

Issue 99 February 2012

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2-Feb-12 5:25pm 31°

Happy Groundhog Day

So do you think Bill Murray will show up on the Square this year?

It was foggy all day. I hope the Groundhog lets it be spring in 6 weeks.

New Newsletter Format

Remember all that trouble I had last year with my template getting corrupt and I had to redo the newsletter a few times? Well this time when it failed me this afternoon, I got lucky and it's Groundhog Day.

I was just about finished and had made a backup. Then it failed. Lucky I only had a little to recreate.

I just stopped and recreated the layout of the news letter making it just about the same.

Not that it is fixed I can tell you I have almost got it ready for you.

I am going to add products and services that I endorse in my newsletter. If you have a product or service you think

should like others to know about maybe you could get me to put it in my newsletter too.

Let me start out with one for my book.

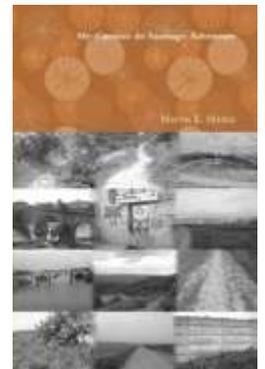
Advertisement

I went to Spain in 2007 and walked part of the Camino de Santiago. I kept a journal and then published these notes into a book along with my pictures.

Read my thoughts in "My Camino de Santiago Adventure".

The black & white version is the best bargain. If you would like the same book with all the pictures printed in color I made it available too. It cost over four times as much to print it. Wait there is another way color for a lot less. You could download the PDF version all the pictures are in color.

Current price is discounted at my online store.



My Camino de Santiago Adventure by Martin E. Metras

Version	Regular Price	Percent off	You pay only (*plus s/h)
Black & White	\$15.99	25%	\$11.99*
Color	\$64.95	25%	\$48.71*
Downloadable Color PDF file	\$3.99	None	\$3.99

Checkout his book and all the back issues copies of **Marty's Random Thoughts** newsletter at www.lulu.com/metras3.

I keep a few B&W version of my books so if you would like one let me know I can save you some shipping & handling. As for the PDF version I have some them burnt to CDs. Just let me know when you see me.

8-Feb-12 6:54pm 24°

I have been shopping around for some lighted gear for when I go to Spain. Today I shopped for a lighter jacket. The one I have right now might be to one I take. It weighs 1-1/4 pounds. I might not do any better. I looked at a light rain jacked the weighed only 0.05 pounds less than the one I have now. It felt a log lighter but when I weighed it there were the same. It might have felt lighter because it was new and black.

I am looking for an everyday shirt and pants that weigh less than what I am wearing now. The spring hiking clothes have not hit the stores yet.

And I still need a lighter backpack that is still not happened yet. It is not that light backpacks are not out there is just that I haven't made up my mind yet.

Having Cash

In the January issue I was telling about prepping for the Camino. I figured then I need to have some cash. I got this email from Mike.

Marty,

Ref: your Jan newsletter: Cash is not a good idea. You can get money **everywhere** with your ATM card. In the last 9 years I have never had more than 200 euro or so in my pocket, unless I needed more in the next day or so. There are ATMs in even the smaller towns these days. A big roll of cash is too easy to get lost or attract the wrong attention. As for day-to-day Camino cost, it is \$30 to \$60 (**dollars**) depending where you want to live and eat—that is a quite accurate number gleaned from 2010 experience and earlier. So for 40 days it is \$1,200 to \$2,400 plus the ticket to get there. I suspect the lower number is closer for you.

And now they take VISA at a lot of restaurants (especially the upper class ones you'll have to go to live the \$60 a day level).

Peace and Joy,
Mike Metras

Source: email from Mike

Thanks Mike for the feedback. I didn't plan on take a whole lot of cash with me. I just wanted to make sure I had enough to draw on if the need aroused.

Last time I pulled €300.00 from the ATM each time I got low on cash. Mike suggests €200. I think this is sounds advices. Even at home I only get a hundred bucks once in awhile. Thanks for the advice mike!

Weather Data

For you who want to look at the weather history for Woodstock as my weather station records it is available.

I have updated my weather page to show all of the weather history back to 2004. Each month has a report. And each year has a report. I have also posted the Sun rise and sent set times for each day for 2012 as well for the last 9 years.

You can view that data from <http://www.doerofthings.com/weather/index.htm>.

Farmer's Almanac

I know of you are interested in what the Farmer's Almanac has to say for our area of the country.

