to be entertained. If I lose myself for 1-4 hours (Lord of the Rings was at least that long on the extended DVD) and come out feeling entertained, I feel the movie did its job. The kicker on this is if I think the movie has a chance of entertaining me again. There is where I get my choices for good movies. Now for the movies that have been dumped on by critics, friends and family, but I still like them...

#1 on the list, but not in my favorites, this has just been dumped on by almost everybody, even the lead... Catwoman. Yes, the one with Halle Barrie. I knew from the start that this movie was not going to follow any comic book ever written about Catwoman. It wouldn't even be close to any of the Batman movies, TV or cartoon catwomen. But Halle looked real good in the leather jump suit. Hell, her male stunt double looked good in the leather jump suit. I heard that she had a male stunt double for some of the fights, flips and other stunts but I had a hard time believing it. I was finally able to pick out the double, and CGI catwoman most of the time. Other than that, the character they developed for Catwoman was interesting to me. In knowing cats they came up with a good human characterization of the cats qualities. I found the transition from the mousy woman at the beginning of the show to the proud feline at the end was a good use of what this type of thing could do to a person. The beginning story line trying to find what was poisoning people, and the classic business cover up was good to. What I didn't like was "Stone Faced" Sharon Stone. For 1 it was a really bad pun, but I don't think that Catwoman needed that kind of adversary. It

would have been better to put more mystery in the story and have the “Cat” stalk for it. More cat like in my opinion. I could go on but there are other movies to list...

2) League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. Just a fun flick. See how much they took advantage of the characters, and they did stretch them a bit, was pure enjoyment to me. The story was so-so, the acting was iffy, but it all worked as a whole for me.

3) DareDevil. Again, the story just kept my attention and I walked out in a better mood than when I went in.

4) Electra – Same for this one, I just enjoyed the movie.

5) The Shadow. I grew up listening to these on a little transistor radio hidden under my pillow. The show brought back fond memories of staying up late and not letting my parents catch me.

6) More B movie sci-fi fantasy than I can remember. Beast Master hits me as one of them. There was another, that I can't remember the title of, but it was fun watching the heroine's dress go from torn to whole to torn to dirty, to clean to whole in about a 15 minute period. I don't think she ever had time to change.

... More to come I just can't remember all of them.

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## Choices

When I got home from small group last night, I did a check again for jobs, and came up with one district that had two postings. One was closer, one was one of the furthest schools from me. People who know me know my love for driving, or

rather how much I love to **not** have to drive much in traffic. So the choice was obvious of course- I took the second one. Say what? You're thinking, "Didn't he just get through saying...?" Well, yes, but I mentioned in one of my comments a couple of days ago that there is a position I vowed never to take again. This was for one of those teachers. ELL at that one middle school is a nightmare I wish never to repeat, err, again. I actually subbed for these teachers (two ELL teachers on the team) a few times but I finally had enough last year. My theory is that discipline is far more strict in Mexico (these were primarily Hispanic kids) and so when they come to the US and enter our education system, we are far more limited on what we can do for punishment and so it's like a cake-walk to them. Our worst is no problem to them as long as they only break rules and not laws in which case they finally have justice meted toward them. In any event, coupled with typical low-income for this area they are very difficult to work with. There is another middle school in the district, but oddly enough I have never actively chosen to not sub for ELL there. Maybe the difference is the grades are separated over there but all combined at the first school. 6th-graders learn how to play the system sooner from the 8th-graders since they spend a lot of time in the same room. In any event, as possible proof of this theory one of the days a student actually threw his binder at another student's head (in retribution). In front of me while I started to deal with the initial problem. Besides this, there was just a constant lack of respect overall.

Never again.

So of course that same position just showed up for tomorrow, but no alternative assignment. I am still looking for something for tomorrow...

Of course there are even worse positions. A nearby district actually has a lot of gang activity at their middle schools, though it is really not as bad as what I hear of from the

city. I no longer sub in that district.

