

# Ever wonder where our gas money is going?

Nothing to do with teaching, but check this link out. Crazy.

[Saudi prince promises £5bn desert spire TWICE as tall as nearest rival being built](#)

---

# Help me make the music of the...

Hmm. Mr. Webber's Phantom of the Opera line doesn't quite work since this was during the day. How about, "The hills are alive, with the sound of music..." Yep, that works better. If you haven't guessed by now the position I subbed for today was music. Elementary music. Like most specials jobs in the district I was in, it was a traveling job, but fortunately this time I went to the right school first. The first two classes were great. They were fourth graders and they were really focused. As they were in a unit about stage productions/musicals, they got to watch a video with scenes with a couple of famous dancers if you thought of Billy Elliot, you are dead wrong. In fact, he's not even real. Did you know there is actually a [musical based on this movie](#) by the way?. Nope, not [Michael Flatley](#). At least he's real, but you are thinking too modern! Go way back to the 1930s-1950s to get this one. Okay, you have them- Fred Astaire and Gene Autry... No wait, not the kind of dancing that involves bullets at your feet- Gene Kelly of course.

Anyway, they saw scenes from a few shows including [Ziegfeld](#)

[Follies](#), [Royal Wedding](#), and, of course, [Singin' in the Rain](#). In [Royal Wedding](#), There was a strange scene where Astaire danced not only on the floor, but on the walls and ceiling as well! If you go to the [Royal Wedding](#) link and check out the trivia for it you can find out how they did it. These days they would just use computers of course. The kids really enjoyed that scene, as well as Kelly getting wet in [Singin' in the Rain](#).

I wish I could say that the fifth graders at the other school did as well with this video, but I can't. There were technical difficulties (the LMC gave me a DVD player that was broken- it wouldn't play the disc) and the first class just talked and talked, even after I finally got another player and started the movie. The second class was a little better, but still excitable during some scenes. The third class did much better, though not quite up to the fourth graders.

Finally, I had lunch then four afternoon classes with younger grades. No video for them, but instead the second graders worked on a show they were doing- we just went through all their songs on CD. I noticed this show involves the fifth grade as well. At first I wondered why the teacher didn't have me do this plan with that grade, but remembering how the first two classes went I quickly shelved that question. First grade had yet a different lesson, which we only got partway through, but that was expected by the teacher. Well, that's it for now.

---

## Math dyslexia?

I have heard of dyslexia of course, but this is the first time I have heard of *math* dyslexia. Apparently this condition makes for a very hard time in math. One Florida teacher is

finding that he may not be allowed to teach since he can't pass a required basic math skills test due to his disability. Where this gets interesting is he is an art teacher. No math involved in what he teaches. The rules say it doesn't matter, all teachers must pass this test. However, he has people fighting for him. Click the link to read the article:

[Math dyslexia imperils Orange County art teacher's job](#)

---

## Back to drama

It was a little exhilarating to get back to the children's drama this weekend. We had been off for over a month, partly due to Easter. So this weekend we were back with a vengeance, err- three of us were. I guess the other two were still on spring break or something. Fortunately the head director, I guess I can call him, was there with his son who plays one of the roles on Sunday morning (this is Saturday night I'm talking about), though unfortunately not one of the characters who was needed. Young as he is (4th grade!) he happily brought out a script and filled in. No, he couldn't be expected to memorize it in a half hour. The other character was a puppet, so another drama regular easily filled in, no memorization even required for that role.

I play sort of a clumsy, bumbling, absent-minded TV scientist in the spirit (but not the intelligence) of [Christopher Lloyd's](#) Doc Brown character from [Back to the Future](#). There are two assistants played by kids, one an airhead-ish lab assistant and the other a geeky research assistant. The one tends to ask some very silly questions (to which my character has a wacky response) and the other is immersed in a computer and constantly correcting anything misspoke (usually by me).

There is also a puppet I mentioned and a guest character, a recurring role played about once every other month.

The lesson was about being thankful. My character was the one who had something to learn about it, as almost usual, but comes up with the proper thankfulness in the end, attributing all power to Jesus, to whom we should be thankful. Presumably this leads into the actual lesson taught after the drama which should be on the same topic. However, I have never heard any of the lessons as I usually go directly to 4th/5th grade (drama is only for K-3) right after the drama, or head into the worship service if it is a last weekend of the month like this weekend.

