

Oops...

I saw this on Channel One this morning (news briefs shown at some schools). How important are grades to you? Well, in Indiana they are probably as important as they are elsewhere, but nevertheless they managed to lose a month of grades over spring break due to what they say was a computer glitch. Click link for story:

[Tech error wipes out Ind. school's grades](#)

Finding information

In an extensive lookup, I was finding a lot of information on electric ranges. It seems like my range has a common failure type. I can't believe that the number of stoves that fail by turning on as high as they can go. I'm going to have to do an all out search for an old style stove without any electronic stuff. I'm going to try to find all manual controls. This may mean not having a smooth top cook surface, which I really like. Maybe I could find one with a safety feature that actually turns the oven off if the temp gets too high. This is really a pain. For now, I have to unplug the elements in the oven, so I can use the cook top. I could probably get by with this for quite some time, but eventually I'll need to cook a pie, cookies, or even a pizza.

Forehand to Forehead – And Then Some

And now for some youtube fun:

VIDEO 1: [Bloody Tennis Tantrum](#)

WHO: Mikhail Youzhny, a professional tennis player

WHAT: Tennis racket vs. forehead

WHEN: Monday, March 31, 2008

WHERE: Sony Ericsson Open – Key Biscayne, FL

WHY: ??????

COMMENTS: If you are bored by tennis, the real fun starts about 30 seconds into the video. Make sure you listen to the announcers' commentary on the incident – hilarious!

VIDEO 2: [Drunk Hamster](#)

WHO: Someone's poor (?) hamster

WHAT: repeatedly doing flips

WHEN: Not important

WHERE: The Hamster's cage

WHY: Is he really drunk?

COMMENTS: I don't condone cruelty to animals, of course, but this is so funny... And he seems to be doing it because he really LIKES doing it. He doesn't seem to be getting hurt. The theme song works well with the action.

Video 3: [The Price is Right April Fool's Day Joke](#)

WHO: Drew Carey and Rich Fields vs. a contestant named Lisa

WHAT: A contestant bids on a fake showcase

WHEN: April Fool's Day 2008

WHERE: Los Angeles, CA

WHY: April Fool's Day prank

COMMENTS: I can't believe the contestant didn't get the joke earlier... guess she was distracted by being on tv, that happens. Wish I could hear what the audience was saying during the prank! Were they giving her bids, telling her it was a joke, what?

Great day today!

Today was possibly one of the best days I have had in a long time. It really reminded me why I am most comfortable with kids in 4th-6th grades. The class really went well. Remember the one fifth grade class I talked about in my music entry a few days ago? This was pretty much opposite, more like the two 4th grade classes I had that day. It is really unfortunate I am not so comfortable teaching things like reading and writing. What other career can place me with this age group but not involve standard teaching? Coaching is out of course as I am definitely not sports oriented- speaking of which, did you hear about what boys are doing now for sport in Missouri? Put it this way: it is *illegal* in most states. [Check it out at this link \(click\)](#). Actually, once I saw the video (there is a video at that link, but I'm not sure it's the same one I saw) it didn't seem so bad, which is why I am not telling you what it is and making you go to the link instead. ☐ The only reservations I have is that they are teaching this to boys as young as six.

Anyway, back to today. I didn't do much teaching this

morning, what with computer lab time and art taking up an hour and a half, but what teaching I did I really enjoyed. Following art, they had spelling (still no teaching, but some preparation and study time for their test Friday) and reading. I got to read aloud a book that was actually pretty good, though I didn't like the ending **at all**. It was called [My Brother Sam is Dead](#). With what happened in the chapter I read to the class, one would hope for a miracle to happen in the next chapter, but what happens is really quite sad. I'll leave it a little mysterious in case you want to read it- hopefully I didn't say too much. I don't think I did.

This led us to lunch. After lunch there was just math and science left. For math I got the advanced group with only around 15 students. This group was in the 6th grade book. I actually almost got through what the teacher expected me to get through. I only needed about five minutes more instead of the typical 15-30 minutes more... For science we talked about energy sources. They had read about fossil fuels and hydropower yesterday, and we picked up with solar, nuclear, and other forms of energy today. It was a good read and discussion. By the time we finished, I was a little disappointed it was time to go home, it was such a good day. Oh well, it couldn't last forever. And tomorrow I've got 7th grade... Well, 7th grade science! I just hope I don't have to show another video like that Al Gore one I showed at this school last time. That was not fun, though not as bad as 7th grade sex-ed I had to do at another school around that same time. ☐

Even More Of A Great Thing?

Fans of the popular NBC comedy *The Office* will have even more to love in [2009](#). The network has just greenlit a spinoff series which will have its debut in February in the highly coveted post Super Bowl XLIII timeslot (sounds like another party to me). Little has been revealed about the series, but one possible plot seems to be giving Dwight his own series to head. Hey, it worked for [Frasier](#).

