

Issue # 48 January 2009 Continues

24-Jan-2009 10:39am 3°

I have renumbered the pages this year to show the issue along with the page number. I did this because when I was trying to make a master table of contents for last year's newsletter it got confusing. The pages were from 1 to x then start over and then would start over. By using the issue as a chapter function inside the Word document I have some kind of control.

This makes it easier for me to make last years into a book. Book, hummm... I haven't finished my adventure to Spain yet. Maybe I should get that finished.

Newspaper

The newspaper (Northwest Harold) is getting smaller and smaller. And it seems there is only gloom and doom stores in there. I don't read the front section of the paper very much. It seems that all that is in there are stories about layoffs, murders, or some government official ripping us off. In the local section there more positive articles. Even there are a lot of negative stores.

If unemployment is at 9% doesn't that really mean that 91% of the people are working? If a plane crashes, it happens, and 150 die, none too often do they don't tell us about the 147 that walked away. We need more good news.

Hay, now I'm doing it.

26-Jan-2009 8:57am 6°

I think I have that server build that will replace the ones that were hosting my web site and email. I will just back things up now. I have to leave it sit for a few days to make sure it is all working fine and that I didn't miss anything. After that I will turn off the rest of that hardware and saving all of the electricity I said I would save back in October.

Something I noticed while working on this is there is a lot of cold air in that windowed porch. With all that computer hardware that was running out there it kept that room warm so I didn't notice the cold in that room. It may mean I need to replace the windows or put on better storm windows.

I have to eat breakfast and pay bills today before I starve and they repossess my stuff. ☺

27-Jan-2009 10:29am 11°

Last night we lost power for an hour or so. It was a big one. On the radio they said that Huntley and Woodstock were without power. The only thing I saw was the lights on my battery backups for the computers. They are only good enough for about a half hour so I shut things down. I plugged the radio in to one to get the news after I noticed there

was no light to be seen anywhere outside. I was dark out there!

I went to bed where it was warm. I thought if I woke up later and the power was still out I could go to the motor home and fire up the heat in it.

By the time I time I had figured out what I would do if it was a long term outage the power was back on.

This morning all is well!

28-Jan-2009 09:10am 10°

Why does it not feel so cold the last few days? It hasn't been very warm outside. Are my bones getting use to the cold? Maybe it is because the sun was shining.

Rebuild the Servers

The last few days maybe a week or so I have been rebuilding my server's infrastructure. After sending my web and email out to the hosting service I needed to change things so I wasn't running so much computer hardware.

I think I have the hardware the way I want it. There will only be the three servers (PCs) the will be running all the time.

One will handle the weather station data. That is the very low powered PC that could be run on the solar panel and may latter. There is the firewall PC that helps keeps the bad people from getting in to my network. And then there is my file server where all my stuff is stored.

All the rest are only turned on when I want to use them. I just have to remember to turn then off when I am not using them.

Other than making a few software changes, I think this is a done deal.

The Weather

It is 7:55pm and I just checked the temperature and it is only 8°. I checked my weather data is I show the last time the high was above freezing was on the 4th of January and the time before that was last month.

Maybe the Groundhog will help and stay in his hole on Monday. Here is what Jan. 2008 looked like:

<i>Jan 2008</i>			
<i>High and Low Temperatures</i>			
<i>HI</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>LOW</i>	<i>DATE</i>
58.5°	7 th	-10.5°	24 th

Source: www.doerofthings.com/weather

29-Jan-2009 7:59am 18°

It feels warm outside. 18° isn't really warm but it feels warm compared to the temperatures we have had for the last couple of weeks.

Motorhome

I have had the keys to the motorhome in my pocket for a week because I was going to start the engine and generator and let them run for a while. I was told one time you should do that if you leave them sit for a very long time just to get the oil all through the engine. I think it has been sitting there since October. I haven't driven the motorhome since May.

This morning I did it. The engine started right up and the generator only took a little bit of cranking before it fired up. Both seem to run just fine. After fifteen minutes I shut them down and here I am.



I may have to get an ad writer to see if I can sell a few copy of my book with the older newsletters. Do you know any one that would like to help?