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## Float Like A Butterfly...Sing Like A Bee?

I have already touched upon this subject by mentioning those fly-by-night performers on a certain reality show becoming Broadway performers but the practice of bringing big names in an attempt to fill New York audiences is nothing new. I found it rather interesting to discover that in 1969 Muhammad Ali sang in the musical *Buck White*. According to the [Internet Broadway Data Base](#), the show only ran from 12/2/69-12/6/69. So, bad example... I never said the shows in which the names appeared were successful.

-Julia Roberts was in the play *Three Days of Rain* from April-June, 2006.

- In Fall 2007, Jennifer Garner starred as Roxanne opposite Kevin Kline's title role in a limited production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

-Perhaps most notably and most successfully has been the continuing revival of the musical [Chicago](#). This seems to be a revolving door of pop culture names appearing on stage. Melanie Griffith, Bebe Neuwirth (so she was a stage actress prior to Cheers), Wayne Brady, Joey Lawrence, Usher, Brooke Shields(?), KELLY OSBOURNE(?!... as Mama Morton), ASHLEE SIMPSON. Ok... so even most of the names do not appeal to me. Most would turn me off of the show (which is good seeing live). But the musical is still running.



## Reading a speech

Quite a few years ago my wife gave a speech about being hard of hearing. I found her hand written speech today. I wasn't looking for it, but I was cleaning out a drawer looking for an old "Windows" disk. For those who know me and my safe places, it is amazing that I found the disk.

Anyway, today I held in my hands something my wife wrote. That is a very strange feeling. In reading her words, I can hear her voice, I can see her smile at certain parts of the speech. I can even see parts of this speech where I'm quite certain her anger/disappointment would show through. I never saw her give this speech, but I did today.

From her speech these words I remember because they were said more than once.

[ Quote from SJO]

*... Over the years I have become quite adept at conversation by reading lips and body language, anticipating what will be said, filling in blank spaces in a sentence with the correct word or phrase based on subject matter, number of syllables in the words, and placement in the sentence.*

*Certainly, I am wrong frequently. This causes embarrassment and confusion, but the alternative is silence – no conversing because of fearing embarrassment. I don't enjoy embarrassing myself, but I am not afraid of embarrassment – it does no permanent damage. ...*

That last sentence, if my girls would have learned only one thing from their mother, this would be right at the top of the list. We don't enjoy embarrassing ourselves in any aspect of our lives, but as my dear wife said "it does no permanent damage."

To SJO 1962-2003. A life not long enough, but lived fully.

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## Another Hundred Posts Got Onto Tangents

As my fellow blogger so eloquently posted, I would also like to send my thanks to all the readers, commenters (even those I have just now begun to spam because they seem to be worthless... don't worry all ye faithful die-hard fans you are not among the spammed). I too have enjoyed sharing my views on entertainment, news, and other bits of life. Along the way, I have discovered even more about myself and the people I like to call friends. I also send greetings from Indiana (or Indiana) via Morat who will be covering the vote tomorrow. Even talking about my not so favorite movies like *Howard the Duck* has been entertaining as hopefully I have entertained my readers. Here's to the next 100.

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## What Is A Dwig?

In my ongoing effort to catch up on old episodes of *The Office*, I watched a hilarious repeat from season 2 (two

episodes air Tuesday nights on TBS at 9PM eastern time thank you DVR). "The Client" featured a guest appearance by Tim Meadows of Saturday Night Live fame as a client who actually is receptive to Michael's particular brand of customer interaction. Also along for the meeting at Chili's was Jan Levinson-Gould (no Gould...HAHAHAHA). "Awesome Blossom!"

While back at the Scranton branch of Dunder-Mifflin, Pam discovers a screenplay that Michael had written in which he changed some of the names of the staff into characters in a spy movie. Agent Michael Scarn, Dwight (his sidekick), "Catherine Zeta Jones" also appeared in the screenplay (surely as a love interest for Agent Scarn).

A very hilarious episode.