

## My Week in Court

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Apologies for a personal post that has nothing to do with web development, but I just felt like sharing.

I was called to serve on a jury in Federal court last week. I have wanted to serve on a jury for years - mostly out of a sense of duty, but also out of curiosity about the experience.

Everyone I talked to during jury selection claimed they didn't want to be part of the jury, yet they all seemed to answer selection questions honestly and very few made any attempt to get out of their obligation (the few who did found it easy to get excused).

In the end, we had a diverse group of thirteen people. Despite, different backgrounds and different interests (and, I am guessing, different political views), everyone got along the whole four days we served (including during deliberation). Naturally, a longer or more difficult trial could have brought out tensions - I haven't had that experience.

The trial involved marijuana growth and possession of firearms by a felon (against federal law if the firearms crossed state lines). It had plenty of interesting twists and interesting people. I think we all found ourselves sympathetic to everyone involved.

I learned more about marijuana growth than I ever thought I would know and a bit about firearms and welding as well.

We all did our best to find any reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the accused. In the end, however, we all felt that a guilty verdict was unavoidable. The evidence was just too compelling to allow any real doubt as to the guilt of the accused.

I was very impressed with everyone involved for how serious we all took our responsibility to the accused. I was afraid that some people (no-one in particular) would rush to judgement, but everyone took their time in deliberation. We stayed on task largely due to the foreman who did a good job of keep us all focused.

Despite putting me a week behind at work, this was a very positive process that reinforced my belief in the U.S. legal system. In this case the system seemed worked just as it should.

If you ever get the chance to serve on jury duty, I encourage you to look on it as a very positive opportunity - it certainly was for me.