

January 01, 2012 New Years Day

I got up early this morning at 6:15 but Libbie slept in till 9. We had a high calorie night, with lots of wine last night but I was OK this morning. Started using VB 2010 Express to rewrite the Great Violets program. Took a walk around the block. We decided to go to the clubhouse at 3:30 but found they only had cold cuts on a buffet table. Instead we ordered a pizza from Valentinos around 6 PM. They're on Clark in the Expo center. We got a Large for \$14.40. I ordered the relays for the new greenhouse this evening. They should get there by the time we get home. After 60 minutes we watched PBS New Years in Vienna concert. Nice. Comcast switched to a digital system and gave us a box of junk to hook up. The lower channels work fine as analog but for the upper premium channels we need the boxes hooked up. I want HGTV for the Rose parade tomorrow. Hookup was a pain in the ass. The set top box is overly complicated and a piece of shit. I counted over 50 buttons just to watch TV. It's going back to Comcast. The little adapters are better - smaller remotes, smaller box.

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January 02, 2012 McDermott

We were going to do a bike ride today but ran out of time. I worked on VB Express 2010 a little in the morning. It doesn't seem much different than VB6. We had some cheese and crackers for lunch then left at 1:50 for Ted and Lorraines. I stopped in Walmart for a new clock and aspirin (81 mg aspirin a day stuff). Got to Port Charlotte a little after 3. The address is not in the GPS. Instead we took Tamiami to Cornelius at the Circle K. Turned right and went until we found a major BLVD. Went down a half mile and found the entrance to Riverwood. After the gate took a left at the second Stop sign onto Club. Took that to Silver Lakes on the left. They live on Silver Lakes Circle, 14435. Had a glass of wine at their home then Ted drove to the Lock and Key on Manasota Key. The Seafood restaurant was very nice. I had salmon topped with Papaya and Mango. Perfect. Some squash and other veggies complete the \$22 dish. Total bill with tip was \$51. It was an enjoyable evening. Their son Brian is engaged but no wedding date yet. Fiance is Nicole. We came back shortly after 9 after stopping at Lorraine's

house again after dinner. We stayed a few minutes then started back.

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January 03, 2012 Condons

We spent the morning cleaning the condo. I took care of spots on the rug and also cleaned the windows. I ran out of cleaner so we did a run to Publix and also returned the telephone wires to Sears. Came back and touched up the place including vacuuming. We stopped at the clubhouse on the way back for Yuengling and sandwiches. I had a BLT and sweet potato fries. Bill and Barb came around 4:30. They both were getting over a cold. We found that both Jeff's wife Carrie and Corrie were pregnant. We went to dinner at the club. I had Horseradish crusted Salmon with veggies and rice. Very nice. We stayed at the table and chatted a while.

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January 04, 2012 Things

We enjoyed breakfast with Bill and Barb. We then took a walk around the block with them before they left later in the morning. They are going to stay with her Dad in Jensen Beach. We then had lunch at the club house, I had a BLT with fruit and a glass of Yuengling. Later we went back for pub night. I enjoyed the flank steak with a glass of Cabernet. I finished the Stephen King 11/22/62 book. It didn't end the way I thought it would but was an excellent read.

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January 05, 2012 Cold

It's a chilly day. We took a ride downtown and walked the bayfront enjoying the Season of Sculpture. I photographed every piece. I will do a slide show when we get home. Bill made some very nice slide shows of his safari trip. I can envision a media center attached to our TV with a selection of these movies for our own entertainment.

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January 06, 2012 beach

We spent the morning working around the condo. After lunch we hooked up the bikes to the car and drove to the Venice train station. Took a bike ride along the waterway to the Gulf. Along the way we saw a bald eagle on a dead tree and many gopher turtles along the road. Turned around at Caspersen beach and rode back. Tried to come back on Honore so we turned up 681 but found you can't get onto it from 681, It only goes to 681 on the Southbound side. We ended up taking I-75 to Clark to get home. We next tried to go to Yoders for Honeybelles but got there one minute after closing. At Publix next we picked up wine and some prepared pineapple chicken with 2 eggrolls. Libbie is having stomach problems from having too much food (or beef the night before?) We packed up as much as we could for an early take off tomorrow.

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January 07, 2012 Driving

We got up early, packed the rest of the car and got moving in the car at 6:30 AM. The sun started rising as we approached Tampa on I-75. We stopped for McDonalds biscuits on I-4 at the second exit after getting on I-4. Traffic was normal the whole trip, we had no delays. It was also warmer than normal. Although it was in the early morning 50's throughout Florida, when we got up into GA and SC the temps were in the 70's for a beautiful January day. I had to get gas at the last exit in FL for 3.44, I couldn't make it to GA for cheaper gas. Our next stop was Florence where we had McDonalds snack wraps for lunch and topped off at 3.18 per gallon at the Raceway. We arrived home around 5:30 which was a quite normal 11 hour trip. For dinner we had tuna sandwiches. Before dinner we had cheese and crackers with a glass of Shiraz. Everything looked good at home, the plants, the fish, the watering system.

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January 08, 2012 getting back

I'm running a little slow today. After the morning shows I went to Home Depot for some gas pipes. Redid the gas line to the greenhouse heater and hooked it up. Leak tested the gas and all is well. Libbie made her excellent pizza with dough she had frozen.

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January 09, 2012 salad

Today is cold and miserable outside. I painted the kitchen vent cover inside my workshop and studied some Arduino hardware. Did not do a whole lot today. I bought the ingredients for broccoli salad for the violet club tomorrow. libbie helped me make it. We scrambled around cleaning for the club meeting tomorrow. Dinner was Lobster pasta from Trader Joes.

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January 10, 2012 violet club

Picked up groceries this morning and emailed the realtor about listing the greenhouse land. Outside I cut down the roses and Lantana. The meeting started at noon. Sheila brought a nice lunch.

The subject was

Gesneriads. Everyone brought their favorite Gesneriads for show and tell. I showed a few slides from the Dr Clark presentation about Gesneriads, the beginning has what countries each type comes from. It's pretty educational. Dinner this evening was a trip to La Cosina for Quasadilla and a margarita. At home we listened to some of Tosca live from the met before going upstairs. I'm reading a Cast Memoir of Disney world.

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January 11, 2012 busy

Outdoors it's a miserable day. Cold, dreary and rainy. I had a physical at 9:30. this went well, my weight is too high and Blood Pressure is up. They doubled the diuretic to 50 mg. My challenge was to find this generically priced. Next was the Home Depot fence estimate. The guy

came out at 12:30 when it was raining pretty good. The estimate was way over what I ever thought it would cost. The price was \$2590. Ouch!

Next we went to the greenhouse. I took down the cool cell interval timer to use on the inflation blower. I wanted to take down the inflation fitting and blower but the realtor showed up. We listed with Brad after talking with him a little. He sounds like a nice guy. We went with \$100 on the lot/orchard and \$500 on the greenhouse property. It really started raining harder when we concluded. Dinner was left over quasadilla from La Cosina and then Libbie's Ham 15 bean soup. Good stuff! We enjoyed Aida which was a classic performance from 300 years ago.

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January 12, 2012 Mondo

I didn't do much today. Nancy came over in the morning and played Violets with Libbie. I went outside and spent 2 hours removing Mondo grass and transplanted it to the front yard. Dinner was the 15 bean soup which was excellent. We went to the greenhouse and removed the inflation blower. This was while I waited for Walgreens to fulfill my Potassium prescription. I had to illegally join the W club to get the stuff at a discount, \$30 for 90 days. Kroger wanted \$27 for 30 days worth. It's a very windy evening tonight.

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January 13, 2012 Productive

This was a productive day. Ann came over for an ag inspection. I went outside and hooked up the inflation blower. It's mounted near the heater and attached via a 4 inch dryer pipe to the top. Next I put plastic on the rest of the sidewalls. I finished the job but ran out of strip tape. Still have a few other strips that need taping including the deadmen. Libbie worked on removing mondo grass. The Wall Street journal subscription began today via Home Delivery. Surprising. Dinner was crab cakes on buns with tomato. I lost 3 pounds, down to 243. It's cold out today but nice and sunny so it wasn't that bad. My fingers were cold installing the inflation but stapling the plastic all was well again.

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January 14, 2012 cold

I spent the morning painting the thermostat mount and covers and the Stevenson screen for my temperature probe. It's cold out but I put the cover on the kitchen duct and planted the Mondo grass from yesterday. Libbie took out some more Mondo grass which we planted next to the greenhouse wall. I got out the rototiller and did a first pass leveling of the area where the potting bench will be. We need gravel on the ground but I don't want to buy a truckload. Dinner was ribs, broccoli and a very nice Chateau St Michele Cabernet. This is an outstanding Cabernet. After dinner I watched Miss America with mute turned on while and Beethoven Fidelio playing on Sirius/XM.

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January 15, 2012 cold and busy

I got up late, it was after 7 when I got out of bed. Went downstairs and found Miss Wisconsin won Miss America. Her talent was the operatic aria Il Bacio by Isit. I found Anna Netrebko singing it on YouTube at Versailles. We first hooked up the trailer and went out to the greenhouse and picked up the potting bench and 4 2x4's and pieces of 2x4's for the first of the growing benches. Next I hit the rototiller and leveled half of the greenhouse. It's ready for the potting bench, growing bench and stairs. Libbie and I then moved the potting bench into position. It needs some cinder blocks and leveling but next task is going to be wiring of the thermostats and then the power from the relays. We watched the Golden Globes red carpet while having Libbie's wonderful pizza made from scratch dough. Afterwards we watched the Golden Globes. It was bright and sunny today but cold with temps only in the 40's.

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January 16, 2012 MLK day

I went out early and started running the thermostat wiring even though it was cold out. Temp this morning was in the thirties. I made all

the runs of the thermostat wire. Next step will be to mount the relay box on the porch that the thermostat wiring will control. Libbie and I made a Trader Joes run this afternoon. We also researched doors at Lowes. Saw somebody laying in the parking lot being worked on by EMS. Bought a pipe to be cut up as table leg extensions in our pack and ship room. This went very well. I ended up putting the small blue chair next to the table to raise the Ott light now that the table is raised. The Lowes parking lot and the Trader Joes parking lots were pretty full because it was MLK day. I didn't count on the crowds but we got through it OK. Dinner was Lobster Ravioli from Trader joes.

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January 17, 2012 Roof seal

I went on the roof pretty early to try caulking the greenhouse edge. I found there was no room for caulking. Instead I tucked the leftover plastic top material under the drip edge all along the roof. This made me pretty sore. It started raining while I did this task. Went to the grocery store and did the Tuesday old geezer day thing. Later I entered a bunch of click and ship packages for Libbie which she took to the post office. Dinner was trader Joes BBQ on a bun. Fell asleep to the Enchanted Island in the evening. This was being broadcast live by Sirius. I'm slightly warming up to this opera but if I had a clear choice I would choose to skip it.

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January 18, 2012 relay box

Left at 9:25 for a 10k maintenance check at Leith Toyota. I drove there without effort. They wanted to sell me \$49 tire balancing for \$29 but I refused. The Corolla now has 9,807 miles. Came back home at 11:30 and started wiring the relay box. This went pretty well but took all afternoon. Libbie started making a pot of chili and wanted to turn the heat on downstairs but the new greenhouse is hooked to the downstairs heat which has no power while I work on the wiring. When I was done I fired it up and the top inflated. I found that a significantly less amount of time is needed for the inflation on/off period. Either way less time or blocking the input so there is much less flow, possibly even a block over the output. Dinner was some homemade chili and

corn bread. After dinner we listened to toscia live. I don't care for Patricia Racette's rendition of Visi D'arte.

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January 19, 2012 FICA

Nancy came over early. I worked in my shop tracing wires to the relays. I then rebuilt two relays using the new 24 VDC relays I purchased earlier this month. I made two new 24VAC relays by retrofitting the new ones with old AC coils. Installed these in the relay box. Everything is now powered in the greenhouse. In the afternoon Libbie and I put the deadmen plastic up. We don't have strip tape so we only fastened it at the top and bottom. Dinner was chili and cornbread. After dinner I worked on the Social Security taxes so we could get a handle on them. The payroll tax break for Social Security deductions worked to our advantage since we didn't have to pay such a large deduction out, 10.4% instead of 12.9%. This allowed us to cover the payment with the money in Paypal.

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January 20, 2012 Busy Day

This was a busy day. It started with a greenhouse trip for cinder blocks and an inflation jumper tube. Next stop was Krogers for a Lowes gift card and the gas. The gift card let me get a 40 cents per gallon discount to 2.99. I needed 10 gallons. Went home and hooked up the trailer and went to Lowes for a storm door and some 2x6's. I used the gift cards from Krogers and also a \$15 off coupon received in the mail. Came home and stapled the deadmen plastic. Libbie had picked up a roll of strip tape on her journey today to Wyatt Quarles. Fired up the inflation blower which is on the interval timer. I need to monitor the top to see how far it deflates after 20 or more seconds of inflation. This is an empirical job. Dinner was Bryani. Just before dinner I decided to get Met HD Enchanted Island tickets for tomorrow. Unfortunately, Fandango automatically charged my FIA card. I need to fix this to use the Sparks card.

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January 21, 2012 Enchanted Island

This morning I worked on the W2 and W3 for the greenhouse. I need to complete this before our trip. Finished it up and mailed it on the way to the theater. The hard part as usual was getting the numbers lined up on the form. They keep moving the boxes around on the form which means I have to add or delete rows or columns on the spreadsheet I use to print this. We drove to Crossroads for the Opera. It's nice getting there just past 12:30 for a 1:00 performance. Libbie made sandwiches which we had in the theater during intermission. We both really enjoyed the Enchanted Island. It was over the top sticky sweet. Nice, nice, nice. It was pouring rain when we got out. I wanted to stop at BJ's but it was too messy, I just wanted to get home. Dinner was very nice. We had scallops with Broccoli and wine.

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January 22, 2012 Storm Door

A cold and yucky day. My first task in the cold was to get a wheelbarrow of muddy clay and level the potting bench. I ended up using paver bricks too set the bench on after propping up the low side with the muddy clay. It should dry and be OK. Next I used the bench to lay out the hardware for the storm door and set up a couple of saw horses to lay the door down so I could attach the hinges. Attached the door to the frame, drilled the door for the latch mechanism and basically got everything hung and working today. Still need a threshold and door sweep. Libbie made her nice Pizza. We had an interesting time microwaving peppers. The bell pepper sparked and flamed like it was metal in the microwave. I put some cut pepper on a piece of saran and the same thing happened. This eliminated any influence of the bowl. We ended up having the pizza with only onions and left the peppers out of it. I finished reading the Chelsey Handler book and started reading a Clive Cussler. So far this is a nice read.

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January 23, 2012 Last Minute Details

It's cold and overcast today as well. We had the same weather yesterday.

I sold my CQP after reading about the company in the WSJ. They keep referring to it as debt laden and hapless. It didn't sound like something I wanted to be a part of. Went outside and put the threshold on the storm door. This concludes the door project. Next step, stairs and benches. We'll be traveling to Sarasota tomorrow. I scheduled a carpet cleaning for Thursday morning. I packed up my suitcase. Forgot my glasses last time and did not want to do that again. We went out to La Cocina for dinner. I had a Margarita and Quesadilla La Cocina. I was hungry. Had been doing good on weight loss till now. Have to make sure I don't stray too far.

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January 24, 2012 travel

Up at the normal time and on the road at 7:01 am. It was a little foggy but not as bad as they predicted. We had good visibility. the sun came out while in SC. Stopped for gas in Florence and a Mickey Dee biscuit. 3.24 per gallon. Next stop was lunch, snack wraps at Mickey Dee and 3.37 gas fill up. Traffic was light. We had some heavy episodes through Orlando because it was 4:30 pm but nothing to stop us. Sailed right through Tampa and into Stoneybrook at 6:15 PM. We went to the clubhouse for dinner - 2 glasses of Cabernet and Florida Wreck fish pan seared over rice and Broccoli. Very enjoyable. The parking lot was very full because it was Bingo night.

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January 25, 2012 Fan cleaning

We had a late morning in the condo. A little after 10 we got outside and went to Selby Gardens. This was an enjoyable experience on an enjoyable day. It's 81 degrees this afternoon. Next stop was Whole Foods for crackers and pizza for lunch. When we got back we knocked on Peter and Christa's door and chatted with them for a while. I came back and dusted the living room fan. It wasn't too bad but the kitchen fan is pretty greasy. For dinner we went to the clubhouse pub night after 7. I had Florida wreck fish over brown rice which was excellent. Moose Tracks for desert back home.

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January 26, 2012 carpet shampoo

We had the carpet shampooed at 9 AM for \$80. The carpet was too wet to walk on until 5 PM. We laid on the bed, did some napping and some reading on my Nook. After a lazy day we washed some of the fans then went to the clubhouse for rib night. Took a walk around the block first, noticed that Verizon had a tent set up to sell Fios. We took some granola bars from their table. At dinner I had prime rib and wine. I finished the whole thing. Very good. Desert was back home. We had the Moose tracks ice cream.

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January 27, 2012 rainy day

We woke up to thunder and rain. It rained most of the morning. I used the time to write and debug the Xbee_Enviro program which collects sensor data in the workshop and sends it out the Xbee. Next step is to receive this data in the office for web display and Pachube data logging. We went out on our bikes in the PM. Took the new Honore extension to Venice. Amazingly the road has curbs and sidewalks on both sides through the cow pastures. We took the South side of the waterway trail to Shannon Park at the end. What a nice surprise. We had to use the bathrooms at the park. I talked to a lady for a while who was seated on a bench. She was from Utica and staying in Florida for a month.

In the evening we went to Bangkok Thai on Proctor where I did not have wine but did order the seafood pad thai. Yum.

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January 28, 2012 Dunedin, FL

The sun is out and it's beautiful. We left the condo at 9 heading North. Found Diane in Wesley Chapel via GPS. What a dump. Her garage is junked up with boxes, toys all over an unkempt yard and junk cars everywhere. We loaded the Dandy's wherever we could find room in the Corolla. After loading up we went in to see Diane's light stands. The house smelled bad with dogs. She has a surprisingly large number of light stands. Libbie bought two violets. We then left for Dunedin via FL

54. Stopped at a very busy McDonalds for bathroom and lunch. On the way to Dunedin Darrel called and said Holly had a stroke last night. Libbie called Sue, Mary and Bill. We arrived at Rainbows End around 1. There was no parking so I parked across the street and then moved it later. Libbie got all her materials for the three baby quilts. On the way home I stopped at the Ellenton Outlet mall and got new jeans. The mall was pretty crowded but it was a Saturday. I cleaned the front screen door of the condo when we got home and also the back door. At 5 we went over to Peter and Christas. We had wine and Italian Salami on the back porch to start. Dinner was Quiche Lorraine that Christa made with bacon and cheese. Desert was three flavors of Sorbet. Very nice. We enjoyed the dinner and the conversation.

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January 29, 2012 Baby quilt

Started out on the computer updating my musings. It looks to be another beautiful day. Libbie is spreading her quilting out on the floor. It looks beautiful. Libbie did most of the cleaning of the floors. We went for a short walk around the subdivision. Christa had lent us a New Orleans restaurant recipes book. I liked it so I ordered one used on Amazon and returned their copy to them and said goodbye. Will see them in the Fall. I told them I would cook them a Cajun dinner. Around 6:30 we ordered a Pizza from Valentinos on Clark then went to Publix to get fruit for our trip and new sponges for the condo. Got to Valentinos at 7 and our pizza was ready. It was good as usual. After dinner we packed some of our stuff and started loading the car. We have the Dandy Pots so space will be at a premium.

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January 30, 2012 Travel Home

Got up at 6 and loaded the rest of the suitcases and arranged the Dandy pots. We got going at 7 am but had a little under a half tank of gas. Stopped at the second exit on I-4 for McDonalds and gas at 3.47. It was convenient, the Raceway Gas and the McDonalds were next to each other. We slowed down a little through Orlando morning rush but got back to cruising speed shortly after downtown.

We stopped at the visitors center in GA for Libbie then stopped for gas and food at a combo McDonalds and gas pumps at Exit 8 in SC. We saw on the highway signs that there was an accident 15 miles ahead so we got on 17 North along with a line of trucks up to Ridgeland at exit 20. It wasn't too bad, we could see I-95 stopped as we traveled at 60 MPH. We chose not to stop in Florence and kept going till we arrived home at 6:15. Not sure how it took 15 extra minutes since we didn't have any delays. Went out again for dinner at 6:30 to LaCocina where I had the Pollo Chipotle. Nice to be home.

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January 31, 2012 Easy Day

It was a slow day. I went to Trader joes and Krogers then went outside to remove nails from the 2x4's in the yard and move them out of the way. Didn't do much else today. This morning I talked to the gas line locator guy and also the cable locator. The cable locator service painted the ground where the septic line is located. Dinner was the leftover Pollo Chipotle.

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February 01, 2012 first of Month

Check book is replenished today since it's the first of the month. Immediately paid off Home Depot which was down to \$400 balance for the oven, range and hood. I also paid the vehicle tax for the Prius which was \$117. Worked outside most of the day building a greenhouse bench. I moved the saw out there on the potting bench. After lunch I picked up some 2x4's at Home Depot and then bought an HD gift card to get fuel points. Libbie and I both filled up for 3.37 with a 20 cent discount due to fuel points. Kroger gas is 3.57 today. Next task was to start installing the lights for the top shelf of Tower 1. Mounted 3 lights on the ceiling. Have to wire them up and buy a new timer. Dinner was Lobster Pasta.

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February 02, 2012 fence day

Nancy came over this morning. While she was here the fence guys came and worked all day until 3 PM. The fence looks pretty good although the enclosed area seems smaller than I imagined it to be. While they worked the fence I was in the greenhouse building the porch landing and digging out the ground to get it level while on bricks. I achieved this. Dinner was Trader Joes barbecue on flat buns.

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February 03, 2012 Wiring

I spent the day wiring the new lights on the top shelf of Tower 1. This involved a trip to Home Depot to pick up wiring supplies and a fourth light. This project took all day but it's finished and the lights work. We went to Litmus at 6:30 and saw Clara's contemporary art work which were large oil paintings, some of them 2 panel pieces.

Next we

went to Visual Arts which was a surprise. They had a large crowd and many young people on bicycles. The crowd was young and eclectic. We also popped in next door and walked through an Artspace like facility. Next stop was Buku. This was the former Fins but now reconfigured as a global street cart restaurant. Wow, we were blown away by the taste and flavor. I had Thai BBQ Snapper with Papaya salad. We each had Shiraz and shared a Tiramisu for desert. Wow, this was yummy. I'm definitely going back.

~

February 04, 2012 Forbidden Rice

Today was digging day in the greenhouse. Stabilized the platform which will serve as the landing for the stairs. Used the dirt under the fence gate to make it level. Decided I wanted to listen to Anna Bolena this afternoon from the Met so stayed inside working on the computer on Arduino projects. In the late afternoon we went to Fresh market and bought some Shrimp and Broccoli and forbidden rice which we had with shiraz for dinner. Very nice meal.

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February 05, 2012 stairs

Picked up some more 2x6's from Lowes then added the decking boards for the stairs landing. Cut and fit the stair stringers and bolted them to the wall and to the landing. Placed the treads over the stringers but did not nail them because I need to move them to paint the pipe. Libbie made her very nice pizza which we had while listening to Tales of Hoffman from the met instead of the Silly Bowl.

~

February 06, 2012 Paint

Jack Shannon came over today to help Libbie and her shipping. I painted the gas pipe in the greenhouse. It's a hot day inside the greenhouse structure with no fan to exhaust the air. I also worked out the problem with receiving comma separated data with commas for the Meistersinger energy collector Arduino. This is the last day of the current charge cycle with Sparks Visa. Tomorrow li can spend again! We need to book the rest of the New Orleans trip but I'm waiting for a new charge cycle. Dinner was baked beans and a rotisserie chicken from Kroger.

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February 07, 2012 fence

Went to the greenhouse and picked up 20 2x4x12's to work on the benches and walkway. I bought some mason string and located the fence line between us and Longo. Kids have been playing in our woods, we found a teepee fort made out of sticks in the woods. I want to stop this so will run a wire fence for a few hundred feet from the corner of the property. I used the fence digger and dug one hole and located the corner post. Ran the mason string from there for about 300 feet. Dinner was Lobster pasta. We finished the chicken from last night today. Had it for lunch with baked beans.

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February 08, 2012 Another bench

Adjusted the string along the property line early this morning then went into the greenhouse to begin bench construction. Mixed up some hydraulic cement and patched around the hole where the gas pipe and conduit pass through. Cut the riser boards for the stairs. I'm one short, probably the bottom step when I get them all nailed down. Cut the wood and assembled the second Southernmost bench. I want both benches in place before I start building the boardwalk. I hung the Bluebird thermometer which I retrieved yesterday from the Jessie Rd greenhouse.

Best place for it seems to be over the thermostats which is out of the sun. Dinner was Chicken peanut Thai. Yummy.

~

February 09, 2012 Window Frame

Busy day. Went to the Credit Union and deposited the 3,000 Feb rent check. This will help with cash flow. Priced lumber in lowes, they raised the price of treated wood. Bought 6 2x6's in Home Depot for the walkway. It's 40 cents per foot. Pachube still not working. Created a stripped down program to try. Went to the top of the hill and pulled the staples from the broken fence post. Will finish mending the back fence tomorrow. Finished the second half of the South bench. It still needs a covering and the first half still needs blocking. Nailed down the stairs and examined the cement job from yesterday. Very nice. While the stairs were in place I used them to remove the window frame on 3 sides. Getting ready to break through but first will build the walkway.