Marty's Random Thoughts is a collection of newsletters I wrote for my amusement and gave to my friends and family for their enjoyment. Book 1 is the beginning years to 2007.



See the web site below or grab me off the street to get your copy
The online store is at: <http://stores.lulu.com/metras3>

I need to get back to working at my adventures in Spain book. Today would be a good day for that. But first I need to go have coffee.

My Book

I have been working on proofing my book all day. If I keep going I might get finished this year. But now it is time for a break. Maybe I will go out and bug Anila for a while.

30-Jan-2009 1:27pm 10°

After working on my book all morning I decided to take a break and go bug Kim. While sitting there eating my lunch I didn't get much time to bug her. She was busy! I think she was serving deserts to almost every body. I think I must have seen her take out 20 or 25 cake, pies, and ice cream deserts. In the mean time I think Fatima was only serving breakfasts. It was lunch time not breakfast or snack time.

New Governor

When I got to Vaughan yesterday they were just starting to vote to impeach the governor. The vote was 59 to nothing. I guess that says it all.

I guess this leave this office for the next election. Maybe Voviollca and I should try for this office in the next election. What you think "V"?

31-Jan-2009 12:54pm 25°

Can't talk now! Aunt Annie just called and asked if I wasn't to ride with her to lunch. You know I said "Yes!" She will be here in a couple minutes. Got to go!

3:47pm 33°

Wow, we finally broking the freezing mark at 2:30 this afternoon. It was 32.2°. The last time it was that warm was on January 4th at 1:45am when it was 32.3°. Now if we can get that Groundhog to do his thing on Monday.

DirecTV

It looks like DirecTV is going to raise the cost of my T-V service come March. It looks like it is going to be another \$5.00. That will make it over \$600.00 per year. That is double what I paid when I first installed DirecTV.

Maybe it is time to put up an antenna. I have that tower just sitting there. I might as well be using it and I can get some the free broadcast T-V.

I like my DirecTV service. It is the \$600.00 I don't like. I will have to think on this one for a while.

Mike's Works and Words



I have written the following books and video

For more details go to www.worksandwords.com/bookindex.htm

February 2009

02-Feb-2009 9:30am 19°

After looking outside there is no way that Groundhog can not see his shadow! I will wait until after breakfast to check and see the out come of that.

My book

Yesterday I spent most of the day finishing up editing and proofing my book. This morning I uploaded file to have them print me a new draft copy so I can go over it again. It will take a week to get back to me.

This draft will have all the pictures this time so I will have a good idea how it will look when it goes to the publisher. I will have to proof it again. I am sure there is a little more editing that will go along with it.

Go for a Walk

I decided it was the thing to do, for a walk. I walked out to the car to go for breakfast this morning and saw all that frost all over the car. I didn't feel like scraping if off but I still want to go for breakfast. I came in the house and got my hat and gloves and headed up town to Anglo's for breakfast. I within a block I knew it was kind of cold for the first walk in over six months. I just zipped up my coat and put my hood over my head and kept going.

When I was about 3 blocks, I saw there are sidewalks still covered with snow that I had to deal with. Oh well, the street was clear so I walked around.

By then my face was getting cold. My feet and hands were nice in warm. By then I was already on the Square.

I crossed the street on Benton to be in the sun. I walked west on Cass then through the park and I was at Anglo's in no time.

I had my breakfast and talked to Carol and she said it was only 3 block to my house. We talked about that for a while then I told here it was 9 blocks.

Here are the pictures of each street I crossed on the way home.



Dean & E. Van Buren: I'm at Anglo's door.looking at where Ward's uses to be.



Benton & E. Jackson: I'm in front of the old State Bank Building



Benton looking at Judd: I'm on the corner at the top of the steps where Uncle Dan's use to be.



Clay & Newell: I am across the street from this new housing on the Corner where Townsend's user car lot uses to be.



Benton & Church and Clay & Church: I am on the corner where Hurley's Garage uses to stand.



Clay & North: I am on the southeast corner looking at that new light post.



Clay & Hutchins: I'm across the street from them Moose on the corner where the National Tea store used to be.



