

Monday February 19th 2018

George Washington's Birthday – Presidents' Day

Weather Toronto 34F to 39F rain Louisville 61F to 72F Grayt 68F to 73F part cloud

David was a slow 4 minutes and 53 seconds on the NYTX while Louise aced it at 69 seconds.

BBC: Young survivors of Wednesday's school shooting in Florida have announced a national march on Washington to demand political action on gun control. Student organizers told US media that they were determined to make Wednesday's shooting a turning point in the national gun debate. The attack, which left 17 students and staff members dead, was the deadliest US school shooting since 2012. Yesterday protesters chanted "shame on you" to US lawmakers and the President.

CBC: Canada skated to a 5-0 semifinal win over the Olympic Athletes from Russia on Monday in Pyeongchang, South Korea, setting up a third straight gold-medal showdown with the United States. Louise admitted that she really did not care – David, of course, could barely contain himself. Trump was not available for comment.

CBC: The biggest save of the Canada versus Czech Republic hockey game at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang didn't necessarily happen on the ice. B.C. RCMP officer Frank Martineau and his South Korean partner Yon Gyu Min, part of an international security team during the men's preliminary-round game on Saturday, were hailed as heroes after helping to revive a South Korean boy who was choking. The eight-year-old was eating a piece of traditional Korean sticky rice cake, when he started fighting for air, according to police in Gangwon Province. The child collapsed and lost consciousness in front of an exit gate around 1:30 p.m. That's when Martineau and Min, a police officer from the Korean National Police Agency, leapt to action. The Heimlich maneuver was performed to dislodge the food in the boy's throat.

About 10:30 we started out on a long walk. We went inland at first to see “downtown” and soon veered away when we saw too many vehicles. We took the boardwalk to the beach, it skirts the Western Lake Outfall. There were only a couple of vehicles parked on the beach – the vehicle must have a permit. We could see that a boat had been launched from the beach by the empty cradle behind a pickup truck.

David was testing Louise's wrap-around sun goggles that allowed him to wear his normal long distance glasses underneath. The goggles were great until he had to use the camera.

In mid-morning the beach was not crowded at all and the further west we went the more open space we had to ourselves. There was a strong cool breeze coming off the Gulf and David's long-sleeved 100% polyester shirt was just perfect. He theorized that any moisture from his body was wicked up by the shirt and then the breeze evaporated the dampness and provided cooling.

We did not get back to the cottage until 11:30 hrs. Louise spent time sending e-mails and David finished the Darwin book.

We had tacos for lunch. You could tell how much humidity there had been by the fact that the taco shells had no crunch to them. We had watermelon and beer to round out the meal.

After lunch we read. David started a book that is a very tough slog: “Friends and Relations” by Elizabeth Bowen. The author has a unique ability to string out a sentence such that she leaves you absolutely bewildered.

Some time around 15:00 we decided to walk the beach. We went out via the west roped pathway and came back along the outfall boardwalk. A mother watched as her two young children wallowed in the filthy brown outfall water. Ugh! The weekend visitors seemed to have fled.

We started doing a laundry in preparation for our return to Louisville. Louise was having difficulty figuring out how to pack all the additional things we had acquired.

About 17:00 Louise saved the day by popping corn.

Louise prepared chicken salad, served on a bed of mixed greens, with half an avocado and a sliced vine-ripened tomato. We had a Cupcake Pinot Grigio from the foothills of the Italian Alps. The wine was very lovely with its flavors of ripe pear. A perfect pairing for a light dinner.

We pigged out on Boston Legal devouring four episodes. There was some pretty meaty subject matter

Tuesday February 20th 2018

Weather Toronto 42F to 52F rain; Louisville 66F to 77F part cloud flooding Grayt 69F to 74F afternoon thunder storms.

David flubbed the NYTX - just got stuck in all directions. Louise solves it in 1 minute 54 seconds.

Louise got a message from Louisville indicating a lot of flooding. The Ohio River has risen so much that River Road, the one we often take into downtown Louisville, is blocked. The river hasn't crested yet.

CBC: The venerated duo, Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir, won ice dance gold after an overall record-breaking performance at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. It's their second-career Olympic ice dance title and their third overall including their team gold from earlier at these Games.