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February 10, 2012 walkway

Put together the walkway for the South Bench. Next I have to build a ramp to get to the stairs platform. I spent some time on the Arduino project. I can now pick up the Zigbee stuff but it's not being displayed correctly by the web server. I went to the top of the hill and put the new fence post into it then nailed the wire to the fence. This repairs the back section of fence. Next job will be to run a wire down the Longo side of the property and attach it to the posts. Dinner tonight

was scallops, broccoli and Brown rice with shiraz.

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February 11, 2012 Gotterdamerung

Carried the wood and bricks into the greenhouse this morning and pounded a pipe into the ground for the walkway near the steps. I want to stay clean because we're going to the Opera at Crossroads. Left at 11:15 for a noon showing of Gotterdamerung. The music was transporting. The transmission was lost for 10 minutes at about the 5 hour mark when the power to the theater glitched. After the performance it was very cold and windy outside. ?The car thermometer said it was 37. We had Chinese tonight with Ravenwood Shiraz and an eggroll. I really like this stuff.

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February 12, 2012 walkway

Leveled the walkway and built the ramp to the stairs. Next job was to cut the boards into 2 foot lengths and nail down the planks. I ran out of nails and wood. GMA this morning devoted the whole show to Whitney Houston. I'm not sure why. She had a great voice but I wasn't excited by her music. Libbie made her great pizza which we had while watching the Grammys.

~

February 13, 2012 Walkway

Went to Home Depot and got more nails and 2x6's. Although it was around 50 outside, it was hot in the greenhouse. The temp got to over 100. I was sweating and ended up finishing the walkway without my shirt. Libbie took pics of everything which I downloaded from her camera and put on her computer for her. I made a photographic Valentine for her which I picked up at Walgreens and assembled to give to her. We checked her very late into her flight but she still got an A ticket. Dinner was BBQ from Trader Joes which we had on buns. Tomorrow in the

greenhouse I need to install the fan since it's getting hot in there.
I also have to take LKibbie to the airport at 5:30 am.

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February 14, 2012 flight and fans

Got up at 5 to take Libbie to the airport at 5:30 for her 7 AM flight to PVD. Came home tired. Read the Wall Street Journal then did some online reading of Arduino and Pachube. My feed is still frozen for unknown reasons. Visited downtown Raleigh then went to Northern Tool, Lowes and Home Depot looking at reciprocating saws. Milwaukee makes a made in USA model for \$119 but Lowes sells a name brand Skil reciprocating saw for \$59. Did the Tuesday groceries at Kroger and picked up a Lowes \$50 gift card which I spent in Lowes for the Skil saw. The lady running the register, Gwen, was tall, slim and attractive. I mentioned to her how tall she was and had a pleasant conversation. Nice. Dinner was Lima beans and cranberry-orange cookies. Not great.

~

February 15, 2012 tavs

Straightened up the house and got the lunch buffet ready for the Violet club which started shortly after noon when Sheila arrived, then Sylvia, Ed and Joanne. It was a pleasant get together. Sheila demonstrated a Pave technique for design which was nice. Sylvia gave me a bunch of comments about the new AVSA website. After the meeting I put the shutter up over the fan and completed the strip tape around it. I took a walk to the top of the hill and looked over where I need to put the fence wire but I didn't do anything about it since i was a little tired. Lunch today was cookies (too many of them), cupcakes, tuna salad, chicken salad, macaroni salad, potato salad and Hawaiian rolls. I ate too many cookies, too many sandwiches which I also had for dinner. Listened to Barber of Seville in the evening live. It was truly a delight then read "Sahara" on my Nook until 11:30 PM. It's a great read, I really like Dirk Pitt. This is like the old James Bond but a Geekier version.

~

February 16, 2012 sculpting

Got the shutter from the Jessie Rd greenhouse before it started raining at noon today. Patched the hole where it came from. It's rusted badly, so I'll have to sand and paint it. Easier said than done, it needs to be disassembled first and the motor rebuilt. Dinner was tuna sandwiches before going over to Litmus to sculpt. My piece is doing fine. I want to complete hands and legs as well as a complete head with hair. Came home and played with the Nook, looking for another book to read since I finished "Sahara" by Clive Custer.

~

February 17, 2012 Paint

This was a busy day. I started by finishing the sanding of the shutter then I put a coat of Rustoleum on one side. Returned several hours later, flipped the shutter and did the other side. I'll check tomorrow, it may need 2 coats of paint. Temp got up to 88 today in the greenhouse, one of the reasons I want the shutter functioning. This was with the outside door propped open. Set the toaster on fire by leaving toast cooking in the thing and forgetting about it. The Smoke Detector alerted me but not before the kitchen was filled with smoke and there were flames coming out of the toaster. I'm afraid it has reached the end of the road. Installed the fence wire up Longo's side of the property today, this completes the fence job except for retrieving my mason line. Spent some time with the Adobe Lightroom tutorial today. I'm not sure of the worth of this program but I will keep at it. It may not buy me anything from what I see so far. I also downloaded Family Tree Maker 2012 from Pirate Bay. My version was 2010. Not sure what's new and improved. Dinner was fried chicken and cherry pie. Too much food, I'll never learn.

~

February 18, 2012 Tree dropping

Hooked up the chains and come along and dropped 3 poplar trees along the creek in back. The goal is more light in the backyard. The trees came down easily but wore me out. Came in, had some fried chicken, then

settled down to listen to Barber of Seville. Talked to Libbie who is in RI this week. She had trouble calling. I checked the phones and Line 1, 362-853, has a constant beeping tone. I unplugged a few phones but still have problems. Tried switching the Vonage box over to the same box the greenhouse line is on. One box supports two lines. Still no dice. Something is wrong somewhere. Will unplug phones one at a time to debug this problem. When I woke from Barber of Seville I went into the greenhouse and re-assembled the shutter that I painted. Dinner was the rest of the fried chicken.

~

February 19, 2012 cold rainy day

Cold and rainy today. I rebuilt the shutter motor this morning, drilling the rivets and putting light grease on all the gears and gear spindles. Need long 6-32 screws to hold the motor together again.

I picked

up some French Bread pizza and had that for dinner. I watched Woody Allens "Midnight in Paris" this evening which I loved. It showed many of the places we visited on our trip there. The scenery was also very moody and paris like along with Woody's choice of Cole Porter for the sound track. It completed the movie experience of Paris for me.

~

February 20, 2012 snow

Today I finished the two bench tops, cutting off the excess and securing them to the bench frame. This went well. Spent some time working on the relay wiring for the vent system. I hung the shutter but also had to cut 2 2x4's for framing the opening in a little more. The shutter was too small or the opening was too big depending on your point of view. Got it all done then found the shutter motor doesn't work. Boo!

Joy called this morning. We chatted over how Joe and Christa are doing and the snow today. Her husband had to go to work at 4:30 am to cover the icy roads. Our backyard was half dusted, especially in the woods. The bare ground was not touched. I worked on carrying more of the tree crowns to the brush pile. The ground is wet because previously this morning it was sleet covered. Carried what I could before needing

some more chain saw cutting which I'll defer to another day. Dinner was bean burgers and cheesecake for desert.

~

February 21, 2012 window

Moved the pile of dirt inside the greenhouse to the gate of the fencing. The ground slopes away under the gate so it needs to be built up level. Next step was to remove the window and the frame around the window. I also had to remove the small wall under the window. There is an issue of which studs to remove for the door. I may shift the door more into the corner to retain the double 2x4 next to the towel rack. Dinner was baked chicken which came precooked from Kroger. I watched Property Virgins which featured Dunellen. Good stuff, I recognized some of the homes or maybe they all look the same.

~

February 22, 2012 Door installation

Used the saw inside the porch and cleaned up the opening for the new door. I ended up retaining the 2x4's in the corner where the hinges are mounted and removed one 2x4 on the door handle side of the door frame. Brought the door into the greenhouse and tacked it up with three nails but did not fully secure it. I'll do that tomorrow. Dinner was more of the baked chicken from yesterday. Listened to Butterfly live from the Met this evening. Incredibly nice.

~

February 23, 2012 Busy Day

I started the day by working on the panel over the bathtub faucet. Finally mounted it and the toilet paper roll. Next stop was the greenhouse. I finished nailing the door frame inside the greenhouse then went to Home Depot to exchange the Kwikset door handle and purchased a Schlage model which matches the others in the house. Installed the handle which went well. Tackled the CPVC plumbing next. Put a tee off the water line coming into the greenhouse and ran one branch to a spigot

next to the bench and the second branch to under the shutter. I'll use this second branch to rig up water to some veggies I want to grow in the deadmen. Dinner was bean burger then I left at 5:45 for sculpting. Spent the night sculpting Katlyn's hands and feet. Jim told me the proportion was wrong on the hands and feet so I made them bigger. They still may not be proportional. I also finished the face and put hair on her. Will return Tuesday to clean it up. Libbie was home when I got back. Nancy and Coleman picked her up at the airport then toured the plant room and greenhouse construction. Her plane arrived at 6:45 while sculpting downtown went from 6:30 to 9:30.

~

February 24, 2012 Deal

This morning I started taking apart the plumbing under the porch sink and sketching out how to tie in the filter. Went to Home Depot and purchased brackets and a few plumbing parts and started the project. Took a break at noon and did some click and ship for Libbie. She has a large batch of orders to go out. We did a grocery run in late afternoon to Trader Joes and Krogers for wine and Salmon. Dinner was Salmon, forbidden rice and Broccoli with Shiraz. We heard from Brad our realtor this evening. He has a proposal to lease the land. We will think about this and talk with him Monday morning. He is talking about \$2,000 per month. I'm more interested in selling the structure outright and leasing the land with option to buy.

~

February 25, 2012 Ernani

Spent the morning working on the Bluebird website until it was time to go to the opera. It is quite windy today. We went to the opera at the wrong time, one hour early, so we used the time to go to BJ's and then take the food home. I thought Ernani was great and the signal held up despite the windy weather. Dinner was ribs with brown rice, broccoli and Shiraz.

~

February 26, 2012 RLT

I spent the morning finishing up the Bluebird website and actually finished it and published it. This included pot pricing update, additional pictures, inventory update and the addition of used pots.

In the afternoon we went to RLT for Miss Firecracker. It was enjoyable but I'm getting tired of the RLT performances. Too much stuff to do. We came back and Libbie made a fresh batch of dough for her pizza which we had during the Oscar telecast. The Artist won best picture, a picture that I actually saw before the Oscars thanks to the newsgroup copy.

~

February 27, 2012 Sad day

Met with the realtor this morning about leasing arrangements for our greenhouse. I'm more interested in selling the place than leasing it.

Had a frustrating time with the USPS website. It was taking approx 10 minutes per click. Went out to work on the plumbing. Had to buy a new torch from Home Depot. The new torch did a great job of soldering the fittings in. Still need some 1/2 inch pipe and elbows to adapt to the 3/4 inch pipe I'm using. Joe told us tonight that Christa is having a miscarriage this evening. All 3 babies will be lost. Dinner was chopped BBQ on a bun.

~

February 28, 2012 Orchid moving day

Didn't sleep well last night. First thing this morning Lib and I went to the Post Office to drop off 3 boxes, then over to Lowes for some plumbing parts and Krogers for Senior day. Did all those errands and started hooking up the water under the porch sink while Libbie called Craig and got the details about the early delivery. All 3 were lost and didn't have a chance when her water broke. Lots of sadness going around.

I

pressurized the water when done and almost immediately a pipe let loose in the new greenhouse. The Tee coming into the building was not glued so it opened up and shot water all over the place. In the meantime, Libbie started moving Orchids into the greenhouse. She

moved about half a bench into the new place.
Dinner was Briyani.

Fixed

the glue on the tee and tried again. The filter is leaking under the sink. Will cut the filter out and tighten the fittings going in and also switch from teflon tape to pipe thread compound.

~

February 29, 2012 leap day

Ordered flowers for Joe and Christa, Gerbera Daisies. Went to Home Depot and got more plumbing and reworked the filter. It took almost all day. Broke down the benches and moved them outside until we're ready in the greenhouse for them. Went to Trader Joes then stopped into Great Clips on the way home to get a haircut. They're having a 5.99 haircut sale. The filter still leaks. Dinner was lobster pasta from Trader Joes. I'm having trouble catching a mouse on the porch. He keeps eating the bait. I decided the problem with the relays is the transformer. It's too small to drive 2 relays. Ordered a bigger one from Graingers online for Will call pickup. Its a 24VAC, 40 VA.

~

March 01, 2012 nice day

Nancy came over this morning to help Libbie. I drove to Graingers in North Raleigh to get the transformer. Of course, they didn't know about the will call. They took one out of stock and I mounted it in the relay box. The fan and the shutters now work as expected. This fixed the problem of the chattering relay. Next step was to work on the door frame. Got the frame cut and mounted as well as some shims installed. Next step is to complete the inside trim. moved to the backyard to move logs. It's a glorious 80 degree sunny day so I went and knocked myself out which is satisfying. Libbie watered the orchids in the greenhouse for the first time today. this is goodness although the water pipes still need clamping down to the structure. Dinner was a center cut pork chop with broccoli, apple sauce and Chardonnay. Wagner Tannhauser on WCPE tonight which is nice. I contacted the Modine distributor today and getting my money back for the warranty heat exchanger

last year sounds positive. We shall see. I also had to deal with the Post Office because of multiple charges for the postal labels. The Feb 27 labels were charged 4 times for the same item. Their records only show 3 charges so I have soe work to do when the bill comes!!!

~

March 02, 2012 trim

Picked up some trim boards from Home Depot then started trimming the door out on the inside of the porch. Finished this, now I need to work

on the threshold and get a door sweep. OpD was called, I got the money this morning and bought more WSR and also added SPH, an old friend from years back. Stopped by Litmus for First Friday then did Artspace and went out to dinner at Boku. Service was not great. I had prawns in a nice spicy rice. Also had some Annabelle Cab which was \$10 per glass and very good.

~

March 03, 2012 rainy day

How did we get to March 3 already? It rained pretty hard overnight. In the morning Libbie and I went to Home Depot and got white paint for the back porch. When I got home I finished the door threshold but the sweep I bought is too short. Needed to buy a 2 inch one. Stopped by Krogers and bought Burpee seeds for \$1 per pack. The package says #2.49 on it, wow! Dinner tonight was pork chops with apple sauce, broccoli and shiraz.

~

March 04, 2012 roto tiller

I waited for it to get warmer today then turned the greenhouse fan on and moved the rototiller into the space and tilled the space for the new walkway. This worked well. This week I'll shovel out the dirt, rake and level it and build the walkway. I also moved some of the logs in the back onto the pile. I want to do a little bit of this each day.

Dinner was Libbie's nice pizza once again.

~

March 05, 2012 groggy

Went outside in the new greenhouse today from 1:10 am to 5 am fooling around with the heater. The flame only runs a few minutes before going out and the green led blinks indicating a lockout. Libbie and I moved the orchids into the porch at 3 in the morning. We went to bed and slept until 7:30 am. This was a groggy day because of the lack of sleep. Talked to Dornback and they suggested moving the sensor probe which I tried. Also swapped the controller. I picked up a thermostat and buzzer in Home Depot and worked the rest of the day wiring a low temperature alarm in the greenhouse. Dinner was BBQ pork from Trader Joes on a bun.

~

March 06, 2012 heater failure again

The low temp alarm went off at 1:30 this morning. The heater is going into lockout. Adjusted the sensor again and monitored it. Lockout happened again. I set the fan up and blew the heated porch air into the greenhouse for the night. Overnight low was 28. Called Dornback again.

I have to send back the controller to get a new one. Went to Trader Joes and Krogers for Tuesday groceries. On the trip I began to think about the sensor. If it opens up when heated the controller will lockout the heater. I think that's what's going on, we're getting intermittent at high temperatures. I went to Home Depot and picked up a Honeywell Universal ignitor. Will try that tonight to see how it performs.

The great news is that it works at all!!! It's shaped differently.

Managed to shovel up the dirt for the next walkaway. Removed 7 wheelbarrows worth of dirt. I'm now ready for the walkway framing. Dinner was lobster pasta. Afterwards I listened to KovaSchina live from the Met.

~

March 07, 2012 success

Started putting down the wood for the next walkway. the heater worked flawlessly all night long. Yeah!!! The Honeywell Universal sensor is working as advertised. I will still send back the old sensor to Dornback. Dinner this evening was curry chicken with Broccoli. Very nice!!!

I studied some of the control system I will need for watering the next round of plants in the greenhouse. Will order from Sparkfun and Adafruit to prepare for our early April vacation in New Orleans.

~

March 08, 2012 Moving In

Nancy came over at 9:30 this morning to help Libbie move back into the greenhouse. So far the new sensor is working fine. Stopped working on the walkway while they were in the greenhouse, then cut the rest of the boards when they left. Used the morning time to work in the flower garden removing the old fence and out in the woods taking the downed trees to the wood pile. Finished the walkway today. it looks pretty good. Dinner was spaghetti!!!! We had red velvet cake for desert.

~

March 09, 2012 shade cloth

Tackled the greenhouse this morning and put straps on the water pipes. Also put a shade on the vent thermostat ot keep the sun off it. Removed the last of the Mondo grass and started cutting bench legs for the next bench. The Orchids are getting burned so Libbie and I put the shade up inside the greenhouse on the deadman shading the orchids on the Southernmost bench. Yesterday I ordered the shade for the tops. In the afternoon I resumed reading 20000 leagues under the sea. I never read this book by Jules Verne before. It's quite good. Dinner was Scallops and brown rice with Chardonnay. Went over to Krogers in the evening to get an apple turnover for desert.

~

March 10, 2012 No heat again

The low temperature alarm went off last night at 11 am. I was in a deep sleep. It was supposed to go down to 33 but only went to 39. The outdoor temp when the alarm went off was 41. Tried swapping sensors with the good heater but no dice. The heater starts up but quits after a few minutes and then won't restart. I cranked up the porch temp to 70 and turned the fan on full blowing hot air from the top of the hot tub into the greenhouse. This morning when I woke at 7 I tried jumping out the flame rollover sensors and all worked well. I read online that on some heaters the upper rollout sensor was prematurely tripping. Tried the upper then the lower sensor individually. Either sensor by itself causes gas valve shutdown. For now I removed the rollover sensor. It's the end of the heating season so there is no rush to get a rollover sensor in there. I will probably put one back in mounted on a bracket away from the flame but close enough to detect anything bad in the firebox. Cut the bench legs while listening to Don Giovanni on the met Saturday broadcast. Installed the Northernmost bench and moved the half bench inside and placed it on top temporarily until I cut proper legs for the upper bench. I'm pretty tired this afternoon! Dinner was ribs, brown rice, broccoli and Melbac wine. Tonight is Daylight Savings switchover, we went to bed early but I read a little more of Jules Verne.

~

March 11, 2012 Bolshoi

Spent some of the morning on Orcad then left at 10:30 for the Bolshoi performance of Le Corsaire. It was a spectacular. I'm glad we went it was so good. My favorite spokeswoman was there, Katarina Novikova. She had on a black sheer lacy top. The woman is gorgeous. This performance was a large company spectacular. At one time we counted 50 tutus on stage along with another 50 other dancers and none of these were the principals. Wow. Dinner was Libbie's fantastic pizza.

~

March 12, 2012 garbage

Getting ready today for Violet club tomorrow. I went through and got the wood scraps out of the greenhouse and into a trash bag. I also took

the opportunity to chop some of the wood scraps into smaller pieces so that they will fit into the bag as well. Did some rototilling in front of the greenhouse deadmen. Took 3 of the phlox from the Jessie Rd greenhouse and relocated them to Downing place. For dinner we went out to La Cosina where I had a Quesadilla La Cosina.

~

March 13, 2012 TAVS

Violet club today. Linda Ablanap was guest speaker talking about design. She did a nice job. We served lunch beforehand which consisted of salads and buns that Sheila brought and Broccoli salad that I made yesterday. The meeting went extremely well. After the meeting Libbie and I planted the packages of seeds into 6 packs. I need to come up with a watering scheme. Dinner was BBQ sandwiches.

~

March 14, 2012 shrub planting

Doing the schematic entry today for the relay 4 board. I also put in an order to Adafruit for some Boarduinos for the relay 4 controller. This will plug into the board I get from AP Circuits next week. Went to the greenhouse and took some of the shrubs and the rest of the phlox. Planted them at home and mulched the phlox with pine bark from Home Depot. Dinner was spaghetti with chicken chunk and curry sauce. This morning Libbie came with me and we did a Trader Joes run.

~

March 15, 2012 sidewalk project

Worked on the autoroute of the relay 4 board. My version of Orcad does not have Autoroute but it does have an Allegro router which is what I used. It works OK. Sent the job to AP circuits. Went to the greenhouse and removed the rest of the shrubs and planted them next to our brick sidewalk. Dinner was Lobster pasta. After dinner I went to Krogers for a gift certificate because of 4x points then used it at Home Depot to pick up a solenoid, pressure regulator and misc plumbing fittings.

Out on Old Raleigh Rd a construction project started this week to put sidewalks along the road all the way to Foodlion. Yes!

Took

a trip to the Farmers Market. It was disappointing since the shed building was closed for maintenance. The vendors were in the parking lot.

There wasn't much in the way of plants to choose from.

~

March 16, 2012 benches done!

Worked a little on timer software then went outside and experimented with the sprinkler hookup to the greenhouse water. It puts too much water out all over the bench but that's the best I may do. Worked on the bench and finished installing the greenhouse center bench. We went to Kroger and picked up pork chops and steak for weekend dinners.

Dinner

was steak, potato and beets along with Shiraz. Chocolate cake for desert.

~

March 17, 2012 Easy Day

In the morning I experimented with the drip mister. Set up some cups at various distances from the emitter then ran the solenoid for first one minute then 3 minutes. Coverage seems even but quantity is not great. I guess this is a good thing since it can be regulated with time.

In the afternoon I stayed inside and listened to Kavaschina from the Met while working on the irrigation relay program. The Boarduino from Adafruit is on its way and the relay PCB should be here from AP Circuits on Tuesday. I'm going to build two of these, one for greenhouse use and one to test programs on. Dinner was pork chops, potato and beets with Santa Barbara (Trader Joes) Chardonnay. Still reading 20,000 leagues and also downloaded the 1954 Walt Disney movie starring Kirk Douglas.

~

March 18, 2012 water heater

Lib wanted me to see the cucumber seedlings in the greenhouse this morning. Went out there and noticed the water running down the wall from the water heater overflow. Went upstairs and found the water heater leaking. Went to Lowes and bought a new Hotpoint 9 year heater. Spent the rest of the morning dismantling and removing the old heater. Made a trip to HD for plumbing parts and gas pipes to replumb the new heater. Got it hooked up by late afternoon. Libbie made her super pizza once again, this time with fresh tomato.

~

March 19, 2012 junk

Cleaned up the yard of wood scraps, benchtops and a sheet of glass from the porch and took it all along with the water heater to the landfill. They took the water heater but couldn't take the wood because there was no bin and couldn't take the sheet of glass because the compactor was broke. Went home. Joy came over and was helping Libbie with shipping. While doing the yard cleanup a huge thunder buster moved through. Late in the PM Libbie and I took the trailer full of wood and glass to the Old Stage Road dumpster. Afterwards I struggled with the USPS click n ship and created all the mail labels. The Boarduinios came today, I assembled one in my shop of the three. We both filled up at Krogers since we had 1000 fuel points giving us \$1 off per gallon. We took 15 gallons at 2.77. Dinner was Rotisserie chicken, baked beans and potato salad.

~

March 20, 2012 rain

We had an incredible thunder storm at 6 am this morning. We both lay in bed and listened to the booms. I checked the radar on the Nook, it was a single cell. The PCB came today but it was not by 10:30 but more like 5 PM. All the components seem to properly fit. VanWingerden also did not call. I had to chase them down once again. Angela said she will mail the check on Friday. She didn't even have my address. This wasn't good. I finished 20,000 leagues after dinner while listening to MacBeth live. Dinner was BBQ chicken with sweet potatoes. his afternoon around 3 Libbie called that she drove the Prius into the compost

pile at the greenhouse. I went over with a jack, come along, chains and hand tools. I ended up jacking up the front wheels and putting wood and bricks under the sunken wheels. Drove forward one foot onto 2 scraps of Plywood which kept the car out of the muck. To get the jack under the car I needed to dig out a spot for the jack under the frame on each side. Once up out of the muck, we lined the tire path with wood and then drove off the compost pile. Time to do this was about one hour.

~

March 21, 2012 sakrete

I built the relay card this morning. Looks great!!! Dug the concrete and old post out of the railing on the deck walkway. Put in a new post and poured dry Sakrete into the hole to support it. Libbie and I went to Wyatt Quarles and the Farmers Market this afternoon. Looked at the herbs for sale. It's still too early but I'm planning. We had BBQ chicken breast for dinner. Yummy although Libbie said I bought one that was too big. I liked it.

~

March 22, 2012 Romeo and Juliet

Tried to stay inside and do clean things today since we're going to the live ballet in Hd this afternoon. Romeo and Juliet from the Royal Opera House was about the nicest ballet I have ever seen, especially the Act II Pas du Deux leading up to their kiss. Wow, was this good. We need the DVD. The performance started at 3:30 which was 7:30 London time. There were 6 other people in the theater with us. We got out at 6:30. At home we heated some BBQ in the microwave which we ate on sandwich rounds.

~

March 23, 2012 tractor battery

Worked on the relay card in the morning then investigated how to root a Nook tablet. I want to get one for Libbie for our 40th anniversary.

Started working on the door frame but had to quit because Libbie started watering in the greenhouse. Earlier today I charged the tractor battery at the greenhouse so Libbie could mow. Not sure if it will hold a charge. Time will tell. Dinner was a Pork Chop with beets and potatoes and chocolate cake for desert.