Clay & First: I am looking in the direction of what used to be Lou's place a long, long time ago.

So let's see, the cross streets were East Van Buren, East Jackson, Judd, Church, Hutchins, Newell, and North, First Street then home. That is only 8 blocks. I guess I could call it 9 if I want. It is a lot more than the 3 that Carol said.

Google Maps say it is 0.3 miles. So for my first walk this year I went about a 1/2 of a mile round trip. If I am going to catch up with Mike and Petra I best get out more.

Income Taxes

Now that I have my walk in, I can start seeing if I have all the income tax paperwork so I can get that out of the way.

03-Feb-2009 10:35am 14°

I didn't get my walk in yet today. It was only 4° when I first was out this morning.

Groundhog Report

With the sun shining all day yesterday I just guessed the Groundhog saw his shadow. I went to the official Groundhog site on the internet and checked it out. www.groundhog.org It looks like we are in for 6 more weeks of winter. I am going to think about it as there are only 6 more weeks until springs. It makes me feel better. Besides I am an optimist not a pessimist.

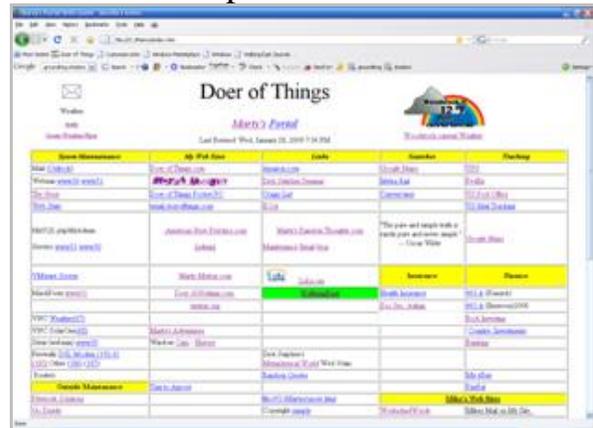
If you are really in to it if he saw or didn't see his shadow, there is a report on this page where they kept score since 1950. www.gojp.com/groundhog/shadow.html

Internet Explorer Menus

If you are using Microsoft's browser, Internet Explorer (IE) and you don't see the menu or tool bars on the top of the screen, you may be in full screen mode. It happens by accident once in a

while it you typing and hit the wrong key and didn't know it. Most people don't use the full screen mode. I know I don't. You may not even know you can do that. You can press the [F11] function key to toggle between the full screen and normal modes. If you are in the full screen mode the menu and tool bars and not shown at the top of the screen giving you more viewing area. Try it, it's neat.

Here are examples:



This is an example with the menu bar on top



This is the full screen mode.

It works with the Fire Fox and Internet Explorer browsers. Just press [F11].

I had to look this up to help someone so I thought I would share it with you. Now I can go back to the income taxes I was working on yesterday.

04-Feb-2009 11:21am 7° 0.6 kw

Cork and I went to IHOP for breakfast to say "Hi!" to Shirley. Victoria told us that she wasn't there. When Kim took our order she told us she would be there in a few minutes. No, Shirley wasn't late we were early. So when she showed we said "Hi!" and visited.

You know they have good breakfast other than pancakes at IHOP.

Back to the Income Taxes

I have been working on my taxes off and on for the last couple of days. I have been doing it slow because I want to get money back this year. I have found some deductions but not so good at finding much. When you pay yourself from the your IRA you should pay some taxes. I didn't pay taxes on it while it was a 401-k. And when I paid my some of the money I didn't have any taxes withdrawn. This means I need to pay the tax man now. Well, April 15th.

I spent the morning looking for the paperwork from when I donated that old blue pickup. I have the receipts for most everything else for the taxes in one place. I looked through all of my 2008 receipts but found nothing.

I said to myself; "It was last year wasn't it?" The next thing I did was look up when I put gas in it last. That will give me an idea when I used it last.

So I went to my book and it said 1995 Ranger Dec. 14. 2008. Again I said to myself; "I don't remember having it that late in the year!" Just then it dawned on me, I still have the '95 ranger sitting in the driveway. The other pickup was a 1989 Ranger. Both are blue and Ford Rangers so I could have mess up the

year. Couldn't I? I looked the '89 and I put gas in it last in July of 2007.

