

What a week

The Thursday before last, I shot all of one car at two dealers- highly unusual, so on Monday that was more than made up for by having 18 cars to do between the same two dealers. Normally this would make me quite happy, but not so much on a Monday following a snowfall. For starters, I knew I couldn't leave as early as normal because the dealers needed time to clean up their lots. The first one was still doing it when I arrived. Monday nights I have small group at my church, so it is the only night I need to finish on time so starting late and then finding I had so many cars to do, some of which would have to be brushed off, was less than thrilling. I finished the second dealer a little before 7PM, then headed back. It was dark and I was traveling 50MPH, so I can probably be excused for not seeing the massive pothole in the right lane. I kept moving, but I feared it would cause my tire to go flat on the way home. It didn't and I was able to drive the car for the rest of the week, but when I brought the car into the shop Saturday because I needed a brake job, surprise! A \$500 repair bill. Actually, it was higher but he gave me a break (on top of the four brakes □) because my mother and I were good customers. \$210 was for the brakes, \$30 was for the oil change- that meant the rest was for the new axle and bearings on the potholed wheel. Incidentally, I was an hour late for small group, partly because I stopped to eat on the way.

Tuesday I found myself in supersized district to sub- a rare occurrence these days as I can find few jobs available there even the mornings of. And sub I dd- in bilingual kindergarten. Fortunately there was an assistant with me for both classes- a different one for each class. The morning had Spanish-speakers who knew very little English. The assistant ended up running most of the morning. It was a struggle. Oddly enough there was a boy who I'm told actually knows

English and very little Spanish, yet he was required to do everything in Spanish like the rest of the class! The afternoon was supposedly Polish-speakers (hence the different assistant) but all of them knew English so I was actually able to take charge of this group. I felt I accomplished much more with this group.

Wednesday I had only a half-day in, what do I call it again-next-door district? It was for middle-school math. The website said 7th grade, but when I got there I found out it was 8th grade. Oh well, the system has been wrong before. It was actually quite easy- most of the classes had tests, though I also went over homework answers. This teacher actually teaches five different classes out of her six teaching periods- unusual for middle school. Usually there are no more than three different classes, repeating the same lesson for more than one. Her one repeated class was in the morning so I only had two different lessons, though I did start the 5th-period class which would have been my third different plan. She arrived less than ten minutes in and took over.

Totally forgetting Wednesday when I had that entire afternoon free that there was a dealer in Barrington with two cars, I could kick myself when I realized I had forgotten and would have to fit them in Thursday instead. This is a small dealer that only has a couple of cars every few weeks. At least I did remember. Eventually. So I started off the morning by going there. Of course, there had been some more snow Wednesday night so I didn't get there *too* early. I did the cars and was on my way to the next dealer when- 25-min in I realized I still had a set of keys from the first place. Oops. I turned around, angry with myself once all over again. The better part of an hour wasted. So I finally arrived at the next place, their lot cleared of snow, and

found I had another bunch of cars like Monday. Two of them were too loaded with salt to do (hey, I just used three forms of a homophone/nym!), so I breathed a sigh of relief and headed to the final dealer with a good three hours of light to go, though it would be less by the time I got there. I finished with some light to spare. You are probably wondering about Monday right now. Yes, I did run out of light Monday, but when there is pressure to get things done at the end of the day like that I get all the photos out of the way first before I do the options and print the stickers, which tends to be the bulk of my time spent.

Friday I had only one dealer in the afternoon so I took a morning job in next-door district (still not sure if that's the name I gave it). It was for 3rd/4th grade. When I arrived, I said who I was there for and was handed a folder for a classroom that turned out to be 1st and 2nd grade. I looked at the name and it sounded right when I said it to myself, but while I didn't quite remember the spelling of the name I knew it didn't look right. I asked another teacher if this teacher taught 3rd/4th grade last year as sometimes that info doesn't get updated on the sub system (remember Wednesday). She thought for a few seconds and then informed me there was **another** teacher upstairs with almost the same name! I went back to the office to verify I was in the right class and found out that I was indeed given the wrong folder. Both teachers were out this morning, probably both for the same meeting I knew at least the one was at. I went upstairs to let the other sub know we had been duped. She had almost the same story as me, knowing something wasn't quite right with the room she was in. We traded folders and I finally got a chance to look at the right plans. The morning actually went quite well. For the afternoon, instead of the usual two or three cars I had nine because for some reason the other photographer either didn't go there the day before like he

usually does, or they didn't have any ready when he did which would have been strange considering nine were ready this time. Well, more commission for me I guess- something I will need because of the car repair bill. Sigh.

Saturday I was supposed to go cross-country skiing with a few guys from church, but when I called around Friday I couldn't find anyone who rented skis close by, and the one store that was recommended to me closed at 6PM Friday night, too early for me to go there. Well, I hope the others had a good time. Instead, I stayed home to receive that repair-bill shock...

Well, that was my week. How was yours?