

No sleeping in for me

Whenever I have had a subbing day this year it has almost always been a result of getting up early and hitting the web. Last night I was able to secure a job in 6th grade a little after 10 which didn't have a start time until almost 8:30, meaning I could sleep in, at least a little bit. Okay, knowing about the snow meant I should be up about 20 minutes earlier to get shoveling out of the way. Still, I could get up about an hour later than usual. Of course you know something was bound to happen, and happen it did at about 4AM. That's when I was jarred out of my sleep by what I thought then was the neighbors slamming the door. It took me about a half hour to get back to sleep. I was worried because it didn't *sound* like a door slamming, but what else could it be. Well, eventually I did get up at about 6:45 and didn't worry about it all day. Unfortunately it wasn't quite early enough as there was more snow than I would have hoped waiting to be shoveled, making me a little bit late. At least I still arrived before the kids.

Yesterday I subbed for music at one of hometown district's middle schools- I actually got a call for it about five minutes before the alarm was set to go off. Very uneventful. We watched videos in all classes. At least I got to see [Blue Man Group](#), a group I had never heard before though I of course knew about them. Other class videos included [Stomp](#) and [The Wizard of Oz](#). Today I was excited because I was subbing in an elementary school, and what that usually means is getting to teach instead of just babysit. Well, not so much. The plans didn't include videos, but they did include a test, lots of reading and working on their own, and skit performances for social studies, in which they are studying Greek Mythology- a topic I really enjoyed myself when I was in 6th grade. Well, there was a spelling game too, and at least that was interactive. I also worked in a short math review not on the

plans before they started working on their assignment, and at least one other subject, vocabulary, was more interactive as well. Additionally, I worked in some word puzzles which I like to do in elementary classes. Definitely a more productive day for me than yesterday, overall.

So back to what woke me up. On one of the forums I read someone who I know lives around here made a post humorously telling California to keep the earthquakes to themselves. Say what? I read his post then had to go to my newspaper website to see just what he was talking about. Sure enough, there was a 3.5 magnitude earthquake a short distance from us. An earthquake. In Illinois. At 3:59AM. That's right, not a slamming door. Well, I guess if our tornadoes can be exported to other areas, I shouldn't be surprised when earthquakes are imported to our relatively-geologically-stable part of the country. Here's a link to the story (click the title), and a short excerpt:

[Small earthquake wakes up northern Illinois](#)

To some, it sounded like a train derailling, a snowplow taking out a car, a plane crash, a sonic boom.

To dogs, it was clearly something to panic about.

But the U.S. Geological Survey said what woke people well before dawn Wednesday was a mild, 3.8 magnitude earthquake whose epicenter was about three miles beneath a farm field a short distance south of Pingree Grove, near Route 20 and Switzer Road in western Kane County.

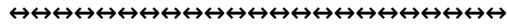
It started rumbling at 3:59 a.m. Wednesday and lasted just seven seconds.

Now about them kids...

I guess it's time to return to the topic of kids- subbing and at church. The past week I was back to two days of subbing after my big half-day Thanksgiving week. I was lucky to get even that as only one district I am signed up with had classes at all that week, and only Monday and Tuesday. Monday of course is a photo day for me which left only Tuesday for work. So this past week I did middle school for two days in two different districts. What happened in both cases was the teachers were taking a second sick day in a row, but fortunately this did not spell disaster like in that one BD/ED classroom in near-urban district. The first class was a Spanish class, and half of a husband-wife team. They even had classrooms right next to each other. This is the second time I have ever encountered this, the first being in hometown district where a husband and wife both teach the same grade of science- one on each of the two teams for that grade. Incidentally at that school there is also another married couple, but in their case they teach two different things. So back to Spanish, it was a very easy day- for all classes I showed a video. Now, she teaches both 7th and 8th grades, but everyone still got the same video- the celebration of Christmas in Mexico. What was it? Oh, yes- Piñatas, Posadas, and Pastorelas was the title. I'm sure you're familiar with the first- a seeming staple of Mexican celebrations. The other two mean a party and a Christmas play, respectively.

