

## Monday April 16th 2018

We had a violent windstorm all night with rain bucketing down. The combination of the howling wind and the odd flash of lightning kept David awake until after 01:00 hrs. Maisie was equally upset and could not settle down.

CBC: Tens of thousands of people in the Greater Toronto Area and southern Ontario were without power this morning after a spring ice storm lashed the province two days in a row. Toronto Hydro crews worked to restore power to some 10,000 customers in the city, while 76,000 customers of the provincial utility Hydro One are disconnected. High winds of more than 100 km/h in some areas and heavy rain overnight snapped limbs from trees, downing power lines and poles.

We were up very early to check for damage. The front and back lawns were strewn with debris so there is going to be quite a cleanup.

In the garage we set up cardboard, old matting and some green carpet sponge underlay so that Maisie could have some “grass” upon which to perform. No deal.

Weather: Toronto 35F to 40F rain and wind    Louisville 36F to 41F snow showers and cloud

NYTX: David one minute and 31 seconds. Louise one minute and six seconds.

Louise made us fried egg and prosciutto on toasted 7 grain bread. Maisie would not eat breakfast. The howling wind had really put her off her game.

David reinstalled a Kidde smoke detector in the basement that he had dismantled when the plumber was soldering.

Louise phoned the bank to make sure her mailed documentation on the Jeep had been received. It had not. So, we then went through a complicated secure messaging system through a third party. It was just a simple form that needed a signature. Then we spent some time trying to figure how to configure and connect the HP ink jet printer to an outside phone line so that we could fax back the signed form. We think we succeeded. Only David would have a 50 foot telephone extension cord hidden in his electronics trove.

For lunch we had leftover pizza.

At 12:30 David drove off to see the Tooth Fairy for a normal tooth cleaning. He was overdue after his long stay in the US.

On the way home he dropped into the Port Union Library to pick up a HOLD Louise had placed on a book using the on-line system. He also dropped off “The City of Fallen Angels” by John Berendt (Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil). The Toronto Public Library system has over 100 branches scattered across the city with a collection of over ten million books, movies and other media.

The driving was very sloppy. Toronto obviously got hit by a weather bomb. While David was away

Louise took Maisie for a walk in the pouring rain. Maisie finally performed.

The pouring rain slowed down in the late afternoon. Now we will all have to wait to find out if we have suffered any more damage.

For supper we had brined spiced chicken with sweet potato and salad. Then we watched three episodes of the “Gilmore Girls”.

### **Tuesday April 17th 2018**

David had an early appointment in West Scarborough so we were up early at 06:00 hrs. The temperature was right at the freezing mark so it was treacherous underfoot.

Weather: Toronto 32F to 37F cloud    Louisville 32F to 58F sun  
NYTX: David one minute and 35 seconds    Louise one minute 16 seconds

David drove off at 07:20 and decided to stay away from the 401 mega highway. He drove all the way west across Lawrence Avenue in bumper-to-bumper traffic. At one point he braked for a traffic light and the brakes did a machine gun dance – black ice. It happened again about five minutes later. David had been driving in the left lane of three lanes – the City had plowed snow into the centre of the road. The rain the day before had been absorbed and released by these snow banks and dribbled onto the tarmac to make perfect invisible black ice. David switched to the centre lane.

David arrived in the area of his appointment but he had noted that none of the sidewalks had been cleared. So, he had to park closer so that his walk would be less. He arrived right on time and was finished in 20 minutes.

He decided to drive back via the 401 and saw immediately that it was a parking lot going west. He got home by 09:20 – two hours elapsed time for a 20 minute appointment.

Louise had the frying pan at the ready so that we could have a late breakfast.

David started preparing his IRS 8840 “Closer Connection Exception Statement for Aliens”. It is one of those inverse logic bureaucratic forms that makes you state the reverse of what logic would dictate.

For lunch Louise came up with a tuna salad with cucumber, accompanied by Triscuits, a snack cracker, made by Nabisco, which takes the form of square baked whole wheat wafers. It was invented in 1900, a patent was granted in 1902, and the Shredded Wheat Company in Niagara Falls, New York began production in 1903. Wikipedia.

Louise got onto the Toronto Public Library website and ordered two books with a Venetian theme, both short stories by Jane Rylands, an American woman who befriended Susie Guggenheim in her late years. Ms. Rylands and her husband, an Englishman, became prominent expats in Venetian society.

In the early afternoon we started to get bursts of sun and snow showers. The weather is really wearing us down.