Weather Forecast for Lower Lakes

FEBRUARY 2012: temperature 20° (4° below avg.);
Precipitation 1" (1" below avg.);

Feb 1-3: Snow showers, turning milder;

Feb 4-6: Lake snows, very cold;

Feb 7-11: Sunny, mild, then snow showers, cold;

Feb 12-16: Snow showers, cold;

Feb 17-19: Lake snows, very cold;

Feb 20-22: Snow, then snow showers, cold;

Feb 23-29: Snow showers, seasonable.

MARCH 2012: temperature 38° (2° above avg.);
Precipitation 2.5" (0.5" below avg.);

Mar 1-4: Sunny, mild;

Mar 5-7: Showers, mild;

Mar 8-12: Snowy periods, cold;

Mar 13-17: Snow, then flurries, cold;

Mar 18-24: Showers, then sunny, warm;

Mar 25-28: Rain, then sunny, cool;

Mar 29-31: Rainy; mild, then cool.

Source: Farmer's Almanac, <http://www.almanac.com/>

10-Feb-12 3:33pm 16°

So I see from the Farmer's Almanac today could be sunny and mild. And it might be everywhere except Woodstock.

Well I had a nice walk this morning and one mile into the walk there were a few snowflakes. There was only enough snow to show fresh foot prints when I walked back it to the driveway.

14-Feb-12 9:36am 35°

>>> **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY** <<<



I love that so many of you enjoy my random thoughts.

Camera Failure

The other day I was noticing that I had not used my camera in a while. I turned it on and found the battery to be dead. After I charged it I noticed that the LCD display was cracked. It had no signs of being dropped. I can only guess but I think an elephant had stepped upon it. Not wanting to get a big animal mad at me I decided to just take it in and get it fixed.

Yesterday morning I took it along with the other camera that was also broken to be repaired.

This place in Bensenville and if they have the parts can in most cases fix camera in an hours. Here is there information:

United Camera Service Center
Tower Lane Business Park
1062 Tower Lane
Bensenville, Illinois 60106
Phone: 630.595.2525
<http://www.unitedcamera.com/>

They also repair other things. Things like iPads, phone, camera lenses, cam corders, and 10,000 other devices.

I have had them repair my old camera before and they did a great job. And If I hadn't dropped it might still be working.

This time they didn't have the parts in stock so they will ship it back to me at no extra charge.

They give you a price before they fix it in case you decide not to spend the money on repairs. In my case I had both repaired a whole lot cheaper than buying one new camera.

Yes I like this company. Check it out for yourself.

Walk the Walk

I was thinking I needed a logo while I walk the Camino. Well I wanted one not needed. Really I was playing around and drew up my own logo. I know all of play around some times.

Well anyway I did created a logo and I did draw it myself. Then I thought it needed to be in color so I colorized it. No I don't have crayons I had to use Sharpies, Hi-Liters, and white board markers. I didn't want to go out and buy crayons just to paint one little picture. Well here it is.



Well I am not sure I will be wearing those colors. I only used them because I wanted to be random. ☺

Feb 21, *\$

While sitting at Starbucks trying to read my book two guys are talking about saw mills and wood working tools. It sounds like they are talking about the fineries of wine. They just met today when one guy was saying that he went to a saw mill in Kirkland yesterday. One is around fifty and the other in his sevenths. They have been going on and on for an hour. I am enjoying listening to them.

Book notes

I have been reading this book about the history along the Camino de Santiago and finding that people had a lot more time 1,500 years ago to do art and craft things. Yes maybe they got paid for it but nonetheless it is handcrafted work, much like these two guys talking about wood structure, grain, and color patterns. They are artisans. They both are doing their thing as hobbies and they have a passion for what they are doing.

I know a few people who have passion for what they do as the job and a few who have great passion for their hobbies. I had not thought about this until I was listening to these to guys while I was reading this book at the same time.

As for me I always just figured I was obsessed when I lose myself in some projects. Maybe I am. :-)

Now I want to find an audio book on the history of the Camino de Santiago.

Feb 25, TC

For some reason I woke up bored. Even coming out to see Anila didn't help yet. I drove by Vaughan's and they were busy so I am here sitting alone. Oh woe is me. :-) Someone just sat behind me and is moving all over the place. It is hard to sit here and relax when someone is moving my back rest all over the place. Grrrr! Maybe I should just move. My food is here now.

Eaten now and I am still bored. Anila is busy taking care of other customers so does not have to entertain me so I must take care of myself. That is hard to lift your spirits when you are full of the ho-hums.