Wednesday I filled in for an 8th grade resource teacher, though she had one 7th grade reading group. This was a bit more interactive than the Spanish class, at least for some of the periods. As mentioned, I worked with a reading group for one period, led an interesting homeroom activity where the

To our national birds
The American Eagle
The Thanksgiving Turkey
May one give us peace in all our states
And the other a piece for all our plates



Thanksgiving Divorce

A man in Phoenix calls his son in New York the day before Thanksgiving and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough.

"Pop, what are you talking about?" the son screams. We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Chicago and tell her."

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like heck they're getting divorced," she shouts, "I'll take care of this,"

She calls Phoenix immediately, and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Okay," he says, "they're coming for Thanksgiving and paying their own way."



Stuffed Turkey

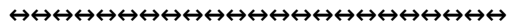
Baby Bruno was sitting in his grandmother's kitchen, watching her prepare the Thanksgiving meal.

"What are you doing?" Bruno asked.

"Oh, I'm just stuffing the turkey," his grandmother replied.

"That's cool!" Bruno said.

"Are you going to hang it next to the deer?"



The Turkey Popped Out of the Oven

The Turkey popped out of the oven
and rocketed in to the air;
It knocked every plate off the table
and partly demolished a chair.
It ricocheted into a corner
and burst with a deafening boom,
Then splattered all over the kitchen,
completely obscuring the room.
It stuck to the walls and the windows,
it totally coated the floor,
There was turkey attached to the ceiling,
where there had never been turkey before..
It blanketed every appliance,
it smeared every saucer and bowl;
There wasn't a way I could stop it;
that turkey was out of control.
I scraped and I scraped with displeasure
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,
That I would never again stuff a turkey
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.

written by Jack Prelutsky





HAPPY

THANKSGIVING!

No fishing

So, fishing for comments clearly doesn't work on this blog. The answer about the two dog videos is for one of them the owner offers the treats two different ways, palm up and palm down. The dog turns her head when offered the wrong way. In the other video the hand is offering it the same way every time, so either this dog doesn't like our current Prez or some other form of training is going on outside of the camera.

Real post coming soon- watch this spot. ☐

Priceless dog therapy

Okay, those are two things mashed together in the title describing events of Wednesday, my only day of subbing this week (though I am still trying for some Friday work). What happened to Tuesday? Well, I had to push my Monday photo work to Tuesday due to that annoyance to the daily routine known as jury duty, or in my case non-duty. Fortunately no driving was

required for this civic duty as the location was Chicago. In fact, I would just not show up rather than drive there due to the ridiculous traffic. Fortunately, the train stations are within walking distance both from my home and the courthouse in the city. I also was glad this was the civil court instead of the criminal one- I don't know how people are able to serve on juries for criminal trials that can often take weeks to complete. I realize jobs can't fire you for jury duty but they don't have to pay you, and that lack of pay would be a huge problem, at least for me. You noticed, I'm sure, that I wrote "non-duty" earlier. What actually happened was my group got called down (while I was in the bathroom no less) and we went down to a courtroom, only to wait and be told that the two parties came to a settlement so no jury would need to be picked. So we went back up to the jury waiting room in case we might be needed again. About an hour later we were called up again, jury trial take two, or so I thought. However, this time we were given our checks and sent home- I guess being called up once can count as our civic duty even if we didn't make it to jury selection, let alone trial. We did have to wait until they were sure we would no longer be needed though. With half the day still left, I stopped for lunch since the next train wouldn't depart for another 45 minutes. Unfortunately, with the light leaving us earlier these days I was not able to go to even one of the dealers since I couldn't be sure how long it would take and didn't want to make a wasted hour round-trip anywhere. Yes, I could have blogged Monday, but I just wasn't up to it.

Which leads us to the topic of the title, my sub-job Wednesday. I had to get up at 5:30 to start looking since it is near impossible this year to get a sub job in advance for some reason. I somehow managed to secure one at a nearby school in their mentally-impaired program. I must remember never to show up any later than 10-minutes early at this school. I was right on time, but ended up about ten minutes late because they closed the lot by the front doors due to

buses meaning I had to ask where the other lot was, wait in traffic to get to it, suffer leagues of parents dropping off their kids in the very same lot, find a spot, then walk a quarter mile back to the front doors of the school. I did note there were still spots left in the front lot as I headed to the doors.

