*Ottawa Outlook, nee North Hero News and World Review …. ……. Mostly stuff no one else would print.*

Thursday, February 28, 2013. c:/outlk13, 13wc05

**The Month that Was**.

 In all honesty, February is not one of our favorite months. The culprit? Abstinence! Yes, … abstaining seems to make some normal doings take on sinister, underlying, aspects. Let’s take a couple from the February just passed.

 Reading a book.

 After starting out #264th on the hold list , the library finally called and said we could pick up our request for, *“ The Last Lion”, Winston Spencer* *Churchill , Defender of the Realm, 1940-1965*, (1053 pages). Oh boy, … we had really been looking forward to this. Went, got it and started right in.

 Well now, it quickly became apparent that we were going to have an underlying, unforeseen problem. Our subject was in the habit of having a drink or two, … or three, … or more. And this at every meal plus pre-breakfast and bedtime! Good Grief! All this imbibing was accompanied by intimate brand, winery, year and accoutrement detail. The hardest for your writer not to dwell upon, was the brandy habit. Winston even had a special brandy glass warmer which heated his snifter to just the right temperature. Oh boy, when Winston was having a brandy snort Ken could hear the brandy bottle in the liquor cabinet calling him, *“It’s Brandy Time,… come and get me.”* When it came to alcohol consumption or command of the English language, Winston had few rivals. However, maybe it was a good time to read *“The Last Lion”*, if not abstaining might have tried to keep up with him.

Making wine

 In advance of our 80 day abstinence period we are apt to be lax in maintaining a normal wine cellar inventory. Thus, February is always a prime ‘re-stock the wine cellar’ month. Normally, a wine making session, with its wine smells and new batch taste-testing, is accompanied by an enjoyable quaff or two. Not so, February sessions, … they’re *“think of anything but wine”* sessions. Carried this mental detachment a bit too far with our recent batch #77, Australian Chardonnay[[1]](#footnote-1)[1]. Going down the cellar stairs to label this batch it was, *“Think we’ll play a round of imaginary golf at that nice executive course in Grand Isle, VT. That will keep our mind of  wine,… and we always play so well in these kind of matches.”*

Thinking about our tee shot on the fourth hole, we happened to glance at the first six labels we’d adhered. Well positioned, no wrinkles, … but oh my gosh, there stood six lovely, clear bottles of Chardonnay sporting Pinot Noir labels[[2]](#footnote-2)[2] Well now, … that’s sure detachment. Maybe stupidity? What to do? Soak’em back off? We’d be short six labels for the Pinot batch. Over-label them with old spare white wine labels? Served to company, a guest might say, *“Oh my, this is lovely Riesling.”*  How would we respond to that? No, think we will just leave things as they are and end up with six bottles of red Chardonnay and six bottles of pale Pinot Noir. Will serve same to wine guests with bottles in plain view and this may lead to some interesting conversations, maybe even a letter or two.

 Writing this on February 20th, 29 more dry days to go. We will try to stay focused better.

 In closing, … a further ‘reading’ note. After tossing off ‘Winston’, have started *“ Return of the Founding Fathers.”* by Art Ward. Art is an *“Outlook”* recipient, a best friend from early Grade School and known by many of you also. Boy, … imaginative, innovative literature. Fiction? History? Not sure yet. Enjoying your book Art.

 From Ottawa,

 Lucille & Ken.

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1. [1] Good Grief! 77 batches, 30 bottles each, … 2 thousand three hundred and 10 bottles of wine! [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [2] ! (Any non-winos out there? Well, Pinot Noir is dark red, Chardonnay is pale golden.)

  [↑](#footnote-ref-2)