Spinoff series are either hit or miss. The earliest example I can think of would be *The Danny Thomas Show* giving birth to *The Andy Griffith Show*. *Happy Days* (which was a spinoff of *Love, American Style*) begat *Laverne & Shirley*, and [Mork and Mindy](#). Today, it seems nearly impossible to find a show whose title does not include *Law & Order* or *CSI*. So, there are times when spinoff series are a good thing.

However, there have been failures to the genre. Although [Happy Days](#) did give way to two very popular shows, there was also the dreadful attempt to give Joanie and Chachi their own timeslot. While [Cheers](#) gave Kelsey Grammer's character Frasier Crane his own series, there was also the show known as [The Tortellis](#).

So whatever path the new series based upon the successful show takes, here's hoping that it is another *Frasier* and not *Joanie Loves Chachi*.

Anyone have a favorite spinoff series?

Movie to Broadway

Ok... a recent trend that has come to the Broadway stage is the reimagining of Hollywood movies as stage musicals. I am not speaking of Disney animated features being adapted for the stage (I have made at least 2 postings on that subject). I have felt that the best of these cartoons easily lend themselves to staging. However, musicals such as [The Producers](#), [Hairspray](#), [Xanadu](#), and most recently, [Young Frankenstein](#) all seem to be doing quite well.

I think the strangest of these creations is *Xanadu*. The [1980 movie](#) was to be Olivia-Newton John's follow-up to the phenomenal hit *Grease*. I'm not precisely sure why the movie flopped but it could have been the death of disco or perhaps that the movie was just terrible. It was the winner(?) of 1 Razzie and nominated for 4 others. Hopefully, I am not going to be the victim of a mob of cultists who actually liked the movie. Strangely enough 25 years later, nostalgia (or the few people who have actually seen and enjoyed the movie) must have created the necessity to revisit the movie. I wish I could dwell on the plot of the show. However, I have never seen either version and reading synopses just gave me a headache because they made little sense.

I suppose that this streak of bringing movies to the stage will continue as long as they are profitable. On the horizon a stage version of the Dolly Parton, Lili Tomlin, and Jane Fonda classic(?) [9 to 5](#) opens in Los Angeles in September '08. I'm certain that I have heard rumors of a [Back to the Future](#) musical being produced. Any others? While Mel Brooks seems to be on a role, he might as well develop [Spaceballs](#) or [Blazing Saddles](#). Or how about [Road House: The Stage Version Of The Cinema Classic That Starred Patrick Swayze, Except This One Stars Taimak From The 80's Cult Classic "The Last Dragon" Wearing A Blonde Mullet Wig](#) (oops that was not a musical, correct?).

What other movies would make great musicals or which am I forgetting besides *Footloose* and *Saturday Night Fever* to name a few.

When “Good” Towns Go Bad

I guess it depends on what you would call a good town. A place we used to live called Naperville Illinois, a western suburb of Chicago, was once considered a good town. It had lots of fun things to do, relatively low crime, good schools, and lots of money. It was never my ideal place to live, however, because it was always way too crowded and had way too much traffic for my tastes. But I never considered it a *dangerous* place to live... until yesterday. Being from the Chicago area and having friends and family who still reside there means I maintain an interest in keeping up with their local news. Yesterday I came across the following newspaper article about a murder that was committed in the neighborhood where we used to live: Man Shot, Killed in Naperville

In a city the size of Naperville (about 10 square miles, with a population of over 140,000 people), this incident might not appear to be as shocking to the normal reader as it was to me. However, having lived in this neighborhood only about 7 years ago, I can't believe how much it has changed. We lived in a small townhome; it was very nice and backed up to a school. It seemed like the perfect picture of suburbia at the time. It was VERY over-priced for what I would expect to pay for a 1.5 bedroom where I live now, (we paid \$1380 rent a month, and our place was not more than 650 square feet), however at the time I thought it was worth it because it was a “nice” area and close to family in a place I thought would be safe to raise kids. Needless to say, I was wrong on that

account. In the article about the crime, the newspaper drew a nice little map. Turns out the victim (who had an arrest record himself – not that I'm judging, just noting) lived not more than 2 blocks from our old home. The victim's body was found 5 blocks from our old home. We used to take our daughter for walks around the area all the time; there was a Walgreens we used to walk to right near where the body was found. Readers who posted in the comments section of the story say how the area has become "seedy", and in the article itself, they state that the victim's home was a "high traffic area". All of this adds up to a place where I would NOT want to raise kids, let alone pay through the nose for a small place to live, only to have to worry about protecting my family from the violent crime that seems to have invaded the area. Some might say this is an isolated incident; they can say "this can happen anywhere." That IS true. Anything can happen anywhere. However, one can now say that it can happen anywhere, but it DOES happen there.