I wish I could say it went perfectly, but a couple of us had some minor line trouble (nothing the kids in the audience would notice) and for some reason none of us thought of putting a microphone on our young 4th-grade fill-in so he was very hard to hear. Well, nothing can be done for it now but to move forward. I will be looking forward to the monthly rehearsal this Wednesday.

---

## Toledo Zoo pics

As promised here are a few of the pictures from the Toledo Zoo. Just click on them for a larger image. It took me longer than I thought since I had to transfer the pictures one at a time (about 60 pictures!) from the phone memory to the card memory, so I could then take the card out of the phone and put it in my computer's card reader. Then I had to select some pictures and edit them in a paint program to make them uniform in size and more web-friendly. Enjoy!





---

## Been a while

Well, it has been awhile since my last post, so I will have to pick up the pace. I had some insane idea that I would be able to post from my friend's house when I was in Ohio for the last few days. Of course the opportunity to ask really never presented itself. If I was making more money I could have had a laptop with me, but as a poor substitute (no pun intended...) I am still trying to afford a new **desktop** to replace my old 1.1GHz one that stopped working last year. Yes, I use another's computer to do my blogging and other stuff.

Well, Ohio was entertaining, at least when we could decide on something to do. On Thursday I was able to get some use out of my new phone with the camera feature. I have yet to see if any of the pictures actually look any good full scale. Once I transfer them to the computer I will show a couple of them. Anyway, we were at the Toledo Zoo even though it was an overcast, somewhat rainy day (especially in the late afternoon- we got soaked!). We were one of maybe a dozen families there enjoying the day. Many attractions were closed but for some reason it still cost me the same \$10 it would cost to enter on a bustling summer day. Not all were closed, so we still saw a large number of animals. Again, pictures will follow. At night we watched some Office episodes and split up to go to bed.

The following day was the day of indecision. We went to

Defiance (yes, as in [The Prizewinner from...](#)) for the day and besides eating and playing some [Highway 66 mini-bowling](#) we did some *shopping* of all things. The bowling was definitely different than the full-scale version, but I was just as bad at it. If nothing else, the shopping was good social time. Speaking of social time, once we got back their friends started arriving shortly after (they were invited- they weren't *those* sort of friends...) and we played a couple of games while the kids watched TV. Finally, after bearing our souls in one of the social games I left for home (about an hour and a half after I wanted to, yes the game was fun) and didn't get home until after 1AM.

At least the traffic was good, even through the city, until I encountered a bottleneck where the expressway was bottled to just one lane. I have no idea what was going on- there were many trucks lined up on the other side of the highway but the side I was on was recently finished road work and so looked excellent. Were they doing a late night inspection to see if the job was done right? Anyway, that only lasted for a couple of miles so after that there were no problems. I quickly got some things unpacked then I got ready for bed, so again, no post.

Today I was busy for much of the day so I am only now finally getting to the blog. Well, time to end this post so hopefully you will get in some happy reading!

---

## So tired

I think my lack of any exercise this winter has caught up to me. I am having a very hard time sleeping lately. I will go to bed, usually at a reasonable hour, and I'll be able to fall

asleep, but then throughout the night I will constantly wake up, then lay in a state of semiconsciousness for a bit, finally fall asleep and start dreaming again, then the process will repeat for several times during the night until I finally get up still exhausted.

I found a site that gave some tips and people seem to have had good luck with keeping a window cracked open for fresh air so I will try that tonight along with turning my fan on. Yes, even though the outside temperature is under 40 degrees. For the long term I guess I will have to start walking more and see if that keeps things under control. I've already told people in my church small group so they will be praying for me as well. Between all of these, emphasis on the prayer, I should be back to normal eventually. I really hope I don't have sleep apnea- I understand my dad had it. If I have developed it then these little cures won't really help. Except for the prayer of course. Well, I'm going to keep this short so I can get to bed sooner. Goodnight...

---

## **Happy Easter!, continued**

I just wanted to get that Godtube video up before continuing writing. I can't believe it's been three days since my last post (not counting the first Easter post of course!). Well, yesterday was a busy day. Friday was, well, Good Friday. Like a Good Friday should be, it was a very dreary day outside- snowing for most of the day. After shoveling (for the last time until next winter I hope!) I headed out to the church.

