

## Monday January 8th 2018

Louise got up about 05:00, but David stayed in bed listening to rain drops hit the eaves trough.

David finally pulled a Lazarus about 07:00 and got the NYTX in 3 mins 56 secs. Louise gave up.

The streets were slick with rain and shone in the glow of the street lights. So, the brining was a good idea. A couple of degrees lower and Louisville would have been a skating rink.

A quick check of the weather revealed: Louisville 36F with mixed snow/rain rising to 43F: Toronto 30F with light snow going to 36F: Fort Walton Beach 49F with a top of 62F. But Bondi Beach in Sydney was 47C/117F.

When we did Louise's post cataract surgery eye drops, we ran out of one type. Later Louise phoned the Kentucky Eye Clinic to get the prescription refilled.

After breakfast we decided to do some house chores. David got the step ladder and climbed up to dismount the front porch outside light. Two out of the three bulbs were dead. It was determined that they were the narrow base 60 watt variety. So, we would have to go back to Lowe's to get three new bulbs.

Then Louise groomed Maisie – always a grim task as Maisie does not like having her hair stripped. Meanwhile, David was out in the garage trying to remedy the low tire pressure warning he had received from the Dodge van. Using the tire pressure gauge it was found that all four tires were down around 30 PSI when the required pressure is 36 PSI. David used the portable 12 volt DC electric pump machine to get all four tires back to normal. David checked the Scion and found the tire pressures to be OK.

Meanwhile, Louise was vacuuming, a task that David hates with a passion.

About 11:30 Louise drove us over to Kroger to pick up the eye drops. We went on to Lowe's and found the parking lot was treacherous with patches of ice. We purchased the replacement light bulbs for the front porch light.

Back home we had a lunch of tomato soup, a tiny slice of quiche and a slice of tiramisu. In preparation for Florida, we had a Dr Brown milk shake to go with lunch.

Then came the hard part. The outer shell covering the three porch light bulbs was easy to take down, just two tiny bolts. But, David knew instinctively that getting those tiny guys back up there would be tricky. The problem was that gravity would drop the bolts out while the cover was being installed. The first time he tried, David lost both bolts and found only one. In the search David discovered that the front steps were covered with ice. We emptied the kitchen drawers looking for a substitute bolt. We found one longer bolt with the same screw thread.

David used the longer bolt to tack the outer lamp case in place and was then able to secure the cover with the one really short bolt. With the lamp functioning and “good enough”, we gave up. We will try again when it is warmer and we have a shorter bolt.

Louise had a long conversation with her Financial Adviser in Cincinnati. They worked on her mandatory IRA withdrawal.

The major news agencies were buzzing about Oprah Winfrey's speech at the Golden Globes. The speculation was that she was preparing to run for President of the US in 2020.

In the afternoon it was 39F but we were apprehensive about patches of ice. Louise fell a few years ago in such conditions and broke her wrist. So, we decided against a walk.

The USPS brought Louise a brochure for the 2018 Odyssey to Oxford sponsored by the Michigan State University Alumni Association. Louise had been three times before. It was of interest because there were courses that we both liked. But, there was a problem with the dates in that the two weeks were too close to our Road Scholar trip to northern Italy. BUT, we are going to consider it for 2019. We went to Aix en Provence to study French with Michigan State in March 2015.

It was a dull gloomy afternoon so we switched on some lights to brighten things up. We both read.

Dinner was baked pork chops, sweet potato and peas with mint jelly and toasted buns.

Of course we went back to The Good Wife for a nightcap.

### **Tuesday January 9th 2018**

We were brewing coffee by 05:40 and typing this message at 06:00 hrs. For some reason we have become Early Birds.

Dense fog lay in low-lying areas around Louisville where we started at 37F and would climb to 43F. Toronto was 34F in the morning but dropped to 30F in the afternoon. Fort Walton Beach was 53F and saw an afternoon at 64F.

The furnace was working in Toronto – the Rogers application is used each day to make sure all the sensors are normal.

We had 'eggs in a nest' and prosciutto for breakfast.