~

March 24, 2012 Tablet

Today I tried finishing the door trim inside the greenhouse but ran out of caulk. Ran to Lowes for more caulk and stopped in Office Max and bought a Nook Tablet for Libbie for our 40th anniversary. Listened to Macbeth live from the Met this afternoon then we had a pre anniversary dinner of pork chop, sweet potato and Shiraz. After dinner we sat on the backporch where I gave Libbie a caramel Russel Stover egg with a 40th anniversary 8x10 featuring honeymoon pics and the Nook Tablet. I will order an 8 gig flash card for the tablet to load Android on the device. Without Android it can't access the google app store where all the good free apps are.

~

March 25, 2012 40th Anniversary

I took it easy today. Worked on the Relay card trying to get a telnet type feature working. It rained overnight so everything is pretty soggy. Around noon we decided to walk around the flea market at the fairgrounds. Saw some interesting Jack in the Pulpits by an eclectic couple. There weren't too many vendors out. We saw a collection of food trucks. We tried some Spring rolls from one of them. They weren't too bad. Libbie made her wonderful pizza again for dinner. I'm reading 50 shades of gray, it's an alright book with lots of sex but doesn't seem to be going anywhere.

~

March 26, 2012 click n ship

Tried click and ship all day, the USPS server was crap. On the side I

worked on the Arduino watering timer project. Dinner was chicken in curry sauce over spaghetti.

~

March 27, 2012 no check yet

Called Van Wingerden this morning and they still had not sent the check even though they promised to last week. Moved the carpentry equipment out of the greenhouse. It's done except for painting the door. Did the groceries including Trader Joes. It's surprisingly cold out, in the 60's. Learning VB Express by writing the program to copy and paste addresses for Click N Ship. Dinner was Lobster Pasta purchased from Trader Joes today.

~

March 28, 2012 Easy Day

Not much done today. Moved the chunk of concrete out of the fenced in garden and put it into the creek. Picked up some pipes at Home Depot and added a watering branch to Tower 1 to cover some dry spots. Planned for some more watering of large pots in the new greenhouse. Picked up a few drippers from Home Depot as well as a solenoid, pressure regulator and pipe fittings for this part of the project. Dinner was Libbie's homemade Chili and fresh baked corn bread., Yummy.

~

March 29, 2012 Knockout Rose

Worked all morning on putting the ceiling lights above Tower 2. This is two eight foot light strips containing 8 light tubes. At noon we went to the Farmers Market for tomatoes for BLT's as well as Sweet Potatoes. Libbie found a double knockout Rose for \$20 which we purchased. It was a little more than others but we liked the woman and the way it was grown. She also mentioned another rose variety which is like knockout in mildew resistance but grows low with miniature blossoms. Came home and picked up bacon in Krogers as well as a spiral sliced ham for the weekend. Moved the existing pink rose and replaced it with

the double pink knockout. The USPS sent me into a panic since they said they no longer support the old API for the shipping calculator for our shopping cart. I spent some time studying the code to modify our cart. Dinner was chili. Desert was hot chocolate brownie with vanilla ice cream. Libbie didn't like it but I did. Her issue was the 400 calories. I agree with that part.

~

March 30, 2012 Greenhouse work

We went to the greenhouse where I took down the runs of bell wire running from the garage to the back buildings. Took it all down and rolled it up for use as solenoid wire in the new greenhouse. I also shoveled a few pails of gravel to bring home. Hooked up the solenoid to water floor plants in the greenhouse. Next I'll wire up the solenoids using the salvaged greenhouse bell wire. Finished running the solenoid wire this afternoon as well as mounting the timer controller but did not hook the stuff up. My back is killing me. We went to Walmart and bought socks, some saucers, wine and bath rugs. Went back to return a swimsuit later and bought a folio case for Libbie's Nook. Dinner was sliced ham, broccoli, sweet potato and chardonnay. It was a nice day.

~

March 31, 2012 wiring

This morning I put the Nook Android image on the 8 GB card from Newegg which arrived Thursday. Placed the card in the Nook Tablet and had no problems booting into an Android desktop screen. Went out and fetched a few free apps including the Nook and Kindle apps and tried them out. All worked well except that the Nook app only can access data on the external flash which meant I had to copy the internal books onto the external drive. This was not much of a problem and all still works very well. The Nook Tablet is more responsive than my Nook Color reader, most likely because of the dual processors and higher clock speed. I really like it!!!

Went outside and soldered all the connections then during the Met Opera broadcast of Elixir I tested the system. The dripper is leaking at the port tap. I need to go to home depot to see if this is the correct hose size for this port. I also need the

correct masonry screws for the 5/32 holes I drilled. Juan Diego just sang an encore live on the Met today of una furtiva lacrema. Fantastic!!!!
Panic
set in tonight as I tried to change the USPS API to V4
for our shopping cart. What a disaster!!!! Nothing works anymore.
Dinner was ham with sweet potato, apple sauce, broccoli and shiraz. Yummy.

~

April 01, 2012 recovery

Started right away debugging the shopping cart. Found a raw copy on Manon. Zipped it up then started comparing files. found some syntax errors and corrected them. The shopping cart gets further along. Added some file write statements to the perl module accessing the USPS and this was a huge help. It pointed to the error messages coming from the Post Office server. Changed so that I was V4 compliant and then had to figure out how to parse the result using XML and Perl. With some trial and error as well as reading online I was able to parse the result and extract the rate info. Cart fixed. Next job was hooking up the drippers and running a test cycle which I ran through at 3 PM. We will monitor the watering and make adjustments as needed. Dinner was another great pizza by Libbie. I did the click and ship stuff today to avoid USPS slow downs on Monday.

~

April 02, 2012 reebok

BBluebird this morning to trim the shrubs and pick up garbage as well as get 4 more pails of gravel. I helped Libbie transplant some Liriope from the greenhouse. She also took some daffodil bulbs. After a ham sandwich lunch we went to Selma to the Carolina Outlet malls for sneakers for Libbie at the Reebok store. Walked around DeWaynes garden center. There were nicely displayed plants in colorful arrangements on tables. We walked around then drove to JR Outlet. What a dump!!!! The store smelled of smoke and had tons of trashy merchandise. Awful, we'll never go back there. Stopped in at the Raleigh Farmers market for tomatoes on the way home. Also got beets and yams. Home at 4 PM.

Out

to dinner tonight to La Cocina. We had Margaritas and I ordered

the Quesadilla La Cocina. Came home and worked on tax stuff.

~

April 03, 2012 fill up

Worked on taxes for quite a bit of time. Also put the step back together in the back and did roundup on the fence edging and the greenhouse under the benches. It's coming along nicely. The auto watering is working out in the greenhouse. Did a short grocery run and also bought Lowes and HD gift cards to get 4x the points for fuel discounts. My tank was empty so I got 40 cents a gallon discount on a fillup with the points. Gas is pretty high, 33.49 after discount. Dinner was ham slices with beets and potato slices. I downloaded some sheets from the 1940 census and looked at some of the areas in the Bronx. The Borowski's, Glembocki and Cybulski all lived on E155 St in the Bronx. St Adalberts was on E156th St. I visited the area on Google Streets - a lot of E155 St is gone and projects in it's place.

~

April 04, 2012 new battery

Finished the taxes today but did not file them yet. I still want to do a little bit of review. We went to the greenhouse this morning where we removed the tractor battery and took it to Walmart in Apex for an exchange and a new battery. It would be \$9 more if we did not do the exchange. The new battery was \$25.88. The tractor started right up. While Libbie mowed the pipeline I shoveled gravel. We brought 6 pails of gravel home to the new greenhouse. Everything is proceeding well there. For dinner we had manicotti from Trader Joes.

~

April 05, 2012 eFile

Filed the taxes this morning using eFile for federal but mailed the state taxes because they wanted 19.95 to eFile the state. That's a lot of money for two pages which I took care of with a 42 cent stamp! Making

last minute tweaks to our watering this morning. the violet towers still have some dry corners and the greenhouse hibiscus needed another emitter. The big one wasn't get enough water. We have been enjoying the ham for sandwiches everyday for lunch this week. Ham, tomato and bread rounds make the perfect lunch. We had the same for dinner - ham, tomato on sandwich rounds.

~

April 06, 2012 Tanger Outlet

Did the packing this morning as well as a trip to the USPS with Libbie's click n ship, Lowes for Velcro for her nook and Krogers for bread for our sandwiches. We got going at 12:16 which was good. Took 64 and 49 to Charlotte. It was a nice scenic ride. Traffic in Charlotte was heavy as expected but moving along. We stopped at Tanger Outlet exit 147 on I-85 at 5:30 PM. I discovered I had my work shoes on so I bought new shoes at Reebok. These are brown suede walking shoes. Our Comfort Inn was at exit 137. Checked in and then had dinner in a very nice Mexican place out front, El Jinette . It seemed to be a restaurant visited by locals. I had the Texas Fajitas which had beef, chicken and shrimp cooked with onions and peppers. We each had a 17 oz Margarita. Too much alcohol but outstanding Mexican Fare. We slept well.

~

April 07, 2012 Bourbon St

Had an egg round and sausage on raisin bread toast for breakfast then hit the road. It was cold out, the car said 45 degrees. Went to the other side of Atlanta and stopped at a McDonalds for coffee and bathroom.

Once South of Atlanta the scenery was nice and the traffic pretty light. We had lunch at a McDonalds in Alabama and got into Ashtons Bed and Breakfast at 2:15 Central time. We were listening to the live performance of Manon with Anna Netrebko. Very nice but we arrived. The B&B is outstanding. It's an elegant old mansion with beautiful interiors and a large patio in back with a live Oak and resurrection ferns covering the branches. After resting a little we went out front and took a 4:15 bus to the French Quarter. Senior fare was 40 cents. Got off the bus at Toulouse and Rampart St and walked into the French Quarter. Walked to the Cathedral and then took in the sights of all

the craziness. Lots of bars and much music spilling into the streets. Listened to some black guys playing jazz and a Cajun band singing songs. We stopped for a while and watched a street band with 4 horns, 2 drums and a tuba. They were pretty good. Went into the Red Fish Grill and had a marvelous dinner. I started with the barbecued oysters and blue cheese. Wow, good. We had a bottle of Ravenswood Zinfandel and then for dinner I had the cheese crusted snapper. Very nice and tasty. After dinner we walked along Bourbon. The crowd was definitely getting rowdier. Found a taxi that took us back to the B&B. We didn't know the address but guided him along by site since we knew we were the 3rd house after Johnson.

~

April 08, 2012 Easter Sunday

We started with some coffee early then when breakfast was served at 8:30 we had a plate of fruit and coffee cake for starters. Next was a crepe stuffed with Bagara, a ricotta type cheese. Nice but way too much food. After breakfast we walked the neighborhood touring the Esplanada Ridge. We then got into the car and found the garden district. We had a very nice 2 hour walk before stopping for lunch at a coffee shop. We had a chicken breast wrap and water inside the A/C to cool off. Then we drove over to the French Quarter and parked in the Canal Place parking garage. Libbie caught some beads from the Easter parade, we then walked to Cafe duMonde where we had coffee and beignets. The sugar pile up is unbelievable. Walked the French quarter and enjoyed a few street bands and the Easter hats. I had a Huge Ass beer which I shared with Libbie before we made it back to the parking garage and then home.

In the evening I printed a parking garage coupon and we drove over to the French Quarter. I decided against a taxi cause it was later and I didn't want to wait. The parking garage we went into said something about our car would be booted if we parked there. Left that one and drive onward crossing Bourbon, something I didn't want to do. Lo and behold we found parking around the corner from Mr B's. They took us right in to a nice table. I had the gumbo and barbecue shrimp which were unpeeled in a barbecue sauce. I wore a bib and made a mess eating them but they were delicious. Desert was bread pudding with irish whiskey. Wow!!!! Walked down Bourbon after dinner and stopped to listen to some good music by an older band with tuba, piano, horn and string bass. Quite good. Made it back to our car and home around

10.

~

April 09, 2012 Lafayette

Breakfast this morning was french toast with sweet potato filling and swimming in honey, brown sugar and butter with pecans and Applewood bacon. On the side were slices of fruit. yummy. We packed up and headed for Lafayette around 10:30. It was a pretty straight shot for 133 miles. Once we were in Lafayette I filled up the gas tank then we headed for the hotel. Found it but didn't stop because it was early so tried looking for a lunch spot. We found "Chris's PO Boy" restaurant. We each had a shrimp Po Boy which came with chips, pickle and cabbage. Checked into the Marriott. It's a nice hotel and looks new. Our leader's name is a Cajun named Patti Daigle. The week looks full. Dinner tonight was at the Hub City Restaurant. I had the Blackened catfish over shrimp etouffee. Desert was bread pudding. Our bus driver, a college student, sat at our table. He's a graduating senior.

~

April 10, 2012 Day 1

I wasn't too keen about the breakfast buffet in our meeting room but I had the sausage and eggs and of course coffee. Our chef was Becky who teaches hospitality at the University. This was her kitchen. We chopped up some Tasso which is like a smoked ham and added some spices, celery and bell peppers along with cream and straight corn to make a corn Maque choux. We also chopped tasso and mixed it with cajun spices and crawfish to make an etouffee. Took some frozen catfish filets, rubbed some Cajun seasoning on both sides and baked. Served it covered with the etouffee. We also coated eggplant and baked it then ladled some sauce over it for serving. After lunch and cleanup we went to see Boudin sausage being made, Dinner was at LA Seafood hooouse where we had a huge plate of Crawfish with beer.

~

April 11, 2012 gumbo

We had the Road Scholar buffet again this morning. Eggs, sausage, potato and bagel with cream cheese plus coffee. It was adequate. This morning we had a very nice chef, Sanders who is the Executive chef of the University Dining Hall Services. He had us doing the cooking step by step which helped. Our Gumbo was outstanding. We chopped bread for croutons and chopped bread for bread pudding. The bread pudding had crushed pineapples and raisins added to it. Wow, was it good. It think adding some rum to the mix really spiced it up. Our Caesar salad was also outstanding with our own home made dressing. Yumm!!! After we ate lunch and cleaned up we walked over to the UL swamp. Libbie and I chose to walk around the swamp and skipped the bookstore. We peeked at it then got onto the bus for a tour of downtown. Stopped at the Catholic Church to see the 500 year old Oak Tree then came back. The bus A/C wasn't fully functioning. It's 82 outside. We went to the Martin Accordion company where we learned about accordians and had a pretty nice concert by the Martin family. Libbie bought Joel's CD. He's a pretty good young musician. Dinner was Deano's pizza where we had cajun pizza with shrimp and crawfish and a pitcher of abita amber beer.

~

April 12, 2012 day 4

After breakfast we went to the college and had chef Nick of Bruce foods. Our menu was flounder stuffed with crab and covered with a mornay sauce, a salad with strawberry vinaigrette and pecan dressing, flaming banana foster for desert. Libbie was having fun flaming bananas over the stove. After lunch we went to a produce store and saw some amazing cajun spices. Came down at 4 for a long movie about the history of Cajun music. It was informative. I found some of the names on tom's music server were old cajun musicians. I incorrectly classified the music as zydeco. Dinner was at Prejeans, a unique restaurant with cajun music. I had crawfish half and half, half were fried and half were in an etouffee. Pretty good. The bread pudding was too dense.

~

April 13, 2012 Last day

Early morning breakfast then over to campus. Today we had a very young chef, Chef Colt who is one of the top 5 chefs in Lafayette. Our menu was collard greens with Tasso, salad with pepper jelly dressing and blue cheese, shrimp creole over grits and chicken smothered in Andouille sausage creme sauce. The cake came out like a brick, it wasn't good. I really got into sauteing the trinity. I think I can do this! I also had fun making the rice pilaf but there was a problem getting the rice to come out correctly. When we got back we took off in the car looking for a Daiquiri drive through. Found one called Dix's but it wasn't a drive through. Drove 4 miles turning right on 90 but no deal. Came back and the lady said to turn left and go less than a mile. I went alone and found the drive through. Took some pictures then used the drive through and bought 2 16 ounce daiquiri's, one Margarita and one Strawberry. Very good. Got our diploma at 4 then got onto the bus and left for the boat ride on the Achatafalaya basic. This was quite scenic and our cajun driver was very colorful. Next it was dinner and dancing at Bes Pere. We sat with the Browns of Kentucky. They have done several music Road Scholar programs. I had the catfish with etouffee and a couple of beers. Libbie had the stuffed crab. Yummy. We also got up and did a little cajun dancing. Libbie ended up buying the band's CD. Back home at 9:16.

~

April 14, 2012 Traviata

Early for breakfast. Chatted with Stevie, Grace, Jan and a few others to say goodbye. On the way out of town we stopped at the fresh pickins store and picked up some Cajun spices. Next it was the breakfast bakery for some beignets. We ate them in a parking lot outside of town with our comfort inn coffee. Got to Baton Rouge with no problems. There was a 2 story BN next to the theater. We went to the bathroom there and browsed books. The opera started without the video. I think it was a theater problem. the audience was chatty and noisy. We had to change seats because the lady behind us decided to rattle her shopping bag constantly. Natalie was not in great shape. Worse was the awful sets with corrugated steel walls and austerity. I hated it. We got out at 3:15. Took a wrong turn onto 10 instead of 12 coming home. Doubled back and got stuck for about an hour because of an accident. This set us back getting into Opelika, AL at 11 PM. The Comfort Inn room was large and clean. Nice to have arrived.

~

April 15, 2012 home

Up at 6 Central time this morning. We had a 6:30 breakfast and stopped for gas next to the hotel before starting our drive. Opelika is 90 miles South of Atlanta and about 37 miles south of the GA border. Once over the border we were in the Eastern time zone. Traffic was moderate. We picked up a biscuit and more coffee on the other side of Atlanta. Somewhere up in SC we stopped at a Pilot truck stop for a bathroom break and topped off the tank. It was half full but prices were 3.65 which is lower than the approx 3.80 per gallon in NC. We found 49 in Charlotte and used it to get to 64 and then home. Arrived at 4 PM which is good. Picked up a diGiorno pizza at Krogers for dinner. I also found Slap Yo Momma spices and Andouille sausage in Kroger. Everything looks good outside - unfortunately, the pink double rose I bought was red and not pink. The marigold seedlings needed a little more water than the auto system supplied. The sprinkler needs to be moved back from the edge of the bench.

~

April 16, 2012 musing

Sprayed roundup inside the fence today to eradicate the lawn then I helped Joy, Jack and Libbie pack violets for the Albuquerque club. An interesting offer came today from Cap One. I can use their checks to get 0% money for one year for a 2% transfer fee. The car balance is \$8800, it will cost \$176 in fees. Interest would be \$237. Not much savings.

If I buy 1000 shares of CMOpB it will cost 14,720 and will yield \$1,260 or \$105 per month for a transaction cost of \$295. On the other hand WSR costs 13,070 and yields \$1,140 for a cost of \$262. income works out to \$95 per month, therefor 3 months to start making money. Dinner was chicken curry over whole wheat spaghetti.

~

April 17, 2012 chain saw

Joy came over and worked violets with libbie while I worked with the chain

saw cutting up the logs on the house side of the creek. I moved the logs into the pile nearest the house down by the creek. I went to Kroger and got all the ingredients for a Cajun meal which I will make on Thursday. Dinner was chicken in Briyani which was really good. I like the Biryani chicken Libbie makes.

~

April 18, 2012 Farmers Market

We went to the Farmers Market in the morning and did a lot of plant shopping. Honeycuckle Garden herbs were disappointing but Longwood Gardens of Raleigh had a nice selection of plants. We bought their Coreopsis and Cleome as well as an assortment of herbs. Dinner was Trader Joe crabcakes with the Farmers Market tomatoes.

~

April 19, 2012 gardening

Big day outdoors. I hooked up the rototiller and tilled the entire area inside the fence. Jack came over during the morning. He and Libbie worked inside the greenhouse while I tilled. After he left Libbie and I went to the greenhouse and picked up 4 more cans of potting soil. Spread that on top of the tilled dirt 6 inches thick and tilled it into the soil. We need more of this stuff. Libbie net planted the Alyssum and Cleome. After a brief rest and shower I tackled the dinner. Libbie made the corn Mach Chou while I made the bread pudding. I don't like the Kroger's Baguette. I need to find something better. Net step was the etouffee. It came out pretty good. Quickly broiled some Tilapia filets in the oven This came out yummy. It was my first cooking experience and it wasn't very hard. This was a most enjoyable day. First some hard work in the garden and then cooking of an enjoyable meal.

~

April 20, 2012 garden prep

Hitched up the trailer and got 10 bags of mulch from Home Depot then did two trips to the greenhouse for 5 cans of potting soil from the compost

out back. Spread it 6 inches thick and mixed it into the garden with the rototiller. The bed is now prepared for plants. They were pouring concrete into forms for more of the sidewalk on Old Raleigh Road. I'm happy to see this even though it means waiting for a flagman. We had a longer wait on 1010 in front of the tank farm because they are widening the road (maybe). Saw a high school girl crossing 64 at Laura Duncan wearing only black tights below her waist. This is pretty revealing and I'm wondering what her parents thought. Dinner was more Tilapia with cajun rub and the leftover etouffee and corn Mach Choux. Desert was bread pudding. We had this with Shiraz.

~

April 21, 2012 Garden

I signed up for Rocky's watercolor workshop. Went out to Jerry's Artarama and picked up all the needed colors for class as well as some smaller brushes.

Went to a very very crowded Farmers Market and got more herbs and perennials from our favorite vendors. We also did a run to Beth Moore for tomatoes and strawberries. We planted all the herbs and perennials that we purchased. Now we only have our own seed flats of bedding plants to put in. We mulched it all with pine bark. It's supposed to rain quite a bit tomorrow so this is good timing.

Dinner

was Cajun Rubbed Tilapia filets with the last of the etoffee, the last of the Corn mach Choux. For desert Libbie made some shortcake biscuits topped with our Farmers Market strawberries. We had this with a cold bottle of Chardonnay.

~

April 22, 2012 rain

It rained all day which was good because I was too tired to go out in the garden and work. We went to Sears when they opened at noon and bought the top rated Vacuum Cleaner by Consumer Reports. This is a Hoover Anniversary edition windtunnel. The important thing was to buy it now because the rebate expired today. Brought it home after a minimum of difficulty in Sears which was a miracle. Dinner was Libbie's homemdade pizza. I took advantage of the rain today to use the soft window

brush and scrub the car down. It really needed it after the Louisiana trip.

~

April 23, 2012 cold

It's frigid outside, only in the fifties. Worked on pictures, building a slide show. Bought some WSR using a cap one check with 0% interest for 12.99. It closed the day at 12.85. Bummer, but I have a year to collect interest I hope. Dinner was thai chicken over rice noodles.

~

April 24, 2012 gumbo

Lazy day. Did the Tuesday groceries searching for ingredients for Gumbo. Did not find cane vinegar or shrimp base so I tried Whole Foods with Libbie. I've been using the BAC Visa to get 5% cash back. Will be pissed if this doesn't work. Mowed the back lawn entirely yesterday. WSR, my purchase yesterday using Cap One 0% checks, went up 67 cents. I think it is an anomaly that will correct itself. Dinner was pulled pork barbecue on buns. The pulled pork was purchased in the store this morning.

~

April 25, 2012 perennials

It's a cold day with some rain. We went to Lowes for brick chips and also picked up some perennials for the fenced in garden. The garden is pretty sappy and footprints sink in pretty far. Despite this I was able to mulch the mint garden by the fence and Libbie planted the perennials we purchased. dinner was out to La Cocina because the lobster ravioli we purchased in Trader joes was moldy. I had a Margarita and a Quesadilla La cocina. Nice.

~

April 26, 2012 Gumbo

Surprising rain today, I was planning to mow the front lawn. Made Gumbo this afternoon. It wasn't very good since there was too much Roux in the mixture. The recipe calls for 4 oz, we put a cup of oil and a cup of flour into the gumbo as roux. Will try again but with less Roux. I did not like that the crawfish were sourced in china and the crab legs didn't add anything to the texture. The bread pudding was a delight. Libbie made the praline sauce, I think I'll keep her out of my cooking since she's not very good at sauces. Listened to the Rheingold live this evening while reading the Steve Jobs book.

~

April 27, 2012 pond leak

This was an unplanned day. The back porch was covered with water from the fish pond which sprung a leak. We worked at draining it and taking out the liner. It looks like a rock went through the liner and caused the leak. After lunch we went to the Farmers Market for tomatoes and a butterfly bush. Our favorite vendor said next week for the bush so we'll wait. We had the leftover gumbo and bread pudding for dinner with a bottle of Shiraz. I can't believe it but the WSR I bought has gone up .85 this week. I originally purchased this to get the 8.72% interest but I may sell early. We'll see how it goes. Our garden is looking great.

~

April 28, 2012 cold

It's a cold day out, not much motivation for outdoors stuff. I started studying how to do the outdoor garden watering. Dinner was broiled tilapia with sweet potato and homemade pepper vinaigrette dressing over a spring mix of salad greens.

~

April 29, 2012 Bright Stream

This morning we watched CBS Sunday then had to leave at 10:30 for Bright Stream live from the Bolshoi. We were the only ones in the theater!!!! It ended around 2 PM. We came home and I mowed the front lawn. Dinner was Libbie's amazing pizza. Worked on a photo book donation for the AVSA convention.

~

May 01, 2012 planting

May Day!!! I did the grocery run getting fixins for another Cajun meal on Thursday. Got the grow boxes in place and ran the hose to each one for watering. Lib planted some of the flower seedlings. I mulched them. One bag of mulch was infested with termites so I poured it into a wheelbarrow and sprinkled insect powder over it. This killed all the little buggers. I also planted all the tomatoes that were destined for the grow boxes. They joined the peppers which were done yesterday. Dinner was Chinese takeout with a bottle of Rodney Strong Merlot.

