*North hero News and World Review …*

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(2008 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card #03)

**Winter Wading**

Believe we have addressed the subject of “Dog Walking” before, but since it is such an integral part of our days we shall revisit same. There is a wide choice of routes available. We’ll call the main ones X,Y, & Z. X is along the Ottawa River, Y is ‘The Hood’ and Z like the lovely Russian melody, “*Meadowlands”*. To meander directly into Meadowlands, it’s: down the drive, north on Atlantis Ave., past three houses to the corner then duck thru the fence. One may also enter Meadowlands from the north after cruising thru X or Y. Meadowlands is a loose interpretation of the lay of this land. It has morphed from lagoon to marsh to high water table meadow and at times may resemble all three simultaneously.

For the walk detailed below, … some statistics.

Time: Early morn.

Temperature: A bit above freezing. (January thaw)

Ground: Snow with crusty cover, about 76 cm/30 inches deep.

Potential pounds pressure per paw print (standing): 80/4=20 lb.

                        (Tried hard to find a synonym for ‘stationary’ which began with a “P”, … but struck out.  Would have tied our alliteration record of 7.)

Potential pounds pressure per foot print (standing, sans parka):  60/2=80 lb.

Potential KGs 36/4 = 9 kg & 72/2 = 36 kg.

Length of leash: 7.6 meters/25 feet.

This *“Canada/U.S. Friendly”* policy is getting to be a nuisance, think we’ll do as the Romans do from now on. Goodbye dollar, hello                                        Loonie/Toonie.

In concluding ‘statistics’, as our discerning readership would be quick to point out, PPPPPP’s & PPPPFP’s are doubled when no longer                                        stationary. On to the footslogging fiasco.

Bailey and Ken entered the Meadowlands from the north after touring the adjacent N.E. neighborhood. Shortly past the gate, the trodden path crosses a depressed drain area which is in a continual state of disrepair; i.e. gullies, holes, erosion. Bailey, as usual, is in the maximum permitted leash lead. All of a sudden the peaceful serenity of an early morning walk is shattered. Bailey almost disappears. She had already passed over the deepest depression spot (over the drain), but then wandered off the hard packed path and fallen thru virgin crust. Dog turns head to the rear, facial expression is obvious, … *“Help!”*

The person at the other end of the leash thinks, *“Good Grief, why didn’t you stay on the path dum-dum.”* Person takes step toward dog. Person rockets down into thigh deep snow. Below the knee it’s worse, … water. Shock, … Yell, *“Goodness Gracious”* (Yeah Right!), … then an eerie sensation, Person’s waterproof Red Wing boots (157 loonies) are slowly filling up with icy water. The glacial captives institute individual rescue efforts. Dog, on rear paws, starts a porpoise like motion to the west. This entailed: a crouch, a leap, a crashing with front paws on the crust, and a new breakthrough Person begins a crab like motion to the south. This entailed: extricating one leg, bending knee up under chin, swinging leg forward and punching a new hole. Goodness knows what dog is thinking. Person is thinking:

*“Wonder what my hip replacement surgeon would think about this extreme test of his prosthesis?”*

*“Wonder if I can return the soaked Red Wings and get a new pair?”*

Both captives were making gains, but keep in mind they are still connected by the leash, … bad. Dog breaks free first, but is almost into the woods, … bad.

*“Bailey, STAY, don’t go around that tree.* ***STAY****!* ***ST*** *….”*

Bailey goes around the tree.

*“Bailey, go back around, back around!”*

Bailey stares.

Decision time. Crab over to the tree? At current crab velocity that’s about 10 minutes of icy exertion. Toss the leash past the tree? Good thought, but wait, what about the NCC Dog Gestapo? For non-Ottawans NCC is the National Capitol Commission which owns Meadowlands. Their enforcers go to great lengths to apprehend dog owners who let their dogs off the leash. Better do a scan. Anyone lurking in the bushes? Snooping from a tree? Probably not, anyway, they’d be laughing real hard by now. Agent disguised as a little old lady with shaky cane shuffle? No, coast is clear. Okay, get comfortable, a few practice swings and give it the heave-ho. Leash controller awaa…ay! Bad, … tangled up on a branch short of the target! Person feels like Charlie Brown, in mortal combat with a *“Leash Eating Tree’*. As dog had gone west and person had gone south, participants are still about 6.1 meters from each other, with dog hung up on the leash, leash hung up on the tree and person wishing he was hung up to dry. Crabber alters course from south to northwest, retrieves leash controller, goes around tree and frees dog. Finally, exhausted hikers head home.

The Greeting:

*“You’re both all wet! What happened?”*

*“Fell thru the ice.”*

*“Fell thru the ice? How did that happen?”*

*“Don’t want to talk about it. Need a drink.”*

*“You’re on the wagon.”*

Three sneezes and*, “A medicinal brandy?”*

*“Nice try buddy, but no marbles. Take off your clothes, I’ll put them in the dryer.*

For the afternoon’s excursion, Dog & Person stayed in the ‘Hood’.

Lucile, Bailey and Sneezy.

Reg. Dist. (94)

Bill Jefferson: Considered putting ‘Super Footwear’ into the micro-wave, but just stuffed them with Ottawa Citizen newspaper. Boots have made a complete recovery.

……… *mostly stuff no one else would print.*