I already got a deduction for it with the 2007 taxes. I best not try to do it again. The IRS might put me in jail. They may not let me have a computer to do my newsletter in jail. They might let me have some paper but not a sharp pencil. I might hurt my elf with that.

I best get back to my taxes. They won't get done without someone working on them.

Oh, I found a receipt for the sales tax I paid on the '95 ranger. It is only \$25.00, but every little bit helps.

Taxes are ready

When I had a job they took out income taxes out of my pay. This way I built up some funds and at the end of year it wasn't so bad. I paid in almost no taxes in 2008 so I got hit with a big tax bill this time. It was a big shock. I rechecked everything and things looked right. I guess I did that to myself. So now I can go to dinner and have coffee and crackers. No money left to eat with. ☺ Yes, the Tax Man cometh!

Field Trip Time

I don't think I any projects left that need to get done for now. I think I will make a new project. I think I will get the motorhome ready and drive to find Mike & Petra. Maybe even walk with them for a day or so.

The motorhome needs the insurance turned on, an oil change and the antifreeze flushed from the water lines then it is ready. And I need to pack a few things and I am ready. I figured to meet them around Flagstaff. Mike said based on their progress they should be

there some where between February 27th and March 5th. They are in Silver Lake, CA now so that is from 577 to 642 miles away from Flagstaff, AZ.

My source mileage is maps.google.com. The 577 miles are walking and the other is driving mileage. It is 7 days 22 hours walking or 10 hours 3 minutes driving. I am guess if thy walk 7 days straight they won't make it. ☺

I just looked at the route that Google Maps shows. Walking they would go through Death Valley and Las Vegas. But it they were driving they could miss that. I am sure they have their path under control even it they don't use Google Maps.

Enough playing with this, I am going to take the rest of the night off now.

05-Feb-2009 12:23pm 23° **0.7kw**

Did you notice I added my power usage when I started the day. That is what my power monitor says I am using when I start writing. That means I am using about 9¢ of electricity an hour right now.

I finally found the short cut for the cents "¢symbol. You hold Control then press forward slash "/" and the letter "C". Like [Ctrl] + / + C and you get a ¢ symbol. You need to do [Ctrl] then [/] then [c] in that order or it don't work.

Now where was I? Oh yes, 9¢ an hour doesn't sound like much but in a month that is \$648. My bill isn't that high. It shows only 0.6kw now. My average on last month's bill was 1.06kw/hr making my bill \$95. The cold

weather makes I want to run the furnace to keep warm. So I do!

I have a lot of thinking to save more electricity and gas energy. But first I need to get ready for my road trip to see Mike and Petra.

Wine Joke

"During one of my treks through Afghanistan, we lost our corkscrew. We were compelled to live on food and water for several days." - W.C.Fields

06-Feb-2009 9:05am 23°

23°! That should be warm enough to go for a walk. Sun is shining and the winds are light.

Where should I walk? Let's see...I have been out to see Bill, Steve, and Kim. I could walk out and see Mary. That would be just under a mile and a half. It might be up to freezing when I get there and I could have coffee and try to warm up. I am not warmed by 11 Maybe I could talk Mary dropping me of some where closer to my house on here way home. I am guessing she would go down route 47 past Grove Street where I could jump out. If she has to turn right and goes down Lake Street and dropped me off along there I would have side walks that have been shoveled.

On the other hand if I don't get going I won't get there until after she has gone home and I will need to walk home anyway.

Maybe I should drive today because I have to run some projects to do.

What Happen to Today

I was watching a DVD and eating some Ritz crackers and the next thing I knew the phone was ringing. It was Aunt Annie calling to see if I was going for dinner. Yes, I fall a sleep watching TV. I

am glad I have that chair for watching TV with my eyes closed ☺

So now that dinner is over I can sit and watch TV until it is time to wake up, get up, and go to bed.

7-Feb-2009 11:15am 47°

What does that Groundhog know? It is spring like outside.