So I eventually made it to the classroom, somehow still before the kids arrived to the class (though I still had to work my way around several at their lockers). Being a MI class there were of course teaching assistants so I was able to cool down from the hassle of my arrival. They showed me the schedule for the day, but being Vet's day that schedule was just made to be broken. Instead of an hour of guided reading, for example, they had maybe 20 minutes before heading to their 2nd-grade buddy class. That teacher talked a little bit about Veteran's Day, and then a couple of soldiers came in to visit- one from the Army, the other a Marine. Both had served time in you-know-what part of the world (the marine couldn't tell us where- essentially saying it was classified, but the army soldier had been to Afghanistan). They talked a little about what they did, what life was like with their respective units, and their families. The 2nd-graders had written several questions to ask them during their visit. It was quite interesting. Once the principal came in and whisked them to their next class to visit, we headed back to our own room for snack time. The next schedule change came during this time. Just as they finished eating and sat down to read silently, in walks a vet. Okay, she wasn't a vet but I just had to use that play on words. Notice how I didn't capitalize the word this time? That's because this person was a pet therapist, if not a veterinarian. Both work with pets, though for different reasons- oh never mind. So my pun didn't work- sue me. ☐

Anyway, the therapist reminded the kids how to handle the dog (apparently she had been here before), making sure they let this lap dog sniff their hands before they could pet him. She

also taught them how to give the dog treats (in an open hand, because the dog could bite your fingers if you hold the treat by the thumb and forefinger). She also had the dog do some tricks. The kids one at a time rolled a die and the dog would jump through a hoop for the number of times it showed, then later they did dog bowling where the kids would hide a treat among foam pins, and the dog would knock a number of them down to get to the treat. Cute.

The kids got their silent reading in, and then we skipped math to do calendar in the short time left before lunch. This is where the next part of the title comes into play- the look of surprise on a 5th-grader's face when you sneak up behind him while he's eating lunch and ask him a question in a place he does not expect to hear or see his church and summer camp leader as he turns and recognizes me. Priceless. As I talked to him, two more kids from my church got up to talk to me- one of whom I was going to talk to next, the other a surprise to me. What was funny about this encounter was the girl who I had worked with in church drama last year didn't know what to call me since she only remembered my first name, which is what I use at church- Mr. Derek. She had clearly been taught to not use an adult's first name at school. Maybe I told her last year, I don't know. I didn't know the third one came to this school, but this school being the closest to my church means several kids do happen to attend school here. I know of three others in the junior high area who I know I have mentioned before (two are the girl's brothers, twins whom I have also worked with at church).

The rest of the day was pretty mild. I had an extra half-hour off due to the kids going to music, and when they came back we scrapped writing for some reason to watch part of a movie. You know, I don't think I have ever watched *101 Dalmatians* before even though I kind of know the story. We only watched a little bit of it before getting ready to go home, where I rested up until choir rehearsal, where I just want to mention

that another pair of twins I taught a few years ago are regularly a part of- they finally came down to the tenor section after singing alto for the last couple of years (hey, they were 12-13 at the time!). I can even name a couple more sets of twins and a set of triplets too. I don't know why, but they are not all that uncommon at my church. Well, if I can think of some story to write about them sometime I may say some more.

More of last week's news...

When mentioning costumes for the 5th grade class I subbed for last week, I forgot to mention one other costume. Or two, rather, though only one of them was in my class. It is strange it slipped my mind because this boy was wearing a video-game-related costume which was very good. He came as Mario, complete in the right colors with hat, large white cartoon gloves, and of course, mustache (though this piece kept falling off). I mentioned to him that with his build he might have made a good Luigi too, but his costume did have the extra padding to make him pudgy ala Mario. During the costume show, who walked across the stage with (I think) a third-grade class but Luigi, which from a distance also looked pretty good. When our Mario waved to him I figured they were brothers, but when I asked him about it the only fraternal relationship was in the characters, so this just made for a cool coincidence.

