Friday, August 22, 2008 c:/wklylt8.8wc31

2008 NHN&WR letter/story #11

**‘08 Years**

**\*\*\*\*\***

**Intro.:** Suppose we should say something, ... it’s August 22nd and here is July’s letter. Well, ... we’ve visited and been visited by 33 family and friends, had terrible weather, our county has been declared a disaster area and Ken suffered a mild heart attack. The latter was exiting: 911, Grand Isle Rescue, ER, & Operation. Maybe write about it sometime, but now, ... don’t even want to think about it. Enjoyed the visitations, recovered from the storm and had one clogged artery repaired. August letter will follow shortly and we’ll be caught up.

Then again, ... maybe nobody missed them.

\*\*\*\*\*

Egad, ... what’s with these years ending in 8? Maybe the Chinese like them, but Good Grief. In 1998 it was the Ice Storm to end all ice storms. Lost over two hundred trees in that one, ... we were younger then. Come 2008 and a super thunder/lightning/wind storm which was followed closely by a second storm which would have been significant had it not been for its immediate predecessor. Is somebody trying to tell us something. Should we put our place on the market in 2017? It is easy to visualize the 2018 headline now, *"Tsunami devastates Lake Champlain shoreline".*

Back to 2008.

(We will first insert an unfortunate side note: Thought we’d save a bit of money on our home owners insurance this year by raising the deductible a thousand dollars. Because our name is Jefferson, this move was a bad omen for the entire neighborhood.)

Friday morning July 18 was a beautiful day. We needed a new yellow slicker. Off to Lenny’s in St. Albans to get one. Did we shut all the cabin windows? No, ... forgot. Bad. We had been confirmed L.L.Bean yellow slicker people, but they seem to have moved operations from Maine to China. Will try Lenny’s where they still have American work books. Ken parks right in front of the store and goes in. Lucile & Bailey stay in the car. Ken picks out one he likes. Made where? Right, ... China. All of a sudden a crash of thunder and the car is no longer visible. Rain like you couldn’t believe.

The transaction is completed and the clerk asks*," Do you want this in a bag?"*

Ken, *"No, I think I’ll wear it."* He does and ducks next door to buy Breyers ice cream. As soon as this transaction is completed, the power goes off. Back to the car. The rain has now slackened a bit and the family heads back to North Hero.

For those not familiar with Vermont geographics, St. Albans is across the lake from North Hero, on a clear day one can see this shoreline from the North Hero Post Office. Clear day meaning it hasn’t been seen for months. However, to get there one must go north on North Hero, off island to Alburgh, round the top of the lake through Swanton and come back down the east side of the lake. Depending on traffic, this is about a 50 minute run. One of our favorite C.I.D.E.R. runs, ... we know it well.

Forty minutes or so into the return we are approaching the N.H.Town Garage/Fire Dept. Uh Oh,... Flashing Blue lights, cars being turned around, Firemen approach.

*"Where you folks going?"*

*"North Hero."*

*"Whereabouts in North Hero?"*

*"Down Station Rd."*

*"Can’t do that, trees and power lines down all over the place. You’ll have to go around,"*

Lucile & Ken look at each other. Both know their windows are wide open and now it’s: Alburgh, Swanton, St. Albans, Georgia, Milton, South Hero, Grand Isle and North Hero. Hour and a half? Maybe.

When finally home, what a mess. Fortunately the wind had slammed three of four opened, lakeside, casement windows shut, wracking their hardware in the process. The fourth was in thousands of pieces across the front lawn. The wood stove chimney was almost resting on the roof. Deck chairs and tables were smashed to pieces. Birdfeeders were history, we had eight trees down and the raspberry patch was flattened.. Worst of all the water in the cabin and no power. Should have duct taped up the old slicker and left the deductible as was.

We have persevered, but it hasn’t been easy. Had we checked the generator since we arrived? Of course not, ... and it wouldn’t start. Pennies sank to the bottom of the ice cube trays, ... pitch frozen food along with the just purchased three cartoons of Breyers Natural Vanilla. Chain saw did not quite make it to the finish, ... went to Stihl rehab. Mop, mop mop. We can think of only two good things about the 2008 storm. One: no one was hurt. Two: with all kinds of professional tree-cutters, cranes, chippers etc. in the neighborhood, the fall agenda for the ‘Freebie Foresters’, AKA ‘The Beer & Chainsaw Weekenders’, should be: Less trees, more beer.

From North Hero (Where it is still raining and Lake is still rising.)

Lucile, Bailey & Ken.