I walked out to Vaughan for breakfast and didn't even ask for a ride home. It took about 30 minutes to get there. Not bad for the first walk over a mile this year. That is considering that there were a lot of paces where my path was cover ice, snow or water. I got a little sore on the way there and a little sorer on the way back. My bones got out of shape since 2007. I will have to do this more often.

I took a different route on the way home. I was hoping for more cleared pathways. That wasn't the case.

There are calling for warm weather like this up to at least Wednesday. We might even see some green grass by then. Yes, they are calling a little lightening on Monday and rain on Wednesday. The lightening will energize the grass and help being it to life. The rains will clean things up a little. I think we might get come fog because of the quick melting. That too is good because it will make it hearer for us to see the dirt and stuff the snow has covered up through he winter.

I enjoyed my walk even though I can feel my muscles starting to stiffen up.

Where are Mike and Petra

I think each time Mike post a new location I will let you know where they are. Since Marty's Random Thoughts is

published randomly, it will not be very timely. Read Mike's blog at the web page www.WalkingEast.com to keep up.

Yesterday they were at Barstow, CA. I drove through Barstow on the way out to Paso Robles last spring. I remember stopping at Mojave to have lunch. This means they are about to go through the desert. If you have some time drive down there and see if they need any thing.

I just looked and Mojave, CA is on the west side of Barstow. So now I am not sure. Maybe there is not places to stop for water from Barstow and points east through the desert. We will have to wait for the next posting.

Oh Barstow it is about 240 miles since I started tracking them on Jan 16th. At that rate they will be here in no time.

My Trip

I plan to drive down to find them around Flagstaff. Maybe I will walk with them for a while. The other day Mike figures they should get to Flagstaff between February 27th and March 5th. He was in Barstow yesterday. Google says that Flagstaff is about 400 walking miles. I guessing they are walking about 15 miles a day. That is more than I want but they are in better shape than me.

Anyway that would be about 27 days at 15 miles per day that would mean closer to the 5th.

If I leave here on the 23rd and stop and visit friends and family on the way I would be in Flagstaff around the 26th or 27th. I could start looking for a place to park until I find out that they are already in Winslow and I have to drive 70 miles to catch with them. I will find them!

The Snow & Slop

I just came home from lunch and the thermometer says 55°. There has been a lot of melting today. Maybe we won't have to wait until Wednesday for the grass to turn green.

It looks like the temperature is about the same here as Barstow CA where Mike and Petra were yesterday. I am a little stiff from walking this morning. I think I will go for another walk tomorrow.

08-Feb-2009 1:39pm 38°

I just remembered I hadn't been on the computer today. For me that is almost like sleeping until noon.

I got an email from Marcia she sent a picture for out her door.



Hesston, KS I think this is looking east.

Marcia wanted me to know that round thing there on the right center of the picture is a thermometer.



It looks like 59° to me.

Well that is nice Marcia. I will have stop down there on my way to Arizona in a couple weeks. I will make sure didn't have a match under the thermometer just before you took this picture. ☺

It has been very warm the last few days around here. There has been a bunch of snow that has left us.

Playing Around

I was playing around with some software and after a couple hours I decided to stop. Sometimes I play around way too long. I was having fun and made this.



09-Feb-2009 9:53am 34°

I just washed my car. I see from the forecast it might rain. I hope it rains so it gets clean.

The forecast shows warm weather this week during the day light hours and cold at night. This should be good for us. It will freeze at night to stop the melting to give the rivers a change to catch up. We don't need any flooding.

Start Walking

How to start: First of all, start out slow and easy. Just walk out the door. For most people this means head out the door, walk for 10 minutes, and walk back. That's it? Yes, that's it. Do this every day for a week. If this was easy for you, add five minutes to your walks next week (total walking time 25 minutes). Keep adding 5 minutes until you are walking as long as desired.

Source: <http://www.thewalkingsite.com/beginner.html>

Energy Usage

The last time I thought about watch the electricity usage and on any one group of items was when it snowed last. I put my watt meter on the outlet where I plug in the snow blower. This was just after I finished. It hasn't snowed since. That is a good thing and a bad thing. The bad thing was it didn't get to measure how much electricity it cost to remove the snow. Maybe I should use the shovel. The good news was it has snowed since.