Louise had brought her Bose Radio from Louisville to play in her painting studio. But, Louise also likes to have a radio in the kitchen. Air Canada's Aeroplan starting bugging David with emails. So, David ordered a Bose Wave SoundTouch Music System IV by using some of his Aeroplan miles.

David finished his book on Churchill. At 1,053 pages it is a bit of a slog. But, it is very well written. It is highly recommended for those who like this sort of history.

We finally got some mail today. Of course most of it was junk, but there was the buried treasure of a Costco rebate cheque. While it did not quite cover the annual cost of membership, it helped defray the cost. Mind you, there might be another slice to come.

David did a fine chopping of shallots to assist Louise in the preparation of spiced pan-fried chicken, asparagus, Brussels sprouts and green beans for supper. The avocado refused to ripen in time, so that wiped out a salad.

“The Gilmore Girls” had some ups and downs through three episodes. The story has gradually become one with some substance but it also continues to operate under the guise of style and topical wit.

### **Wednesday April 18th 2018**

Weather: Toronto 35F to 43F cloud    Louisville 41 74 sun cloud  
NYTX: David two minutes 5 seconds    Louise one minute 58 seconds

CBC Neil Macdonald: “Imagine Trump declaring that you should ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country? Coming from him, that would just sound weird.”

About 07:15 hrs, after the mandatory caffeine jolt, Louise went out with Maisie while David explored the news services of the Web.

Her daily read of the NYT on her iPhone yielded yet another coincidence and a very funny headline for an op-ed. The writer of the op-ed Jennifer Finney Boylan captions her writing “The Forrest Trump Presidency. An unnamed congressman continued with 'But it's an evil, really stupid Forrest Gump.’”

Now! For another in a remarkable series of coincidences: David picked up “The Best American Essays, 2017” from the library two days ago. The editor of the 2017 collection is Leslie Jamison, a writer Louise had never heard of. Yesterday Louise read the introductory essay by Ms. Jamison. Today the NYT has an article about her! Apparently she has published a memoir called “The Recovering”, about her overcoming her addiction.

We were off to Costco where we found all sorts of necessary items, and some not so necessary, nevertheless important. We first filled up the Dodge gas tank. It is really getting expensive and we will be so happy when we finally take delivery of the Nissan Leaf – all electric.

Costco was not crowded so we bought some special coffee mugs and dessert bowls. David got a defective HP ink jet cartridge refilled at no charge. We looked at a replacement built-in house vacuum but need to phone a 1-800 number to make sure the hose will fit into all the built-in wall fixtures. We wondered whether Wednesday might be 'Senior Citizens' Day'. That was our general take on the crowd

this morning.

Back home lunch was a can of a brand new Costco soup – sweet potato. David had never even heard of sweet potato until it was introduced by Louise. Thinking it must be a Southern dish, we were astonished to find out it came from Belleville, Ontario.

The courier delivered David's throw-away cell phone. He got it because it is unlocked. It has a dual micro-SIM capability so he can have a Canadian and US phone number both driven by air time that he can buy at grocery stores WITHOUT any contract.

It took David the better part of two hours to get the thing operational. The instruction sheet had 6 point typeface that only a ten year could read. The Web revealed little clues, one bit at a time. We desperately need to hire a teenager for this sort of thing.

BBC: A pilot who safely landed a Southwest Airlines passenger plane after a jet engine ripped apart mid-air has been praised as a hero by passengers. Tammie Jo Shults captained Flight 1380 to a Philadelphia airport in Tuesday's emergency, according to passengers. Shrapnel from the shredded engine smashed a window and nearly sucked a passenger out of the jet. That woman, a mother-of-two, later died. Capt Shults served in the US Navy for 10 years and flew fighter jets.

We had Louise's super hamburgers for supper, with diet ginger ale and a salad. Dessert was slices of Moroccan oranges – delicious.

David sat down with his hobby magnifying headset and read through the cell phone instructions. Some of it made sense. He has until jury duty on May 14<sup>th</sup> to figure out how to make/receive phone calls and how to use the texting function. He has already learned that you need the finger dexterity of the six year old girl to hit the text buttons. Fortunately, he has a capacitance input device.

“Gilmore Girls” More ups and downs. However, the fashion statements are improving, and the story is following its promise/foreshadowing it seems a bit better.

### **Thursday April 19th 2018**

We were up at first light and walking Maisie by 06:50, being careful to thread between icy patches – half the time we used the road rather than the sidewalk.