I said I would mention Friday night, so I am finally getting around to it. Friday night was our second annual movie night for 4th and 5th grade. Last year we saw the excellent [Meet the Robinsons](#). This year was [Bolt](#). Having never seen this movie before I was looking forward to it even if I wouldn't

really get to see if I had to keep too much of a watchful eye on the kids (as it happily turns out, my fears here were unfounded and I was able to watch the whole thing). Before the movie, however, there was game and pizza time. This year they separated the boys and the girls so one group was playing games while the other ate. We started out in the gym. There was a fun game set up called "the gauntlet" but before we did that we warmed up with another game, link tag. No, this has nothing to do with:

[collegehumor]<https://www.collegehumor.com/video:1923420>[/collegehumor]

though that's a hilarious Family Guy-esque video (click to see it in a larger size). It is a game with one (or a few) runner(s) and one (or a few) tagger(s) with the rest spread out, standing linked in pairs. At any time the runner can link up with one pair and the person on the opposite side would become a new runner so the pair doesn't become a trio. If the tagger tags the runner, the runner becomes the tagger and the former tagger links up with a pair and a new person becomes the runner. I think we had played this before a couple of years ago, calling it squirrel tag. After this game came- The Gauntlet. This is just as insidious as it sounds. The kids have to run through a course, going over or under as the course dictates, while trying to avoid getting hit by balls thrown by us leaders (heh, heh...). If hit, they would have to go back to the beginning. For those of you crying "aww, no fair for the kids," don't worry- they got their turn getting back at us. I didn't make it very far...

So for food time, we had pizza. I was expecting the variety made in our church's kitchen, but it turned out they ordered from Little Caesars. The parents had to pay for this event, so why not? This was the time where we leaders got to hang out with a few boys sitting together, thereby selecting our small groups for the end of the night. After the boys grabbed their dinner, I waited a minute or so before grabbing my own

and sitting down with four boys. There were almost a dozen guy leaders, so the small groups were quite small. There were more girls and fewer girl leaders present, so their groups I understand were a bit larger. Did I mention this was an outreach event? The kids were encouraged to invite friends who didn't normally come to our church, so it turned out that two of these boys were such invitees. In fact, both were invited by one of the other boys, but all four actually knew each other from school. After a brief time in conversation with them, it was time for the movie. We cleaned up and headed to the learning center where the movie was shown on two screens. We were supposed to sit with our groups, but the boys kind of crowded together, so I sat in the row right in front of them instead. Don't worry, the seating was tiered and the screens high up besides so I didn't block their view.

□

As I wrote, we were able to enjoy the whole movie with no more distraction than some kids going to the bathroom now and again. They even provided popcorn for the whole movie experience. Now, I typically say I don't like popcorn all that much, but it is strange that I typically find myself eating it anyway, and this night was no exception. While not in the same class as Meet the Robinsons IMHO, I still enjoyed this movie about a dog raised thinking his "human" was a spy constantly threatened by the evil Dr. Calico (with his evil cats of course) and that he was a superhero- managing to escape from his trailer, he heads out on a mission to save his human whom he thought was captured (they ended the day's shooting on this cliffhanger) but in fact headed home as this was after all just a TV show no matter what Bolt was raised to believe.

Finally, Pastor Steve came out and talked a little, focusing on superheroes and how God is the only superhero. It was just a bit more exciting than what I just wrote, but you get the idea. We then broke into our small groups and talked some

more about it, ending with handing out Gospel tracts that folds in several ways to reveal the message. I actually picked up a fifth boy who hadn't been selected already by another leader so I may have ended up with the largest boy's group of the night. I felt the discussion went very well. The two visitors actually attended different churches, so they weren't as green as expected in an outreach event, but that was okay as I'm sure everyone still picked up something from the small group, especially on sharing Christ with others if they had already had a relationship with Him.

It was a great night- I can't wait for Winterblast in a few months- the overnighter at the church. The only disappointing time was seeing another fifth-grade boy at the church with his mom for a single-parents meeting who chose to not attend movie night because the ones he wanted to invite were not in 4th or 5th grade, which I learned was sort of a limit in this event though not strictly enforced.