About 08:45 we decided to air Maisie – she got very excited when she saw us kitting up and reaching for the dog lead. Maisie likes to get out and hates it when we refuse to go out when the weather goes into the basement. It was 38F with 94% humidity – that is the kind of cool that seeps into your bones. As we descended the front steps, there sticking out like a sore thumb, was the tiny bolt for the front porch light that we had lost yesterday. There was still ice on the steps so we were very careful.

Louise phoned to find out about the “Coffee Concert” by the Louisville Symphony Orchestra at the Center for Performing Arts on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>.

Louise had an appointment with Toyota of Louisville to do an oil change. The Scion had not gone beyond the recommended mileage, but it was way overdue on the timeline. Louise had other business on the southwest side of town so she made it an expedition. Driving away at 11:15 hrs.

Louise phoned just after noon to tell that the service manager she had worked with for over a decade fell yesterday and broke his leg. Waiting for the Scion to be serviced, Louise looked at the new cars and decided that her next ride would be the Toyota RAV4 Hybrid. The reviews on the Internet were positive.

When Louise got home 15:00 she was excited about the computer printout that showed her 2006 Scion was in excellent shape. The new sales guys must hate that!

We drove off to the Tinseltown movie theater and snagged seats for the showing of "The Post" on Saturday afternoon. Then we went over to the Liquor Barn to renew our supply of Kentucky Moonshine. We finished at Kroger where Louise got Part 1 of the new ant-shingles vaccine – she has to come back in March to get Part 2.

Louise found an ad for a Great Lakes cruise while waiting in the doctor's office. Pearl Cruises seems to offer something interesting on the Toronto-Chicago axis in the great Lakes and a fall foliage cruise Montreal to Boston. They have a cruise to Cuba but the itinerary does not excite.

Dinner was a tasty chicken salad. After dinner we read a bit. David is three quarters through his book about Savannah and a trial has resulted in a surprise verdict.

About 19:15 we started watching two slices of The Good Wife. In the first episode we finally realized that Alicia's political opponent in the race for State's Attorney was none other than David Hyde Pierce from "Frazier". The second tranche was quite upsetting so neither of us could get to sleep.

### **Wednesday January 10th 2018**

Louise solved the NYTX in 87 seconds, but David took 119 seconds.

It had been raining when we got up. Maisie made noises wanting to go outside, but froze on the enclosed porch once she realized the ground was wet. That proves that Maisie is no Chesapeake Retriever.

The weather: Toronto 29F to 39F with rain. Louisville: 45F to 60F with sun & cloud. Fort Walton Beach: 63F to 67F with cloud. We got a warning about a major snow storm moving in for the weekend. 'Winter Storm Hunter' is forecast to bring a mess of heavy snow, freezing rain and sleet from the West to the Plains, Midwest and Northeast through Saturday, January 13th.

We had oatmeal for breakfast as Louise needed to build up her strength for porcelain pottery. At present she is in the 'baby steps' phase. However she has learned to be patient about progress in throwing . . . the Arrowmont experience of a couple of years ago proved to her that this does not come naturally. So it will be once again into the fray!

In the Santa Barbara, California area the first rain in months caused mudslides when it hit ground that had been scorched by December's huge wildfires. After a wildfire, burned vegetation and charred soil create a water repellent layer which blocks water absorption. Together with the loss of vegetation, this leads to an increased risk of mudslides and floods. The death toll from the powerful debris flows that

hit the community of Montecito stood at 15.

"It looked like a World War I battlefield," Santa Barbara Sheriff Bill Brown said. "It was literally a carpet of mud and debris everywhere with huge boulders, rocks, downed trees, power lines, wrecked cars, lots of obstacles and challenges for rescue personnel to get to homes, let alone to get people out of them."

Desirable as it might be to live in southern California, people living there seem to have more than their share of problems. Louise heard on the NPR news that more than 70 deaths have resulted in the last few weeks as result of the flu. It is a veritable epidemic there now. So one thinks that the beautiful, unchanging weather cannot be of much consolation at times. And we haven't even mentioned earthquakes.

