

# A middle school week



*(Big Nate ©[Lincoln Peirce](#))*

This past week I could be found in a middle school every day. In fact, I was in one school for three days for two teachers. I started the week in near-city district at the school that was closed for a few days a couple of weeks ago due to swine H1N1 flu. Yes, I'm still fine, thanks for wondering ☐ .. The class was IT, though in actuality he only had four classes (I believe I mentioned before that at this school 6th grade doesn't take this class). To make up for it, he had a tutorial, something usually only the core teachers have, and lunch detention. It is my understanding that under normal circumstances lunch detention has only ten or less students. Monday had 23 ☐ .. Most didn't have passes though as was supposedly required. Huh. So as typical in this class which doesn't have an assistant like in hometown district, students didn't work on IT projects. Instead, students had to read a packet then do three worksheets based on it. Yeah, kind of a blah day for the kids. The packet only covered about half the chapter that the worksheets had questions on I discovered later in the day. So naturally I informed the students of this... hey, are you kidding?? Like they needed an excuse to be lazy and not do it. "Hey, I didn't find the answer in two seconds so it must be in the half I didn't get to read so I'll just skip the question." My lips were sealed about this little discovery ☐ ..

Tuesday and Wednesday I subbed for sixth-grade math. Not that I taught any, nope. Still in near-city district, I was at their other middle school and the teacher left plans just having students work on problems out of their books. This is the sort of assignment in which one hears about subs falling asleep... They were generally well-behaved, at least in my

book. The resource teacher however, who came in for a couple of periods, didn't think so as she was very...not friendly. My highlights were going over the warmups (not listed in the plans, but I did it anyway just to have something to do) in each of the math classes, but for her one social studies class I just suffered in silence as I babysat.

Thursday I was in hometown district, so I didn't have to drive as far. This time I was with 7th grade language arts. They had a spelling test, afterwhich they worked on a persuasive writing packet for the rest of the time. You may be thinking, "Spelling test? But it's only Thursday!" Well yes, but this district had an institute day Friday making it a four-day weekend instead of three (Memorial Day ya know). Near-city district on the other hand was supposed to have a four-day weekend, though Tuesday instead of Friday being the off day, however for them Tuesday was a buffer day that got changed due to the winter's snow days.

Speaking of near-city district, as you already surmised from my opening paragraph I was back at Tuesday's and Wednesday's schools as a 6th grade resource teacher. No, not *that* one, but the one for the other team. I'll tell you, her first period was very busy. Do this, then this, then this, then this... Fortunately she gave me time constraints, otherwise it would have turned into a do this, then this, then leave a note on how we ran out of time for the rest period. Out of the rest of the day, team teaching with another teacher followed by a tutorial period, two of the periods were quite interesting as there were two subs in the room- a lot of teachers were out- could Memorial weekend have anything to it I wonder..? Come to think of it, there were a lot out on Thursday too in hometown district... Anyway, there was a little more restlessness in these students than the ones earlier in the week which I fully understand since it was a holiday weekend coming up after all.

So that was my week at work. I do hope I get a chance to fill

this week, all four days of school, but I suspect I won't have four full days.

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## **New position**

I have come to a decision on the new position at Goodwill. I will be taking the job in the back. At least for now. I was talking to Sarah and decided that right now, what is best for me is to have something steady, with set hours since I have all this other stuff to get used to and work with. I am getting married in about three weeks, I will be setting up a house, and actually buying food and supplies for Tony and myself. With all these changes, I will have something in my life that is very steady and I know that it won't be changing for awhile. Plus, it will give me the weekends to hang out with my younger sister before she heads off to Fort Wayne.

I also have the option of asking for a head cashier job when one comes available if I do not like working in the back. Head cashier sometimes have to work in the back anyway, on the weekends, so doing this job now will help me in the future if I ever decide to try for the head cashier job. And who knows, I may like it back there. I'm not sure, since I am not moving around as much as I would be with working up in the front. This position will give me more of an understand of Goodwill and how things work. It will let me see things from a different perspective, at least.