BBC: KFC has closed more of its outlets in the UK after delivery problems meant it ran out of chicken. Its website shows that 646 of the fast-food chain's 900 outlets in its UK-based division were shut as of 11:25 on Tuesday morning.

National Post: Over the long weekend, delegates at the National Democratic Party's annual convention in Ottawa officially vowed to eliminate tuition fees. Resolution 3-18-18, adopted Sunday, calls for the party to work towards "eliminating tuition fees and all administrative fees" at Canadian post-secondary institutions. [Note: Canada does not use the US two party system] The NDP tends to collect those who can find no other home in a storm.

Wikipedia: The Battle of Olustee or Battle of Ocean Pond was fought in Baker County, Florida on February 20, 1864, during the American Civil War. It was the only major battle fought in Florida during the war. Union General Truman Seymour had landed troops at Jacksonville, aiming chiefly to disrupt Confederate food supply. Meeting little resistance, he proceeded towards the state capital of Tallahassee, against orders, assuming that he would face only the small Florida militia. Confederates in Charleston sent reinforcements under General Alfred H. Colquitt and the two armies collided near Ocean Pond in Olustee. The Union forces were repulsed and retreated back to Jacksonville where they stayed for the remainder of the war.

Not having seen the towering smoke stacks one sees along the Ohio River, we wondered how Floridians generated electricity. The primary sources are: Gas 62% Coal 21% and Nuclear 12% - as one might suspect, Hydro is a pitiful 0.1% as waterfalls are very scarce in flat Florida.

The President is going to visit Tallahassee on Wednesday to meet with those protesting the massacre of students at the massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., which left 17 people dead. We planned to be in Tallahassee the same day and hope we do not get tangled up in road closures.

A billboard has been vandalized on Interstate 65 near Louisville. It states, “Kill the NRA”.

Louise has been keeping up with the NYT news and editorials. Paul Krugman had a good , if totally despairing one today, ending with a paragraph that admits the USA is ruled by a kakistocracy, that is a government by the worst. Does this mean the USA can sink no lower? Probably not. Another editorial claims that whatever party or ethos, the US has always evolved back to conservatism. This editorial warns that even if the Democrats attain some dominance in the midterms, the trend toward conservatism will and must continue.

The first order of business was to drive to Publix to get some Dave's Killer Bread (DKB)– we wanted to have sandwiches for lunch for Wednesday lunch on our way to Tallahassee. But first, we stopped at the Tom Thumb gas station to fill up the van. It was hard getting to the pumps as an aircraft carrier, towing a car behind it, took up most of the space.

It was a beautiful sunny on the way to Publix. We bought a few things and when we came out the weather had gone downhill. On the way home we diverted to the closed Blue Mountain Beach.

There the red flag was straight out under totally overcast skies. Kids were playing with kites – they certainly had enough wind. We walked the beach until we got chilled.

For lunch we had toasted tomato and cheese on DKB, splitting a beer.

The name DeFuniak shows up a lot in this area. DeFuniak Springs was founded by the officers of the Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad, a subsidiary of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Frederick R. De Funiak, a vice-president of the L&N. Like much of Northwest Florida, DeFuniak Springs was settled mainly by Scots from Virginia and the Carolinas. DeFuniak Springs was established as a final-destination resort, and the developers enlisted the cooperation and aid of the Chautauqua Movement. The Chautauqua Hall of Brotherhood, an auditorium seating 4,000, was constructed on Lake DeFuniak in the center of town.

By mid-afternoon David had finished, or rather was finished with, “Friends and Relations” by Elizabeth Bowen. It was almost totally dialogue among bored minor aristocrats between the World Wars. Reading the verbatim transcript of the action in a bridge game would have been more scintillating.

Louise decided to have afternoon nap so, in desperation, David started reading “A Perfect Life” by Danielle Steel. Danielle churns them out assembly-line style. With 800 million copies sold. She has written 165 books, including 141 novels.

It started out describing a shooting of a Congressman at a high school by a 19 year old with mental problems. The kid slaughtered fifteen and the took his own life – the parallel was uncanny. The novel then went on to the main character, Blaise, a top-ranking television news commentator who traveled the world and interviewed the most important people – and had no life of her own. Again, the parallel to a known entity was obvious.