Weather: Toronto 34F to 26F cloud Louisville 40F to 55F cloud & sun

NYTX: David one minute and 23 seconds Louise only 50 seconds

CBC: Queen Elizabeth II opened a summit of the 53-nation Commonwealth on Thursday, and backed her son Prince Charles to be the next leader of the association of Britain and its former colonies. In a ceremony at Buckingham Palace, the Queen said she hoped Charles would "carry on the important work" of leading the Commonwealth, a loose alliance that has struggled to carve out a firm place on the world stage. The Queen has no designated successor as Commonwealth chief, and *some have suggested Charles should not take over the helm of the group*, which takes in 2.4 billion people on five continents.

After a cheese omelette breakfast we went our separate ways. Louise wanted to vacuum the house but David cannot stand the noise of the existing portable vacuum. David decided to solve the problem by buying a new central vacuum to replace the one installed in 1981 – he spent some time on the Web researching the situation and concluded that Costco gave the best deal. The new central vacuum will be installed in the garage and the noise level will be only 65 dB.

National Post: After a legal battle fought all the way to Canada's highest court, a New Brunswick man's quest to be able to buy slightly cheaper alcohol in a neighbouring province has failed. In a unanimous decision handed down Thursday, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled provincial trade barriers are constitutional as long as they're aimed at a valid purpose within the province's jurisdiction, with only an incidental effect on trade. Canada's constitution simply "does not impose absolute free trade across Canada," it declared. The ruling concluded that New Brunswick's prohibition on residents buying alcohol from anywhere other than the New Brunswick Liquor Corporation was constitutional because it isn't primarily meant to stop inter-provincial trade. [Comment: If Canadians do not enjoy free trade WITHIN Canada, how can Canada expect free trade elsewhere.]

BBC: Miguel Díaz-Canel has been sworn in as Cuba's new president, replacing Raúl Castro who took over from his ailing brother Fidel in 2006. It is the first time since the revolution in 1959 that a Castro is not at the helm of the government. Mr Díaz-Canel had been serving as first vice-president for the past five years.

Louise received a photo of her back garden from a friend in Louisville. It showed her flowering apple tree in full pink blossom. This little tree first made its appearance to Louise near her front door as a single sprig volunteer. She transplanted it to her side yard . . .oops! Too shady near the house, so she put it by the fence where it gets lots of good sun. It is just beautiful now, about ten years old. We returned in exchange a picture of the grey, grey, grey ravine with snow patches on the grass in the back of David's house.

Louise immediately asked David to drive to 'No Frills' to buy a bouquet of tulips for the house.

While David did housework in the basement, Louise was cooking up a storm in the kitchen to make an almond cake.

BBC: Temperatures have soared to over 29C in parts of London, making it the warmest April day for nearly 70 years. Indeed, very odd!

In anticipation of getting our new Nissan Leaf all electric we set up an account with Flo, the company that sells Level Two EV charging stations for residential use, and operates public charging stations at strategic locations.

A licensed electrician from Durham College was to drop by to assess the electrical situation for the installation of a Level Two EV charging station.

We had signed up with Road Scholar for a trip in January, 2019 that included a visit to Swaziland. But, King Mswati III of Swaziland announced this date that he was renaming the country "the Kingdom of eSwatini". We wonder how long it will take Road Scholar to notice.

While David waited for the electrician, Louise took Maisie for a walk. The electrician cancelled. This is the sort of problem we had in Louisville. It is very hard to get anything done these days.

Supper was BBQ chicken with green beans.

We did not really enjoy “Gilmore Girls” this evening. We watched three episodes and they were a bit flat. It was as though the writing team had been on vacation and the job turned over to a high school group.

### **Friday April 20th 2018**

Weather: Toronto 32F to 45F sun    Louisville 37F to 61F sun  
NYTX:    David one minute 10 seconds    Louise one minute 9 seconds – Drat!

We went for our morning walk about 07:10 in weak sunlight. The sidewalks were mostly clear, with the odd black ice stretch. We were all in a better mood with the nicer weather. On our walk David had the idea of using the Nissan Leaf battery as a backup to power the furnace in an electrical power failure.

CBC: Thousands of students across the United States will mark the 19th anniversary of the massacre at Columbine High School by walking out of classes on Friday, in a show of unity intended to put pressure on politicians to enact tighter gun restrictions. Students from more than 2,600 schools and institutions walked out of class at 10 a.m. local time on Friday, organizers say. They have been asked to wear orange, the official colour of the campaign against gun violence, and observe a 13-second silence to honour the victims killed at Columbine High School in Colorado.