I haven't measured how much energy I am using since I shut down all of that computer hardware. I remember telling you I thought I would save what it cost me to have someone else host my email and web sites. I think that was around \$10.00 a month. I will put the monitor on what is left in the server room and see what is happening. I will let you know what I find out in a few days.

A Note from the Universe sm...

There's nothing you can ask for that won't set the entire Universe in motion.

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing.

©www.tut.com

10-Feb-2009 6:31pm 51°

Is spring here now? I am almost clear of snow today. There is a little where it piled high and where the sun doesn't get to it. Another day like today and I will have to look hard to find any snow.

11-Feb-2009 8:16am 43°

One of the newsletters I get is from TerraPass. They tell how someone is saving the planet. Sometimes there is something in there that I just need to tell you. Here is on for you.

Avoid the cut flowers

TerraPass / February 10, 2009

An easy way to cut your footprint this Valentine's Day

If you can possibly get away with it, avoid buying and giving cut flowers — unless they're from your own garden. If you can't get away with it, look for locally grown flowers that are in season. This almost certainly means no roses.

How this helps

There's plenty to love about cut flowers, but the story behind the dozen roses is often far from pretty. Heated greenhouses, pesticides and transportation often contribute to the heavy environmental footprint of the Valentine's Day bouquet.

Source: www.terrapass.com

One of the ideas behind buying locally is because all the transportations cost of buying things that are grown or manufactured a long way from home.

You go to the store and buy a new shirt for ten dollars because it is cheaper than another. The one you buy might

come from over sea and the one from somewhere else was made in North Carolina. Yes, we save money even with all of the cost to transport it from China to Woodstock. Labor is cheaper some places so money is saved. And Yes, I buy things from China all the time.

We are paying China and the oil companies. We could be buying from somewhere locally to save fuel and give some poor family a job even it is in a sweet shop in New York or somewhere.

By buying locally or closer to home we might save money in the long run by creating jobs and save the planet as a side effect.

Motorhome

I just said all of that while I am planning a field trip with my motorhome that gets less than 9 MPG. Well, I do get over 8!

12-Feb-2009 11:26am 34°

How soon we get uses to the warm weather. I was out moving the motorhome into the driveway and while moving the pads out of the grass and putting away the power cord I almost froze my fingers.

It is cold and damp out there. I can handle it because by this time next week I plan to be on the way to Arizona.

Walking East

Last I heard the Pilgrims were in Laughlin NV. That was on the 9th. The weather now is looks to be near 60°. Not hearing from them I am going to guess there are near Kingman or a little more.

Looking at there pace they I might even get to Flagstaff before me. Well I can't leave here before Thursday because I have to get the oil changed and they are

busy and can't get to it until Tuesday. That leaves me Wednesday to load up.

13-Feb-2009 8:34am 32°

Friday-the-13th! Hummm!

Not always a bad thing. The day after I was born was Friday-the-13th. The day after I bought my house was Friday-the-13th. And ever month that starts on a Sunday has a Friday-th-13th. This year that is February, March, and November.

I don't know if it is any different than any other day. Some people seem to think so. I think just knowing it is Friday-the-13th people tend to dwell on things that go bad and use it for an excuse. I am thinking that just as many things go right.

Did any of you go visit Abe yesterday?

Birthdays

February

2 nd	Josh H	20 th	Jessica Mc
16 th	Devyn J	26 th	Shirley M
19 th	Chad P		

March

1 st	Jenae	13 th	Sandi's Anniversary
2 nd	Day I retired 2007	13 th	Steve S
6 th	Marie K	13 th	Dad Died 1983
8 th	Bruce M	16 th	Marcia G
8 th	Taylor B.	10 th	Victoria (IHOP)
9 th	Sandi P	21 st	John K
10 th	Sandi's other Anniversary	30 th	Christine P

It is time to end this issue. I have get this edited and published and start getting ready to go on a field trip. I will work on the next newsletter when I return.

In the mean time;

Sappy Friday-the-13th