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# The Third Smallest Town In Texas

WOW... how hysterical! I continued my part in establishing relations between the WCCT and the [Village Players](#) by attending a production of Greater Tuna. I'm not sure if there could be a less politically correct, laugh out loud play. Taking place largely at radio station OKKK (get it?) operating on 250 (help me out here Mare) watts in really backwater, hickville Tuna, Texas, two actors embody 20 citizens of the town. Travis and Alex... man I don't know how they did it... had accents for each character that were perfect and mannerisms that were a hoot.

Some of my favorite characters:

- Bertha Bumiller (married to Hank who is a member of such civic minded organizations as Smut-Snatchers and a committee to reduce the number of blacks in literature which has banned such books as *Roots*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. And the group is also looking into Shakespeare's other works)
- Stanley Bumiller (son of Hank and Bertha a juvenile delinquent)
- Charlene Bumiller (high school senior daughter who has been trying for 7 years to be make the cheerleading squad with no success whatsoever but seems to be the town's poet laureate)
- Jody Bumiller (youngest child has a pack of 8-10 dogs provided by "puppy pusher" and humane activist, Petey Fisk who has a speech impediment)
- Reverend Spikes (Baptist minister and leader of the Smut-Snatchers. Alex delivered IMHO the finest speech in the play by eulogizing the greatness of the deceased judge)

During the extraordinary amount of costume changes, there were PSAs broadcasted. One of my favorites was an ad for Spatula Warehouse where if you buy 10 spatulas you can get one for a penny. Definitely not for everyone, but if you can put aside most of your morals and are able to laugh with the play as they satirize almost every politically correct thing imaginable then definitely look for [Greater Tuna](#) and its sequels.

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## WHERE IS THE RAT?!?

My daughters are having a garage sale today. They've been working it all by themselves (along with their older friend), and it's fun to peek out the window and watch them. They've gotten a lot of customers, and people are buying our old junk and popsicles and some have even donated money just because the kids are so cute. It kept them busy all morning, and things were going great until they went upstairs to get their bathing suits on because they were hot. That's when they noticed that one of our four pet rats was not in his cage! Where do you even begin to look for a missing rat in a house?!?

Not only that, but one of our dogs is a terrier mix and has been yearning to taste a pet rat. We needed to find that rat before the dog did! My oldest daughter is a worrier, so of course she started panicking about her rat – near hyperventilation and everything. I started to look for the rat, but then worse-case scenarios started running through my head – what if it got outside and we never found it? What if it was dead somewhere? What if the kids found it dead? What if no one found it dead and it stank up the house for weeks? What if we couldn't find it and it starved? I went to look

under my bed (funny that I thought I saw something running across the floor this morning. I chalked it up to a hallucination caused by lack of sleep which happens to me a lot – I sometimes see my cat running across the floor, and she died over a year ago!), but then I realized that I wouldn't really WANT to find the rat under there. I'm not scared of rats in the slightest, but today I was not in the mood to look under my bed and have a rodent come running at me. As I was debating what to do next, my daughter found the missing rat (Bobby Jack) in her sock drawer. Apparently the sock drawer was a "safe place" for Bobby since the girls have been putting him in there (!), and he likes it. Nevermind their poor, unsuspecting laundry maid who has rats running all over her work, sigh.

But the good news is the rat is safe and sound. Now we have to figure out how that happened in the first place. My two-year-old admitted to letting the rat out, but my husband thinks she is giving a false confession because she is usually scared to pick up the rats. Hopefully someone let him out and forgot about him and he didn't get out on his own. I am just thankful we located the MIA rat before the dog did!

