

## Monday May 7th 2018

Weather: Toronto 52F to 57F cloudy    Louisville 57F to 74F sun  
NYTX: David got it in one minute and 56 seconds.

We were back home by 07:25 having spooked a rabbit on the Dawn Patrol. We got a great photo for the album.

David secured fence boards on the northern upper balcony deck that had been loosened by the hurricane force winds of May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018. One of the boards actually was blown off.

NYT: Barnes & Noble may be in trouble. You hear that, in worried tones, when you talk to people in the book business. It's depressing to imagine that more than 600 Barnes & Noble stores might simply disappear — as already happened with Borders, in 2011.

BBC: The eruption of the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii has destroyed 26 homes and is threatening hundreds more, with new fissures opening overnight on Sunday. Nearly 2,000 people have so far been evacuated. Some residents were allowed home to rescue pets, but authorities said it was not safe to stay.

For lunch Louise came up with a new sandwich. On freshly toasted 7 grains bread she spread peanut butter and then slathered on some Canadian raspberry jam. In her hurry to keep us on schedule (as usual, we were a bit early), she spread the peanut butter on warm bread. One had to be very careful not to get dripped upon.

We drove away at 12:45 for a combination of visits in the Don Mills area. Louise did some damage at the Cadillac Fairview Shops of Don Mills. Therein, Louise found the lovely store "Anthopologie" that she had first visited in February in Sandestin, Florida. She found a blouse that she had reluctantly talked herself out of in Florida, now on sale (half price). So, you know the rest . . .

On the drive down and back we saw two other fallen trees in our neighbourhood. Amazingly, most of the trees that came down have already been cleared away. The majority appear to have landed on city easements.

David's new cell phone had a meltdown and wasted \$24 worth of calling time.

BBC: The influential US gun lobby the National Rifle Association (NRA) has elected a former aide to President Ronald Reagan as its new president. Oliver North, a retired US Marine Colonel, played a major role in the so-called Iran-Contra scandal. During the 1980s he created a network which secretly sold weapons to Iran and diverted the proceeds to fund armed Nicaraguan anti-communist groups.

We had pizza for supper. David has to have capers with pizza.

We read a bit, with David finishing his Newfoundland book on Joey Smallwood.

Then we watched the third episode of the Bhagwan in Wasco County, Oregon. Things were getting ugly.

## **Tuesday May 8th 2018**

Weather: Toronto 43F to 61F sun Louisville 52F to 79F sun  
The NYTX crossword was a shambles. Even with the solution in hand we simply did not get it.

The day started with David starving as he had to go to the clinic for fasting blood work. Nonetheless, we completed an early morning walk before David set off for the clinic. While waiting for the “blood sucker”, aka phlebotomist, one of the other patients told him the clinic used to be a funeral home.

Back home we had a nice pan fried prosciutto and fried egg breakfast, with tons of drip coffee.

Costco Ajax was the target and we filled up with gas – what a shock. We will be so glad to get the all-electric Nissan Leaf. In the store we got a ton of groceries, but they had no Montreal Smoked Beef and no spring rolls – a serious problems. When we checked out David's MasterCard refused to perform. That was annoying because it had just done so at the gas pump. A debit card would have worked but David had been checking his accounts on the computer and left the debit card at home. In desperation, he used cash – a dirty four letter word.

For several days Louise had been boxing up unused crockery to donate to Diabetes Canada. She spent a lot of time carefully wrapping pieces with tissue, bubble wrap and cardboard padding. These pieces were all treasures that had not been used in decades.

After a light lunch we got into really heavy duty emotional work. It was decided that David needed to make a considerable contribution to the Diabetes Canada pickup on May 11<sup>th</sup>. He had a closet full of old business clothes that he had not worn since 1995. Funny, but all those pants and jackets had shrunk hanging in the closet. In the end, about \$15,000 worth of clothing was dumped. Having cleaned out the closet, Louise immediately claimed the newly vacated space for her clothes. Nature abhors a vacuum.

CBC: President Donald Trump announced Tuesday the U.S. will pull out of the landmark nuclear accord with Iran, dealing a profound blow to U.S. allies and potentially deepening the president's isolation on the world stage.

For supper, Louise tried out a new style of pork chops that we had bought at Costco – souvlaki marinated pork loin. Louise served this with an organic blend of rice and lentils and added whole artichokes for exotic flavour.

Then we watched the third episode of the Bhagwan in Wasco County, Oregon. This is a totally fascinating documentary produced for Netflix. We continue to marvel at human nature: people willing to believe in this rather ineffable guru. And willing to give their entire lives to this belief, which is also ineffable. Beyond ineffable. If you wrote this up as a movie script, nobody would believe it.