The latest national rally comes more than a month after tens of thousands of students from some 3,000 schools participated in the #ENOUGH National School Walkout to demand that lawmakers seek tighter gun-control regulations. It also follows "March For Our Lives" rallies in cities across the United States on March 24 that were some of the biggest U.S. youth demonstrations in decades, with hundreds of thousands of young Americans and their supporters taking to the streets to demand tighter gun laws.

BBC: There are 53 countries in the Commonwealth and most of them are former British colonies. Out of those, 37 have laws that criminalize homosexuality. Many of the laws criminalizing homosexual relations originate from British colonial times. [Very similar to slavery and the slave trade.]

We had a lovely lunch with friends from Toronto.

David had redeemed Aeroplan miles for a Bose radio that arrived this date, about three weeks ahead of schedule. A PhD was needed to set it up. Fortunately, one was available.

We went for an afternoon walk. It was a sunny 46F – it felt great to be warm again.

Having eaten a very big lunch, we had a salad and toasted buns for supper.

We finished the day with the “Gilmore Girls”. One episode was pathetic, the other two OK.

## **Saturday April 21st 2018**

Weather: Toronto 33F to 54 F sun Louisville 42F to 67F sun  
NYTX: The big Saturday one. David four minutes 35 seconds Louise three minutes 32 seconds

We went for a cool but sunny walk. The gorgeous sunshine has helped everyone's moods. Now that the snow has melted, we can see the serious need for cleaning up in the neighbourhood. Mother Nature's pruning has strewn bits and pieces all over the place.

Louise put her down jacket in the dryer and beat it to death with tennis balls. It sounded like jungle drums and restless natives.

We just had cereal and raspberries for breakfast, but we played a CD of Segovia's favourites, according to the cover blurb. And, truth to tell, this music is worthy of being anyone's favourites.

E-mail revealed that the central vacuum has shipped, again way ahead of schedule. There seems to be a trend to "under promise - over deliver".

Louise has emails from Louisville that tell of a rather serious, quasi-epidemic of Hepatitis A. People of a certain age especially are advised to be vaccinated. The other news is that Louisville is putting on its spring finest, getting ready for the Kentucky Derby. That is the pivotal day of the year for Louisvillians, whether they are race fans or not! It's time for Thunder over Louisville! Also, early blooming trees are in their finery. Louise and David are wondering why we were back to Toronto so soon.

Having received a notification of the arrival that a book Louise had ordered from the Toronto Public Library, David drove down to the library to return a book and to pick up the new one. When he arrived he discovered that the Scouts and Guides were holding a recycling event in the parking lot. We had stuff but, the event closed at 14:00 and we had guests for lunch. Not having kids, we are out of the loop for such notifications.

One website claims that "Canada is home to the world's most educated population where more than 50% of adults hold a college degree."

BBC: North Korea's announcement that it is halting nuclear and missile tests has received a broad international welcome. Leader Kim Jong-un said further tests were not needed, as the North had demonstrated it had nuclear weapons.

We had guests for lunch. They brought with them an outstanding Pinot Noir from Oyster Bay, South Island, New Zealand.

Louise had done such a magnificent job of lunch that we ate very little for supper. The "Gilmore Girls" were not on a diet.

## **Sunday April 22nd 2018**

Weather: Toronto 37F to 52 sun Louisville 53F to 70F sun  
NYTX: David two minutes and 5 seconds. Louise sliced her finger preparing breakfast so she took a

pass.

Dawn brought clear skies. It is so great to finally see the end of the snow. We were back from our morning walk by 07:45, Maisie having been a bit draggy wanting to sniff every blade of grass.

It was laundry day. It is always amazing how much we wash each week.

News from Louisville is that the Hepatitis A 'epidemic' has become quite alarming. The TV news and the local newspaper are giving the populace strong warnings.

Lunch was quite spartan as we tried to cut back the calories.

We did a nice sunny afternoon walk with Maisie and talked to our neighbours along the way. Many people were out very happily raking lawns to get rid of the storm debris. The weather today makes it difficult to be inside.

In the evening Louise took David for a pizza supper in Highland Creek village to celebrate his birthday. Our dinner was wonderful: warm goat cheese over a thick slice of tomato, served atop fresh spinach. Then we had their classic pizza and the house red wine. All was very compatible and delicious. A perfect end to a gorgeous day, laundry done, sun still high in the sky and time to prepare for an easy evening at home.

The “Gilmore Girls” were a bit too predictable. Louise is betting on one strategic outcome. Her experience as an admission officer gives her an insight into Rory's college future. We'll see sometime soon whether Louise knows anything that is applicable for today's world.