It truly makes me thankful every day that we've now found such a wonderful place to call home; away from the city and its crime, pollution, and expenses, not to mention how superficial and just downright unfriendly the residents of a town like Naperville can be. It's baffling to me that they charge EXTRA to live in a place like that! It makes me feel really good knowing that when my kids grow up and want to raise children of their own, they will have the option to stay in the wonderful town where they grew up. I did not have that option, since I grew up in a town next to Naperville, and it is no longer a good place to raise children. If my kids want to spread their wings and fly away to explore the world and see what else is out there, that is fine. I will miss them of course, but I am quite confident that if all else fails out there, they will always have the option to return to the place where they grew up to live safely and prosperously. Country living is not for everyone, I guess, but I don't think I'll ever understand those who choose to pass up utopia for

Stupid Oven

I've been steaming about this most of the evening. For supper I put in a Lasagna for dinner, set the timer, the temperature and walked away. An hour into the cooking time I smelt something burning. I checked the stove and there was a blinking light. I opened the oven, and it was much warmer than the 400 I set it at, and the broiler was on too. I couldn't turn the thing off either!!!!!! Dinner almost ruined (very brown on top) and a stove that would not turn off! I had to turn off power at the breaker box to make sure it was off.

Now it is an older stove (10-15 years?), so you can expect a thing or two to go wrong after the use it got. But really, a failure of some part causing both elements of the stove to turn on and continue heating? Shouldn't it fail to the off position (no heat)? I found out the cause of the problem, and the part is around \$100 dollars. I should be able to put it in myself. My concern with this is that the thing will fail again in the ON position. At that much money (1/3 to 1/5 the cost of new), I may want to research new stoves, and find one that fails on the off side. I find this a little dangerous, especially now that I'm getting older. Fixing this problem will give me another 10-15 years, and by then I may have some concentration problems. Bad enough I won't remember I put the tea-kettle on, but the stove being on when it looks off bothers me.

April Fool's – Not Over Yet!

Yet another April Fool's Day surprise awaited us when we got home tonight... seems the newest addition to the family is a little jokester. Our dog Beesley, who we've had for almost a month now, is an escape artist. We have a little mud room in the back of the house that leads to the garage, and if we don't lock the dogs out of it, Beesley can push open the door leading to the garage and escape. Apparently, tonight was one of those nights when we forgot to make sure the dogs were locked out of the mud room because when we got home and opened the garage to pull the car in, out runs Beesley. We corralled her into the car, and that's when we saw it – a HUGE mountain of garbage in the middle of the garage, along with several smaller hills of doggie-doo. Seems during her great escape into the garage, she decided to tear apart the garbage that was in there waiting for garbage day. Of course, being a family of 5, we have lots of garbage, including lots of dirty diapers. Seems little Beesley had herself such a feast that she immediately had to add doggie-doo to the mess without waiting for us to come home and let her outside to do her business. Compounding our luck had this happening on a Tuesday, which is only 2 days before garbage day, so we had just about as much garbage out there as was possible. I've been trying to convince Hubby that we need to buy one of those mega garbage cans just to store our garbage in until garbage day ever since the local squirrels discovered we have a parrot who discards nuts into our garbage. They sneak into the garage constantly and tear little holes in the garbage bags to get at the nuts. But at least they're dainty about it, which is more than I can say for Beesley. It's just difficult to justify spending money on something that you're going to put garbage into – it's like literally throwing money away... or the reverse actually, but still... maybe now we'll be able to justify that expense a little better. April Fool's – Beesley style – YUCK!

And a side note about April Fool's Day from our local paper. No one knows how April Fool's Day came about. There's a theory that it originated when the Gregorian Calender was adopted in the 1500's. Seems there were a few folks stubborn about adopting the change of New Year's Day from April 1 to January 1, so others made fun of them, pranked them, and sent them on fool's errands, hence the origin of April Fool's Day. That is just a theory however, but equally amusing and NOT just a theory is how the country of Scotland celebrates April 1st. Apparently Scottish April Fool's Day jokes often focus on the buttocks and the day is known as Taily Day. According to our local paper, the "butts" of the Taily Day jokes are known as April "Gowk" which is another name for Cuckoo bird, and it's believed the ole "kick me" sign gag originated with these Scottish customs. I think I'll stick with good old April Fool's Day, thanks, though this year in our house, I guess you could call it Taily Day!

Jokes that didn't work...

Well, I tried to get my oldest with an April Fool's Joke today, but unfortunately she had a similar idea to try to get me. Both of us failed. I know her too well. And since my joke was similar she saw right through it. All in good fun. She's been trying to get me since I got her up for School on a Saturday. That had to be one of my best.

I do try to plan my pranks, jokes and other April Fools day fun on people who like that sort of thing. Getting caught by that may not be everyone's favorite thing. I tend to plan one or two major things, and a couple of smaller ones. I have yet to make anyone really mad.

Did anyone catch the Google prank today. It was a stroke of genius. The ability to send your e-mail back in time. I wonder how many people believed that one.

Also see the following for the 100 best all time pranks.

[April Fools' day Pranks](#)