That October Holiday

So what does it mean when it's November and I still have posts from September sitting on my front page? Still not all that excited to blog I guess. It has now been over a week since some of my Ohio friends came out and we all went haunt hopping. It's a little late to review them, and I'm no expert on this sort of thing anyway so I think I'll just say that it was a good time had by all of us. Fortunately the threatening rain stayed away. Sorry you had to miss the last haunt, J and M. According to C & L it was really good, though whether it be that I was third in a group or just my logical mind drowning out the "let's have fun" portion I just didn't get as much out of it. That said, I though the actors did a good

job, especially outdoors (I really wish I had seen the one jumping out at the younger kids but I was facing the wrong direction at the time- apparently their reactions were priceless). Thanks again C & L for paying for that one.

For work, this week was much better than last for the most part. The only work-day that had rain was Friday, but I was able to take a full-day sub job that day instead, bumping my one Friday gig to Saturday- yes, the holiday. Did you all have a happy Martin Luther day? You know, the anniversary of Luther nailing the [Ninety-Five Theses](#) to the church door in 1517 (the doors were popularly used as bulletin boards at that time). Oh, you celebrated a different holiday you say? Well, so did the kids on Friday. Unluckily for the teacher I subbed for, her son got sick on party day so I was the lucky one who got to take the job in her place. It was my favorite grade, 5th, and it was quite easy. The morning consisted of three tests- didn't you hate days like that in school?- split by an hour of gym and music. At least one of the tests was only spelling, so only two of them were big thinking tests. Of course, I say "at least" for the spelling test as I was a really good speller in school. I suppose for some it may have been just as rough as the other two.

Lunch time, then the kids were back in costume. Did I mention this was the one day of the year 2/3 of the class went home for lunch? All afternoon was party time. There was a costume parade through the neighborhood scheduled as well, but- you know- rain. As a result, the parents came to the school and watched the kids march across the stage instead. Outside of this time the parent volunteers were in charge. They organized the classroom party- the food, games, and whatnot- while I just helped as needed. The kids had a scavenger hunt, played cauldron bowling and a scooter-relay with toilet paper mummy-wrapping, created a haunted story web, felt brains, hearts, and whatnot in a box, jumped for donuts on a string, and had cupcakes and water (where was the punch??). Most of

the year in hometown district serving food in classrooms is a big no-no- they even stopped birthday treats last year- but this was one of the few times they still get to eat sweets in class.

Some of the costumes were classic. There were a few wearing ghoulish costumes including the obligatory Scream mask, some costumes of movie/tv characters like Darth Maul, and a few M&M girls, but there were some stand-out ones including a girl with an overturned bowl of spaghetti on her head (represented by white yarn with brown yarn-ball meatballs), another girl who came as a washing machine with her head under a pile of "dirty" clothes on top, and a boy who came as a vending machine. Actually, while original, I'm not sure the last one would have won any awards. The front really did look like a vending machine with real chips, candy bars, and whatnot, but in reality it was what could have been a store demo with straps so he could wear it in front of him. It was apparently heavy too, as he took the elevator upstairs instead of the stairs. I hope he had permission, but I felt for him so I didn't ask. The washing machine on the other hand was an excellent costume. I already mentioned the pile of clothes to hide her face, but it also came complete with a box of fabric softener and bottle of detergent taped or glued to it. The only thing that would have improved the costume was if the round door in front actually opened revealing more clothes.

So what did I do for halloween? Well, following work on the windy day I... handed out candy. Yep, that was it. I did have a "phantom of the opera" half-mask, so I wore it when I answered the door, but that was pretty much it. We had our usual half-dozen groups of kids come to our door. Seriously, is our house on the sex-offender list or something? Since moving here we have had no more than ten groups of costumed candy-beggars stop by each year. Nothing at all like or previous location across from a school. Oh, well.

We did have a 4th/5th grade church party Friday night, but

this post is getting long so I think I will save it for a future church post.