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## **Facing Fear**

In church as of late, we are in the midst of a pastoral series called Fearless. I am enjoying this series because so far we have been able to study the Biblical story of David and Goliath and also the story of Moses and the Parting of the Red Sea – two stories I've certainly heard about, but hadn't heard the details or about how they relate to modern-day Christianity until now. Last Sunday at church, our pastor told of an amusing story during his Fearless series, and I

thought I'd share it. Also in this service, the band accompanied an amazing Bossa Nova / Spanish-style vocal duet unlike anything I've seen in church so far – it was awesome! I can't reproduce the song unfortunately, but here is a summary of the pastor's fun story:

*A beautiful village nestled on the bottom of a valley erupted in flames. All of the surrounding villages' fire engines came to fight the fire, but they all stopped at the top of the hill on the road leading to the burning village in the valley, for they figured the village would not be savable and would only pose a danger to their own firefighters. A rickety old fire truck soon showed up from a distant town, and it didn't hesitate as it crested the hill and rode straight into the valley to fight the fire. The fire was extinguished, the village saved, and there was a grand ceremony of celebration. When the fearless fire department who put out the fire rose to accept their rewards and thanks, the fire chief took the stage. The mayor of the saved village asked him, "What are you going to do with your rewards and with your thank-you money?" The fire chief of that heroic fire department who fearlessly rode down the hill to save the neighboring town said, "The first thing we are going to do is to fix the brakes on that fire truck!"*

The moral of the story? Here's my take: The "fearless" firefighters didn't even mean to go into the fire to fight it... But they did just that, and once they got down in the valley accidentally (because of the failed brakes on the fire truck), they faced their fears and conquered that fire, even though they didn't originally intend to and also despite their fears.

The story tied in nicely with our church's Fearless series. And our pastor told us that story, I think, to get our attention and to get us thinking... And that it did.

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# Decision

I have been given two choices to choose from at Goodwill. Well, actually three if one really thinks about it. I am either able to stay on as a cashier, move up to head cashier or move into the back and start sorting clothes. I have already said no to staying a cashier. I need more hours. So that leaves me with head cashier or sorting clothes. I have been told by my boss that either one would be all right for me, since I am a reliable person, but I really don't know which one would be the best for me.

With being the head cashier, I would be making more money, with the \$.20 increase in pay. I would be working about thirty hours a week, though it could be more, and I would be able to get managerial experience. But there are downsides to this as well. I would not be able to be in choir, most likely because I would be working at least two Sundays a month, I would be working with people more, since I take complaints and stuff like that and I'm still not full time.

Now, with the sorting job, I would be full time, get weekends off and spend all day with Monica. But, unfortunately, I wouldn't be moving around as much, and I would be doing the same thing over and over, which at least up front, I can go from putting away clothes, to helping customers, and putting things onto the shelves. I would have a job where I would know when I would almost every week. I don't want to say that I would know for sure, since it might vary somewhat from time to time, but it would make hanging out with friends and family a lot easier. I wouldn't have to deal with customers in the back very often, but that might shove me back into the shell that I had been in before starting at Goodwill.

With both positions I am able to get insurance, which I need. I do not want to choose where I go just because I am able to work with Monica again. I need to choose because that is the best choice for me. I love Monica to death, but I have to be happy with where I am working also. I had hoped that writing this would help me bring my thoughts into perspective and help make my decision easier, but it hasn't. :( I know I don't have a lot of time to choose, so I really need to get this made and quickly. I just have to hope it is the right decision.

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## An extraterrestrial virus killer

All the way from Qo'noS comes something to kill...computer viruses/virii. That's right, today may be a good day to die but we're pretty safe this time as we are not the intended targets of Klingon wrath- the computer virus apparently is. Read about it at its site: <https://www.sophos.com/klingon-anti-virus/>

Do you suppose they used the [Klingon keyboard](#) to program it? ☐

Even if you think this is a stupid idea (read: you're not a Trekkie), at least go to the site to hear a classic cult piece sung in its original tlhIngan (Klingon). Hilarious!

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# CUBS Vs Sox



I haven't had a chance to blog much, but a few posts ago in my "To Hellinois... .. And Back Again" blog series, I mentioned that I might be partaking in a "very exciting, awesomely fun event" to which I promised, "more on that later".