~

May 02, 2012 hard work

This was a tough day. I put down the water pipe around the backyard fence and hooked up one of the misters. Went over to help Libbie by spreading bark mulch. She planted over 100 seedlings. Earlier I got a call that our Knock Out Rose was at the Farmers Market so we drove over to get the rose, our veggies and a few more perennials. The garden planting is going good. I put the cucumbers in the growbox also. Now we just have the 3 more empty grow boxes to fill. It got up to 91 today and was very hot working in the sun. Dinner was crab cakes with fresh tomatoes from the Farmers Market and homemade strawberry shortcake for desert. This is a good time of year when the strawberries are coming in.

~

May 03, 2012 Water!

This is a much better day. I have more energy and hooked up the rest of

the sprinklers. Put together the hoses and solenoids inside the greenhouse and temporarily used the remote Christmas timer on the solenoid that controls the water to the flower garden. While having lunch we ran the watering for 15 minutes. we measured approx 1/2 inch of water in a plant saucer. I went to Home Depot and got more 1/4 inch tubing and added 3 more sprinklers, 2 of them on stakes. Finished this by 4 PM and ran another 15 minute test run. The coverage looks great, I'm happy. I need to do a more permanent job with the solenoid wiring but first I need to finish planting the garden. Dinner was pad Thai from a Whole Foods noodle box. Very good. I originally was going to do some Cajun cooking tonight but we were so tired that it didn't happen. Listened to Gotterdamerung on Sirius live. During the third act I got tired so I pressed record on the DVR. We'll see if that works.

~

May 04, 2012 First Friday

Roto-tilled the garden this morning then planted the rest of the tomatoes. Put cages over them and now I need some plants for the grow boxes. In the evening we left for first Friday. Went to see Nicoles new studio, had a glass of wine and some wonderful dip then drove over to Artspace. We parked near Caffè Luna and walked over. Paris Alexanders daughter was in the lobby with a chisel and hammer working on a piece of stone. Cute beyond cute. Met Rocky in the building, chatted about the class I will have with her on Monday. Talked to Nancy Taylor and Judy Crane upstairs also. Went to Caffè Luna where the service was very slow. Our waiter was not very attentive and seemed to forget about us a lot. I had the Pescatore which was shrimp, calamari, mussels and scallops over pasta in a tomato based sauce. Had 2 glasses of Rodney Strong Merlot. The bill with tip was \$68. A very pleasant evening it was! One side note: I have become so accustomed to Cajun spices that the shrimp and scallops in my pasta seemed bland in comparison.

~

May 05, 2012 cajun cooking

Worked in the garden putting the rail back up for the climbing roses. After lunch we went to the greenhouse and got a gutter end from house 1. Took a 4.5 inch white PVC pipe from the Seagrove Farms pond scraps

and used it as a downspout. At 5 PM we had a heavy thunderstorm that washed away a river through the flower bed. I don't think any kind of drain would have helped. We'll fix it in the morning. I also started making a shrimp etouffe for the Tilapia filets.

Dinner was salad

greens with pepper jelly vinaigrette, Tilapia filets with shrimp etouffee, and a very hot and spicy corn machoux. All this with Shiraz and moose tracks ice cream for desert. Yum. Libbie got a call late in the evening from John. Mary is in intensive care with bacterial meningitis. Wow, she's the healthiest of the sisters.

~

May 06, 2012 repairs

Bought 2 bags of mulch at HD and returned the parts I had bought to make a downspout. Didn't need them because the old greenhouse downspout was adequate. Repaired the spots in the flower garden that were washed out by the rain. Our bucket shows that we received 3 inches of rain yesterday!!!! Dinner was Libbie's homemade pizza. She made fresh dough from scratch.

~

May 07, 2012 Magnolia painting

Went to Rocky's workshop at Jerry's this morning. There wasn't enough time to finish the magnolia painting but I learned a lot. Now I have to practice. In the afternoon I worked a little on the AVSA photobook donation then listened to Walkure live on Sirius. I stayed until the end which was almost midnight. I also sent in an email with my favorite 3 operas this season. Dinner this evening was Trader Joes barbecue on sandwich rounds.

~

May 08, 2012 car appt

Went to a 9:30 appt at Leith for 15,000 mile service on my Corolla. This took all mornng. I didn't get out of there until 11 PM. Dropped the

IRA withdrawal off at Scottrade in Cary then went to Fairview for Eggplants and tomato plants. Didn't do too much today. Dinner was Briyani.

~

May 09, 2012 butterfly bushes

It rained pretty heavy this afternoon but before then I planted the eggplants and tomato plants purchased this week. Still have to get the squash and beans in the ground. I unplugged the electric fence and didn't remember it until I woke up at midnight. Put on a robe and plugged it in via flashlight. Dinner tonight was lobster ravioli from Trader Joes. We had done a Trader Joes trip earlier as well as the farmers market. Picked up 2 butterfly bushes for the backyard.

~

May 10, 2012 photo album

Went out to work in the garden but it was wet and also cool. Walked up to the top of the hill in back and looked at where I need to spray with the roundup. Finished up the photo book for AVSA and sent it to MyPublisher using the groupon coupon. Shipping via Fedex is another \$12. which is on top of the \$19 for the coupon. I made dinner tonight consisting of tilapia filets, corn Mach Choux, salad with pepper jelly topped with blue cheese. This was accompanied by Shiraz.

~

May 11, 2012 Planting

Finished up the garden stuff - planted the Dahlia, put stakes in all the tomatoes and planted the watermelon in the greenhouse. It doesn't sound like much but I was tired after all this. Picked up some Pork chops at Krogers whcih we had with corn Mach choux, salad and Shiraz. Very nice.

~

May 12, 2012 Joe arrives

Joe came this morning. I cleaned the garage and put everything away that was on the workbench. while vacuuming in the garage, Joe arrived from TN. We spent a lot of the day talking. I showed him my Arduino stuff and the light sensor I want to get running. In the evening I was reading light with the thing. Dinner was Smithfields takeout with Yuengling. We had pulled pork, hush puppies, slaw and BBQ Beans. Nice.

~

May 13, 2012 pizza

I spent a lot of the day working on the light sensor for the greenhouse. I can read the sensor, convert to footcandles and put the data out as a serial stream. I had trouble getting the device to work with the Xbee. The trouble turned out to be getting enough voltage to power the thing. I had to jumper the batt and input terminals essentially bypassing the battery charge regulator. While Joe and Libbie went to the Farmers Market I planted the butterfly bushes just before it started to rain which was a good thing and lucky timing. Joe made a lot of small and creative pizzas including a basil, a tomoat and a spinach pizza. He also made a BBQ pizza and a calzone type pizza. Lots of food. We had this with some Yuengling Black and Tan beer.

~

May 14, 2012 rain

Joe started back this morning. Unfortunately he will encounter heavy rain on his trip. It arrived here around noon and rained all afternoon. I worked on the software for the light meter. Dinner was a BLT.

~

May 15, 2012 lazy

It's a cool yucky day. I perused some of the BP stuff and also downloaded all of Popular Mechanics from 1905. This was a 41 gigabyte download! Spoke with Dr Chen in NJ today. Aunt Helen is in the hospital with

pneumonia and enlarged kidneys. I gave a verbal authorization to go ahead with surgery to install a drain in her kidneys. Libbie went to a violet meeting at Sheila's Senior Center with Joanne Raymer and Sylvia. I didn't too much today, it was a lazy day. Dinner was pasta from the Kroger grocery trip this afternoon.

~

May 16, 2012 sluice way

Did some garden repair today from the rain and also cut and painted a piece of hardy board to construct a sluice for the greenhouse roof drain. This seems to be the way to go. We need a heavy rain to test it. Dinner was curry chicken which was outstanding. It's been a while since we had this.

~

May 17, 2012 road scholar Chicago

Worked on getting the sprinklers hooked to the timer today. All this is in prep for our trip up north in June. I also signed up for the Road Scholar Chicago trip today. This seems to be the best way to stay in the middle of it all and see everything. Dinner was Cajun night. We had tilapia with Cajun rub, brown rice, peas and salad with pepper vinaigrette dressing.

~

May 18, 2012 productive

This turned into a pretty productive day. I started out mowing the lawn then went to the grocery store for milk and more bacon. In the afternoon I put 3 gallons of Roundup in the sprayer tank and walked the property line spraying brush and grape vines. It could use another pass but later. Dinner was salmon, penne pasta with veggies and Chardonnay. We had carrot cake for desert. I started looking at communicating over TCP today for the Arduino data collector module. I'll still use the Arduino for tmeperature gathering as well as wireless Xbee reception

but I'll probably send this stuff to Traviata for graphing, pachube updates and web services. My other thought was to put Ubuntu on the Zotac machine which has a dual Atom. I could then use the machine for NCID as well.

~

May 19, 2012 farmers market

Made a Farmers Market trip this morning and picked up a couple of shasta daisy's from our favorite vendor. Mowed the back yard but I was too tired to do much else. Dinner was Pork chops with corn and salad with a bottle of Shiraz.

~

May 20, 2012 Artsplosure

We went to Artsplosure this morning. My overall impression was that it is a high quality art show with many vendors. Different this year was the Impressionists garden, a series of sculptures replicating famous paintings by Renoir and Manet on Fayetteville Street. Seward Johnson, the sculptor, made life sized sculptures which were placed in flower gardens. The overall effect was stunning. I posted some of the pics on Facebook. Libbie made her pizza from scratch today since she didn't have any dough frozen. It was quite good. I took up the light meter again, trying to get it to read and transmit readings to the upstairs computer in my office.

~

May 21, 2012 Irrigation

This morning I started on the irrigation in the greenhouse. I think a mister at each end will do the trick. Had to run the flower garden watering for 15 minutes this morning because it's so dry out. It's been a week since we had rain. This also gave me a chance to label the Hydro Rain timer. I found the label on my life bits had two stations reversed. Started plumbing the new solenoid and flex tubing but that's as far as I got. Came in to do click n ship then played with the light

sensor some more. I now have the receiving CPU correctly interpreting the packet but the data is not going to Pachube. Dinner tonight was Trader Joes BBQ.

~

May 22, 2012 Irrigation and stuff

Early in the morning I worked on pictures from April 25 and April 26. It was supposed to rain today but it only looks cloudy. I finished up by 11 am and went to both Trader Joes and Kroger. When I came back I resumed on plumbing the greenhouse irrigation. I sure do get sweaty doing this job. It's not that hot today. It looks like I will probably have to use the Arduino timer I built since it will allow the most flexibility in a schedule. If i can get something working talking back to Traviata or a Linux machine it would be super but I have my doubts. I need to get Libbie's latest inventory and the latest pictures on the website which interferes with working on the timer. In the meantime, the light sensor still is not displaying correctly. Bummer! Dinner was Lobster ravioli from Trader Joes.

~

May 23, 2012 Irrigation

Finished the irrigation plumbing in the greenhouse and then started looking at the timer. I will use my relay board with a Boardino and an RTC. The big job is going to be Xbee communications with the thing to set the watering time. Dinner was chicken Curry. Nice.

~

May 24, 2012 Water

I installed Ubuntu Linux on the Dual Atom today. It seems pretty snappy. I now need to get a Xampp package for it so I can do server type things. I want this box for serial communications with an NCID modem and also TCP communications with an Arduino or possibly Xbee too the Arduino. In the afternoon I tried to hook waterers to the butterfly bush but failed. The plugs I used are solid plugs rather than taps for

water lines. Didn't know I had these. Had to run the waterers today for the flower garden and for the grow boxes. In the evening we had a Cajun night. I made bread pudding and broiled some Tilapia while Libbie made corn Mach Choux and the Praline sauce. We had this with Shiraz and a salad with the Louisiana Vinaigrette dressing and blue cheese.

~

May 25, 2012 Shopping

This was considered a wasted day. We spent all day shopping. Went to AgriSupply for roundup and a pesticide duster. Next stop was Wyatt Quarles for a few bags of potting soil. Stopped into BJ's and got ribs and yeast. Saw Brian Stevens there. He was picking up Ice on the way to the beach. Next stop was the Credit Union to get \$20 cash by cashing the Hoover rebate check. Stopped into the Farmers Market for peaches, beets, potatoes and tomatoes. Dinner was Krogers frozen salmon filets with beets and potatoes and a salad with LA pepper dressing. Libbie needed gas so we took both cars to Krogers and filled up for \$3.15 per gallon using grocery points which was a 40 cents discount.

~

May 26, 2012 mowing

I mowed the lawn this morning and then took a quick shower after lunch because Jack and Barbara were coming over. I also got the bubblers working on the butterfly bush. Jack came and brought some plants one of which I will need to add another bubbler to because it's in a large pot next to the deck. Dinner was ribs with beets, potato and shiraz and salad with LA pepper dressing.

~

May 27, 2012 Timer

In the morning I installed Fedora 16 Linux on the Zotac Atom processor. I also got Xampp installed and running. Autostart is a challenge. I'm also having trouble getting a fixed IP on the device. Today I mounted

the Flower Timer and the LCD in the plastic case. Had to solder connectors on the LCD backpack and the LCD module then hook the I2C lines up to the relay 4 board. All this went pretty well. We had a nice surprise this afternoon as the skies opened up and the rain came down in buckets. This was a welcome sight for the flower garden. Dinner was Libbie's super pizza.

~

May 28, 2012 Timer Software

During the morning shows I worked on the Flower Timer software. It's coming along pretty good. I'm impressed with the LCD backpack module. It significantly cuts down on the LCD wiring. There's a lot of software involved with the timer. Dinner was salad with LA pepper dressing and curry chicken over whole grain pasta.

~

May 29, 2012 timer

Set the timer up for a violet tower watering. Shelf 204 doesn't seem to have watered. Don't know what's wrong. Will diagnose this later. Dinner was BBQ chicken with potatoes and beets. Yesterday was memorial day so today Libbie is shipping. Lots of click and ship labels to produce. Rebuilt one fluorescent light upstairs that did not come on anymore. Put the garbage out this afternoon for morning pickup instead of yesterday because pickup has slipped a day due to Memorial Day.

~

May 30, 2012 tilapia

The tropical storm Beryl remnants are passing through this morning. The rain gauge shows we got 3/4 inch of rain. The sun came out in the afternoon. When the sun arrived we went to the Farmers Market. It was a good time to go there. Dinner was grilled tilapia with Thomas's sauce. It's better with cajun rub. We had this with the first local corn of the season.

~

May 31, 2012 flower timer

I finished the flower timer software this morning and worked on packaging it up. Mounted the timer on the wall along with a box to contain the power warts. Worked outside on the water hoses for the grow boxes. We currently have a small pepper, a small cuke and a small tomato. Looking good. Wired up the two new solenoids in the greenhouse for a pretty full day. Dinner was grilled chicken with beets and potatoes. Very nice.

~

June 01, 2012 rain

This is First Friday but we chose not to go out today. Instead we dined on Tilapia with Baked beans with chipotle and salad and a very nice bottle Rodney Strong Cabernet that came from Walmart today. I finished debugging the timer. We went to Walmart because Libbie broke her Mouse. We had more rain this evening. It has rained a little up to a half inch each day this week.

~

June 02, 2012 ribs

I hit the road running today. Changed the ballast in two of the fluorescent fixtures, tied the tomatoes and peppers and updated the Bluebird website. The website was a challenge because I had to delete some menu items which are major changes to the software. Dinner was ribs with shiraz and Olanthe corn from Kroger.

~

June 03, 2012 water timers

Finished hooking up the timers and testing them. The grow boxes will come on for one minute every day. There are now two solenoids running

the 6 boxes, 3 grow boxes for each one. The veggies really look good. I had to spray Orthene on the Mints since one of them had mealy bugs.

Interestingly while I was working on my computer I heard the waterers come on outside. I looked and we did the 15 second test cycle of the greenhouse and the outdoor flower garden. The cycle was still programmed from previous testing only now all the wiring is hooked up.

Dinner was Libbie's homemade pizza. We took pictures this afternoon of a dozen or so violets that were in bloom but missing on the website.

Now I need to process the pictures. Late at night I gathered all the website comments I have collected and forwarded them to the board with my comments.

~

June 04, 2012 busy

This was a busy day. Besides the normal click n ship I programmed the violet towers for watering and also got a watering cycle of every 4 days programmed into the Flower Timer. This took more than I expected since I had lots of errors. It was because I defined the DateTime variable inside an if/else loop which it wasn't happy about. It's fixed now. Dinner tonight was Briyani. Spoke with Joe this afternoon. He picked up another support job for a company that builds light towers on factory floors.

~

June 05, 2012 Travel to WV

This is a comfortable morning at home. The garbage was collected this morning, we rolled the cans back to the home and left at 2:15. Made it to Beckley, WV by 6:30 in a very leisurely drive. Visited the Tamrack craft center which is about a half mile from our hotel then parked the car at the hotel and walked to Pasquales Italian restaurant next door. The food and the service was outstanding. We both had Shiraz with salad, Italian dressing and a delicious eggplant parmesan Pasta el Forna. It was quite good.

~

June 06, 2012 travel to Detroit

We woke to a light rain outside. Had the Comfort Inn breakfast then got going by 8 am after gas at Beckley for 3.57. Traffic was light. We took i-77 straight up to I80 which is the Ohio Turnpike and costed us 7.50 to Toledo. Got off onto 280 to I75 in Toledo and stopped for gas at 3.46 and McDonalds lunch. This finished up my \$100 Dishnetwork rebate Visa card which was good. Registered for the convention and saw most of the usual gang - Jenny, Amy, Anne-Marie. Got the lay of the land before we went for a takeout sandwich at the Pot Belly sandwich shop. Had a quick sandwich and then went to the Nancy Hayes opening night slide show. Nancy does a great job presenting the slides from last year. I left after this while Libbie stayed for the grower forum. I was tired.

~

June 07, 2012 day one

went to breakfast in the foodcourt and sat with some of the Texas gang including Bill Foster. Later Brenda came in with Mahlen. We had the commercial meeting at 9, I passed out the sales tax envelopes. Next stop was the beginners forms then we picked up a lunch sandwich of turkey in a pita Took this up to Anne's room on the 60th floor where we had the library meeting. Andrea passed out her cupcakes at the meeting. Almost right after this meeting we started the Library Photography and finished up quickly since there were only about 500 entries. The showroom is huge for a small show. For dinner tonight we went across the street to Tom's Seafood. I had parmesan crusted tilapia with veggies and rice and a dark local brew beer. It was nice. After dinner we rode the little train around the loop of burned out and vacant buildings. It's so sad to see how bad things are in Detroit. We were panhandled out in front of the GM building when we got back.

~

June 08, 2012 AVSA Friday

Breakfast at McDonalds this morning then upstairs to the show. Did some more photography of the designs. We went late to a Basics class then

visited a beneficials lecture about predatory bugs. We had an Adiamos pizza for lunch which was pretty good. We got on the cruise this evening which was interesting. Several High Schools were having their prom. The ladies were dressed in very poofy and colorful "princess" dresses with glitter and bright tropical hot colors. Most of the dresses had no sleeves, the poor girls kept pulling the tops back up since they seemed to be quite insecure. Funny. Dinner was very good. It was a buffet with Salmon, potato salad, cole slaw, noodles and tortellini. We purchased wine with dinner for \$5 per glass.

~

June 09, 2012 Last Day AVSA

After the traditional McDonalds breakfast we went to a "Last task of Judging" seminar. It was dry and boring. Tried for lunch at PotBelly's but they were closed. So were the other sandwich shops but we went to Subway and split a foot long turkey which was fine. I really enjoyed the David Thompson lecture on Streps. He was quite informative. I took lots of notes. David can do a great job talking about his Streps. Afterwards I collected the sales tax and went to the room to count it. Wrote the total on an envelope along with the amounts of the 3 checks and gave the whole thing to Kathy Lahti. Richard Nicholas made a haul of Streps from David Thompson. He was nice enough to share with us. We bought his duplicates, 6 of them for \$25. We went over to dinner tonight at the Italian restaurant along the river in front of GM. It was OK but dinner was \$121 with tip. Ouch.

~

June 10, 2012 chicago

The food court was closed this morning. Packed the car up and stopped at an iHop on the way to the Laundromat. The sign on the door said this is a pistol free zone. Our Senior omelet was very good - lots of bacon and cheese. Too much food. Next the Harbortown laundry was the nicest we have seen. It was very clean, had parking in front and WiFi. What a surprise. When we got going we found the ramps on I94 were all closed. Drove many miles through very run down areas with burned out and abandoned houses. It looked like a combat zone. Many other homes were torn down but many still remain that need tearing down. This

is a disaster. Found the Interstate and drove to Chicago. It was \$5.60 in tolls. When we got to Chicago we immediately were in a traffic jam. Got off 90 and took city streets for the last few miles. Put the car in a parking garage and rolled our suitcases down the street for checkin. The hotel is great. It's old and the rooms are small but nice. Dinner at McCormick and Schmick, a very nice upscale seafood restaurant.

~

June 11, 2012 Chicago Architecture

Up early, actually a few minutes too early for breakfast. The clock in our room is fast. We will fix that! Nice continental cold breakfast, nothing special. The bagels are good. The coffee is also. Did a bus tour of the amazing Chicago architecture. This was very impressive. our guide, Joe, is also amazing. We had a delicious lunch in Greektown complete with Baklava desert. On the bus again with stops at a Univ of Ill chapel, the Chicago skyline and Buckingham fountain. After the tour, Libbie and I rested up then walked up to Heaven on Seventh for dinner. I had a wonderful BBQ salmon with gumbo as an appetizer and veggies consisting of trinity mix and Tasso. This was yummy and accompanied by a Ragin Rita which is the house specialty on Monday Margarita night. After dinner we got on a #3 bus and went down to a rock concert at Millenium Park under the Gehry designed concert shell. We next went through a garden and walked to the Buckingham Fountain. Saw the fountain shoot off at 9 with coordinated music, lights and water. It was lovely. Hauled ourselves back up to Michigan and waited 15 minutes for the #6 bus to take us back to Wacker. It was a fun evening.

~

June 12, 2012 Willis

After the hotel continental breakfast we got on a school bus and went to the Federal Reserve. We got a lecture from a very good economist. i thought he ha a good command of facts, figures and numbers but others

said he didn't answer the questions. We then saw a movie of what the Fed does then visited the Fed museum. Next stop was Willis tower. Went to the top and had my picture taken with Miss Illinois. Walked out on the glass shelves above the street, it was fun. We had personal deep dish pizza for lunch. I had the spinach. Libbie had the cheese then we tasted each others. I liked the Spinach better. Next stop was the Art Museum. Joe led us on a discussion of the Rainy Paris Street then a few other keynote works including American Gothic and some Modern pieces by Picasso and others. It was highly enjoyable. Dinner was at the Bacio in the hotel. they had a very tasty buffet set up for us. Our only problem was they ran out of desert.

~

June 13, 2012 Field Museum

After breakfast today we went to the Field Museum. The guides weren't very good at the Field so we wandered on our own then went to lunch where I had a veggie sandwich which was cheese and tomato. Did not care for this museum but afterward had a lovely walk through the park to the Art museum. We sat outside and did some people watching in the garden courtyard before going inside using Andrea's member pass. Used the bathrooms then went upstairs to the impressionists. We met Joe our guide from yesterday inside the museum. He seemed to have a small class he was lecturing. We stayed around for two Monet paintings then started doing rooms of paintings on our own. I thoroughly enjoyed the museum. This is the treat and highlight of the tour. We were incredibly tired when it was only 4 PM so we took a bus home and rested before going out for dinner. We had Giordano deep dish mushroom pizza and Sam Adams beer. It hit the spot perfectly. Came home very tired and went straight to bed.

~

June 14, 2012 Architecture

After breakfast we got on the school bus and went to the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the Illinois Building and then to the Fox and Obel cafe in a high end grocery store. My sandwich was one of the best ever. The bread was to die for. We then walked around the corner to the boat dock for the Architectural Tour by boat. That was fantastic. We saw

all the buildings from the water and got a narrated tour. When we got back I didn't care to wait for the elevator so I ran up 12 flights of stairs. It wasn't bad although I was winded. It gave me energy to go out with Libbie to the popcorn store next to the theater on Randolph. What a treat. The popcorn was yummy. We picked up some for Andrea and our host. Dinner tonight was at the Elephant and Castle, a pub on N Wabash on the turn of the el. Nice buffet but crowded room for the size of our group. Dinner was fish n chips with slaw and green beans. Desert was bread pudding and cookie with coffee.

~

June 15, 2012 Last day - Andi's

This morning after breakfast we checked out and put our suitcases in our car down the street at 111 E Wacker in the parking garage. Got our parking voucher validated at the hotel so it was \$120 instead of \$190. We toured the Chicago History Museum which was pretty interesting. Lots of Chicago history on view. Lunch was a Chicago Hot Dog with all the trimmings. After the bus brought us back we navigated the parking garage and got out on Michigan to go to Congress for the start of Andrea's instructions. Followed them at 1 PM as we made our way through stop and go traffic on the Eisenhower Expressway. Picked up a bottle of Merlot in Downtown Downers Grove then to Andrea's house. We enjoyed our time but wow, was it ever smokey for our tastes. We got the tour of her addition, a lovely BBQ of ribs, steak, salad, corn, Margarita's and Key Lime Pie. We really enjoyed her cute little dog named Ruby. Leftn there very tired and crashed at Bonnie's house. Bonnie is a widow and Andrea's Mothers friend.

~

June 16, 2012 Drive home

Bonnie had cereal and coffee for us in the morning. We got going at 8 am. Traffic was easy. Stopped up the road for coffee and McDonalds. In Indiana we got some gas at a Krogers just before Cincinnati. Stopped at Beckley for dinner at McDonalds and gas for 3.57. Made it into NC right around dark at 9 PM. Around 11 I was stopped on US 64 in Siler City for going 70 in a 55 zone. He let me go because his printer was jammed. Lucky. No speeding for me the rest of the way home. Home

at 11:30.