We had our last walk on the beach at mid-afternoon. The storm that had been predicted did not materialize, so we had an incredibly beautiful walk with a strong wind from the east, parallel to the shoreline. The red flag was proudly flying. The beach was all but deserted. The nasty forest floor

outwash from the lake was gone. The sand bar separating the lake and the gulf was reestablished. Back to the beautiful, sparkling world of northwest Florida Gulf shoreline!

About 16:00 Louise popped corn for Happy Hour.

We had spaghetti and a green salad for supper and went on to Boston Legal.

Wednesday February 21st 2018

Weather: Toronto 42F to 37F rain Louisville 56F to 47F rain Grayt 70F to 74F cloud
Tallahassee 67F to 81F sun

Louise did the NYTX in 1 minute 54 seconds. David flubbed it.

Our plan was to drive from Grayton Beach eastwards towards Panama City and then southeast along the coastal Hwy 98 towards Port Saint Joe. After that we would turn the Big Bend in the Apalachicola area. [Note: The name Apalachicola was invented to identify strangers.] From Apalachicola we would wend our way to Carrabelle and then weave northeast towards, dropping into the Wakulla sanctuary before hitting Tallahassee.

Louise did not sleep past 02:00 -David slept until 06:30

Louise packed the van to save David's back, but exhausted herself doing so. David elected to do all the driving this day.

We drove away at 09:00 hrs and headed east on highway 98.

Panama City had a significant ship yard on its east side.

Tyndall AFB went on forever. We saw a flight of two fighters come in off the Gulf to land at the base. The base is huge and is covered by large tracts of pine.

We were both pleasantly surprised by Port St Joe. Very neat, tidy and upscale. We will have to look up its history.

We stopped in Apalachicola for a coffee – it was pure gold – cost \$5.20 for two coffee. The town was a rundown tourist trap. And a distinct disappointment to Louise who had been told that it is a desirable destination for getaways. It is not! We took the bridge over the mouth of the Apalachicola River and then followed a causeway that was similar to driving down to Key West. We saw a flock of pelicans cavorting.

The coastline changed dramatically once we got around The Big Bend and started going north. The water was shallow and the prosperity on the shore dropped severely. A bit closer to Tallahassee we were in the area where Louise used to sail the Hobie Cat she towed down from Tallahassee behind her Kharman Ghia.

We missed the turn into Wakulla Springs but eventually got turned around. It cost \$6 at the gate, but that got deducted from the restaurant bill.

In the lobby of the Lodge we saw the mummified remains of Old Joe – the alligator who never harmed a child or a lady. The lodge itself is pseudo Spanish hacienda style.

We shared a Club Sandwich at the Wakulla Lodge restaurant. The dining room was another disappointment to Louise. Her memory of it is a brighter, quietly elegant and clean place. Not so now! Many people were there on this day. Most of the tags/plates on the autos named Florida. Wakulla is a remote place, so that figures. Sadly again it is not what it used to be. Edward Ball, the philanthropist who bought up the property to deny it to developers, is turning in his grave.

Afterwards we walked down to the lake. There was an incredible amount of water gushing up. We saw a crane and tiny coots. You could take an electric boat tour. On the grounds camellia bushes were blooming in reds and pinks.

We walked out to the nature trail boardwalk with signs warning of rattlesnakes and alligators. We took a quick photo and retreated to the van.

As we came into the south side of Tallahassee we noticed the foliage on the side of the highway was pretty bland, but there were white and yellow blooms on vines. The odd red bud was leafing out. Camellia shrubs were in blossom in front yards. The presence of many Baptist churches, Pentecostal, Primitive, Apostolic, Evangelical cried out from the road sides. One cannot help but wonder how these many churches are supported and what possesses people who support them - to think as they must in this day and time.

We were directed by the GPS to a circle highway. Louise could not correct “Sue”, bumfuzzled as Louise was by the new circle. We took Sue's directions which led us to the FSU 'dem' school, way far away from the city or the University.

But we found ourselves in a new and beautiful neighborhood which surrounded a gorgeous, lush golf course. Lost, we were nevertheless! So Louise went into the clubhouse to inquire of the golf shop pro how to unravel our course. He directed us back to the circle road. Sue chimed in again with useless directions, but this time Louise located us on the map and found Apalachee Parkway, a major route to follow to the Capitol. Louise used to live just off Apalachee Parkway, so now we could drive up the rise to the State Capitol. And a beautiful sight it was as we drove directly up the hill !