Little later:

I'm at Vaughan's now. Cork's family is just living and I got to see Tonya's finger nails. They match her purse! Then I noticed than Mary and I had matching finger nails. They are just finger nails. :-) Wait I have to checkout Heather's...well Heather won't stand still long enough to talk. I'll check later.

The boredom is starting to leave me.

Heather just stopped for a second and her nail match mine too, just plain old nails.

She did say they were blue the other day but she shortly went back to natural.

Thinking about fingernail polish I thought you might to know a little about it. Check this out

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nail_polish

How about your fingernail they can tell you a little about your Heath.

After looking through a ton of web pages I am thinking people color their nail because it makes them feel good, just my opinion.

Still bored

Aunt Annie called and said she wasn't to meet up for lunch today. A little later Cork called to tell he was working and wouldn't make it either. So I thought I would make a walking staff for my trip. I looked out the door to see if the sticks I had were covered with snow. Yup, snow! So I looked up on the internet and saw a hiking pole is just a stick your fancy up a little. Yes there are those \$200 hiking sticks you can buy at the sporting goods store but you only need a sturdy stick.

So I thought I would have to make me one and make it sturdy from one of the small branches I saved for that a couple of years ago. So they are covered with snow today.

Tomorrow I will be able to see them. I need a rubber tip and a metal tip for the staff. So I headed to Menard's to see what I could find. While there I thought I needed to make my hiking staff so it can come apart so I could pack it into my back pack. So after spending more than an hour I think I have the parts I need for this.

Then I notices it was lunch time so I headed to Town and Country to see who would come to lunch. About 2:45 no one else showed. I thought maybe Michele could join me but even she was working and unavailable. I was still bored and

messing with the iPhone to learn how to do things. Then I ate lunch and came home.

I think understand why

I have been spending so much time getting my things for the backpack as light a possible that I forgot what else I can do. I need to have 2 or 3 projects going to keep me from getting bored. I was so obsessed getting the backpack ready that I forgot about everything else. Even this newsletter got neglected. I have begun to de-clutter a little getting a path to Mom's Picture Albums so I can start going through them.

I have very little to do with backpack other then re-packing it before I leave except for walking with it to make sure I can carry it without overdoing.

28-Feb-12 10:42pm 34°

It's coming! Tomorrow is that extra day we get every four years. I hope you enjoy your extra day.

As for me I have to get up early and get out to EWT and do some exercise. Who would have thought I would even say that I enjoy going out and playing with weight, ropes, and ball this much. I love it! Once in a while I even go out there just to say "Hi!"

Yesterday it was five months since I started exercising 3 days a week. And I see it changing until I leave for my trip in May.

The Way

Mike told me about the movie the "The Way back in October and I have been waiting for it to come to the Woodstock Theater. It hasn't made it yet. It did finally showed up on DIRECTV-V last week. Since that it became available on DVD and I bought a copy and have seen it three times now.

Oh this movie is about a guy, Tom who is walking the Camino de Santiago as I will

be in May. It is a 5 star on MRT scale. I do not rate very any books or movies a 5. I like this movie. It is a fun story with some serious parts. It is still on Direct-V and it may be available on Netflix soon. I have ordered the DVD!

Walking with a load

Monday I loaded up my backpack and headed out the E.W Training for my morning workout. I have a full 23 pound load and had no problems carrying it the 2-1/2 miles and then working out for an hour. Well no problem other that it was very cold windy for the last 1/2 mile. I only took me about 5 minutes longer to walk my same path. I had to walk around a lot of snow that is on my route that slowed me some. I felt good about that.

It was only 25° and icy. The snow was frozen so no slush. Ice is dangerous and slush make my feet wet. Therefore I will wait for a few days for more of the snow and ice to leave my camino.

The pack it 95% as it will be when I walk the Camino. I need to do a little fine tuning but I could leave today and would be happy with what I have packed. Since I am still losing pounds and inches I may have to replace some of the clothing I have packed. I hope so! I have 5 pairs of pants sitting over here waiting Purple Heart to pick. There is nothing wrong other than they trip me up when they fall to my ankles if I forget to tight the belt. © I love that. I have lost five plus inched.

Will I have to get some sleep now, there is only 24-3/4 hours left this month.

9-Mar-12 9:23am 26°

You know I finally finished off this issue and am not sure why it not so long. After all it is only 6 pages.

Well I was going to put ads on the back pages for products or service I like and I did not get to it. I feel it is good to let people know about companies you are pleased with. Most times we just complain about what we don't like. I am always talking about keeping this newsletter on the positive side.

If you have a good experience with a product, service or company write it down and I will add it to my newsletter. Most people I know like good news.

Well I need to get this issues published before then next one is ready to publish.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day



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