~

June 17, 2012 recovery

This was unpacking and settling day. Had to deal with sorting and backing up all our photos and also did some garden maintenance. Sprayed Malathion, dusted eggplants and weeded. Dinner was Libbie's great pizza.

~

June 18, 2012 shipping

Did a lot of click n ship for the 45 orders that were backed up. Went to the CU to sign for my new cashback Visa card. Dismayed to see even more monitors on the walls. Finished the Chicgo photo book and submitted it to Shutterfly. I really don't like shutterfly. Dinner was a roast chicken from Krogers with steamfresh pasta.

~

June 19, 2012 Arduino stuff

Libbie did a few more of the orders which I did click and ship for. I did some catch up on the accounting and also messed around on eBay looking at Arduino stuff. I placed an order for some Chinese Arduinos, a mega or two, an ethernet shield. I also went to Adafruit and ordered a USB microscope as well as another RTC and some LCD stuff. I waited till we were back before ordering this stuff. I did a major grocery run and visited both Trader Joes and Krogers. Dinner was lobster ravioli from Trader joes.

~

June 20, 2012 Violet Club

We scrambled this morning getting the porch and house cleaned for Violet Club. We turned the A/C on for the first time this season. I put out

a buffet of broccoli salad which I made, potato salad, chicken salad and tuna salad on buns with chips. I also made iced tea by dipping 5 tea bags in 8 cups of water. It went over well. The meeting was excellent, Libbie did a grow to show demo. We had one new member, Catherine, and Felicia also showed up. She is going to contact hotels in Durham for MAAVS. Dinner was some of the leftover salads with slices of the rotisserie chicken.

~

June 21, 2012 gardening

Nancy came over this morning to work with Libbie in the greenhouse. I went onto the roof and blew the pine needles off the greenhouse then put the shade cloth over the original shade. This is the first day of summer and the light is brighter so we needed more shade. After this I worked in the garden tying the tomatoes, harvesting the cucumbers from the cucumber vines which had died for unknown reasons. Next was deadheading the flower garden All this work really tired me out. We went to the Farmers Market before lunch and bought 7 more plants from Longhill Nursery, the guy in the straw hat. It really started pouring when we were there. We both got wet picking out plants. Once home I finished reading Creep by Karen Hillier on my nook then briefly napped. Libbie made corn machu which was fantastic using fresh corn. I cooked cajun rubbed tilapia under the broiler. We had it with Barefoot Cellars Merlot which was great. I went out to Kroger after dinner and got BlueBell Ice Cream, three Dessert flavor. Yummy.

~

June 22, 2012 busy

Worked outside this morning first planting our Farmers Market purchases then I mixed up some Roundup and did the fence as well as a trip up to the fence line in back. In the PM I read the Amish romance which I'm enjoying and listened to Satygraha which is on my Nook. Dinner was grilled chicken with Corn Mach Shoue an Shiraz. Had Bluebell Three desert on the back porch after dinner while we watched it rain.

~

June 23, 2012 shrimp

Worked outside today on the garden. Picked up some bamboo stakes for the zinnias which are falling down. The flowers are growing nicely. Planted the cone flower and the Licorice plant that I missed yesterday.

This should do it for a while. Started draining the hottub so that we could remove the pump and water heater. The element seems to be bad and the pump is leaking. Both are available on eBay for around \$20 each. Will wait till I get the motor out before ordering the seals in case I can't remove the rotor from the shaft. Dinner was shrimp on the Barbi with Mach choux and Barefoot cellars cabernet. Desert was Bluebell ice cream. Totally delightful evening. I will miss Libbie when she's at her parents this week although I can now cook for myself quite well.

~

June 24, 2012 hot tub repair

Chose to skip RLT and the Bolshoi today so we could get a little more done around here. Went to Home Depot for more stakes for Libbie's tying work. On the way back I checked our mailbox and found we had not retrieved the mail yesterday (Saturday). Our photo book from shutterfly was in the mail. It came out quite nix with just a few exceptions. I'm happy. Successfully removed the pump and seals from the hottub. Ordered replacements on eBay. This will probably take a week to arrive.

I spent some time looking at using a web proxy which allows a browser to open a socket in web proxy software which handles sending and receiving data out the serial port. I found this was pretty complicated and that a better way to do this was to use PHP on a server. I think if Traviata had the PHP code and the serial port hooked to an Arduino, comm would result. Another way would be to use the PHP code on Traviata and go out the web interface to a sprinkler timer arduino. This has lots of possibilities. The Arduino would not be doing the web serving function, just straight TCP processing. ANY kind of session would work, Telnet, SMS, private TCP/IP message, etc. Libbie made another great pizza, this time using a pepper from the garden. Yummy.

~

June 25, 2012 Microscope

Lots of reading today about interfacing to my Sprinkler. The Adafruit stuff came. The USB microscope seems to be flimsy but the electronics are OK. I assembled a TV B Gone kit as well as another RTC and an LCD shield. I have a few things I want to try with both of these. Helped Libbie scramble around getting ready for her trip tomorrow. Dinner was a pulled pork BBQ from Trader Joes with Blue Bell Mint Chip Ice Cream.

~

June 26, 2012 calibre

Took Libbie to the airport at 4:40 am for her 6 am flight. We took 40 and got to the airport at 5. Went home, changed cars and picked the Doggets up at 6:45 in the Prius. Used this car because they were bringing the bedding to their vacation trip in Calif. They had an 8:30 flight.

Came back and did a lot of reading. I set up Calibre as a Server on Traviata. It will serve magazines so I tried Consumer Reports. It worked. Dinner was fried chicken from Kroger.

~

June 27, 2012 spot light

Worked some more on Calibre and eBooks in general. Repaired the spotlight over the grill. It was hanging by it's wires because the metal mount had split open. This repair went well and now the new light works. Dinner was fried chicken pieces and pie.

~

June 28, 2012 walking

Did some light work in the garden then took a 3 mile walk around the lake. My butt hurt from the long walk. I really like the new sidewalks installed in front of Buckingham. dinner was a beanburger.

~

June 29, 2012 hot

Temps were ridiculously high today. The house was cool, however. I finished installing the LED spotlight shining onto the driveway. This will be a replacement for the two lights on the Gum tree in front of the house that quite a few months ago. This morning I was able to sucessfully get the watering going for the backyard and greenhouse. The problem was a timer variable was only an 8 bit var which meant a max value of 255 seconds. By making it 16 bits it can hold a larger number of seconds. Dinner was fried chicken and key lime pie.

~

June 30, 2012 broken

There was a tremendous wind storm last night. the power went out and the generator took over. Unfortunatly Traviata the server will not boot. Changed the generator oil then spent the day researching motherboard and whole computer replacements for Traviata. Went to Walmart to get the generator oil and perused the computers they have in the store. Also looked at BJ's as well as the office stores. Nothing jumped out at me. I guess it's either order from Newegg and wait or deal with TigerDirect which I hate to do. Dinner was French bread pizza, supreme model wth banana chocolate ice cream.

~

July 01, 2012 Traviata II

Went to Tigerdirect and got an AMD Motherboard by MSI, an A6 triple core chip and 4 gigs of memory.

Got it all installed into the Traviata

case. Windowss Server 2003 crashed twice trying to get this installed..

I'm

running a memory test from Ubuntu to rule out hardware problems.

Libbie is coming back Tuesday! Crap,

where did the time go? Dinner

was French Bread pizza by Stouffers.

~

July 02, 2012 purchased win 7 pro

Bought a copy of Windows 7 pro off Craigslist. Met the guy in the Cary Amtrak parking lot. Paid \$75 cash which was worth it. Still having install troubles. Ubuntu server won't install, Win server 2003 won't install.

The only thing that works is the Win 7 ISO. Spent alot of the day configuring the new server. It's getting closer to reality. Dinner was French Bread pizza again.

~

July 03, 2012 loading windows 7

Started by loading the new Win 7 Pro onto the server but it got an error. Next I tried the ISO and then did all the updates. This seemed to work. I used the serial number from the new Win 7 purchase and it activated OK. Tried the remote desktop and had some success. Could not get UniServer to run. Need some serious debug. In the meantime I transferred all the files from the old IDE C drive of Traviata using an external hard drive case. I also mounted the old 750 meg drive into the Rosewill aluminum cabinet and labeled it "Tools". Now all three Rosewill external enclosures have SATA drives.

This morning

I did the groceries and then the Credit Union to get the \$100 for the copy of Windows 7. Stopped in to Walgreens to get a refill of my prescription and also get the Aetna PPO card on file. The card has prescription drug coverage. While waiting for the prescription to be filled I stopped into Office Max and got 2 wheels for my office chair.

this has been broken a while, the sales guy in the store was no help. He didn't even know there was such a thing. I found the wheels with the office furniture hanging on a pegboard. Libbie's plane came in at 8:15 pm instead of 7:45, she didn't know why it was late. There was a thunderstorm threatening the airport when I went over there but fortunately she was able to get in without problems. I made a PB and J sandwich and a banana for her because of her late arrival with no dinner. I also had a PBnJ sandwich for dinner along with a slice of watermelon.

~

July 04, 2012 Big Day

WooHoo!!! This is the first time in a long time that I can access the blog. Yesterday I successfully installed Windows 7 Pro on the new Traviata hardware. Proceeded to remove passwords that were stopping access to the UniServer. A lot of the old server is working. The biggest obstacle was the passwords. I'm not sure I want to run this open ended on my Traviata server which is public. I may end up with the passwords again, but for now I'm happy.

Libbie picked up hotdogs for lunch.

they were great with onions and mustard. Yum. I worked some more on Traviata and got the Music Server running. next step will be the art servers. If not, then using Jalbu is a possibility. This also means the VideoDb is hosed although I haven't used that very much.

Ran over

to Krogers and picked up some wine for dinner. Libbie cooked scallops over Brown Rice which we had with Ravenwood Zin. Nice.

~

July 05, 2012 water

Spent the whole day reqrting the serial data parsing routine on Mesitersinger. I'm very happy with the results. I now have a rock solid serial parse routine. Dinner this evening was Briyani. I ended up running the Flower Garden watering for 10 minutes. The garden is wilting pretty bad in the 100 degree heat.

~

July 06, 2012 Thunder Storm

Tied the tomatoes this morning. They are really looking good, the eggplant is great as well. Spent the day trying to get real data to work with Meistersinger. No deal. did some extensive debugging and have found that the one wire routines are not working. the new code I wrote to parse serial data works like a champ. I'm going to try a different One Wire Library. There supposedly is a new one maintained by Bill Stoffregen. The new version of Arduino may have a lot to do with this. Dinner tonight was shrimp on the Barbie with Shiraz and fresh Farmers Market corn which we picked up today. the Farmers Daughters are out with their short shorts and pickup trucks selling corn. I like summer. We had a tremendous thunder storm this evening at 4:30. We got a much needed 1 1/2 inch rain but also tremendous wind and many close lightning strikes including one in the backyard.

~

July 07, 2012 Happy

Last night I switched to the latest UniServer and copied my data over. Surprisingly, all the MySQL apps are now working such as the magazine server and the art server. This wasn't working before. I'm happy. I'm not happy by the fact that Windows installed updates and restarted my server overnight. Went outside this morning to fix storm damage. A tree fell on the shed, no damage. Cut it up and brought the logs to the pile. Did a quick front yard and driveway pickup and came in to shower off. It's hot and extremely humid outside. Did a grocery run for Mach Choux ingredients then blew the driveway off. I have a sore under my left arm, I think it may be an allergic reaction to deodorant. Hope it's not serious. Dinner was corn mach choux, wild caught sockeye salmon and shiraz. Dessert was pralines and cream ice cream by blue bell. I finally got a good handle on the temperature sensors. There are two types in the house, an 18b20 and an 18s20, and the software also has a 2.1 library that does a better job in handling the two types.

~

July 08, 2012 Yummy

I continued to work on the temperature sensors. I finally got them extremely reliable. When I tried it with COSM, COSM is reported an error. I started studying online versions of COSM feeds. Outdoors it was another hot one. I mowed the lawn in the morning out front and fertilized the flowers. I noticed the Hydro timer got reset after the thunderstorm, This is not too good. I'll have to switch over to using my Arduino based code. Libbie made a wonderful pizza from scratch once again. She used our garden peppers as one of the toppings and her home grown basil. Yummy

~

July 09, 2012 COSM

Still working on COSM software today. Had a dentist appt first thing this morning then continued COSM. It was hot in the plant room so I brought the 10,000 BTU AC unit up from the shed and mounted it in the front window. It cools very well. I will be mounting this on a more permanent basis in the knee wall. Started doing a cleanup of the workshop, hoping to fill the garbage can before it goes out to the street. Dinner tonight was leftover corn Mach choux and BBQ chicken tenders. Excellent as usual.

~

July 10, 2012 IR

Groceries this morning in the rain. We got almost 1.5 inches in the past few days which is great news for the garden, especially since I put down some 8-8-8 granules over the weekend. I started capturing the GE A/C remote codes with an Arduino. Hooked up an IR receiver and the scope. Using the Lady Ada tutorials on IR I was able to capture and measure the codes with the Arduino Uno which is a Chinese knock off from eBay. Had to load the serial drivers which I found out are located in the Arduino driver directory. Very convenient.

Dinner tonight

was Carolina chopped BBQ from BrookwoodFarms. This was a tub from Kroger. Nice rain today as I moved a full garbage can to the street.

~

July 11, 2012 More IR

This was another day of working on receiving IR codes on the Arduino. This is very educational. While doing this a mouse ran across the bedroom floor. Caught him later in the day in the Family Room in a trap baited with an Almond. I hope this is the only one in the house. It's significantly cooler outside today but we still need the aux a/c in the plant room. For dinner libbie made eggplant parmesan using one of our eggplants from the grow boxes. They seem to be really putting out the eggplant fruits with many set for harvesting.

~

July 12, 2012 PPV

Nancy came over to help Libbie. She got back from her camping trip in the California mountains last night. I used the IR library to study my remote some more before beginning to build a shield for the Arduino and a case to install everything in. Had not finished it today. this evening we had the eggplant parmigiana again along with a glass of Barefoot Shiraz. After dinner we used one of the free coupons and watched a Pay Per View Movie, "Being Flynn". It wasn't award winning material but it was passable.

~

July 13, 2012 IR

I got all the electronics mounted in an old ember development case. I can now read temperature and transmit IR with the Arduino. After a little tweaking I was able to turn the A/C unit on and off. the only issue now is that it only does it once. Have to power down and back up again for it to work again. Not sure what is going on. Will continue working on it. Dinner was corn Mach Choux with Cajun rubbed Tilapia. I

accompanied it with a cucumber salad. We had a bottle of shiraz and Moo-Lineum BlueBell Ice cream which is a vanilla with pecans, walnut, almonds, chocolate and caramel. Excellent.

~

July 14, 2012 IR continued

Did some more probing and reading about IR. I found I had the wrong schematic for TV B Gone. Took it out and did some continuity measurements.

All the output drivers are tied together to a single transistor which is then driven by an Atmega pin. This is a better design than the 1.2 schematic I was using. Found the new schematic online as ver 1.3

I eventually found that I was keeping the IR LEDs on because the final output was a "zero" which enabled the LEDs. . After the device emit the code sequence, I put a statement in to turn the LEDs off. This was a one on the output pin. This made a difference. The A/C can now be turned on or off with the test button without doing a power cycle. Dinner was Cajun rubbed Tilapia with corn Mach Choux and Shiraz. Desert was Moo Lineum ice cream.

~

July 15, 2012 flagstones

Mozart didn't activate the A/C today. Not sure why not. Went to Lowes and picked up 12 flagstones. While Libbie painted the mailbox and post I dug out spots in the path and put down the stepping stones. This was killing me in the sun. Several times I had to stop to rest or I would pass out. Wow, I'm so out of shape. The question is: What to do about it? Dinner tonight was Salmon with Corn Mach Choux, Shiraz wine and Moo-Lineum ice cream. A great endto a nice day. Some bad garden news - soemthing ate all our sunflower blossoms. We think it was a squirrel.

~

July 16, 2012 IR control

I finally got Mozart to read the room temperature and turn on the A/C when it was too hot. The missing link was the define for target temperature

was never initialized. I'm not sure how this got through the compiler. I started the conduit in the garage by threading wire into 10 foot lengths. It looks like I'll need 60 feet of wire times 2 to do the job.

Incredibly tired today, took a nap at 5:30 pm. Dinner was chicken fingers with corn mach choux and a single glass of Shiraz.

~

July 17, 2012 Conduit

Started at 9 this morning and got all the conduit up in the garage. I'm happy that the A/C unit is cycling according to the control of Mozart. This is going good. In the Pm we watered the flower garden and greenhouse using the timer. Got a text msg from jack that he was in SC at 12:20 PM and should be here in 5 hours.

Jack arrived around 6:20

pm. His hearing is better but not great. He still is only getting a few words of each sentence. Dinner was Cajun rubbed Tilapia, conr Mach choux and Blackberry Cobbler ice cream. We had Shiraz to accompany dinner.

~

July 18, 2012 Copy Files

This morning we did lots of copying from my Ebooks and magazines to Jacks backup drive. In the afternoon we copied books and tools from his backup drive to my Server. For this we ended up plugging the drive directly into the Server in the Office and then doing the copy. All went well. Dinner was pork chops, apple sauce, corn Mach Choux and Cabernet Sauvignon wine. Desert was bread pudding with a scoop of Blue Bell Southern Hospitality Ice Cream.

~

July 19, 2012 fedora

An easy day. Jack is here for the second day of his visit. His hearing is pretty limited. Today we tried installing a printer driver for the

Samsung laser on Fedora. this turned out to be a nightmare. I think I will ditch Fedora and put a version of Windows on the machine. Jack treated us to lunch at La Cosina. I had the chicken Quesadilla which had tons of chicken in it with rice and beans. Libbie had a shrimp quesadilla. Continued with the printer driver but no luck. Dinner was BBQ sandwiches with baked beans and slaw. We had Shiraz with dinner then Southern Hospitality ice cream for desert.

~

July 20, 2012 AC Status LED

Jack left around 8 this morning. Libbie commented that she wouldn't want his life. Because of his limited hearing, he lives in his own little world. He's not too aware of what is going on around him. This morning I modified the Mozart controller to activate a green LED when it thinks the A/C is on. Installed the LED and tested it. Everything is working fine. Took a walk in the back around Seagroves Farm then decided to return via Vintage Grove to the new sidewalk on Old Raleigh Rd. Total mileage is 2.15 miles. Took a shower then started reading Devil in the White City. I like it so far. The writing is good, the story so far interesting. Dinner was leftovers from the week such as a pork chop that Libbie had and the pulled pork that I had plus baked beans and slaw. Good none the less!!! Nice thunderstorm this evening. Jack sent an eMail that he got into Philly at 6:30 PM after getting stuck in traffic.

~

July 21, 2012 Libbie's Birthday

Libbie's 65th!!!! Went to Walgreens and picked up the 8x10 collage I made for her birthday then over to Lowes to pick up some more bamboo stakes and 6 more flagstones. Once home I installed the flagstones. This was mostly easily and consisted of using the hoe to rake back some bark and in some cases, digging into the underlying dirt to make a level base. I'm pretty happy with the Atom based server I built for the printer. I installed the top Amazon books of 2011 on it using Calibre and also installed a Caller ID program. I all seems to be working well. I can also use remote connection to log in with a remote connection to the server because it runs a version of Win 7 called Ultimate

which includes the features of Win 7 Pro. Did another walk up around the park in back and back via Vintage Grove. Libbie came with me. Got ready in the late afternoon for our dinner at the Fearington House. We had a thunderstorm this afternoon but skies cleared for our drive to Chapel Hill. We had the 4 course dinner which was over the top. Wow!!! Small portions, interesting flavors and incredible over the top service. It was great. My main course was Beef Tenderloin. We also tried an NC Cabernet Sauvignon from Yadkin County. It wasn't bad. I still like Rodney Strong better. We had an incredible evening with our 3 hour dinner. We drove home in a thunderstorm. I just took it slow and did not take the back roads.

~

July 22, 2012 AC outlets

Worked today on the electrical outlet for the AC in the plant room. This project was on hold while Jack was here but now I'm back to it. Finished the outlet except for some staples. Went to Home Depot to get the missing staples. Libbie and I took a 2 mile walk to the Seagrove Park then back via Vintage Grove. This is a nice way to walk without getting into the car. Libbie made her yummy pizza once again.

~

July 23, 2012 ac

Joy came over this morning to help Libbie with packing leaves. She leaves next Monday via Air Canada for her Baltic cruise. In the meantime, I put the remaining staples into the knee wall outlet then went into the garage and tied the circuit into the breaker box. I already have a supply of GE breakers from when I installed the transfer switch. Finished the wiring and plugged the AC in to the new outlet. The current transformer works. It shows a lower voltage when the AC first turns on but then is just under 3 volts when the compressor comes on. One thing I didn't count on but should have is the voltage is AC. Should know that because it's coming from a transformer. Looked at hooking up an Arduino analog input to the current sensor. I think I will use an Arduino FIO with Xbee to send the AC status. The only choice now is whether to poll or not. I did my walk again this afternoon up to

the Seagroves park and then out through Vintage Grove for 2 miles. The garden tomatoes are going strong. Picked a bunch today. There's more out there. Dinner was whole wheat spaghetti with chicken and Curry sauce. Very good!!! Dessert was Southern Hospitality Ice Cream. In the evening we had another thunderstorm which stopped the satellite reception mid way through. We were listening to Hoffman from the Met.

~

July 24, 2012 Wolfie

Worked on building Wolfie this morning. Wolfie will monitor AC current and send the results across the room to Mozart. Mozart has needed a way to determine whether the AC is on or off. Wolfie will fill this need. It uses an Arduino FIO and an Xbee module for both wireless programming and status reporting. I'm looking forward to getting something like this going. In the afternoon I took a walk through Seagroves and back through Vintage. I used the shortcut reducing the walk to 1.5 miles. Once home I had to do the Click N Ship. this was miserable. I was sitting with the sweat dripping off my body into a puddle on my chair while trying to keep salty sweat off the PC. It was a relief to jump into the shower and get cleaned up even though there was an approaching thunderstorm. The storm hit fiercely with powerful winds. We lost power but the generator did us well for over an hour. Not really needed but it was nice to have. Dinner was Briyani. After dinner I read the Devil in the White City while Parsifal was playing from the met on Sirius. Very nice. I'm really getting into the book. It's pretty interesting to see how the Chicago Worlds Fair came together in 1892.

~

July 25, 2012 storm clean up

Went to get the car registered then stopped at Trader Joes on the way home. Libbie was in the flower garden tie-ing up flowers blown over in the wind. I cleaned the driveway which was littered with twigs from the storm yesterday then I mowed the back lawn. Wow, productive! After

a 2 mile walk I started looking into programming the Xbees for wireless programming of the FIO board. Got power wired to a FIO and programmed

the transmitter half of a pair. Not sure what to do about addressing.

Dinner

was Lobster Pasta from Trader Joes with Christmas in

July ice cream for dessert.

~

July 26, 2012 Wireless

Today after some fiddling I was able to get the FIO programmed wirelessly. Mounted it in a plastic box and put a rope on it to hang it then installed it in the knee wall. It's pretty neat to load programs into the thing from the next room. Spent all day working on various algorithms to smooth out the AC measured by the A/D converter and try to detect when the A/C is running. So far it's a mixed bag. I even tried doing 100 samples of the AC waveform to get a better average. I applied a formula to calculate Irms but it wasn't consistent. I really need to convert this to DC. Dinner was the Tex Mex casserole I purchased at Trader Joes. Libbie couldn't take it. I liked it. Oh well, she has been a trooper with spicy foods but has hit her limit I guess. Dessert was the Blue Bell Christmas in July Ice cream. We had a decent thunderstorm this evening giving us a healthy dose of rain which is good for the garden.

~

July 27, 2012 Book case

Changed the Wolfie hardware to add a diode and filter cap to the Current Sensor AC output. It's now a DC signal and is detected much better by the Wolfie software. I settled for the routine that reads the A/D voltage X number of times and presents the average reading to the calling program. I'll probably go with this. We had a slight rain this evening but not enough to measure on the rain gauge. We went to Cary, the former Sorrells, and ordered a custom book case out of Oak with Early American stain finish. We paid for it and found the man we were dealing with was Mr Sorrell. Next stop was the Farmers Market for corn and peaches. Dinner was fresh corn and Pork Chops with Apple Sauce and Shiraz.

~

July 28, 2012 walking

Worked on the software for Wolfie in the morning. I can now request power status using a '?' or request actual voltage with a '#'. Took my 2 mile walk around Seagroves Park then got cleaned up and started on the hot tub pump repairs. Installed the seals and the heater element but did not finish the plumbing part of the job. Dinner was Salmon from Kroger with fresh corn on the cob and Shiraz. For dessert it was Blue Bell Moo-Lenium ice cream. This was one of Libbie's favorite. After dinner we had an evening thunderstorm but the power stayed on. I started writing a short story, "Stay at Home Mom" to practice writing. I'm pretty rusty at it. Went to bed at 11:30 fooling around with the story.

~

July 29, 2012 Engines of Change

Watched CBS Sunday this morning and enjoyed a story about the 15 cars that changed America. It was from a book by Simon and Shuster, "Engines of Change". I read part of the first chapter on the S&S website. will read the rest and mark this book as something for my reading list. Tried putting the hot tub back together and put a hundred gallons of water in to test it. Found the pump screws were not installed and ended up dumping all that water on the floor. What a mess. Soaked the carpets and made a miserable mess. We got it all cleaned up and hung the carpets to dry in time to leave for Joanne's Art Crawl. We started at her neighbor's Darryl's "Garage collage". His art is not very good. We met Jim Fatata there with a friend whose name I couldn't remember. Joanne's of course was spectacular. We met Ed and Hanna there. He was playing his sax, flute and harmonica. Ed also gave us a CD of classical music which was nice. JoAnn had a nice spread of ribs, pulled pork and slaw with lots of other fixings and Yuengling. We came home and had Blue Bell MooLineum ice cream.

