

August 23, 2019

THE GUYS MOVE IN...AND RUBBER MEETS ROAD

After a really quick trip north (10+ hours of driving in 26 hours!) to celebrate my younger daughter's 40th birthday and play golf with friends, I returned late Saturday night to find the house in pretty good shape. Half a dozen guys had moved in, avoided using the front steps and were starting to get settled.

So it was a bit of a disappointment to wake up Sunday morning and find the floor of the dining room littered with maybe 30 beer cans with another 6 pack of empties on the front porch. I asked around until I found someone willing to admit guilt... I was a little tough on him as I insisted that he and his friends clean it up, based especially on the fact that there was an empty trash can not 10 feet away. "Am I being a bitch?" He looked at me sideways. "Get used to it. That kind of stupidity is not going to be tolerated."

Most of the rest of the day was spent meeting guys and parents, assisting as I could with fixtures and access, and giving tours and "lectures" on the improvements and expectations. Again I found just about everyone pleased and impressed by the state of the house and the investment in upgrades.

But the cans still sat there. I took a break and went uptown to watch the end of the Indians beating the Yankees. Logan sent me a text suggesting that we should start "softer" on expectations and get tougher later. My reply. "Sorry Logan. Our first disagreement. There is acceptable and unacceptable. Once you set a standard you can always lighten up but almost impossible to get tougher. I identified 2 guys who were part of the beer fest and told them to clean up. If they have not when I get back to the house I will ask them again. If they refuse I will figure out next steps but they won't like it."

This started a really interesting and fairly intense exchange of texts. I'm almost positive that someone was texting Logan asking him to get me to back off. And I know Logan's intentions are good. He did not want the guys to respond to me as they have started to with Stefan, the self-identified "Bad Cop". I can sympathize with Stefan's impossible situation... always fully responsible but rarely here... so when he does show up he sees all the problems and must do his best to fix them... which means taking the guys to task. Tough situation and makes a really good and invested Brother seem like the bad guy.

In our exchange I held my ground and assured Logan that I had dozens of positive interactions and that I would not let this bad one ruin anything. But I also made it clear that I would enforce the expectation. Apparently that message got through. When I returned, there were 5 guys around the game table with all the cans picked up (including the porch!), and a trash can with a garbage bag in it being utilized. I did return the library chairs where they belonged and got them folding chairs and even got one of the guys to help me move in a spare couch that will probably wind up in the basement.

We actually shared some laughs. I made fun of their music and they asked me if I would shotgun a beer. I assured them I knew how and could do it... and that I would when the House set a positive goal and met it! This satisfied the group, and Logan shot me an LOL when I described the exchange to him. I think we call this progress!

The rest of the evening was relatively quiet... one loud group late where I questioned whether one out of house brother about his "limited vocabulary" but relatively quiet and issue free. I was one tired puppy so I binge watched TV and relaxed. More move ins on Monday! And more journal entries to come.