We turned onto Monroe Street and then quickly found Florida State University. Louise saw most of her old haunts on the beautiful campus, and the beautiful park for which Park Avenue is named. The park sits right in the middle of the downtown and has splendid live oaks with Spanish moss and azalea as an interlude to the city. Azaleas were beginning to bloom, with the Formosa variety peeking out of its foliage here and there. It was 84F in the city. David loved the undulating terrain. Tallahassee is a lovely city at the end of the Appalachian chain. The best descriptor for Tallahassee is “elegant”.

State senators had met earlier that day with Gun Law protestors but all we saw was a camera crew camped out across from the Capitol building, Tallahassee being the state capital. The wounds of the tragic Parkland High School shooting were fresh. But even that brought no sympathy from the Republican lawmakers. We read later that Republican Rubio received boos as he declared his continued allegiance to the NRA. Incredible this problem. How can it become worse as time goes on?!?

We were into the room at the Holiday Inn outside Quincy by 16:45 (17:45) hrs. It was way out in the sticks so we had to drive into town for the evening meal. David found the address for the Burger King, 3.7 miles away in Quincy. The place was deserted but neither of us could finish the meal.

When we got back to the hotel we read ourselves to sleep.

Thursday February 22nd 2018

Weather: Toronto 28F to 33F cloud Louisville 53F to 53F rain
Quincy, FL 64F to 82 F sun/cloud Cullman, AB 65F to 76F cloud

From Quincy we would drive up the I-65 towards Cullman, Alabama where we had booked a second Holiday Inn Express.

We woke up about 06:00 but it was still dark being in a different time zone. We snoozed until 08:00 their time and then used the Keurig machine to brew fresh coffee. We had slept close to ten hours.

Then we read the headlines on our portables and went at the NYTX. Louise conceded defeat to David.

We went down to the lobby for breakfast. It was the entirely predictable scrambled eggs and pork sausage but, they had proper Southern Biscuit and wonderful cinnamon buns.

When we drove off Louise took the first shift getting us on to Interstate 10 going west. It was soon pretty obvious that this was lovely countryside. Heavily wooded pine forest and rolling hills.

At 09:15 we pulled into a Rest Area just so that we could get some photos of the yellow and white blooming vines. The perfume of the woods was quite something and the clean air so fresh you could taste it. The road into the rest stop itself was beautifully scenic, as it wound around desultorily until it came to the picnic area.

When we were on Pearl Harbor Memorial Parkway Louise remembered Mayhaw. Maybe some of the flowering shrubs in the woods are of the haw variety? American Magnolias were growing wild in the forests.

We crossed the rather large Apalachicola River. It was about the same size as the Kentucky River, without the same gorge. Of course it emptied at Apalachicola. There are lots of lakes and sink holes in the Tallahassee area. The area is heavily forested. There are also many canopied roads in the woods of this area.

We were crossing in and out of the Central Time Zone. The sun was out and it was a beautiful day.

We talked about taking a course in Tallahassee in the winter of 2019.

The we started to see pastures with horses and cows. The soil was a mixture of sand and red clay.

The highway was banked up high as the region has many swamps and gets a lot of rainfall.

As we changed to Hwy 276 around Marianna, we saw a Japanese Magnolia in a front yard that had already blossomed and was now dropping the petals. Louise spotted bare pecan trees – pecan trees often are small groves in front of or beside the farmhouse. They will be bare until all the other trees leaf out in spring. David had never seen one. Another first was a sign for “boiled peanuts” - he thought they only came roasted.

On the way to Dothan we were seeing very many Bartlett Pear trees in blossom. There were a lot of

fine horses and then we got into cattle country – Black Angus, Charolais, and Brandeis. The van reported it was 80F outside.

We started seeing a series of yellow signs at the side of the road for a country store. We stopped and Louise scored Mayhaw Jelly, Tupelo Honey, Pecan Rolls and “Slap Yo Mama Hot Sauce”. The cashier was a mature lady who was very soft-spoken.

At 10:30 we crossed into Alabama and stopped at the Rest Area to get a map and to visit wash rooms. David had his photo taken beside a giant peanut. He took a photo of a Huey helicopter on a pedestal – he lost two fellow Armoured Corps officers who were shot down in a white UN Huey in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam while trying to enforce the ceasefire between US and North Vietnamese/Viet Cong forces.