~

July 30, 2012 Software

Worked some more on writing a story on Google Docs, "Stay at Home Mom". Also worked on the query response software some more. I will hook up an Atmega Arduino which has extra serial ports to monitor the query and response. Not sure how to address the extra serial ports.

Joe and Christa arrived in mid afternoon after spending the night in Asheville. We sat on the back porch and chatted a while before going out to the Pit in downtown Raleigh for dinner. I had a Lonestar dark beer and a half rack of ribs with beans and sweet potato fries.

~

July 31, 2012 not busy

We hung out with Joe and Christa today. I was able to get my walk in while Libbie and Christa went to Rex for water aerobics. We found Joe and Christa did not eat fish so we had grilled chicken with corn mach choux. Libbie and I shared a bottle of Shiraz.

~

August 01, 2012 xbee

Submitted my story to ASSTR and read some of the other highly entertaining (and erotic) stories on ASSTR. Some of them are trash, others are quite good. There's so many it's hard to find the few good ones. Tried to get my Arduino mega going. I'm able to get it to load but not sure about the Xbee yet part. In addition, the Xbee on the end of an FTDI won't communicate with the current Monitor. Not sure what's wrong. Did a nice walk this afternoon, it's relatively cool for August. For dinner we had simmer sauce with whole wheat spaghetti and Blue Bell for dessert.

~

August 02, 2012 Arduino

Wired Mozart today for wireless programming and to receive and transmit over Xbee. Had lots of problems. Built a model for programming using a Mega because it has more serial ports. Used one port to monitor communications.

Dinner was Tilapia with corn Mach Choux.

~

August 03, 2012 Arduino wireless

Screwed up an Arduino trying to do wireless programming. ended up replacing the Arduino which took a while. The Uno needs a different bootloader to reprogram wirelessly. Did not have a good copy of Mozart code. Started learning GitHub to resolve this situation. I need backups of the software. Joe arrived from Wilmington this afternoon and started prepping his pizzas. Earlier today I bought some ingredients and Libbie started making dough for the pizzas. Josh, Kelly and their kids arrived, Cami with her two and Joe, Christa and us. Josh's kids are totally out of control. I'm surprised something did not get broken. We had pizza and cupcakes which were delicious. I had one beer and went to bed stuffed.

~

August 04, 2012 Tonys Oyster Bar

Joe said Christa is very hot and uncomfortable. It's not even really hot outside for August. I got my software on GitHub. Now I will have backups and snapshots. I got tired of reflashing the router all the time. Found the Rosewill router I bought and flashed it with dd-wrt. Had a hard time getting to Traviata via external dyndns but finally solved the problem thanks to Google while in bed for the night. Had to add an exception to the port forward commands to allow a specific domain to a specific IP address. In the evening we took Joe & Christa and Cole and Emily out to dinner at Tonys Oyster Bar in McGregor Village. The damage total was \$180. After dinner we came back and had birthday cake and sang Happy Birthday to Libbie.

~

August 05, 2012 Sunday

Up early, Joe was already up when I came down just before 7. Started working on the AVSA collage. This is seriously overdue. Moat years has

this done in July. Took my walk up and around Seagroves pond. Met Joe and Christa on the dock in the pond of Seagroves. They were fishing turtles. Saw a nice bikini face up at the townhouses pool. After a shower, etc it was back to work on pictures. Lots of comments on the birthday party pics I posted this morning. Christa's cake was delicious. For dinner Christa made Boc Choy stir fry with onion, garlic, chicken over Brown Rice. Joe left around 3 today to resume work in Tennessee. The mars landing is 1:30 this evening. I hope it makes it!

~

August 06, 2012 AVSA DVD

Got up early and found that the Mars lander "Curiosity" made it. Checked Christa in at 6:30 am for her flight tomorrow then got on with the day. Putting together AVSA photos then took a nice walk. For dinner we went to Skippers Fish Fry in Apex. It was pretty good but pricy. \$38 for 3 of us. I had flounder and shrimp which came with fries and slaw. While being served I dumped a whole cup of water on myself. Bad news but it was OK. It started raining on the way home. There seems to be an upcoming period of cool wet weather which is unusual.

~

August 07, 2012 Photos

Took Christa to the airport at 5 am today for a 6:30 flight. Came back and did the Tuesday groceries after watching some GMA and Olympic crap. Went back upstairs and did a bunch more photos. As of noon I'm up to 20. It rained on and off all day but the total was only 3/8 inch. This will do. Took my walk, cleaned up then went back to pictures. I'm now up to 56. Dinner was Ramen Noodle salad that Libbie made. It was very good. Ice Cream for desert, Blue Bell Century Sundae.

~

August 08, 2012 photos

All day today and into the evening I did the AVSA horticulture photos. Wow, this is a lot of work. Still doing the 2 mile walk through vintage

Grove. It is significantly cooler outside. This is unusual for august, accompanied by almost daily rain. Dinner was Ramen noodle salad. Yes! We did a Farmers market trip this afternoon and got a watermelon, fresh corn, peaches and blueberries. Had the corn for dinner.

~

August 09, 2012 more photos

The photos got finished this morning. Still have the rest of the DVD to put together. Glenda of Austin sent a CD of her photos. While all this was going on, Kitty sent a boatload of stuff for the website for the MAAVS convention which I promptly posted. Dinner was 3 bean salad with watermelon and ice cream for desert.

~

August 10, 2012 eggplant

The A/C controller is getting to be a pain in the rear. It was on again today when it shouldn't have been. We got some more rain this evening. The bugs are getting bad. Still able to get my 2 mile walk in around seagroves pond. Worked all day on AVSA pics. I want to finish up the orticulture, actually the whole DVD. Dinner was eggplant freshly picked form the garden. We had a bottle of Sauvignon Blanc whihc was left over in the refrigerator.

~

August 11, 2012 eggplant

Worked quite a bit on wewriting the state machines for Mozart inot something simpler and less kludgy. It still is failing. Reprogrammed Wolfie to more reliably report power. Dinner was leftover eggplant lasagna.

~

August 12, 2012 basil

Made a few more changes and corrected some errors today for the Mozart controller. I think I have it performing reliably. Did a Lowes trip to get a shelf for my closet and light tubes for the towers. Researched foggers and ended up buying one from Amazon which was highly rated. We shall see. I think I will try for Florida on Tuesday. Today the mosquitoes were pretty bad so I mixed up some Malathion and sprayed the garden at dusk in order to not kill butterflies and bees. Libbie made her pizza with fresh basil and it was super yummy. the fresh basil flavor made it delicious.

~

August 13, 2012 Busy

This is a busy day. The A/C controller went through the night without error. this was a nice accomplishment. Lib also tested it by turning it on manually. A little while later it managed to turn the A/C back off. It samples the power every half hour. If it gets a synch error, it samples it several times then changes the synch status. This causes the temperature routine to notice and correct the A/C power state. Lots of different processes here. Built the people picture section of the AVSA DVD this morning then went outside and finished putting the hot tub back together. Everything seems to be working again. Filled the tub with water and set up a temperature monitor. It doesn't seem to be warming very fast.

~

August 14, 2012 Florida

Left for Sarasota this morning at 6:48. Because I have so much to do at home I really don't want to go. The Nicholas's sent the MP3 files late last night and I saved them all onto my laptop. Need to spend time and assemble them. The trip almost went well until Daytona where I hit heavy rain as I turned onto I-4. The thunder and lightning stayed with me off and on until Tampa. I lost over half an hour due to 100 miles of rain. Got to Sarasota at 6:12 PM. Everything looks good except they turned the wrong water faucet off as expected. Did not stop except for gas at Florence for 3.39 and St Mary for 3.57. Traffic was

not bad except for a car fire near Disneyworld which caused us to creep and crawl even slower than the rain.

Went out on a shopping trip

to Walmart. Picked up salad ingredients and detergents, both dishwasher and laundry. I probably should keep our laundry detergent in the lockup. The salad was not great. I had too much vinegar and it wasn't nearly as good as Cami's.

~

August 15, 2012 weather babe

Hooked the analog up to the living room TV. Channel 17 has a beautiful blonde weather babe with an hour glass figure, Shay. I did the hookup to watch GMA this morning. No milk for cereal. Did a Publix trip at 9 and got milk, fresh pineapple slices and more broccoli salad. It turned out I wasn't too hungry and dumped half the cereal bowl into the disposal. Wonder what's up with that? Anyway, it's a good start to a diet. Got to work on the AVSA photos. Selected and processed the extra photos then started adding them to a slide show with audio and captions. It's going well. Got the bicycle out and pumped up the tires then rode to Oscar Scherer when it started rumbling towards the West. HHHeaded home, I was tired anyways. Total mileage is 8 today. Oscar is 897, Central Sarasota is 894 for 6 miles roundtrip plus one mile to the trail and back for 8 miles. I'm glad I have energy since this was long but not too bad.

~

August 16, 2012 thunder

Continuous thunder and lightning from 7 am until about 4. Didn't go out except for a trip to 7-11 on Lockwood and Clark. got a fillup at 3.62.

This was a place that has the same price cash or credit which is why I go there. I Stopped at Sears and got 3 pairs of shorts and a polo shirt for \$35. The shorts were 7.99 each and the polo was 15. I also got a \$5 discount for multiple purchases. Ride my bike all the way round Stoneybrook at 4:30. the sky is clear blue again. I had the salad from dinner last night for lunch today but at 4 PM. I was hungry.

Worked some more on the main slide show. will finish it up tonight after dinner. Lots of ants in the kitchen. I've been fighting them with

409 cleaner. May have to see if they still sell Taro in the stores.

Ordered

a rack of ribs from the clubhouse. Ate half the rack and put the salad away for tomorrow. The cranberry walnut roll was to die for.

I had this with 2 bottles of Yuengling Black & white. Yummy.

On the way to the ribs I stopped in Lowes and picked up some Taro and put a few drops on the counter to get ants. Let' see how this works.

It's not supposed to be used around food prep areas. My new shorts and shirt fit perfectly. I may want a few more of the shirts from Sears, they're that good. List price says \$50 which is crap. I paid \$14.99.

It's already broken in with rib sauce down the front.

~

August 17, 2012 slow day

Woke to another morning of coastal rain. I decided to install the Android SDK but spent 4 hours downloading over a crummy 3G connection and it's still not up to date. I will start over again but from home on a good connection. I oiled the bike seat and took a ride around the neighborhood. the squeak is gone - much improved. Now, if it will only last. I also got my watercolors out and started painting a landscape. As usual, I was dissatisfied. Finished reading "Dress Not required" which was a cute 50 page sexy ebook. I enjoyed it. For dinner I warmed the leftover ribs and baked potato from last night which I had with a bottle of Yuengling. Wow, it was very good. the Tero ant killer is working well. Hundreds of ants are gathered around a drop of the stuff I put on the kitchen counter. Started gathering my things and running the washing machine for my trip home tomorrow. I can be productive at home so I'll drive Saturday. When I get home I want to try installing the Android SDK and also fix Libbie's hot tub.

~

August 18, 2012 drive home

Woke a little after 5, drove out of Stoneybrook at 6:09 in thunder and lightning. The rain was pretty light although it got a little more intense East of Orlando on I-4. I toasted a bagel which I put Cream Cheese onto before I left, it served as a nice mid morning coffee brake somewhere around Daytona. Stopped at a rest area 7 miles from JAX I-295

for a bathroom break then stopped for gas at exit 3 in GA. Another bathroom break at the SC Visitors Center and then gas at exit 174 which a little past Florence. Filled up for 3.39 per gallon. It was a Hess with a Wendys but I got out my last plum. Got off again at exit 190 in Dillon for Harbor Freight tools where I bought a belt sander and an 80 grit sanding belt. Got home around 5 PM. Went out to the Chinese place for takeout and picked up a bottle of Barefoot Cellars Merlot in Kroger. I was tired and hungry but it was a good trip overall. Looked at the bedroom paint that Libbie had done while I was gone. I need to buy new door knobs and duplex outlets in pure white to replace the bedroom stuff.

~

August 19, 2012 Rain

Rain this morning. There was a tornado alert for Roanoke Rapids which caused the TV to quit doing CBS This Morning as they switched to the tornado maps. It was eventually canceled and they resumed CBS This Morning but I missed the piece I wanted to see on weeds. I got a count of outlets, door knobs and misc and went to Home Depot in a light rain. When I got out of the store it was pouring like all get out. I got totally soaked emptying my shopping cart into the trunk. Came home and started replacing switches and Replaced all the outlets in the bedroom as well as 3 of the switches. First thing I did this morning was AVSA related. I had to make the web pages for the new intros which I then posted for the Nicholas's to narrate. This was one of the reasons I came home. I also successfully got the Eclipse IDE working with the Android SDK so that I could develop Android Apps. I also stumbled upon a nice App maker toolkit hosted by MIT. It looks great except it doesn't handle large program sizes. This is still in beta. Libbie made a fantastic pizza today - very thin white crust with homegrown basil and tomatoes. Wow, I didn't know it could be this good. Signed up online for Apex utility bill app. They now have it so you can view and pay for your utility bill online.

~

August 20, 2012 rain

It's rainy and chilly out this morning. Hard to believe it's August. started

working on the Hot Tub. Found the Pressure switch is closed. The motor won't run in this position. It needs to be open, then close when the pump starts. Ordered a new switch from a Spa vendor in California that i found on eBay. Next, it cleared a little so I tried sanding our bedroom door. the sander quit after only a few minutes. Went to Home Depot and bought a Black and Decker Sander for \$59. The Harbor Freight one I bought Saturday was a piece of junk. Thank goodness it was only \$29. Click N ship doesn't seem to be working. Called support and they said it would be 2 business days. Wow, bad news. Installed a print driver on Libbie's computer and she seems to be having better luck.

~

August 21, 2012 click n ship

Click n ship finally released my cart at noon today. The USPS is pretty slow. Did a grocery run and also did my walk around in the back. Saw a few ladies in bikinis in the pool in the back. Not bad. Dinner was BBQ on a bun.

~

August 22, 2012 tix

Saw on TV that the Southwest airfare sale ends Aug 24. Got online and bought our tickets for the Jan 1 Rose Bowl trip. We will leave Dec 24 and get home Jan 4. Price was right around \$1,000 round trip for us both. Dinner tonight was a Kroger rotisserie chicken with potato salad and baked beans (from a can).

~

August 23, 2012 wash windows

While Libbie painted the window frames I mowed the lawn by the street. It was in bad shape - very high and wet. I had to open the side shoot up to let the grass clippings out instead of mulching. After that I moved the giant ladder to the front of the house and washed the windows. Noticed that the flashing over the porch had pulled away from the

brick. will repair before i put the ladder away. Dinner was pork chops with broccoli and sweet potato. For some reason i wasn't very hungry. Did a wk in the back today, this is getting to be regular which is good.

~

August 24, 2012 ADK

I put the new pressure switch into the hot tub today without much trouble. Adjusted it and now everything works fine. I estimate that i lost only about a cup of water. Took my walk around the back. For dinner we ordered the usual Chinese take out. Stopped in Kroger and got a bottle of Barefoot Cellars Merlot when we went over to get the Chinese food. The ADK came today. That was fast, surprised that it came UPS because shipping was free from Baltimore. Now I have much studying to do.

Emptied out my closet totally today and washed the inside with borax to kill mold. When all was dry, sorted the clothes and put everything back. threw out a lot of older stuff that I no longer wear. Also tossed all the old metal hangers.

~

August 25, 2012 ADK

I studied the Google ADK a little this morning then put the cover back on the hot tub. Went upstairs and helped Libbie by painting one wall of our bedroom then putting the new door handles on. After lunch we went to Home Depot and picked up larger outlet covers and looked for a clothes rack for the laundry room. We also went Kroger and got shrimp and wine for dinner as well as Blue Bell Milk Chocolate ice cream for desert. I just read that Neil Armstrong died today. Wow, time slips by quickly. We had the shrimp with fresh corn on the cob and Shiraz for dinner.

~

August 26, 2012 VB2010

Spent the day reading tech stuff and dusting off the VB 2010.net skills.

I will use XML to store the scrapings from the order forms. I need to automate this further besides copy and pasting from the order into the VB app. Did my traditional walk - it's a beautiful day out for a change after the rain and cloudy weather. The temps were cooler as well. The pool at the condos was enjoyable - several bikini clad sun worshipers which was a delight. Libbie outdid herself with the pizza this time. The crust was thin and crispy and there was an abundance of tomato topping with fresh tomato and basil. Really good.

~

August 27, 2012 plone

Talked to the lady at Dover Downs. Their prices are out of our league. They want 4,000 for ballroom rental plus 159 a night for rooms. I also found our home telephones had a problem - instantly going to voicemail. Rebooted the Vonage device and that went away. Next I called Scott at TWU and chatted about the AVSA website. He wondered if we needed Plone or will anything do. After thinking about this all day, I sent him an eMail suggesting it may be OK to scrap it. I did quite a bit more work on the click n ship scraping module I am developing in VB2010 NET. I had to do 20 click n ships which is a good incentive to get the scraper program working. I also started looking again at slideshows in Drupal for the LSAVC website. I need to dress that site up so it looks a little better. Dinner was whole wheat spaghetti with cheese over it. The last of the Milk chocolate ice cream was desert for the evening.

~

August 28, 2012 busy

Did the grocery run, included Trader joes as well. Had much trouble printing labels. I got distracted and didn't print and lost all the labels. Took my walk and entered them again when I got back. Now there are two charges on my credit card for the labels. Will see if they go away. At 7 PM tonight Social Security called to verify my info. They also talked to Libbie and said her spousal benefit will start the same time as mine, in Dec. We hope she is eligible for 50% of mine. Dinner was trader joes pulled pork bbq on a bun. Managed to sign up for

HH Gregg credit today. It's effective immediately.

~

August 29, 2012 software

Spent the whole day working on software on and off. I also hooked up the old Dell machine and transferred more files off of it onto my backup drive. Couldn't find the Dell power supply so I used Libbie's until she wanted it back. Tried syncing some files from Gandhi to the server. The synch program I found hangs because there are too many files in one of the directories I think. Talked to an auction guy who may be coming to the greenhouse tomorrow. This hasn't been easy. Dinner was lobster ravioli.

~

August 30, 2012 Plasma TV

Chatted with Scott today about starting over with the AVSA website using Drupal. Spoke with Richard tonight and he tentatively gave me the go ahead. I will open up a web hosting account tomorrow. Tried several more phone calls to the Raleigh Clarion, left messages on all the numbers I could find and also sent an email. The auction guy never showed up although he said he was going to come over in the morning. Dinner was Briyani which was pretty good. I smoked the outdoors with the fogger to zap mosquitoes. Gave shots of smoke under the house and also under the porch. Let's see how that works. We picked up a new TV at HH Gregg today, a 50 inch plasma after going to the store and debating between plasma and LED. The deal was 0% interest for 24 months and 5% off with the HH Gregg card that I applied for online.

~

August 31, 2012 drupal

Purchased 12 months of web hosting this morning on Netfirms using their \$1 promo. Had a little trouble installing Drupal but with the help of support disabling a registers_global setting in php.ini I was able to successfully install Drupal. Set up an FTP account for myself

and Scott at TWU as well as admin access for both of us. Now I'm trying to learn th Drupal slide show module so I can place a rotating banner slide show on LSAVC and also to give me some knowledge of how to do this. It's been difficult learning this because of all the interruptions from Libbie. It's not her fault but I wish she could get a life and let me spend a few hours in peace and quiet learning this. dinner was Bok cho in a wok which was supposed to be over basmati rice but the rice got burned. This was accompanied by a bottle of shiraz. I need to cut back on the wine for weight and sleep purposes.

~

September 01, 2012 Saturday

This morning I continued with Drupal slide shows. Went outside and tied the new tomatoes then went for my walk. It's surprisingly warm today, in the 90s for Sept 1. This is also the start of the labor day holiday weekend. Spent quite a bit of the day getting on board with Drupal, looking for a way to put content in panels or blocks on a page. Dinner was ribs that Lib found at the samples counter in Kroger. She liked them so much she bought a package for 9.99 which isn't bad. We had that with broccoli and sweet potato and Shiraz.

~

September 02, 2012 drupal

The whole day was devoted to learning Drupal and trying a few things for the AVSA web site. Libbie made a really thin pizza crust and the topping was like a deep dish pizza - lots of good stuff.

~

September 03, 2012 Labor Day

I couldn't walk yesterday but I did get out today. Surprisingly the crew was putting the roof sheathing on the house next to the pond. It was pretty humid today and warm, I came back dripping wet.

Spent some

time hooking up the rest of our TV but for some reason the antenna

off the air won't work. The TV may be defective. I found a pretty good Drupal module called flexible panels but it still lacks what I'm looking for which is a pininterest like module. I will keep trying. Dinner was stuffed flounder with Basmati rice and broccoli. We had a bottle of Chardonnay with dinner to celebrate the end of Labor Day weekend. Desert was Moolineum Ice Cream.

~

September 04, 2012 busy day

This was click n ship day. Worked on figuring out how to put content into Drupal then switched over to click n ship. No walk today because I was too busy on all fronts. I had a 1 PM appointment at the Clarion for a site visit, these folks were hard to get hold of. I think the facility will do for a convention. Dinner was curried chicken over spaghetti.

~

September 05, 2012 old laptop

Reading quite a bit about Drupal. I have it installed on my laptop now after an abortive attempt at getting it working on my old Dell laptop. That thing needs a re-install of Windows to make it run. Dinner was broccoli salad.

~

September 06, 2012 learning

I spent all of today trying to learn the nuances of Drupal, constantly switching themes and getting this this thing displaying a web page mockup from Scott. Dinner was scallops over rice.

~

September 07, 2012 struggle

This is a frustrating day. I can't get the background to print in Drupal.

Spent the whole day reading and trying things. Wow is this so frustrating and the clock is counting down. Don't know what I'm going to do. Stayed up until past midnight struggling with this. Dinner was pork chops with apple sauce, broccoli and Merlot.

~

September 08, 2012 theme working

Got up early today and started over with the website. I re-installed UniServer & Drupal and then started over again but this time with the Blue Jems theme which was in the Drupal sandbox. I was able to customize this theme as my own and got the background to print like I wanted as well as the fonts and colors. this is working better for me.

Dinner tonight was Bok Choy stir fry with chicken and the rest of the Merlot. Desert was Blue Bell Mint Chip.

~

September 09, 2012 busy

Got a lot of the website working today. Took some time off and washed the window on the back porch which wore me out. We used the Consumer Reports homebrew mix. Called the Nicholas's in the evening and told them about the site. They will look at it later since their laptop was busy doing a repair during bootup. Anne also said the DVD's arrived at the office. Libbie was able to make her homemade pizza tonight despite being super busy.

~

September 10, 2012 windows

Went to Home Depot today for pond liner, a window pole and LED lightbulb for the back hallway. Did the click n Ship but did not walk today because I was too busy. In the evening I washed the outside windows using the pole. It really went well using this thing. I really need a second pole for the squeegee. Dinner was leftover Bok Choy stir fry. Libbie started a weight reduction program this evening at Rex.

~

September 11, 2012 meeting

We scrambled around this morning to get ready for TAVS. I put a temporary threshold down over the crack between the foyer and kitchen then went out to the grocery store for our normal groceries as well as food for the club lunch. Bought tuna salad, chicken salad, rolls and macaroni salad. The meeting went well, they discussed table favors for MAAVS and others made arrangements to attend MAAVS on a day trip. Dinner today was leftovers from the meeting. I discovered that Dishnetwork channel 36 will be carrying the Great Performances Met Ring cycle starting with Wagners Dream which we watched tonight. This is called UNC Ex which I didn't even know existed.

~

September 12, 2012 nothing

Finally got out for my walk today after missing for 2 days. It's noticeably cooler today, only in the 70s. Looked at how to cut coconuts for the MAAVS centerpieces, dumped that idea when Barb Ogers suggested sea shells with violets in them. Everybody liked this idea. Dinner was leftover tuna salad and macaroni salad from the Violet club meeting. I'm OK with this.

~

September 13, 2012 Walkure

I played with MySQL most of today. Nancy came over and she and Libbie worked the violets then went into the backyard to look at the flower garden. The garden is going great and looks beautiful. The avsa website is coming along slowly but good. I got the store dropdown to finally go over the slide show instead of behind it. Did my walk today - two young woman in bikinis at the pool this afternoon which was nice. Dinner was squash lentil soup which was incredibly spicy with curry and jalapeno pepper. Wow. Hard to believe Libbie can stand this, it's almost too hot for me. After dinner I watched the second of the Met's ring series, Walkure. I hate the production but love the music.

~

September 14, 2012 Siegfried

I got a good handle on how to work with Drupal today. I started putting together the store with individual categories listed as sub menus.

Dinner was baked sweet potato and beets with chicken. This was quite good. After dinner I watched Siegfried on PBS. This is part 3 of the Ring series. I stayed with it till the end, love every minute of it.

Late in the evening I purchased \$35 leftover tickets for the Symphony via an eMail I received with the offer. I procrastinated all day over the offer because the seats were in row C even though they were in the middle. At the last minute I went for it and bought the tickets, then printed them at home.