It was so warm this morning that Louise got the urge to start gardening. While Maisie watched from the concrete pad of the porch, Louise started pulling dead vines off the wrought iron fence. When David took photos, Louise objected. When David "developed" them he could see that Louise had put on her unhappy face – into the trash the photos went.

When we did the morning cataract post-op eye drop drill, we were out of the second prescription. Louise phoned the Kentucky Eye Center and by 09:28 the pharmacy at Kroger phoned to say the eye drop prescription was ready for pickup. This is something that the US system does very well. In Toronto this system has just been launched in the past two years.

Louise drove off to pottery at 08:50 headed for Rose Island Road in Prospect. Pottery work was satisfactory where trimming was the issue, but the first throw resulted in a throw-away. The second one came out well enough, but became a bowl rather than the cylinder which was the aim. The really good part is that, due to Laura's patient, excellent teaching, Louise feels that she has finally learned important things today! Next week will tell the tale.

There had been constant nagging messages on Windows 10 about File History. The Seagate backup device seemed to upset W10. David finally realized he had to update the Seagate software. Now it is happy.

A debate is raging in France, after Catherine Deneuve joined more than 100 French women, including prominent actresses and performers, to denounce the #MeToo movement. To call it a denunciation is maybe a bit strong, but there was a strong message that called the #MeToo people to make valid distinctions between forms of 'harassment' that are all too often looped into the same circle.

Charles Dutoit stepped down early as Royal Philharmonic Orchestra's artistic director and principal conductor. Several major symphonies cut ties with Dutoit after reports of sexual assault that conductor denied.

Steve Bannon has left Breitbart News as its executive chairman. Bannon's departure is the latest chapter in a tumultuous year. Once considered one of the driving forces behind U.S. President Donald Trump's strategy, Bannon used Breitbart to push the president's message. Now it appears he no longer has the support of either the president or the news outlet he led.

Louise returned from potter class about 12:30 and was all aglow with what she had learned. Her glasses were splattered with porcelain debris, as were her pants – messy business porcelain.

We had a grilled cheese sandwich for lunch, grilled on Dave's Rocket Bread and including a thinly sliced dill pickle.

We walked Maisie after a quick trip to Costco and Kroger. On departure, we noted that Asbury Park has declared Christmas over, having dismantled about 100 wreaths from the trees on the main avenue.

On the walk, at 61F, David saw a statue in a garden. He suddenly realized it was the same one as that on the dust cover of his book on Savannah. He also took photos of emerging Japanese Magnolia tree buds.

Season Seven of The Good Wife from Amazon was waiting on the front porch.

David continued to find reliable evaluations of new vehicles. Right now it is the Honda CR-V versus the Honda Odyssey. Is bigger better?

We made Greek Rice and Shrimp with feta crumb topping for supper. Then we read a bit and watched two episodes of TGW.

#### **Thursday January 11th 2018**

It had obviously rained overnight and it was totally clouded over and raining when we got up. Our day was forecast as 56F to 63F. In Toronto it was 44F to 44F – flat line. Fort Walton Beach had 64F going to 67F with rain. The weather radar showed a huge swath of slime bearing down on us..

David got the NYTX in 106 seconds. Louise zapped him with 56 seconds.

Rescuers were still scouring the rubble of houses destroyed by the mud slides in Montecito, California.

The Canadian federal government was making preparations in expectation that President Trump would withdraw from NAFTA. The Toronto stock marker slumped and the Canadian dollar wobbled a bit. The next day President Trump indicated that perhaps the talks could be extended.

We had French toast with maple syrup for breakfast, with berries on the side.

Louise decided that with rainy weather, it would be a good idea to drive around town and look at an antiques mall and a furniture consignment shop. Louise wrote the addresses on a piece of paper so that they could be entered into the GPS.

We launched at about 10:00 and were just leaving Asbury Park when the GPS warned of a delay on our route. When we took the bridge over the I-71 we could see immediately that there was more than a delay and also knew that the GPS had chosen the I-71 as the best route. We pulled into a parking lot to try to adjust the GPS – but could not. Then we looked for the paper map – not in the car.