## **Wednesday May 9th 2018**

We walked out the front door at 06:40 and Maisie flushed a bunny rabbit who had been having breakfast on the front lawn. A heavy dew covered the grass with tiny sparkling orbs. Bunny posed for a photo.

After the refreshing sojourn, admiring the new cherry blossoms, daffodils and tulips, David got on the phone to the Costco credit card company named 'CapitalOne' about various issues.

He could not get onto his CapitalOne Costco account because they changed everything in September, 2017. He could not get an increase in his credit limit because he was a good customer and always paid his bills on time. Lastly, his rebate of \$223 had not been mailed to him. It is great doing business with this fine company.

With that wonderful experience behind him, David decided to cancel a card that charged an annual fee. He then negotiated a \$20,000 limit on another bank's credit card – so there Costco!

CBC: Canadians could soon be spending more on recreational cannabis than they do on liquor, if a report from a major bank is to be believed. Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce calculated in a report this week that in the next two years, Canadians will consume 800,000 kilograms of cannabis, the vast majority of which will be for recreational use. "We believe that by 2020, the legal market for adult-use cannabis will approach \$6.5 billion in retail sales," CIBC said. "For context, this is greater than the amount of spirits sold in this country, and approaches wine in scale."

[The new Canadian motto will become: "In Pot We Trust" ]

BBC: France's Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian says the Iranian nuclear deal is "not dead" despite US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw. The 2015 agreement curbed Iran's nuclear activities in return for the lifting of sanctions that had been imposed by the UN, US and EU. But Mr Trump argued that the deal was "defective at its core", saying he would pull out and reimpose sanctions. Other signatories to the nuclear accord say they remain committed to it. The deal was agreed between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the US, UK, France, China and Russia - plus Germany. It was struck under Mr Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama.

[Trump seems to be determined to unravel anything Obama did].

Louise wanted some brioche and, using the Web, we found some at a bakery five miles away. GPS Sue took us there and even sent around a neighbourhood circuit so that we could get to the bakery without scraping off the muffler trying to mount a concrete highway divider. Sue can be very smart. We had high hopes for this artisanal bakery – those hopes were dashed when we walked through the door. We bought three brioche buns that were baked using gold flour. How does this kind of business scrape by one wonders? There is not one thing to recommend it. Louise will make her own brioche.

Strangely, and maybe a bit off the point: Louise remembers buying fresh brioche in Japan at the Tachikawa Airbase commissary concession in 1960, made by a Japanese baker. The brioche were beautiful, fragrant, and fresh that morning.

We went on the "No Frills" to pick up some essentials. No Frills has moved everything around, somehow making more space and light. Their selection of fresh product ranges from the ordinary to the exotic. Amazing!

Back home we took photos of our very own cherry tree blossoms. This tree almost bought the farm about seven years ago when it simply flopped over. David strapped it up and it has survived - even last

week's hurricane.

For lunch we tried some new vegetable spring rolls – they were acceptable, but not great.

Then it was off to see the plastic surgeon for David's 5,000 eyelid blink test. Louise came along as technical advisor. David passed.

Back home, with the temperature about 72F with bright sun, we decided Maisie needed some fresh air. David went along wearing short sleeves – first time since Florida in February.

We noted that Toronto's Official Flower, the dandelion, was blooming in carpets. Also noted were the poor people at the north end of our street whose two cars are still blocked in the driveway by two fallen trees. At least the trees did not hit the cars.

The better weather of the last couple of days has resulted in a remarkable, and very rapid, transformation. The trees have suddenly remembered that they are supposed to grow new leaves and the grass is thrusting upwards and turning greener by the hour. In winter we can see right across the Highland Creek ravine – about 1,000 yards. When the leaves come out the view gets increasingly blocked until the west bank becomes totally cut off by a wall of green.

David continued his clearing operation. He half-filled a bag with shoes that he would never wear again. However, not unlike Imelda Marcos, he has plenty more, but cannot match Louise.

We decide tacos would make a fine supper.

With somewhat morbid curiosity, we watched the final episodes of the Bhagwan in Wasco County, Oregon. The end was a bit of a downer, but quite rational. We then started a new series about two British women detectives. Rachel Bailey and Janet Scott are two detective constables working for DCI Gill Murray on the Manchester Metropolitan Police's Major Incident Team, tasked with tracking down killers. We liked our introduction to this series.

### **Thursday May 10th 2018**

About 05:00 the pounding rain on the bedroom skylight announced that it was probably not a good idea to let the window washers perform. So, we rolled over and had a long snooze and snuggle.