Partially immersed

□□□□□□□□□□

If the characters above got rendered properly in your browser you should see Japanese writing. The proper response for me would be, say what? Of course, if I knew what that said the real response should be:

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Sorry, I guess you probably don't know Japanese either. The first question was, "Do you speak Japanese?" The response was, "No, I do not speak Japanese." When encountering a Spanish-speaking classroom, I always start with, "No hablo español, solamente inglés." (I don't speak Spanish, only English). It's fun to see the kids' reaction, especially if I add a little bit more from my severely limited Spanish vocabulary. With Japanese, I can't even begin. Three times in the space of two weeks I found myself in dual language classrooms- twice for Japanese, once for Spanish. What kind of class is this you may ask? I will answer. Once upon a time the way to teach kids a foreign language was to offer it as an elective in high school. Then, someone learned that the best time to learn new languages was as a young child, so they added the classes to the junior high curriculum (in some cases making kids take five different ones in sixth grade!). This trickled down to intermediate grades with one language twice a week like gym. Still not happy, the powers-that-be started dual-language classes allowing children as young as six to start learning a different language, and that is where we are today. In such a class, the younger grades slowly learn the language, and then they start instructing in that language as they get older for a sort of immersion experience. In the

Japanese class, this means that for the entire afternoon teachers and students use only Japanese. The teaching assistant took over this duty of course since I would be unable to converse in or even understand Japanese. It was an experience not unlike working in a deaf classroom as I have done before, but knowing that I could converse with the students in English when necessary. This was sixth grade, so they were on their sixth year of this. They seemed pretty proficient to me- having read Japanese books for starters and giving a book report in Japanese. When it came time for me to instruct, however, we all went back to English.

The Spanish class was 4th grade, so they weren't as proficient in their second language as 6th grade was in theirs. There were no book reports or the like in Spanish, though of course it could have just been the day. When trying to read the Spanish social studies book, it became clear many did not understand very well. Unfortunately I did not have a Spanish-speaking assistant at this time as I did for Japanese. When math time rolled around, the Spanish-speaking assistant finally arrived and I expected she might take over for a bit, but she didn't so we did the subject in English as I could do little more than the numbers and operations in Spanish. As it turned out it was probably a good thing we did it in English as they had a difficult enough time with the topic in their primary language.

So what's next, dual language French? Italian? I guess I may find out. It's odd that this is the first year I have been in this sort of classroom in all my years of subbing. Bilingual and regular foreign language classes yes, but not dual-language. This may mean then that the chances of doing it again are somewhat remote, so we'll see.

Not much really...

It has been a few weeks now with nary a post from me. You'd think in all that time I would actually have something to say, but sad to say I don't. Not much at least. This new job so

far is keeping me a little poorer than subbing alone. Finding half-days for subbing to go along with this job is not easy and I have gone a few days without. Also, I just learned my commission is based monthly so the couple of weeks I was ahead did not make up for the weeks I was behind. Base only again. Sigh. Soon... This season has been none too friendly for this job either. About 70% rain in the last couple of weeks. In fact, I had to completely take off Friday and go to one of the dealers Saturday instead. I wanted to go to the other one tomorrow since it's Columbo day (or something like that... ☐) and therefore no chance of subbing, but it looks like the rain will likely make a return. Looks like I'll have to take half a day off of subbing Tuesday instead. I already took a half-day sub job, and have jobs for Thursday and Friday as well, so aside from Wednesday I'm pretty set for this week.

Speaking (writing?) of subbing, no interesting subbing stories I'm afraid. Mostly upper grades (4th+) and once with a student teacher whose observing professor came in to watch her teach. I am now two days toward the five I need in order to get paid for the annual sub-training in Hometown district- both middle school days. The last one was science. I essentially led a small chemistry project for 8th grade. I hope their teacher gave them more time the next day as no one finished.

Then there's church, something I haven't written about much lately. I have been able to give four of my five cabin kids their DVDs I made. Unfortunately the fifth hasn't been to church in awhile due to multiple surgeries- yes, the one with the dwarfism condition (is there an official name? I suppose if I had ever watched Little People, Big World I would know). They are just trying to fix his body, but even with a lack of an emergency which would normally lead to invasive surgery, I'm sure it is still trying for him and his parents- and undoubtedly painful. I pray he recovers well.

Well, sorry there isn't much here. Hopefully I'll have at

least one more post before all of you come out this way. I'll try to be less lazy about posting interesting news and links as well. I think there were a couple, but I can't recall at the moment.