~

September 15, 2012 Symphony

Another whole day working at the AVSA website. I finished the FAQ section after reading about the Drupal Book module. This looks like it will fit the bill for me. Skipped the walk today because I wanted to work the website and we were leaving early this evening. Ed Lyons came over to get violets, we dug some Irises out of the garden for his yard. Spoke with Richard about the website, he is putting together the list of concerns from the committee to make sure we capture everything in the current design. We had a bowl of the leftover Lentil soup for dinner at 6 PM then left the house at 7 for our 8 PM Symphony performance. I thoroughly enjoyed the performance, even from Row C. We could see the faces of the orchestra and we were up close and personal with Gabriela, the improve piano soloist.

~

September 16, 2012 Work

Watched the morning programs while working on finding how to implement a photo gallery in Drupal. Spent a lot of time figuring different ways of trying to properly display a grid of photos. I don't like making

each photo a separate content type but I may not have a choice. Libbie made her yummy pizza from scratch today. She had to run out at the last minute to get pizza cheese because we were out. I kept working on photo galleries.

~

September 17, 2012 photos

This was a rainy day. Did the click and ship thing then went back to learning how to do photo galleries. While Libbie went to exercise this afternoon I put the garbage cans out then the sky opened up and dumped a lot of rain. Dinner was BBQ sandwiches. The macro extension tube arrived. I tried it out but then back to work on the website.

~

September 18, 2012 Views

More rain today. When the garbage man came to do his pickup you could hardly see the street it was raining so hard. I'm making progress understanding how to display photos in the Views module. It's not too bad because the View has a grid view. You just specify the number of elements and the number of columns and it works. Dinner was bean lentil curry soup with jalapeno. Yum.

~

September 19, 2012 Bok Choy

Did a lake walk with Libbie today after getting Daffodils at Lowes. We got all the varieties Southern Living said were good. I like how the photo gallery is shaping up. I finally got the hang of views and fields such that Views will put out a grid. Dinner was Bok Choy which was delicious. I talked with Lara today about the hotel. She couldn't do anything but mention that she would speak to her boss about it. I let the group know then posted our site visit photos on Picasa.

~

September 20, 2012 web stuff

Studied panels today and ended up implementing one for the about us page. I thought this was getting finished but tonight Scott had a long list of items from Richard that upsets the mix. Went to Home Depot today and spent \$100 on stuff. Bought lights for the plant room, we need overhead light fixtures. Also bought a new LED spotlight to replace the one on the tree that is coming down this Fall. It's leaning towards the house and is losing its bark. Spent some time organizing files remotely on Traviata. They have been getting out of hand. I also need a backup strategy. Right now there is none. Dinner was left over Bok Choy. My new keyboard came in which I installed this afternoon. It works great but the touchpad does not work at all. I don't want to take it apart to fix it.

~

September 21, 2012 reorganize

I'm well on my way with panels now, implementing stuff. I got the scoop from Scott via eMail and by talking with him about what the site needs. Will reorganize things so that the navigation menus are on the side as well as having more color. Dinner tonight was a sit down dinner at the kitchen table with Shiraz accompanying spinach tortellini topped with tomato sauce.

~

September 22, 2012 chain saw

Did some outdoor chain saw work this morning in lieu of a walk. Cut up some logs that had fallen over the summer. Dinner was Salmon with salad and veggies including carrots and rice. We had it with Shiraz.

~

September 23, 2012 Emmys

I worked some more on the website cleaning up misc issues with spacing

and fonts. Went to Trader joes for food then stopped at the park on the way home and walked around the lake with Libbie. It was a nice day. Watched the Emmys tonight and had another delicious Libbie pizza with homegrown bay leaves and tomato with mushrooms.

~

September 24, 2012 System crash

Things were going along pretty good today with the web site. In the late afternoon I started studying access control and while I was installing the Dev module which is supposed to show which terms have access to a node. During the install the system hung up and crashed with a "Server 500" error. I opened a support ticket to try to fix it but I have my doubts. Tonight is opening night at the Met, I'm listening to the Red Carpet with Deborah Voight and Margaret Juntwait at 6:30. Not sure when things start but it may be 7 am.

~

September 25, 2012 Leaning tree

Website is back up and running. Support increased my memory size to 64 Mb from 32. According to Drupal forums, Drupal can't do much with 32 Mb. After doing groceries today I hooked up the come a long and started cutting the leaning tree in front of the house. It shifted and leaned worse right towards the house!!!! Worse, it jammed the saw blade into the opening. I ran to Home Depot and then Northern Tool where I bought another come a long and some more chain. This stabilized the tree but I couldn't budge it vertical. The saw is still stuck. Dinner tonight was BBQ sandwiches using Brookwoord Farms pulled Pork carolina style (vinegar base). Nancy Doggett will lend us her come a long which she will bring over in the morning.

~

September 26, 2012 downed tree

I worked on the website in the morning then went to Home Depot for more chain. Bought 100 feet of steel rope. Hooked everything up to the Doggett's

come a long and the tree got cranked to vertical pretty easily. I made a little more of a cut after the saw got free and over she went away from the house. Yay! I started cutting up the crown as Libbie took the branches to the street for pick up. It was a very tiring but satisfying day. Dinner was salad with Tilapia and broccoli. It was excellent. It looks like I may have lost about 10 pounds on this regimen which has been a no diet plan. Lots of fruit and veggies and a walk or other exercise every day.

~

September 27, 2012 clean up

Nancy came over today so I returned her Come A Long. It looked brand new, still in it's original box. I worked in the yard cleaning up the tree crown and the upper part of the trunk. Hauled it to the street for pickup. Libbie dragged most of the upper branches while I cut up the trunk pieces and loaded the lawn cart and hauled a few loads to the street. Dinner was the Lentil squash soup. Still very good.

~

September 28, 2012 auction

I worked long and hard on the website today. I'm almost done with all the major sections!!! It's a gorgeous day out, hard to believe it's supposed to rain tonight. We went to the Asian grocery and got Bok choy, mushrooms and celery. This is an amazing store, lots of people buying healthy veggies. Dinner tonight was the Bok Choy over rice with Shiraz. Libbie booked her Providence trip today. I noticed on the Southwest website that their 11 day sale ends today so I went into action and booked some flights to Houston. I also signed up for the Selby behind the scenes photo class on Nov 17. At noon today the auction guy came out and took photos of the greenhouse so they can list it as an auction.

~

September 29, 2012 rain

This was an easy day. I finished up the affiliates section of the website then worked on updating Bluebird. The rest of the day was rainy, sometimes it was intense. I left my new steel cable out in the front yard accidentally, it's getting pretty wet today. Dinner was Bok Choy stir fry over rice with Shiraz. Still as good as ever.

~

September 30, 2012 log rolling

This is the last day of the month. Wow, it went by fast, mostly doing AVSA web work. I sure hope it was worth it. The site looks great. I moved a little more than half a dozen of the tree logs out to the road. I chose not to do anymore cutting today although after I was done getting the logs to the street I was glad I didn't cut any. We went over to Kroger with both cars and got both vehicles filled for \$45 using our gas points which gave us a 40 cents per gallon saving. The list price is 3.77 before savings. In the evening Libbie made her wonderful pizza again, this time with leftover mushrooms from the Bok Choy.

~

October 01, 2012 telephones

It's a cold rainy day. Joy came over to help Libbie and stayed until 2. I worked on the telephone wiring for a while before helping Libbie with click n ship. Dinner was lentil bean soup leftovers. Still yummy. We had a 5:50 dinner because Libbie went to her 6 PM diet class at Rex.

~

October 02, 2012 wiring

Did the grocery thing then got a directory working on newavsa. Tried debugging the phone lines. Still don't know what's wrong. Ran out to Home Depot to get a 5 way telephone junction for the attic. I will try to isolate the upstairs to see if that's the problem. Dinner was leftover BBQ on sandwich rounds. Went to bed early for a change.

~

October 03, 2012 Pumpkin Pasta

Worked pretty much all of today on the telephone system. Cut the lines loose in the attic and this did not solve the problem. Now I need to solder jacks on each of the cut lines to put the system back together. Dinner was pretty unique. We had pumpkin pasta which I picked up in Trader Joes. this was different and almost like eating a dessert for dinner.

~

October 04, 2012 No pansies

Put the jacks all back together in the attic and had some difficulty with one of the multiple taps. The wire with plug coming out of it is intermittent. Will cut the plug off and replace it with either a crimp on plug or I'll solder another one on to it. In the afternoon we went looking for pansies at the Farmers Market but it was too early in the season. Dinner was tilapia with salad, beets and potatoes. The beets and potatoes were purchased the the Farmers market this afternoon

~

October 05, 2012 first friday

The Nicholas's are driving to Tulsa today, I sent Brenda the link to the newavsa site for her to look it over. I put a new chain on the saw this morning and finished cutting up the tree in the front yard. Libbie helped me take it to the street. They picked up the other logs this morning from last week. We went out to First Friday. Stopped at Litmus and talked to Jim, looked over his art and had some wine and dip. Libbie bought a fruit bowl from Sharon the potter. Next stop was Artspace. The quilt lady seems to be gone but we enjoyed looking at other art, especially the guy who paints old barns and country landscapes. Walked over to Boku for an 8 PM appointment. I had the Salmon with fennel, olives, cherry tomatoes and hummus. It was yummy and too much

to eat. I tried the Lone Rider Sweet Josie beer which is brewed locally. it was quite good.

~

October 06, 2012 stocks

I got some bad news last night. All the BAC preferreds are being recalled. I own 2100 shares that need a new home. I have targeted STWD which is Starwood business properties and possibly more SPH or equivalent and definitely a tiny more RGP. I'm also studying O.

The AVSA website

is on hold. The morons hardly looked at it and said they need a week to study it. We went to Kroger and got Salmon for dinner which we had with beets and sweet potato, a salad and the rest of the Shiraz from Thursday night.

~

October 07, 2012 Meistersinger

Made some progress on Meistersinger for the monitoring system. I am able to post data to COSM (formerly Pachube). The data is simulated, not the one wire stuff. The reason for this is so I could sit at my desk without having to go in the closet. In the front yard I moved the rest of the logs to the street. This completes the tree cleanup. Today I tried the Walgreens prescription refill. They sent an eMailtelling me I was low on Potassium pills. I replied to the eMail and a few hours later I got an eMail saying the prescription was ready. Went over and fetched it. Libbie was going to pack plants today but she found the Post Office is closed tomorrow because of Columbus Day. Dinner was Libbies yummy pizza with fresh basil. this makes a big difference.

It was cold today - only in the fifties which was bad because earlier this weekend it was in the 80s.

~

October 08, 2012 Meister 31

It is a cooolldddd day, brrrr. Barbara Oggers brought the shells over for

the MAAVS banquet from New Berne. She bought some conch shells from the museum she volunteers at. They look nice. I hooked up the Arduino mega to ethernet today and after some minor tweaking it will do both COSM publishing and web serving in the same device. I need to test the Xbee functions now. Libbie went to her class tonight so we had soup for dinner. I was still hungry. I bought some STWD and BWP today in anticipation of the redemption of the BAC preferreds on Nov 15.

~

October 09, 2012 TAVS

Worked on building the hardware for the closet in my office. I used a Kroger pencil box but I may have to abandon that in favor a metal box to be more fire proof. Libbie vacuumed then I came down and set up the buffet for the violet club. We had chicken salad, whole wheat buns, macaroni salad, broccoli salad with home made unsweetened tea. It was a fun meeting. I showed newavsa.org, mentioning that it has not been approved by anybody. For dinner we had chicken curry over spaghetti with one of the whole wheat buns to sop up the sauce. I listened to L'elisir D'Amore from the Met live while working on a download of "Birders", an HBO documentary. One section was missing which meant I used the recovery files to repair the original image. When all was done I ended up with a 7 gig HD file!!!! The file extension was ts which I found was a blue ray streaming protocol. The Samsung TV can read the file but I had to use an NTFS formatted Flash Drive because the old FAT32 can't handle a file size larger than 4 Gigabytes.

~

October 10, 2012 Birders

I tried unsuccessfully to get the new hardware working today. Not sure what's wrong. I can't read any temperatures on the One Wire bus. Will try a test program later. We watched the first part of "Birders" this morning. After a lunch of TAVS leftovers Libbie went to Rex and I walked around the back. It was a lovely day to do this. Dinner was lobster pasta from Trader joes.

~

October 11, 2012 hook up

Hung the box in the closet, hooked up the wires and of course nothing works. Much debug is needed. Dinner was Tilapia with brown rice and Shiraz and salad.

~

October 12, 2012 state fair

I worked a little in the morning on software then at noon we went to the State Fair. Because of our age we can now get in for free. We enjoyed seeing the gardens, JoAnns sculptures and then the arts and crafts and painting. We walked for almost 4 hours. Wow. Dinner was Salmon we picked up in Kroger on the way home along with salad, corn and Shiraz.

~

October 13, 2012 Elixir

I spent most of the evening off and on trying to read temperatures using Meister 31. Finally late at night, at quarter past 12, I found the thing was crashing all the time because of not allowing enough room for the string variables. It's stable but still not reading. In the afternoon we went to our first HD of the season, Elixir. It was a marvelous performance, Anna can really hold her own but the supporting cast was quite good as well. Thoroughly enjoyable. After the performance we went to BJ's and got ribs, dishwashing soap and tuna fish. Dinner was ribs with corn, salad and Shiraz.

~

October 14, 2012 Enviro.

Was puzzled for 3/4 of the day because Meister wasn't reading temperatures. Added the begin statements and got it working. Next the Enviro hardware in the shop wouldn't do it's thing. I found that the cables were swapped. After I got the temperatures reading correctly I need to get it to correctly parse the light meter polls. Last night I luckily

stumbled on Jack Skerritts name and address. He lives in St Marys, GA near the Florida border. I also found that our former neighbor, Fred Roueche, passed away in 2009. Wow, amazing. Libbie made her super pizza again with fresh tomato and garden basil leaves.

~

October 15, 2012 rain

This is a rainy and cool day. I worked on the environmental monitor some more but couldn't get the xbee data streams working. I ended up finding a serial library that uses delimiters on the packets and lets you know when a whole packet has been received. This is just what I needed to parse the data. I started adding this code but so far have not tested it. The Benzigers arrived around 2:30 in a fairly heavy rain. when it let up a little we did a walk in the back around Seagroves and the pond. The Halloween decorating is quit extensive. My favorite was a house with tombstones and a small fountain with a skull in it. The skull has a meat cleaver embedded in and red blood is streaming out. For dinner we went out at 8 PM in the rain to Tonys Oyster Bar in McGregor Village. It was very nice. I had the scallops and shrimp over a bed of Angel Hair spaghetti. For a beverage I ordered a Yuengling draft.

~

October 16, 2012 State Fair redux

We had breakfast and lounged around with the Benzigers until 11 then left for the State Fair. Had a lovely day at the Fair. Started with the little pioneer village then went to the gardens outdoors and the flower show indoors. It wasn't too bad as far as crowds went. Spent some time talking to the composting lady about worms and compost before resuming. Walked through the village of yesteryear and talked with the Son in the Turn N Burn exhibit about the Russian Violet article I wrote. They have it laminated in the shop in Seagrove. Did the Arts & Crafts next then found a grassy area with picnic tables for our tuna fish sandwiches. Next stop was the fine arts where we looked at an artist of mine who is a favorite, David Pollack or something. He does watercolor specializing in glass reflections. He also entered an Apple store glass reflection painting. I spoke with the hostess who told

me about the artists Son who did a very nice painting in the Fair. Next stop was the quilts and cakes, Mary bought a candy Apple from a pretty blonde in the Education building. Next stop was the cows where we watched a calf judging before moving on the pumpkins and watermelons. Talked with Jennnifer who is hostess for the peppers. It was 5 hours and we were very tired and trudged back to the car in the beautiful weather. We made a stop at the Asian Market for Bok Choy and mushrooms for our stir fry. Took everyone home then went back out to Krogers for Old Geezers Day. Benzigers came along so they could get camping supplies for next day. They were going to cook stir fry in the Smokeys for a 2 day camping trip. Dinner was Bok Choy stir fry with Shiraz and Coconut Fudge Ice Cream for desert. Afterwards we watched the HBO documentary, "Birders, the Central Park Effect." I fell asleep halfway through.

~

October 17, 2012 Winter Garden

The Benzigers got going around 10 for the Smokeys. Lib and I decided to go to Wyatt Quarles for domes for an order and stopped at the Farmers Market for veggies and pansies. The Asian lady sold us pansies, ornamental cabbage, a spreading mum and Mexican Salvia. Another vendor sold us 2 flats of Super Pansies. These have the giant faces that did so well last year. When we came home we tended to the garden. I tied up the late season tomato and got rid of the eggplants and tomato baskets while Libbie cleared out the zinnias and Marigolds. We planted the Salvia and Mum then she made a start at the cabbage and pansies. Dinner was leftover Bom Choy which was still excellent.

~

October 18, 2012 Lobster

I worked on the Arduino software while Libbie gardened. Still not much luck for a lot of effort. Not sure what's wrong. Dinner was very nice Lobster pasta with cheese and olive oil and a salad. Good stuff.

~

October 19, 2012 Temperature

Did a lot more work on the temperature sensor. I seem to be handling the pointers to the buffer badly. Stayed up late trying various things, I may now have a working strategy. Will try it in the morning. Went to Kroger and got a frozen turkey breast and the fixins for turkey dinner tomorrow night. Tonight's dinner was Tilapia with baked Sweet potato and salad. Very nice, topped off by a bottle of Shiraz.

~

October 20, 2012 Working!!!

Today was a splendid day. It was incredibly nice and clear outside. Libbie and I did a walk in the back around the pond. I finally got temperature readings sent from my shop to the Meister ocntroller. Yes!!!!

I went to the Indian store in Apex and got spices to jazz up some fresh cranberries. It was terrible!!!! Libbie made a turkey breast for tonight along with stuffing and sweet potato and shiraz. Incredibly good. I'm happy about all the temperature data streaming across the house. Excellent.

~

October 21, 2012 Ballet

After the morning shows this morning I went to my shop and retrieved the temperature probe and hung it from the greenhouse ceiling. Removed the outer shade cloth next. While Libbie worked on planting pansies I worked on the MAAVS Souvenir booklet. We had a nice avocado and turkey lunch before leaving for the Carolina Ballet program. It's a spectacular day. We enjoyed a very eclectic Balanchine program. The first half was more classical ballet while the second half was lively Gershwin tunes reminiscent of Broadway. I liked the first piece, "Apollo" but that was Lib's least favorite. Apollo danced with his 3 muses. The sculptural poses were great. I also like the music of Shostakovich and Stravinsky. It was a nice program but pretty long with 2 intermissions. We were in the fourth row of the balcony which were pretty good seats. In the evening we had Libbie's great pizza from a frozen dough she made last week. I went out in the dark and picked a fresh basil using a flashlight.

~

October 22, 2012 beautiful day

Another spectacularly beautiful day today. I continued to work on the MAAVS booklet. We got a good proposal from the DoubleTree in new Bern. I forwarded it to Brian and now it's time to go visit the place. The temperature and light from the greenhouse continue to work well. I purchased a steel box for the Arduino mega in my closet. I don't like the plastic pencil case and feel it's a fire hazard, especially since the regulator gets very warm. Lowes has a steel box made for use as an AC disconnect for only \$6. I also picked up a 90 degree flue pipe and a three foot section of double walled flue. This should improve the draft of the greenhouse furnace since currently I had to jump out the detector for an out the of firebox flame. I don't feel it's dangerous but the detector must be there for some reason. Dinner was turkey slices, stuffing and broccoli with gravy. We ate early because Lib had to go to her healthy eating class at Rex.

~

October 23, 2012 exhaust

This morning I got out the ladder and put the new exhaust pipe sections onto the greenhouse furnace. Now the drafting should be correct. Did the Krogers and Trader joe thing. Libbie and I went to the gas station together at Krogers so we could take advantage of our points which expire next week. We had 400 points which give us 40 cents off bringing the price per gallon to 3.19. COSM conrinues to workvery well tracking all our relevant sensor info. Dinner was turkey, salad, stuffing and broccoli. Yummy.

~

October 24, 2012 booklet

Made some changes to the MAAVS booklet today, final proof is done. Waiting on the award donor list from Richard. Took the light meter switch apart and cleaned it. the old GE light meter now seems to work. Monitoring

the light levels in the greenhouse using the Adafruit photocell shows that the greenhouse is shaded most of the day. I spent a lot of time in the evening studying solar panels. The tower consumes 850 watts, so it would take about a 2 kw installation to offset the light tube consumption. At 9:30 in the morning sunlight is just starting to hit the roof near the top. Dinner tonight was tortellini pasta covered with mushroom, cheese and fresh tomato pieces.

~

October 25, 2012 O subscription

This morning I took advantage of a steals and deals on GMA, 12 months of O magazine for \$12. Went outside and cut up insulation into 2 foot lengths and installed it in the greenhouse. Next step is to cover this with foil covered foam boards. Dinner this evening was spaghetti, with sauce and cheese. Very nice.

~

October 26, 2012 Solar Panels

Libbie finished up planting the pansies in the garden today. I started installing the foam panels over the insulation. Cut the first one but got no further. Did a lot more studying of Solar panels including Arlene's installation. Richard forwarded Winston's website comments which were a bunch of boiler plate and pure crap. Dinner was pork chops, broccoli, home made apple sauce, salad and shiraz. Quite nice. Le Nozze de Figaro was live from the met on sirius this evening. I read more of the Map of Bones while listening but fell asleep.

~

October 27, 2012 Saturday activities

We're going to Othello today, live from the Met on HD in Crossroads. The hurricane is supposed to pass us by and hit the Northeast. Hurricane Sandy is currently midway up the Florida coast in the Atlantic. I reprogrammed the tower timer for less water and also fixed Meister. The porch ambient was reading funny with two decimal points. I found that

variable did not have a null indicating end of string so it kept going until a null was found so I got garbage including another decimal point on the tail end of that one. All seems to be well for now. I want to put it into a metal case instead of the plastic one next.

Othello

was outstanding as expected. Dinner was ribs with broccoli, salad and Shiraz. The Nicholas's called from their cell while driving this evening. They want to get together with Ron and John at Lonestar, and hopefully Sue Ramseur as well. They also mentioned out to dinner for Wednesday and Friday nights. We're game!

~

October 28, 2012 booklet

Went into the greenhouse this morning and started putting up the foam board over the insulation. Finished the entire job, Next I tried to configure the Panasonic wireless camera but had no luck. It's not getting an IP address on the LAN. Not sure why not. Received the last of the needed info for the MAAVS booklet, the award list. Finished the book and sent it out for proofing. Another job is now complete. If all is well will take it to the printer on Monday. I have a few other tasks to do today. The Sheraton in Chapel Hill needs additional info. and I want to do a write up on the AVSA website.

~

October 29, 2012 solar panels

I studied solar panel kits some more and did some lookups on the very nice government web site that details panel output per latitude and geographic region. Tell it your kw capabilities, your region and panel angle and it will predict the kwhr per month for each month of the year. Watched the hurricane go by in the ocean, we hardly had any rain out of this. Libbie had her class tonight so dinner was split pea and bacon soup. When she came home much later we had bread rounds with tomato sauce and cheese as a supplement. I was hungry.

~

October 30, 2012 plumbing

What a miserable day. Linda Hall sent a very vitrollic letter to the EC over my helping of the website. I'm upset but out of there. No more help from me. I'm reassessing whether I should even go to Houston.

I replaced the laundry room faucet. It took 2 trips to Lowes to get all the parts. Sandy struck the Northeast last night. We hardly got any rain or wind but we had a lot of pine straw on the driveway which Libbie raked up and I carted away to along the fence. Went to Kroger and bought the fruitcake candies and fruits. This cost \$64. an I had a \$5 off \$25 coupon.

For dinner tonight we had Tilapia with mixed veggies and a salad. The Met is closed tonight because of the storm, no live broadcast on Sirius.

~

October 31, 2012 travel

We're getting ready for our flight this afternoon. Lots to do around here. I bought one years worth of web hosting for MAAVS from the same webhost that Lonestar uses. They sold me one years worth of hosting for \$57. I want to switch the MAAVS site over to Drupal before Nov 20. This will be a challenge. I have a limited amount of time available because of the amount of travel we have to do. We had sandwiches at home for lunch before leaving for the airport at 12:20. Our flight was at 1:50 PM. It was totally full but on time and very smooth and pleasant. We rented a brand new Dodge from National at the IBM rate. The Odometer only had 2 miles on it. Found the Crowne Plaza next to the Astrodome thanks to GPS. We went to dinner across the highway to a Joes Crab Shack. I had the New Orleans boil which had a pound of Crawfish, 12 shrimp, Andouille sausage, a corn cob and boiled red potatoes. Libbie had the salmon. With a glass of wine each the total was \$48. Very nice. Later that evening we heard from the Nicholas's and met them downstairs in the bar. We sat with Penny and Glenda, Anne and Richard and drank another glass of wine. It was an enjoyable day. Richard told me we had the go ahead for the AVSA website. He got everything smoother over with Linda and she has authorized the site.

~

November 01, 2012 Lonestar day 1

Woke up surprisingly late. We had breakfast with Mary Corondan, Marjorie, the Nicholas's, And Janet Castaglione. The buffet is very reasonable for a hotel - \$12. After breakfast we helped Anne and also Mary move tons of plants out of their room to the show. Went for a quick lunch at McDonalds down the street then out to downtown Houston. Found the Art Museum only a few miles away. It's s marvelous art museum, we only covered a small portion of it and were very tired. There is so much there. I met a woman on the bench who talked about getting immersed in the art when she was away from her kids. Stopped at Kroger on the way home and picked up some grapes and apples for snack food. We had a sandwich in the restaurant. Libbie had a chicken with veggies and I had a tuna wrap. We had a couple glasses of Cabernet to go with the meal. Walked back to the showroom to see if they were doing OK. It was a long walk. The hotel is sprawling, it reminds me of the one in Cincinnati where we had a 3/4 mile walk to the showroom.