Now that the event is definite, I am bursting with excitement, so I will share – hubby got us tickets to see the Chicago Cubs play the White Sox LIVE! I've been wanting to go to a Cubs game for awhile (since our last visit to Wrigley in 2004), but last summer was out because I had a baby and unscheduled surgery from which I had to recover. So, June 28 at ~~Comisky Park~~ US Cellular Field, we will venture into Chicagoland once again to cheer on the Chicago Cubs while on the turf of the Chicago White Sox – AWESOME! My mom was nice enough to agree to watch all 4 kids for the day (and the eldest 3 for the rest of the week, BOOLYAH!), and the tickets for the BIG GAME arrived in the mail the other day.

They accidentally got thrown away in the garbage with the junk mail, but LUCKILY hubby was heads up and asked about the whereabouts of the tickets. That's when I realized that I probably had thrown them away – by accident of course! Good thing he asked when he did – the tickets were found not too near the bottom of the garbage and salvaged, thank goodness!

But anyway, I am looking forward to this event like you wouldn't believe. Not only is it **LIVE** baseball, but it's MLB, not AAA or AA. And it's the Cubs I get to go watch, and they're playing the SOX – their arch-rival (especially as far

as I'm concerned – I HATE those White Sox!!!). So I would say yeah, even though it's not even 2 months after our last Chicago visit, this visit will be well worth it! So watch for us – we'll be decked out in Cubs gear to be sure to properly invade the South Side Sox turf. The game is at 12:05pm local time on June 28 – the last of a 3-game series between the two teams, so it promises to be that much more exciting! It's scheduled to be shown on WGN, so if you get that channel, check it out, you just might see Taylhis and Co.!

GO CUBS!!!!



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## No Go JOE :(

Well... it is official. I have the results of the audition for the summer production of *Joseph*. I don't know what to feel somewhere between total bewilderment and depression. Not because I do not know what part I might have gotten but that the show was totally cancelled because of "[lack of bodies](#)." I cannot believe that this area does not have enough talent to fill the roles of the show: it has been done in the area at least twice in the past 10 years by two different community theatres. It is just a weird feeling knowing that a show was cancelled BEFORE it was even cast. I just hope that the theatre can put this behind them and move on to their next musical production. I really am upset about this and to say

that we should move on and think about the next production is not helping a whole lot because I really did want to be a part of one of my favorite shows and hopefully be in it with one of the best performers and friends I have ever known... but there WILL be another time for that.

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## Doomsday In Smallville

I can accept most things concerning the long, tedious 8 year run of Smallville... For example, character introductions much earlier than acceptable for the sake of increasing ratings. For another, the Incredible Hulk meets Superman interpretation of Doomsday HOWEVER, when viewers have been waiting all season long for what is supposed to be the much-anticipated knockout/dragout battle of Clark Kent's life (still just Clark, no suit, no secret identity except for his moniker of The Red-Blue Blur) and they get next to nothing... well. All season long, the arrival of Doomsday has been announced... even going back to the finale of Season 7. And we get two minutes of less than thrilling spectacle. This creature was supposed to be the end of Superman and it was handled poorly. Sure there was a super catch of a flying automobile, rescuing a small child, a few big explosions, but that was about it... LAME! I had been waiting all season for that.

Oh, yeah. For two years, one of the comics mainstay characters has been a part of the show (even if he was once again one of those aforementioned too early to come to the canvas characters). Jimmy Olsen was killed by Doomsday. At his funeral, we find out that the character's name was Henry James Olsen. The character's younger brother is given his camera. The new character's name? James Bartholomew Olsen: the cub reporter of the Daily Planet. UGH!

Next season, the show is moving to Friday nights which is typically the graveyard of network television. Will I watch? I have my doubts. I enjoy Elsewhere stories as much as anyone, but I see this turn of events as an insult. And on Thursday nights in the 8PM time slot... some teenage angst drama featuring vampires. At least my other favorite show is still looking bright.