A bit later we passed a sign proclaiming the Dothan National Peanut Festival. Going through Dothan we me up with a Hippie Chicken Bus painted with all sorts of weird stuff. We got a photo. Dothan has every franchise outlet under the sun. While it seemed prosperous, there were acres of mobile homes for sale.

Alabama roadsides were unfortunately littered with dozens of billboards. There was a long strange series advertising shoes, a shop in Montgomery? Or Dothan? Also many, many churches of the apostolic(?), fundamentalist persuasion pleading with passersby to repent, etc., etc.

We saw a sign for Troy University. It used to be Troy State University. Louise thought it must have been in Troy, Alabama, but now it seems to be in Dothan and Troy.

This was blueberry farm country as well as cattle. Lots of huge and well-tended cattle farms and ranches on either side of the highway demanded our attention.

Puffy pop-up clouds were building as the temperature rose.

We saw the sign towards Maxwell Air Force Base – David had visited it in 1984.

The Battling Billboards continued on, as the “different” churches tried to outdo each other. We judged the winner to be “In Time Deliverance Church”. After that they actually seemed to diminish. That one took the final word!

We were as far as Ozark at 11:30 and saw a Cobra helicopter gunship outside the Aviation College. David's desk mate at Fort Leavenworth flew one in combat in Vietnam and got shot down five times – not a scratch.

Besides seeing a lot of signs for guns and fireworks, we saw dead Kutzu – they must have sprayed it because frost could not do that much damage.

We saw helicopters from time to time and when we saw the sign for Fort Rucker we put it together. The US Army has a major helicopter school at Rucker. When David's graduating class at Fort Leavenworth got their orders in June 1974, the typist had misspelled Rucker so many times that it was not a mistake.

By noon we were in Troy and the real Troy University showed up – perhaps there is a separate campus at Dothan. There was a huge Trojan helmet painted on the water tower. This was George Wallace territory.

Louise saw a sign for the Sikorsky Helicopter Factory.

Then we started seeing daffodils between gas stations that had gone out of business. There were a lot

of ramshackle house with billboards for boots and shoes.

At 12:50 we turned into South Boulevard to go around Montgomery. It was 82 Fahrenheit according to one billboard.

At noon we stopped at Subway and bought a Black Forest Ham “footlong”. It was much better than the Burger King last night.

Louise remembered she had left her bath robe hanging on the back of the bathroom door at Quincy. She phoned from the van using her iPhone and Holiday Inn will mail it to Louisville. Hooray! A truly unexpected outcome!

We got into Cullman by 16:30, registered at the Holiday Inn Express, took all the stuff out of the van and used the dolly to put it into the room.

After blogging, we drove over to Popeyes for shrimp and chicken. It was a bit better than a hamburger, but not much. We have now given up on many of these place. Man! Is it difficult to eat as one travels the highways of the USA. There are many, many places, but some are more horrible than the others.

Looking around in the restaurant, David concluded that Americans are under a lot of pressure. Louise felt that the population is in dire straits and hasn't got a clue.

We were back in the room by 18:30 and sipped a beer while we read. David is into a real pot boiler book.

Friday February 23rd 2018

Weather: Toronto 33F to 40F rain Louisville 55F to 64F rain Cullman 60F to 74F sun and cloud

We were up at 06:30 Central time – add an hour for Louisville. We brewed Keurig coffee right off the bat. The sky was clear but the forecast was not good for the northern part of the trip

David did the NYTX in 3 minutes and thirteen seconds. Louise clobbered him at 64 seconds.

From Cullman, Alabama we drove the I-65 north into Tennessee and then crossed into Kentucky and struck out for Louisville.

After breakfast at the Holiday Inn we used the dolly to bring down our kit and then loaded the van.

Louise drove us over to the gas station where we put \$33 into the gas tank. Then we headed out on Interstate 65 towards Knoxville, Tennessee. It was sunny and the trees were all leaved out. We hit some cuts in the highway that showed limestone and sandstone shale. It was fairly hilly country and we passed one farm with a large herd of Charolais cattle. Then we were on the Jesse Owens Parkway when we saw the sign for Larry's Pistol and Pawn.