The service that day was like a tour. The first stop of this "tour" was worship time. They basically played a loop of

songs. From the bulletin we were given, it looked like they played the same five or six songs over and over for the five hours (with periodic breaks of just instrumental music). I hope they switched off bands throughout the night- playing the same songs for five hours straight would be kind of grueling.

Anyway, the songs would prepare our hearts for the next part of the "tour", which we could skip to at any time. This part had signs and card packets all around telling us why Christ had to die. There was even a projected image of this on the wall. There were many, many reasons along with Bible verses supporting each reason. I think I read maybe half of them as I walked through.

Next was a meditation area where we would see constant changing images of Christ's "trial" and execution. This actually wasn't working for some reason when I arrived, but they finally got the projectors going before I moved on. Step four of the tour had us write our own sins and nail them to a large wooden cross. There was a long wait for this as there were I think only two or three hammers. We could also leave the cards in a basket at the foot of the cross.

The final stage was communion. We would go in the room, grab our own bread (small cracker) and wine (grape juice) and take some time to reflect, pray, and take in the two elements all on our own time. All in all it was a very somber mood throughout the evening, befitting of a day like Good Friday.

Saturday I was at the church after 1:30 (supposed to be at 1:30, but as usual I was late) for choir rehearsal. The worship music the day before had been somber, but the Easter music we had been practicing was anything but. Where Good Friday was a time of reflection, Easter is a celebration! We actually did very well according to several people. It was a **lot** of singing- not just the four special songs we were doing as a choir, but five worship songs as well. It was near constant singing from almost the time I got there on Saturday

until after 5:30, and again today. The well-wishers' critiques must have been spot on as our time to be there this morning was pushed from 7AM to 7:25, but it was still a bit grueling with so much singing- two services plus the rehearsal (similar to what felt like two rehearsals last night plus the service). I was actually supposed to sing at the end Saturday night (about 6:25ish) but I felt I was needed in the children's ministry as there was only one leader besides another choir member and myself there, and the other choir member went back down to sing the final song. I was able to sing this song the two Sunday services however.

So here we are, voice resting for now. I really should practice singing more often. My voice held out this time, but there have been times in the past where my endurance didn't last through all the services. I remember particularly from when there were **four** services at one time before the second campus opened and many people went there instead. That one extra performance turned out to be a killer of my voice. But I don't sing in the choir all for me. It's about giving back to God. He gave me this talent, so it's only right to use it to give some back to Him.

Once again, HAPPY RESURRECTION DAY!!!

---

## Happy Easter!

Okay, trying to make people say Resurrection Day instead of Easter is just pointless. If you'd like, Happy Resurrection Day! The celebration of Jesus Christ's victory over death is upon us once again! Hallelujah! No, I wasn't calling you over, Hallelujah (private joke: there is a boy named Hallelujah in one of the classes I teach). Now that you're finished

cheering, I have a Godtube video to share. Godtube is like Youtube (ya think?) only it's all about Christ. My pastor showed a video in church a few weeks ago that really shows using dance/drama what God's love is all about. He loves us so much He went through the humiliation of becoming a man and the pain and suffering of becoming a sacrifice- *the* sacrifice for us. Anyway, on to the video. Let me see if this works...

<edit> Nope. I guess we can't embed videos- hey C, any way we can turn this feature on? like embed, target = \_blank also gets cut out of the code when trying to make a link open in a new window. Anyway, here's the link:

[godtube]https://www.godtube.com/view\_video.php?viewkey=ee73e63418003b47d7d5[/godtube]

---

## Can't we all just get along?

This was a favorite line of one of my past coworkers. Speaking of coworkers, this isn't a story about students not getting along- it's about two middle school teachers! Someone tell these two that they're supposed to be role models! Click link for story.

[Teachers Who Got in Fist-Fight Arrested](#)

And just so I don't have to write another post, there's a link on that page about a school staff member dying his hair green for St. Pat's day. The principal apparently wasn't a fan of the day...

Udpate: News item scrolled off the links. Here it is:

[Educator Sent Home for Dyeing Hair Green](#)