Louise had her iPhone with her and used it to get Google Maps to plot a course. With a bit of creative

thinking, Louise managed to get us to the south central part of town. David pulled off onto a side street to try to get the GPS to give us a new route. It would not. We navigated by seat-of-the-pants and pulled off a second time to get the GPS going again. It finally relented and worked.

We arrived at the first address only to find that it was not what we thought. This imposing erstwhile factory had been an antiques mall that Louise visited once some years ago. Now, to her disbelief, the old Louisville Cotton Mill in Germantown had been converted into upscale lofts. Germantown was settled by Germans in the 1870s. In the 1890s the largest collection of Shotgun houses was built. A Shotgun house is narrow and the rooms are one behind the other with no connecting corridor.

We walked for quite a piece admiring the area and taking photos, with Louise's iPhone as David had left his camera home. It was one of those days.

We put the second address into the GPS and drove off. Not long into the trip we were on Bardstown Road where we saw flashing red lights on both sides of the already crowded road. Fire crews had pumped a gazillion gallons of water, which was swooshing down the street. As soon as we could, we got off Bardstown, but Sue, the GPS lady, kept yelling at us to get back onto Bardstown. We politely told her to shut up and wove our way through back streets until we felt safe enough to rejoin Bardstown. The area we drove through is one of the wonderful old Louisville neighborhoods kept in good shape and remaining desirable over time.

We drove a very long way until the GPS announced that we had arrived at the second furniture place. Nothing fit the description of that which we sought. So, we gave up and told Sue to take us home.

When we got home David downloaded the GPS track and found that we had driven 37 miles in traffic. We updated the photo album with maps of our adventure.

For lunch we had Dr Brown milkshakes, Sante Fé style chicken soup and half a toasted cheese sandwich each.

The rain having let up, we took Maisie for a walk in 63F weather. Along the way we met the man who does a lot of gardening in the neighborhood. Louise explained a couple of things she wanted done in her yard and he agreed to drop by next week.

When we got home Louise decided she wanted to do some gardening. You guessed it – she did most of what she had just asked the guy to do. David exerted his brain and finally solved the GPS problem that had flummoxed him in the car.

Louise had prepared a marinade for steak. The steak was very tasty and was accompanied by green beans à la Portland, Oregon, and paella-style rice.

After dinner we read a bit and then watched two episodes of TGW. The first episode was just plain silly, the second very good or frustrating depending on your artistic development. Actually Louise really liked the second one which was a sort of a stream of consciousness episode in which Alicia was examining her life, past and present. She has been very 'at sea' since Will was killed. She continues to wonder what she is doing, what she should be doing, etc. At the end of this episode, she seemed to reach a resolution of sorts. Of course, this is the cliffhanger . . . all remains to be seen!

## Friday January 12th 2018

David almost got the NYTX but one letter eluded him and he gave up after three minutes.

The weather was forecast to be lousy and dangerous. Louisville was 35F when we arose to let Maisie water the grass – the day was going to descend into freezing rain with snow on top by late afternoon. As a result we gave up on going to the Coffee Concert at the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts. Freezing rain is no joke in lovely Louisville. Toronto started at 50F and then followed a similar descent into freezing rain and snow going down to 19F. Even Fort Walton Beach was wobbly starting at 62F and then going through thunderstorms down to 58F.

Both the BBC and the CBC reported that President Trump once again lowered the bar when he questioned why the U.S. would want to admit more people from Haiti. As for Africa, he asked why more people from "shithole countries" should be allowed into the United States. A UN spokesman later condemned his remarks as "shocking", "shameful" and "racist".

Former Canadian Governor-General Michaëlle Jean, who was born in Haiti, has condemned Donald Trump's reported derogatory comments about that country and unnamed African countries.

Mr Trump obviously thinks the inscription on the Statue of Liberty no longer applies.

***“Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door! “***

With the gloomy forecast of freezing rain, we had a hasty breakfast of toasted cranberry bread with Philadelphia cream cheese and coffee. Then we drove over to Kroger's getting there just after 08:00 hrs. Maisie had been so antsy to get out that we took her with us. She had to stay in the car while we shopped.