At 08:30 we crossed the very wide Tennessee River and its flood plain was very wet. At 08:45 we passed the sign for Athens State University. We waved at the Athens Holiday Inn Express as we went by.

Just a bit later we passed a large horse farm with well-maintained black fences, Kentucky style.

We passed the Rest Area with the Redstone Rocket at 08:45 - The Redstone rocket was named for the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama where it was developed. It was used for six sub-orbital Mercury flights from 1960–61; culminating with the launch of the first, and 11 weeks later, the second American (and the second and third humans) in space.

At 09:00 we crossed into Tennessee (The Volunteer State with three stars on its flag). The three stars on the flag represent the three different land forms in Tennessee. Mountains in the east, highlands in the middle and lowlands in the west. "The Volunteer State," a nickname earned during the War of 1812 (thousands of volunteer soldiers from Tennessee played a prominent role in this war, especially during the Battle of New Orleans). This reputation for volunteering was reinforced during the Mexican War when the Secretary of State asked for 2,800 Tennessee volunteers and got 30,000 respondents.

The trees did not have anywhere near as much leaf.

Next we crossed the very muddy Elk River with clusters of marsh marigolds – we wondered what would happen if the cows are them.

And then it clouded over for a while as we passed a sign for Jack Daniels Distillery – a visit was described as a pilgrimage.

Next up was David Crockett State Park and then a TESLA electric car whizzed pass – no exhaust pipe with a plate announcing TESLA. Couldn't make out which state.

At 09:30 we saw a sign for the Tennessee Walking Horse and Racking Horse Association – two horses to look up.

Louise saw some Band Aid cows that David thought were Belted Galloways. David had last seen them in New Zealand at a farm owned by a family names 'Summers'. Sure enough, we looked them up later and that's what they are.

At 09:40 we pulled off the Interstate for a coffee break. The cloud cover thickened.

After we put David behind the wheel we saw a black-fenced paddock with two Buffalo. Right after that we saw cherry trees in blossom.

As we approached Nashville the clouds departed and we had bright sunshine. Getting around Nashville was a white-knuckle event. As we pulled up out of the river valley we saw two huge buildings with the sign DOLLAR GENERAL. Miss "Sue" was a bit confused somehow. She wanted us to go to Knoxville! Must say that didn't help in the fast moving, heavily truckified traffic.

At 11:13 we saw the delightful sign of the stylized white horse proclaiming our entry into KENTUCKY.

The overhead electronic signs were warning us that if we saw water on the road, we should turn around instead of getting drowned.

Right after that it started to rain and we still had several hours ahead of us. Magically it was just a couple of showers.

It was time for lunch so we decided to try the Cracker Barrel. We walked in and immediately realized we were in a geriatric center. We both chose salads and coffee – both were too huge to be finished.

At 12:15 we got back on the Interstate under bright sun. We soon passed the National Corvette Museum. It was great to have sun rather than rain.

About 12:40 we passed Mammoth Cave National Park and got a photo of the grotty dinosaur trying to entice visitors into a private enterprise.

By now we were sick and tired of 18 wheeled trucks. It got worse with 18 wheelers towing a second trailer. In fact, there were herds of trucks.

We saw the weirdest sign just after 13:00 – USED COWS.

Then it was a sign directing us to the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln.

Fifty-four miles south of Louisville we saw extensive flooding. Obviously they had had too much rain.

We came down off the high plateau and drove through a very long pass to the area of Fort Knox.

At 13:45 we crossed the Salt River, 31 miles south of Louisville, that had overflowed its banks.

By now we were back into familiar territory as we took the Gene Snyder off the Interstate, again we were in defiance of Sue's directions.

We crossed the time change and were home by 16:00 local time. We unloaded the van and then drove over to Kroger's to get some groceries.

Back home we started the laundry as the Florida stuff all felt damp.

After Happy Hour we had a cheese fondue for supper and then got back to Boston Legal after being denied for two nights on the road. Boston Legal had some pretty heavy stuff.

Saturday February 24th 2018

We were up at 06:30 local, which was 05:30 Grayton Beach time. It had rained over night. We refiled clothing in the appropriate closets/drawers and then got more laundry going first thing after coffee.

Weather: Toronto 37F to 40F cloud and sun Louisville 51F to 60F scattered thunderstorms.

