Pasted below is October's letter.

Just realized Headers, Footers and Footnotes don't paste.  Good grief, ..... will have to alter literary style.

kj

\*

Monday, September 15, 2003 :/wklyltr3.3wc31

**Title: The Footless Finch and the Three Legged Deer.**

The two ‘Old-timers’ who arrived back in North Hero June 5th were shadows of the healthy couple who had departed April 19th. Weak & wasted, both were on the same anti-biotic medication, One for lymes tick prevention and one for staph infection. Lucile was told by her prescriber, *"Don’t drink alcohol and stay out of the sun."* Ken’s presriber said, *"One martini and a glass of wine daily is OK,"* and didn’t mention the sun. Obviously Ken had the better doctor. We’ve no desire to bore a captive audience with the details of our ordeals. A chronicle is being written. When complete, an announcement will be made. If someone requests a copy, fine we’ll send one. If no one requests a copy, that’s also fine.

While confined and morose, Ken would think of quality moments in North Hero: Morning coffee and afternoon drinks on the deck with Lucile/ Jason. Holding hands or paws as the case may be. These thoughts came to fruition come June. Home cooking and clean, quiet Vermont surroundings were slowly working their recuperative physical magic. The mental aspect of recovery though was not doing well. *"Why did these real bad bacteria decide to invade me? Will they ever leave? Will I ever get better? What a bummer! Hardly have the energy to dress in the morning."*

While musing these bad but seemingly unshakable thoughts, we would absently watch the comings and goings at our bird feeders. One is the glass cylinder type with perches and slits to access the niger seed inside and with a plate at the bottom to catch fumbled seed.. One day a very erratic finch showed up. Lucile thought it was having a seizure of some sort. Ken thought it was trying to imitate a hummingbird or helicopter. A male, he never lit on a perch, but tried to feed on the fly. I mean this little guy was wildly all over the place. We started watching for him to appear. Then one day he belly-flopped down on the bottom plate and began to eat the spilled niger in a prone position.

To move he would flap his wings and flop to right or left, he couldn’t stand up! No feet.

Lucile said, *"Now there’s a survivor for you!"*

The comparison between the *‘Footless Finch’* and Mr. *‘Feeling Sorry for Himself’* was not lost on the latter. ‘*Footless’* was coping, ..... coping sans disability payments, Government assistance, food stamps & visiting nurses. Our hero was moping, ..... moping in spite of a basically sound body and excellent care. Hmmmn. Like Fagan in ‘*Oliver’*, it was, *"I think I’d better think this out again".*

Several days later Ken was taking the Saturn in for service. It was 7:30 A.M. Passing the neighbors two removed to the south there were four deer in their back yard. Actually these neighbors share a drive with Norman & Linda. There were three yearlings and a mother. Two youngsters kept eating, one youngster and mama stared at the now stopped car. There was something a bit odd about mother, but what was it? Of a sudden, all moved, crossed the road in front of the car and disappeared in the woods to the east. Graceful en passant as deer always are, mother’s difference became apparent. Her right front leg was missing! How does a creature survive in the wild, raise three children to boot and have a missing leg? Hey, .... who’s is going to believe this? Can hear the comments now*,*

*"Hitting the martini juice a little early aren’t we Ken?"*

More to the point, for the second time in three days "Moper’s" down attitude was given a sharp jolt.

START COPING YOURSELF YOU STUPID IDIOT! GET OFF YOUR BUTT AND DO SOMETHING!

Only Lucile was informed of the tripod doe. Norman came in late that Friday night to spend the weekend. Ken & Norm had an interesting conversation the next morning.

*"Gee, ..... when I came in last night there was a deer in my driveway."*

*"Really?"*

*"Yes, a doe."*

*"Fairly good sized?"*

*"Umm...yes, I’d say so."*

*"Well, nothing unusual about that, there are lots of deer around here."*

Norm & Ken look at each other, ..... each waiting for the other to say something. Finally,

*"There was something unusual about this one."*

*"Really?"*

*"Yes, only had three legs."*

*"You’d been drinking obviously."*

*"I talked to a business associate this morning, mentioned the deer and that’s the same thing he said."*

*"I’ve seen that deer myself and that’s why I didn’t say anything."*

*"Good plan, mums the word. Every hunter in the* *county will be around trying to shoot their first three-legged deer."*

Mother Nature’s coping creatures did much to change Mr*. "Sorry for Himself’s"* depressed outlook on life. The mental side began to catch up to the physical side. Hey, ..... play the hand that’s dealt ‘ya. The "*Footless* *Finch*" has not been seen for a couple weeks. Hopefully he has left for the south, flying was not a problem, only standing still. Deer season will open before too long. If any three-legged deer are shot, it will be taken personally. Your writer is just about back to normal, even being pleasant on occasion. Lucile has been normal for months. We are hosting the 2nd Annual ‘Beer & Chainsaw’ weekend in mid-October so I guess you might say,

*"It’s back to business as usual."*

From North Hero,

Ken & Lucile

P.O.Box 115

North Hero, VT.

Distribution: Regular recipients.