There were not many customers and the aisles were filled with jobbers refilling shelves. At the check out there were no baggers. When we got back to the car the windows were totally fogged up from Maisie's breath. Maisie might not be quite so enthusiastic about going for another joy ride.

When we got home it was only 08:30 and we needed a fresh pot of coffee.

We worked on refreshing Louise's 'Progenitor' page on her 'Pass the Peas' website. Specifically, we wanted to include a map to show the towns she and her parents lived in.

While Louise painted in her studio, David broke and then repaired Louise's website using his famed two steps back, one step forward programming technique – patent pending.

For lunch Louise built her wonderful Prosciutto Lettuce and Tomato (PLT) grilled sandwiches.

About this time we noticed icicles forming on cold metal surfaces. Then we received frozen ice pellets.

After making additions to the blog, Louise went back to her Studio to paint. David hacked away at

crumbling websites. Outside it was snowing, exactly as predicted in the weather forecast.

Mid-afternoon Louise started making Butternut Squash & White Bean Soup (BSWBS). There was some dicing and lots of pureeing with the blender. It cooked on a low heat for a few hours to let the flavors marry.

David claims to have invented a new type of reading glasses. They walk all over the house by themselves and need no batteries.

For supper we had a small bowl of the BSWBS, concluding that it needs a bit more nutmeg next time, and then cheese fondue à la Costco. We had spritzers of a new Sauvignon Blanc called 'Green House'. Louise liked the bottle more than the wine and will use it as a decorative water container in her Studio.

In the Studio Louise has made a lot of progress on the Cardinals, Cranes, Storks, Egrets and the Osbourne House scene.

We read a bit, David not wanting to end his book on Savannah. Then we watched two episodes of TGW and were quite surprised when the plot went in the opposite direction to our expectation.

It was snowing when we went to bed and we got up in the middle of the night to take some photos.

### **Saturday January 13th 2018**

We were up quite early and tried to get more photos of the ice-clad trees bathed in the glow of the street lamps. Without a tripod that sort of thing is very tricky.

We did not even try the NYTX as it is the Saturday biggie that can be too tough.

With a little bit of snow on the ground Louisville started at 16F and would rise to 27F with partial sun. Toronto was 7F rising to 12F with sun.

We received an e-mail from Toronto friends who have just arrived in Pahia, North Island of New Zealand. The photos of lush greenery said it all. This is the height of summer in Kiwiland.

A headline that will steal Trump's limelight: ***“The French baguette should be listed as a UNCESO cultural treasure”, says France's President Emmanuel Macron.***

After a breakfast of boiled eggs we did more weekly laundry.

Mid-morning bright sunlight showed the ice glinting on the tree boughs. David went out with the Nikon 7100, but he knew from previous experience that this phenomenon was very hard to photograph. The footing was very treacherous so the expedition was both cautious and short.

Louise added some more nutmeg and a dollop of cream to create the New Improved BSWBS (NIBSWBS) for lunch.

About 12:50 we drove over to Tinseltown for our movie “The Post”. After being pummeled by never-

ending advertising for terrible punch-up, shoot-up or whatever-up trailers of movies that were coming in the next decade, we finally were allowed to see what we had paid for. The theater has seats that fully recline.

Steven Spielberg directs Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks in “The Post”, a thrilling drama about the unlikely partnership between The Washington Post's Katharine Graham (Streep), the first female publisher of a major American newspaper, and editor Ben Bradlee (Hanks), as they race to catch up with The New York Times to expose a massive cover-up of government secrets that spanned three decades and four U.S. Presidents. The two must overcome their differences as they risk their careers - and their very freedom - to help bring long-buried truths to light. “The Post” marks the first time Meryl Streep, Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg have collaborated on a project. In addition to directing, Spielberg produces along with Amy Pascal and Kristie Macosko Krieger. The script was written by Liz Hannah and Josh Singer, and the film features an acclaimed ensemble cast including Alison Brie, Carrie Coon, David Cross, Bruce Greenwood, Tracy Letts, Bob Odenkirk, Sarah Paulson, Jesse Plemons, Matthew Rhys, Michael Stuhlbarg, Bradley Whitford and Zach Woods.