David got into the task of transferring blogs from Louise's MacBook and photos from the three cameras we had used to compile some sort of record of our month-long séjour in Florida.

As is the norm after a long period away, as soon as the Windows desktop fired up, it started downloading updates, making it impossible to do any work until the monsters had been satiated.

While Louise was bouncing with energy, David was feeling very tired, as in jet-lagged.

After breakfast Louise drove to Van Maur to snag a bargain, While she was away David slogged away at the blogs, inserting links and then turning them into PDF files. Once that was done the PDFs got posted to the website.

Louise came home for lunch which turned out to be a grilled cheese sandwich and tea.

Then it was off to Costco to fill the van with gas. Louise went to the optometry department to whistle up some sunglasses that would work with her new cataract replacement lenses, Louise found David some very nice slacks with a 29 inch inseam, they being few and far between. After that it was the usual groceries.

Back home Louise retrieved her main that the Post Office had been storing while we were in Florida.

David then set to ironing to clear the decks after the yeoman job Louise had performed getting all the laundry done.

BBC: US billionaire Warren Buffet says his conglomerate has received a profit boost of \$29bn as a result of President Donald Trump's tax reforms, he says. Berkshire Hathaway reported a record quarterly and annual profit on Saturday. The Republican law reform, approved in December, cut the corporate tax rate to 21% from 35%. Mr Buffett, one of the richest men in the world, opposed the plan.

Two major US airlines have joined a growing list of companies to cut ties with the National Rifle Association following the Florida school shooting. United and Delta airlines have both announced they are ending discounts for NRA members.

CBC: A "worry-free retirement" may be a thing of the past, according to a new Sun Life Financial survey, which finds that a quarter of retired Canadians are in debt in their golden years. About 25 per cent of the 750 Canadians polled between the ages of 55 to 80 years for the Sun Life Financial Barometer said they have debt that ranges from mortgages to car payments.

We had a homecoming party for Maisie when the pet sitter brought her home. We were having dinner when suddenly there was an electronic howl in the kitchen. David hit the ceiling as he tends to startle easily. It was Louise's iPhone warning of flash flooding in the Louisville area.

Just as our guest departed, the skies opened up and we had a very loud, and near, display of thunder and lightning.

Sunday February 25th 2018

Weather: Toronto 37F to 50F with cloud then sun Louisville 46F to 54 cloud

Maisie woke us up with a definite indicator that she wanted to us awake.

David did the NYTX in a very slow 4 minutes and one second. Louise, took four seconds longer.

BBC: The #NeverAgain protest demanding an end to gun violence in schools. In reaction to the shootings at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida seems to be holding together.

CBC: In South Korea there is a "Birth Strike". Among OECD countries, South Korea ranks third-highest for number of hours worked, first for highest gender wage gap and last in terms of time men spend caring for their children. Women are expected to work outside and inside the home. The South Korean government has spent \$70 billion over the last 10 years on campaigns to boost the birth rate, with few statistical signs of success. South Korea's fertility rate is 1.2 children per woman, the lowest in the OECD and third-lowest in the world. Canada's, in contrast, is 1.6, in the U.S. it's 1.8. Israel leads the OECD with a birth rate of 3.1. In developed countries sub-replacement fertility is any rate below approximately 2.1 children born per woman.

After a light breakfast of boiled eggs and toast, with fig jam, we took Maisie for a walk. We ran into a fellow dog walker who had just returned from Fort Lauderdale and Cartagena, Colombia. We noted that the daffodils were almost ready to bloom and that the pansies has survived their snowy ordeal.

David was working on the new website postings blogs and an embryonic photo album to create content of the recent trip to Florida. The website blew up and nothing could be viewed. An email to his guru in Chezzetcook resulted in a quick fix. A very important file had been deleted earlier in the day.

Louise worked on her tax return and had it almost finished by noon. David was back at the photo album fixing photos.

For lunch we had toasted chicken salad sandwiches.

After lunch David worked on the photos while Louise did some reading.

Mid-afternoon we took Maisie for an airing. She was showing signs of being bored after romping for a month with all the other boarded dogs, But, she did show that she was out of shape as she does not get

to go on walkies twice a day when boarded.

We worked on the slide show a bit, but it still needs a lot of work.

Mercifully the Olympics are over. Norway trounced the world. Their magic formula – SNOW.

Dinner was marinated steak.