Weather: Toronto 58F to 67F rain Louisville 68F to 84F part cloud

The Canadian Mint revealed a commemorative coin in honour of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's impending nuptials on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The \$20 Fine Silver Coin is limited edition and costs \$104.95. I wonder if anybody can explain the logic behind paying \$104.95 for a \$20 coin?

When there was a break in the rain, Louise took Maisie for a quick break. Five minutes after they got home the heavens opened up in a tremendous dump. Other dog walkers were just appearing when Maisie and Louise came in. The latecomers were just far enough from home to be soaked by the sudden downfall.

We had a slow breakfast with waffles, strawberries, blueberries, maple syrup and tangerines. Maisie

loves it all.

About 09:15, the forecast proved wrong and the sun came out. So, we did a neighbourhood walk and took some photos of freshly bloomed flowers. We also met “Snowball” a small white cat with an arched back indicating she was ready to tangle with Maisie. Snowball was guarding a bright yellow soft ball that Maisie wanted to take home. Louise dragged Maisie out of harm's way while David took photos.

We had a small breakfast and then started emptying the guest bedroom of many of the treasures that had been dumped in it over the years. They were bagged up for Diabetes Canada.

We had Louise's world famous PLTs for lunch.

We went over to Home Depot to gather bits and pieces for the two powder rooms. On the way over we saw that the two trees that had blocked in the two cars in the driveway at the north end of our street had been removed.

Mid-afternoon we took two bags of books to a neighbour who is a voracious reader and who passes us recommendations on what to read. These books will become donations for her church used book sale in a couple of weeks. We got a couple of photos of brilliant yellow forsythia and open blossoms of magnolia. Maisie took Louise on a long walk around Wanita Park. When they returned, at least one of them was exhausted.

We put Bruno's tourtière in the oven for supper. It was served with brown gravy and green peas with mint sauce. Bruno makes a hearty, tasty pie.

On Netflix we continued the British detective series of “Bailey and Scott”. This is adult entertainment with serious story lines and nuances that most teenagers would not grasp.

### **Friday May 11th 2018**

Weather: Toronto 43F to 51F cloud Louisville 65F to 88F sun

NYTX: David three minutes 23 seconds Louise one minute 8 seconds

We had to have all the boxes and bags for Diabetes Canada out on the front porch by 08:00 hrs. There was so much that we wondered if they would take it all.

After a bowl of cereal we went for a walk. When we got back an enormous crane was blocking the road right outside our house. The crane was going to lift the neighbour's tree that was leaning on the roof. So, there was no way that Diabetes Canada could pick up our donation. Louise phoned to say that the crane will be gone by late afternoon. Equally, in the afternoon Home Depot was scheduled to deliver our powder room vanity sink and toilet.

NYT: Consider Owsley County, Ky., at the epicenter of Appalachia’s regional crisis. More than half the county’s population receives food stamps; 84 percent of its voters supported Trump in 2016. Did they know what they were voting for? Another proof of the idea that Louise constantly repeats: the education system has failed in the US to teach people enough to know how to vote their own best interests. Should they be voting at all? The Founding Fathers based the system upon the assumption of an educated populace. And meanwhile the media have raised the emotional level of what passes for thinking to an unconscionably irrational way of responding to the real world. Note: this comment is one for which Louise takes full responsibility.

At 09:00 Home Depot delivery phoned to say they were on their way. They were upset when told the road was blocked and that they were scheduled for the afternoon. Louise missed the call as she was outside taking photos of the tree removal. David had retreated to the Library as he could not stand the combined noise of the crane and the tree limb shredder. What a team – one for photos and one on phones. By 09:15 the tree removal operation had ceased.

BBC: A man has been fined a record-breaking \$120m (£88m) for making more than 90 million automated marketing telephone calls in the US. Miami salesman Adrian Abramovich was accused of trying to sell holidays and timeshare properties with the unsolicited robocalls. The fine is the largest the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has ever issued.

The Home Depot team, in a foul move, arrived at 09:30 and moved the two pieces in with surly service. Just after noon the Diabetes Canada truck arrived. It took the guy quite a while to load the vehicle.

Both Home Depot and Diabetes Canada were recorded as MP4 video by the new Ring doorbell.

Louise came up with a magnificent salad for lunch to celebrate our liberation from tree removers, delivery and pick up people.

Louise did some baking to replenish the cookie jar. She made a batch of traditional Tuscan biscotti (the ones with almonds) and a very special chocolate with walnuts biscotti. That recipe calls for pistachios, but pecans are good, too. It seems one cannot go wrong.

We had to go to No Frills to replenish some basics knowing that David would not be doing grocery runs next week – downtown on jury duty.