The producers went to great lengths to create an authentic environment. There were rotary dial phones, reporters (ninety-percent male) used manual typewriters, the paper was set up using Linotype machines and photos were laid in with photoengraved blocks. The printing press itself was about the size of the engines of the Titanic and just as noisy. Almost everybody smoked cigarettes.

Make no bones about it, this is a very good movie.

When we drove home it was snowing and the sky was very drab. Louise suggested we have popcorn at home.

Back home we found a bundle of DVDs (Boston Legal) in the mail box.

David finished his book “Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil”. It is a very good story and something you should read if you ever intend to spend some time in Savannah, Georgia.

We pan fried some sliced rounds of bratwurst and potato and had them with sauerkraut.

Later we watched another two episodes of The Good Wife. Every time things look rosy, the writers find a way to rain on Alicia's parade.

### **Sunday January 14th 2018**

At 06:30 Louise opened the blinds to make sure the snow was still on the ground. By some miracle, it had not evaporated.

Jolted awake with fresh caffeine, David put down the NYTX in 81 seconds. Louise cheated – she sat by the gas fire logs and warmed up her brain. She solved the puzzle in 75 seconds.

The weather: Louisville 9F to 27F partly cloudy. Toronto 4F to 21F cloudy. Fort Walton Beach 27 F to 50F sunny. The latter does not speak well for our upcoming vacation in Florida.

BBC reported the absolute obvious: *Britain is still not a "foodie nation", Michelin-starred chef Angela Hartnett has said.*

Google and Amazon are investing big money on voice technology. Google, which usually skips the Consumer Electronics Show, is there this year touting their version. Smart speakers and the digital assistants that power them are bringing us closer to the concept of ambient computing, where most of our electronics can be controlled by voice. With everyone racing to integrate voice assistants, are they matching consumers' actual needs? More importantly, how easy is it to turn these devices into spies that report our every in-home activity to Big Brother?

Louise had been studying road maps and had concluded that we needed to break the trip to Florida into two days, stopping overnight in Athens, Alabama. When you Google the term "Athens" you get hits for Ohio, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee – real Southern.

"Houston, we have a problem". The sun yesterday caused some melting and this morning we have patches of glare ice on the roads within the Asbury Park complex. The City of Louisville does not maintain these roads and the Home Owners Association seems very reluctant to spend money on sanding, salting/brining and snow plowing. This is new for David the Canadian as ice is far more dangerous than snow.

David had spent about three hours over the past two days trying to recreate a web page that got trashed in its entirety. It had been created in HTML in 2010 using Microsoft FrontPage. Since the latter lives in the desktop in Toronto, David had to use KompoZer, a WYSIWYG HTML editor that uses Mozilla Composer code base. Hopefully, you now understand the problem.

He copied an existing page from 2010 that worked and then tried a lot of grabbing and patching to manipulate the HTML source code in KompoZer until he had a reasonable working facsimile. Once again it would appear that at some point the ISP smashed some code on David's website.

For lunch Louise created egg salad toasted sandwiches with dill pickle relish. But first, we had a small bowl of the last of the NIBSWBS.

Not being able to go for a walk due to the treacherous icy conditions, we decided to watch one of the Nicholas Sparks DVDs that a friend had lent us. We chose "Message in a Bottle", starring Paul Newman, Kevin Kostner and Robin Wright. It was a dreamy, sweet saccharin story with a sad end.

With nothing better to do, we watched a second Nicholas Sparks entitled "Safe Haven". When a mysterious young woman named Katie appears in the small North Carolina town of South Port, her sudden arrival raises questions about her past. The principals were Josh Duhamel, Julianne Hough Cobie Smulders and David Lyons. This one had a happier ending.

The long, cold afternoon was full of bright sunlight, so we had more melting. Tonight that melt will freeze, of course, so the cycle will go on until there is enough warmth to melt all the snow. From the weather reports, we think that will not occur until Wednesday or Thursday. We'll not feel safe to walk outside for a couple more days probably.

We had tacos for supper and then some more of The Good Wife. Alicia got clobbered twice.