Names and Ties

Another week, another post. As one of you mentioned in a previous post of mine, this blog lets my friends know about my life even if I don't post often so I guess any danger of this blog closing has vanished as it is a really good point. Anyway, I finally finished the DVD I was working on for my cabin last Saturday- well, mostly. There is still one I am trying to fix because the DVD player I tried it in kept glitching at the menu, even after I changed the video and readded it. Yes, each camper got a DVD with a customized menu- an animation of themselves done with Corel's Painter 4 Essentials. With it, you can turn a photo into something that looks like a painting. Oddly enough, though it goes through an animated process "painting" the picture, you can't save the animation. Luckily though I still had Camstudio installed from when admin was trying to save a video when JibJab was a bit slow in allowing his paid download last year. It did the job perfectly.

Since then, I have been busy or just plain tired. Mondays are back to having no time to post, and I have been getting up early every day this week, today included, so I have just not felt like posting. Today however I had an incident that couldn't wait for a post. Actually, it's the latest in things that have been going through my mind as a post for awhile about names and relations. About names, a couple of recent namesakes have run across my life either personally or in the

news. One of them is the CINO (if you are familiar with the political term RINO you will understand this abbreviation considering his recent interview with the local paper) named Milton Bradley. I wonder, is that his real name? I know many entertainers have stage names, but I don't really know if that applies to sports figures. If the name is real, how did kids treat him growing up? Milton Bradley of course was once a big gaming company in case anyone reading this has forgotten. It's not a big name anymore of course having been absorbed by the gaming behemoth Hasbro, but still when the ball player Milton was growing up I'm sure the company was still known.

On the same topic I met a student teacher the other day when subbing at a middle school. His namesake was a famous inventor every child in school learns, so I am sure he must have been teased mercilessly. His name? Tom Edison. Undoubtedly he is still asked by kids about it, and will be for some time considering his chosen profession. I can attest to this considering my own last name is a common word if not a namesake (though kids did once ask if I'm related to a character on TV with the same last name- yes, a character- not an actor □) and I get asked about it all. the. time.

Before I move on to today, I should start a bit earlier. Kids aren't the only ones who ask about relations when they encounter a name. When I encounter a child with a particularly famous last name I sometimes ask about it. Of course, most either have no idea who I'm talking about or just say no, they aren't related. Well they are, as we are all related to the first man and woman known as Adam and Eve, and later Noah since he and his family were the only survivors of the great flood. They are related, but many generations removed of course. However, one time when I was student teaching myself, I came across a girl with the last name of Fogerty and of course had to ask about John Fogerty. Instead of the expected response she said that yes, he was her uncle. Pretty old for her uncle I would have to say, but maybe she

meant great-uncle. I clarified since John Fogerty could still be a common name and not in fact refer to the former CCR member, but she maintained that he was her uncle. Well, I suppose *someone* has to say yes to this question.

Today's encounter started with a guided reading group. We were discussing a book where a shy boy had a talent for playing the piano. He started out telling no one, even his friends, about this talent but ended up overcoming nervousness and performing in front of the school in a talent show. We talked about performing and of course I shared that I acted. The kids' eyes really lit up at this, and I mean **really**. When I said this they assumed I meant I acted on TV. I have never met this kind of fixed attention before when I brought up acting, but it turns out they had a reason for linking acting with television. Their teacher is the mother of an actor who plays a major role in Smallville, and even came to visit last year. I probably shouldn't say which one, but his last name is not the same as his mother's, so I might if prodded. I looked up his bio at a few sites and there's no mention of his mother's name so it may not even take much prodding...

EDIT: I guess I should have looked up [Milton Bradley on Wikipedia](#) before I asked my question, as it has this to say about the baseball player:

Bradley is named after his father, Milton Bradley, Sr., who filled out the birth certificate form without his wife's permission. As Milton's mother says of his father, "He wanted a Junior, and made damn sure he got one."^[1] Junior, who shares a name with a [popular board game pioneer](#), has always been teased about his name, but has never changed it because the memories it evokes "only drive him harder".^[1]