After that we did a neighbourhood walk. The flowers and blossoms are bursting forth. All this despite the fact that the sun has once again become elusive and the temperature has fallen appreciably. It was a fall-like day, but very pleasant.

Louise spent time on the phone trying to get the window washers to work on our windows. No joy here. They promise to call Monday morning to reschedule once again! Their system needs a face lift!

A rose breasted grosbeak visited the back yard. The rose-breasted grosbeak is a large, seed-eating grosbeak in the cardinal family. It is primarily a foliage gleaner. It breeds in cool-temperate North America, migrating to tropical America in winter.

For supper Louise did Montreal pan-fried spiced chicken with snow peas and sweet potato. The salad included sliced yellow peppers, greens and radishes. For dessert we had fresh sliced mango with a dollop of yogurt.

Our evening entertainment was “Bailey and Scott”. It is sometimes fairly raw, but not gruesome as the underbelly of Manchester is examined.

### **Saturday May 12th 2018**

Weather: Toronto 46F to 55F cloud    Louisville 72F to 88F sun  
NYTX: David one minute 51 seconds    Louise bailed out.

It was laundry day. The first load was in as soon as we tumbled out of bed.

We went for an early walk and got sprinkled upon. On one lawn was a collection of cartoon cards proclaiming the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of an inhabitant. We took a photo.

After breakfast Louise opened her Beauty Salon and gave David a haircut.

David started to download the content of his old website “IronTrip” in preparation for moving to a new ISP. This sort of operation is fraught with peril – witness the last time he was forced off an ISP with only 72 hours notice – thousands of links got broken, and have yet to be repaired. David has reserved this task for the nursing home.

David subsequently downloaded the other elements that had been published as separate websites. His thought is to transfer to a new host only the 2018 'ironsite' published in part on Word Press, with blogs and photo albums resident on a host ISP.

We basically took the morning off. David futzed with a light fixture and finally accepted Louise's suggestion that a new one would look better.

David ordered an “Off-Air” TV antenna from Amazon. Since we dropped cable TV from the Rogers package, we have been unable to get any local TV coverage. It all came home when we realized we would not be able to watch the Kentucky Derby.

It being a bright, albeit chilly afternoon, we went for walk. Afterwards we treated ourselves to a hot chocolate.

In the late afternoon we started preparing Prosciutto-and-Cheese Brioche Pudding. It baked for 45 minutes in the oven and then at 18:30 we sat down to a feast.

“Bailey and Scott” served up some rather basic sketches of how hard police work is on the domestic front. This is a very serious series – the acting is first class, and the characters are totally believable.

### **Sunday May 13th 2018**

#### **Mothers' Day**

Weather: Toronto 47F to 60 F cloud then sun Louisville 72F to 89F sun

NYTX: David took three minutes and 10 seconds while Louise got it in one minute and 2 seconds.

On the Dawn Patrol Maisie scared the bunny who was having Sunday breakfast on a manicured lawn. She also felt the urge to be an attack dog when an unsuspecting, elderly spaniel passed us. Very embarrassing! Other than that, the neighbourhood was very quiet – it was too quiet. We wondered if a lot of people had gone north to open up their summer cottages. BUT, traditionally that happens on the May Two-Four weekend – about two weeks hence.

The 'Taraxacum Officinale', a flowering herbaceous perennial plant of the family Asteraceae, were out in full glory. You might know them as dandelions.

We had a quiet Sunday morning during which David prepared for his jury duty.

He took a decisive step when he registered a new website domain name with Bare Metal in Victoria

BC. It will be the foundation for the new website with the handle [www.ironsidez.ca](http://www.ironsidez.ca) The next step is to figure out which company to choose to actually host the website.

We had egg rolls for lunch.

Then we drove over to Home Depot to find a new lamp for the Family Room. Going to pay, David found he had left his wallet at home. So, we were lucky that Louise had some Canadian dollars.

Next was No Frills for some essential fizzy pop, but they had no shoe polish. We went on to Metro where they not only had shoe polish, but also bake brioche loaves, if you get there early in the morning. We dropped into the LCBO to pick up three boxes for packing. Finally, we went to the Toronto Public Library to return a borrowed book.

Back home we found that our friend had cut the lawn – first chop this year. We also co-ordinated the installation of the powder room plumbing fixtures for about three days hence.

While David wrestled with the installation of the new light fixture, Louise took Maisie for a walk. It was just as well as the assembly instructions were totally incorrect and David used some choice Army words to vent his anger. Totally reversing the diagram, he got it installed.

For supper we had some more Prosciutto-and-Cheese Brioche Pudding with mint sauce peas.

Then it was on to more “Bailey and Scott”. The series was giving us a good street level tour of Manchester, away from the glitzy tourist spots.