~

November 02, 2012 Lonestar day 2

The usual breakfast group this morning then we reported for duty as clerks outside the showroom. I had a judging team of Beverly, Susanne of Houston (very pretty slender woman) and a lady named . I enjoyed the judging and did the paperwork as well as the ribbon work. In the afternoon we went down to listen to Paul Kroll do a walk through of designs. It was quite good, I took lots of pictures. At 6 PM a group of us went to an Italian restaurant called the Grotto by the Houston Galleria. It was very nice, Libbie had a baby salmon covered with Sesame and Spinach while I had the Pescatore which was a lot of nice shell fish over Linguine. We each had a glass of Cabernet.

~

November 03, 2012 Lonestar Day 3

We had the usual hotel breakfast buffet. Anne asked about taping the Paul Kroll Dish Garden talk. While Ruth Goeke had a tape recorder, John and Judy Carter had a small movie cam and I took lots of still pics.

I'm not sure about this for a library program. We went down to McDonalds for lunch, the usual chicken wrap and small fries. Went to the showroom and did some photography then rested before going down to the showroom to help the Nicholas's pack their plants and load up their car. They were traveling shortly after the banquet. We left for the Opera at 5:30 using the GPS to lead us to the Opera house. We parked underneath somewhere then walked to a small Thai restaurant called Pad Thai. We both ordered Chicken Pad Thai was excellent. Price was \$25 for dinner. Nice. The opera was out of this world. It was an incredible delight with whimsical colors and light hearted dancing and excellent singing. This of course was Rossini's Italian in Algiers. We thoroughly enjoyed it. Got back to the hotel by 10:30.

~

November 04, 2012 Flying

After our usual hotel breakfast we went to Kroger for Ziploc containers to hold Libbie's leaves without crushing. It was pouring rain when we went out. Had to show our room key to get back into the hotel parking lot because they were selling parking for \$20 due to a game this afternoon across the street. This is for the Reliant Stadium next to the Astrodome. We got going around 9:30 and drove to the San Jacinto Monument. The skies cleared and the sun came out for our time there. We walked around the monument and the battleship then headed for the airport. We had lots of time. Stopped for gas and McDonalds on the way to the airport. Had an easy time into the airport, through security and onto the flight. The flight was remarkably smooth and was very comfortable because we got the exit row. What a bonus!!!! It seemed cold in Raleigh at 54 degrees. It was 90 back in Houston. Our car was first off the Fast Park bus, stopped at Kroger for necessities. Dinner was a frozen Freschetta Brick Oven pizza. It was pretty tasty.

~

November 05, 2012 Back to work

I ended up reserving a minivan at Hendricks for our MAAVS trip. They are calling for a NorEaster up North. Joy came over to help with shipping. I did the click n ship thing. Dinner was a bread round with tomato sauce and cheese early since Libbie had to go to her RexWay class.

I continued working on all the website, LSAVC, MAAVS and AVSA. This is more than a full time job. This is our first full day back after being at Lonestar in Houston last week. I'm glad we decided to fly home Sunday even though it is one of the busiest times of the week.

~

November 06, 2012 birthday

Today was incredibly busy. I covered the tomato cage with paper to make my costume and painted it with poster paint and didn't like it. Ripped it all off and recovered with some corduroy fabric that Libbie had. This is better. Now I need a foam to support the branches. Tried printing labels for MAAVS but ran out of paper and ink. Found some ink but we are still low on the yellow. Did 4 pages this way. Got a nice surprise today in that the BAC payment came early. It was supposed to be Nov 15. Paid the Stoneybrook dues and the Sarasota taxes. Today I am officially at "full retirement age" according to the US government. Was very busy updating the AVSA convention pages with Penny and her team providing feedback. Made all the corrections. Dinner was pasta in oil with fresh tomato from our garden. Talked to Arlene this morning. She still doesn't have power from last weeks storm. It's cold up there.

~

November 07, 2012 Preparations

Libbie went out at 8 when OfficeMax opened and got more labels. The yellow ink is low but it's still printing so we'll continue without buying a new one until I can buy some on the Internet somewhere. After printing the rest of the labels, I printed the judges study guide and started looking at judging requirements. I'm taking the school tomorrow night. Packed our clothes and went to Hendricks and picked up a rental minivan. It's a Dodge Grand Caravan. I folded all the seats into the floor for our trip. We went out to La Cocina for dinner. I had a dark beer and Libbie had a Margarita. For dinner I had the usual quasadilla. La Cocina and Libbie had a shrimp soft taco.

~

November 08, 2012 travel to Richmond

It was cold this morning. I started the car to warm it up and left it running. Unfortunately the heat was off, but the water warmed up in the engine so heating the car was easy. We had an easy trip to Richmond via 64 then I-95. I forgot the hotel address, we couldn't find it on the GPS either. Libbie called Sue who looked it up online. We had no trouble getting there. Arrived shortly after noon and unloaded the car. It seems to be a nice sunny day but chilly in the 50s. Set up the Violet table and began sales at 3. Because judging school started at 6, we ran out at 5:30 and got a half subway sub each for dinner. It was good, especially toasted with the honey grain bread.

~

November 09, 2012 Palm Tree

We had the breakfast buffet which was \$11.50. I didn't think it was too bad a price. Entries were this morning. Later we went into the showroom and photographed plants. The show was better than expected.

We

dressed for dinner then went to the open bar before dinner.

I put the

Palm Tree costume on for our costume party. Most woman wore some variety of a mumu but the Palm Tree was unique. I won \$20 in commercial plants.

~

November 10, 2012 Trolly

We had the hotel buffet. I ordered an omelet but won't do that again.

We sat with Irwin for breakfast and chatted. Faye gets up much later.

I went to the board meeting in the morning and the members meeting in the afternoon. They passed a joint convention with Lone Star. In the afternoon we did the Trolley tour. It was pretty neat, I had not realized that Richmond had such nice architecture. Loved it.

Before dinner

we had help from Linda Kilby and Barbara Jones making the centerpieces which were a shell with flower in the center. We sat with the

Philly girls which was fun.

~

November 11, 2012 Drive from Richmond

We left Richmond around 7:30 after check out and stopped for breakfast when we got onto I-95. I also topped off the gas. Got home around 10:30.

It was a quick reset - unload plants, wash clothes and get set up to leave again. I walked up to the back to examine potential solar sites and also went to Home Depot for a grid over the water reservoir to hold the new plants. Dinner was a Libbie homemade pizza. I returned the rental minivan after getting some supplies in Kroger, filling the tank and using the minivan to fetch the grid in Home Depot.

~

November 12, 2012 Drive to Sarasota

We got up at 6:30 and got out the door at 7:05 am after packing the car and having breakfast. Traffic was light because it was Veterans Day but we had rain in Georgia and some of Florida, especially a very heavy spell near the St Johns. Lunch at McDonalds in St Marys Georgia and arrival in Sarasota around 6:15. We picked up dinner at Publix which was some Bourbon chicken and Cabernet Sauvignon. It was a nice day.

~

November 13, 2012 Selby

It's a beautiful day. We went to the homeowners meeting at 9:30 then went to Selby Gardens. Had lunch at Selby. The other half of my sandwich was dinner. On the way home we picked up a new Nook charger from Barnes and Noble. Later in the PM we went to HH Gregg and bought 2 new TV's for the condo. We got a 40 inch Toshiba for \$379 and a 23 inch Coby for \$129. The deal was an additional 11% off using the promo code. This worked well. Found the TV cable was not turned on. Had to call Comcast to get it authorized. Dinner was half a sandwich from lunch and the other half of the cookie we shared.

~

November 14, 2012 pub night

Tried getting the giant TV into the car but it didn't fit. Left it by the dumpster for Waste Management to pick up. Did a walk around the neighborhood then I worked on the MAAVS website some more. Libbie wants to go to Myakka tomorrow. I'm not thrilled since I have an agenda here to work the two websites. We found a hot tub place on Tamiami for Libbie to get her Bromine tablets. Went to Pub night at Stoneybrook. I ordered the Guinness Beef with mashed potatoes which comes with a family style salad. I also had 2 glasses of wine with the meal.

~

November 15, 2012 Myaka

Left after breakfast this morning for Myaka. Arrived around 10:30 and bought tickets for the 11:30 boat tour. Drove over to the bird walk and met an Audubon volunteer who let us see a snipe through his spotting scope. Neat stuff. Good airboat tour, saw lots of alligators. The boat was pretty full. After the boat ride we had lunch in the Outpost Cafe, we split a chicken and swiss wrap sandwich. Did the canopy walk and got pretty tired so we went home for rest and relaxation. Out to dinner to rib night. I had the small prime rib with salad, green beans and baked potato. The fresh bread was cranberry bread. Yummy.

~

November 16, 2012 Celery Fields

Stayed in this morning and worked on the MAAVS website some more. I'm having trouble getting the colorbox module to show forward and previous arrows. Not sure what is wrong. In the PM we went out looking for the celery fields. Found them off Fruitville and thoroughly enjoyed the birds. I saw a bald eagle, Libbie saw her second of the day. Took a ride over to Siesta Key where Libbie got some tee shirts at Davidson Drugs. Went home for a little bit then off to Bangkok Thai food. I had shiraz with hot Pad Thai and a Spring roll appetizer. \$48 including tip was the bill.

~

November 17, 2012 Selby Backstage

I stayed around in the morning working on MAAVS web stuff. We had the leftover Chicken Pad Thai for lunch then left around 1:30 for our 2:30 photography class in Selby. We arrived early so after parking in the lot opposite the wood gate, we entered the welcome center and toured the Tropical display house. Walked down to the wood gate and checked in. Our first stop was the classroom building where we were given 30 minutes of photo essentials about composition, etc. We were anxious to get into the greenhouses. At last at 3 they let us into the big greenhouse, #5. We spent our allowed time in there then went over to house 4. Eventually towards the end we ended up in House 1 which is the Gesneriads. We had a blast and got tired out in the greenhouses. It was an incredible experience. The last few minutes together with Daniel our photo leader and the other class members we spent in the classroom reviewing Daniel's photos. He's a good photographer, definitely shooting for artistic merit as opposed to Libbie and I who were shooting to document Gesneriads and other interesting plants. It was a great day none the less. We left after sunset and stopped in Paneras for a soup and sandwich. I had the Mediterranean Veggie and French Onion Soup. We came home and crashed.

~

November 18, 2012 Lake Mary

In the morning after breakfast Libbie packed her suitcase for Providence. We left at 9:00 for Cynthia and Jack's in Lake Mary. We had a traffic problem around a mall near Disney World but once we cleared that

it was clear sailing again. Arrived around 11:30. Cynthia had a nice lunch of cold cuts and bread as well as a pumpkin beer cake ready for us. It was nice. Did a tour of her house and got a tour of the development in Jack's electric GEM car. I like the thing. It's quiet economical transportation. Our next activity was the Longwood, FL arts and crafts fair. Nice afternoon talking with some painters then we got into Cynthia's Toyota Rav 4 and went to Fay's home in the Forest Club subdivision. We met Fay and went to dinner with her to an Italian restaurant. It was very nice, I had the eggplant Parmesan. Libbie did too. Of course it was way too much food so we boxed up some to take home. We had desert at Cynthias then left for home. She is a dog lover, her house really smelled of dog. She has the Scottie and is watching a little chichaua called Taco. I don't like dogs. Stopped for gas in Lake Mary for the trip home and the airport trip tomorrow morning. We ended up getting home at 9:00 PM. Libbie did some last minute packing while I messed with the computer. I had submitted a TER review and they granted me VIP membership for 2 weeks. It's fun to read the VIP reviews.

~

November 19, 2012 3:30 AM

Woke this morning at 3:30 to take Libbie to the airport. We left at 4 and had no trouble with fog or traffic to the Tampa airport. Dropped Libbie off at 5:20 for her 6:30 flight and went back to Sarasota. Heard from her later that the Bsltimore to PVD leg was delayed for 6 hours because of mechanical difficulties. Libbie got a \$200 voucher and her flight eventually left at 3:45 PM. I called Enterprise to make sure her car reservation was still good 6 hours later. She got a black Toyota Corolla which is a good color for Providence. It's a gorgeous day in Sarasota, temp in 70's and clear blue skies. Dinner was the leftover eggplant from the Italian dinner in Lake Mary.

~

November 20, 2012 slow day

Spent some time reading about Google Apps on the Nexus 7. I have decided to get one at Walmart. They have the 32 Gb byte version for \$249. I ordered a roof hatch online from a Graham, NC company. They claim no residential deliveries. We shall see. Bought a sandwich at Walmart for lunch and had a Publix Spicy Bourbon chicken for dinner. Had some wine and cheese while listening to Clemenzenza live on Sirius.

~

November 21, 2012 close up the condo

Cleaned the floors and did laundry then went to Walmart for trip food and the Nexus. This is a nice toy. It's very responsive and works well with all the Google Play apps. I like it so far. I even wrote the Hello World app and uploaded it to the droid and ran it. I picked up a frozen stir fry dinner from Lean Cuisine while in Walmart. Libbie called this afternoon. Remarkably the sun had gone down at 4:19 up there. We don't have sunset until 5:30. I had the eggroll and rice lean cuisine with the rest of the Merlot. Started packing the car and carrying stuff to the trash. Met Sally outside her condo and chatted about the holidays and the fact I'm driving tomorrow because that's the best day to do it. Tomorrow is thanksgiving. Sat down and played with the Nexus 7 some more, reading about developing Droid applications. I'm all set for tomorrow!!!

~

November 22, 2012 drive home

I got up at 3:30 and started the coffee maker then started carrying stuff to the car. Stored the Sirius radio in the lockup this time and took the radio module itself and plugged it into the car for the trip home. I hit the road at 4:07 am. Today is Thanksgiving so I was wondering if McDonald's would be open for breakfast since it was too early to have breakfast at home. It was daylight when I reached the other side of the state at 7:00 am and pulled off in Ormond Beach. McDonalds was empty but open. I was their only customer!!! Traffic was incredibly light for I-95. There were a few speed traps along the way and one or two people pulled over. I used the cruise control and kept

it at no more than 3 to 5 over the limit. Stopped by Kroger at 3:09 pm and picked up a turkey breast and pumpkin pie with whipped cream. I went there for the Black Friday newspaper and OJ. Talked with Vicki in the evening and also heard from Rich that he got his hot tub fixed. It was the Oxygenator module. Weather here is not bad, around 60 degrees. This is good for Thanksgiving. Supposed to be even warmer tomorrow before the bottom falls out.

~

November 23, 2012 Black Friday

It's a warm day. I worked outside and took down the Morning Glory on the fence. I also took several trips up the hill looking for good spots for a solar array. I can save considerable money by using greenhouse pipes and greenhouse wiring to trench a long conduit from the back. It's 300 feet. The house would be acceptable as well but I would have to purchase mounting rails, about a \$1500 dollar expense and it would involve screwing the rails into the roof. This isn't good for roof replacement in 10 years. Dinner was more of the turkey breast with cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Nice. I went to home Depot and picked up a metal shelf stand with wheels for a light stand in my office. Carried it upstairs and started assembling it. Aida is live tonight from the met.

~

November 24, 2012 Begin disassembly

Did some reading about B4A today then went to the greenhouse to start the disassembly process. I removed all the drip waterers and started taking down conduit and waterlines in houses 3 & 4. Also did quite a bit of cleanup picking up trash and filling some garbage bags. Dinner was the turkey breast and cranberry and also some refried beans, Contadina by Bush's. I was surprised it was refried, I expected Mexican Baked beans. I put 5 hours in at the greenhouse this afternoon. It's a beautiful day.

~

November 25, 2012 House 3 & 4

Worked some more on the B4A stuff. This is Sunday morning, I watched CBS This Morning which I enjoyed then I went to the greenhouse and did 4 hours today instead of the 5 hours of yesterday. Happily I have completed removed the waterers and conduit from houses 3 & 4. I took a seat and worked my cutter getting the waterline chopped to size to fit a trash bag. I need more trash bags. Dinner was the remainder of the Turkey breast and cranberry sauce and refried beans.

~

November 26, 2012 Greenhouse strip down

Loaded the car up with trash bags this morning and took the pipe pieces and plastic and trash to the dump. Now I have started on house 1 & 2, removing the waterlines and power conduit. I wound up the wire and brought it home to take to the scrap yard. Blew the leaves off the driveway when I got home. This was a 3 hour greenhouse day, it seems like an hour less every day but I'm making great progress on dis-assembly of the structure. The goal is to strip down the interior, then start removing bows. With the bows out of the way, the plastic tops can be removed from inside. At home I collected the garbage from around the house and arranged everything so it would fit the two cans - the recycling and the trash. I managed to put away a trash bag of greenhouse stuff and several cardboard boxes of junk. Dinner was a Brick Oven pizza. I ate the whole thing. Not great.

~

November 27, 2012 Libbie returns

Left this morning at 9 to go to Leith for my 20k maintenance. Surprisingly it was done in an hour but they tried to sell me a Cabin Air filter which I ordered on Amazon for \$10. I also bought one for the Prius. Spent the afternoon getting the MAAVS website up and running and did not go to the greenhouse today. Dinner was BBQ pork on a bun with refried beans. Found out Libbie's plane was delayed. Picked her up at 10 PM instead of 8:45 PM. There was snow up North, only a few inches but it did involve plane de-icing. I made Libbie a PBnJ sandwich and brought a banana and water for her since she will not have had dinner.

We caught up on everything and didn't get to bed until midnight.

~

November 28, 2012 work

This morning I worked on Droid B4A activities. I also mounted a speaker on the wall in my office and moved the plant stand into place. While Libbie and I were having lunch on the back porch we got a call from the delivery company or my hatch. He was at the corner of Buckingham and Downing and didn't want to drive down Downing Place with an 18 wheeler. I agreed. We took the Prius to the corner and got the hatch.

It's huge and heavy but I like it. Next stop was the greenhouse. Libbie concentrated on filling plastic bags with trash while I concentrated on the conduit and water lines in house 1 and 2. I made good headway but didn't finish. We heard from Christa Gross in Sarasota that our package from the Nicholas's arrived. We told them to put it inside the condo.

I had to do a lot of catch up tonight in musings. For some reason there was no entries for the past several days. I guess I was too busy with greenhouse stuff, car maintenance and picking up Libbie in addition to the household chores. All seems to be settled now.

Dinner

was Lobster pasta with cheese. Very nice. I had some of the peppermint tea I picked up in Kroger. It's very nice and caffeine free.

~

November 29, 2012 Tree

I started playing with B4A database utilities and also downloaded some software to create an SQL lite database on my PC. I need a VB program to convert First Class to SQL lite. We went out after Libbie had some blood work done and bought a Christmas Tree at Home Depot. Unfortunately I picked up a nail on this trip and a few hours later had a flat tire. While we were having lunch on the back porch UPS came and delivered my LL Bean Flannel shirt ordered on Monday. It's supposed to be shrink proof flannel. Next we went to the greenhouse and did more cleanup. I pulled down the remaining conduit run in house 1 and rolled up the wire. Afterwards went with Libbie to the Credit Union and Lowes foods. Picked up whole wheat spaghetti for dinner. We had the spaghetti

with chicken and Curry sauce. Spoke with Richard and John Carter about the website. We will go with John Carter's password scheme.

~

November 30, 2012 fix a flat, rotate tires

We went early to the greenhouse because Libbie had an eye appointment this afternoon. The Corolla has a flat tire which I took off and put in the Prius for a trip to Fussel. They couldn't repair it because the screw went through the sidewall. Bought a new tire for \$120 and also had the Prius tires rotated. At the greenhouse I took down most of the pipes in house 1. The pipes still remain in house 4. At home Libbie made a Lemon Meringue belated birthday pie with a Meyer Lemon. It was delicious as usual. The rest of dinner was parmesan tilapia and green beans with Shiraz. Yum

~

December 01, 2012 La Clemenza di Tito

Took it easy this morning working on the web stuff. We left at 12:20 for the theater, La Clemenza starts at 12:55. It was a few minutes late and didn't start until after 1. We enjoyed the performance, how could you go long with Mozart? It was a little long for me but enjoyable none the less. After the performance we went over to BJ's for dinner fixins. Picked up ribs for dinner and also renewed our membership which brought the bill to \$120. The credit card is going to be out of this world this month. It has the TV purchases in Sarasota plus the Florida trip and other stuff. Dinner was Ribs with Broccoli and Shiraz.

~

December 02, 2012 website

Libbie got started on all the back orders while I continued to work on the AVSA website. In the afternoon I went over to the greenhouse to continue taking down the pipes and conduit. This phase of the project is almost complete. For dinner Libbie made her excellent pizza once again. It's too bad we don't have anymore fresh basil.

~

December 03, 2012 3T Drive

Libbie is backed up with orders. This is her first week of shipping all this stuff. My 3T hard drive arrived from New Egg. This will be the Traviata backup drive. It comes unformatted so I had to download the Disc Wizard software to make it into one big partition. The Cobian backup as well as Second Copy software bogged the machine down too much. I'll try an initial copy with Beyond Compare first then updates in the future with Second Copy. Dinner was whole wheat spaghetti with chicken pieces.

~

December 04, 2012 Vegetarian Pot Luck

Libbie finished her backlog of orders while I continued to add photos to the website. Joy came over again to help her. I went over to the greenhouse and rolled up the center bench top in house 2. It went pretty easily. I also started piling up boards along the pipeline as a test to see if this is a viable place to put the benching. Dinner was on my own. Libbie made a corn and bean dish for Rex Pot luck. I got 2 bowls of the leftovers for dinner. It was excellent.

~

December 05, 2012 Tired

Early in the morning I continued to add photos to the AVSA website. This is a lot of work!!! Libbie and I left together at 10 to do some work at the greenhouse. We stopped by the Apex Toyota place to check on Express Lube at the dealership. We were amazed at the number of Prius's in the lot. I started cutting up the pipes in the greenhouse and bundling them while Libbie worked on the lead waterers. She called over to Fairview to see if they needed our web trays. Took one over there to show Carol. They decided they needed them and sent Santos over with the flat bed truck. JoAnn came over as well. She gave Libbie a Poinsettia, we helped Santos load the truck with trays and cool cells

and a lot of other misc stuff. I was tired after this. Came home and continued working on photos. Dinner was salad and Lobster Ravioli with fruit cake for dessert. I finished the Mitch Albom book Timekeeper this evening while Don Giovanni was live on Sirius.

~

December 06, 2012 oil change

I finished the last of the pages on AVSA for the photo gallery. There are still another 1000 photos to go but at least each letter of the alphabet has a page of pictures. At 10 I left with Libbie's Prius and drove to Toyota of Apex to get an oil change. It took an hour but the great news was they ran it through the car wash and also took my online coupon for a \$50 oil change. It's a nice place. I read the Wall Street Journal and drank coffee. Next stop was the Credit Union where I deposited the eye doctor check. Came home and found I missed an eye doctor follow up visit. I had it on my calendar as next week. Libbie got a call that her bilo levels were high so she went for an ultrasound this morning. She needs gall bladder surgery but will get a consultation with a surgeon Monday morning. My Bluetooth keyboard came. I hooked it up and it worked seamlessly with the Nexus 7. Pretty cool.

~

December 07, 2012 First Friday

We went to the greenhouse at 10 and did some more cleanup. I took down another air duct and removed sprinkler heads from several of the benches. We spent about an hour then loaded the car with garbage bags and went to the dump. Sunset Lake Road to the dump has been reconfigured. You can no longer cross the 55 bypass. We have to turn right, do a U Turn and come back. The same is true in the other direction. They closed the road to traffic crossing and only allow turns. It wasn't too much of an inconvenience. Finished editing the description for the Andrea DVD and sent it to Al and Kathy Lahti. Now we have to make the DVD which is going to be interesting. This is First Friday and we have reservations for Cafe Luna at 8 PM.

Left the house at 6:15 and found that 64 by Krogers was in a state of gridlock. Went to the Cary

Pkway which was better but many many cycles of the light near Kildaire Farm Rd. Once we got by that, 440 was a little better. Started by stopping at Litmus Gallery, talked with Jim then went over to Artspace. We used the Moore Square parking garage but had to park on the 6th floor it was so busy. Downtown was really crowded which was surprising. We had a nice table for two in front of the window at Caffe Luna. I had the seafood pasta, Pescatore something or other. Parker gave us a glass of red wine while we waited which was nice. We ordered an additional glass of Strong merlot. It was a nice evening of art and dinner.

~

December 08, 2012 Un Ballo

Planted the daffodils. The ground is very dry, we may be in a drought. Worked on boxing the Meistersinger controller. Fired it up and noticed the Xbee is not powered up. Need to debug this. Left at 12:20 for the opera - I have something irritating my eye today which is not good. Loved the opera, Un Ballo at Crossroads this afternoon. Strong cast and good singing. Fantastic. Came home and took my contacts out since my eye was distressed so much. The router seems to have died this afternoon. I put the old Linksys in. It looks like I may be able to upgrade this to dd-wrt after a Linksys firmware update. Dinner was chili and shiraz with a salad before dinner. The router can't be upgraded since it doesn't have enough memory. It's a real pain in the ass.

~

December 09, 2012 fruit cake factory

Libbie packed up quite a few of the packages for tomorrow since she has a few doctor appointments during the day. In the afternoon we went to Bear Creek, NC to the Fruit Cake bakery. It was an enjoyable trip and a nice place. I enjoyed it. The weather was warm in the 60s but the sky was everything from spotty blue to menacing black clouds. Dinner was Libbie's magnificent pizza once again.

~

December 10, 2012 nexus case

Libbie found out she needs her gall bladder removed. They set up an appointment for Thursday for her surgery. I took the packages to the Post Office for her then did a Credit Union deposit and a Walmart trip to pick up a case for my Nexus 7. Last stop was the greenhouse where I put in an hour taking down the house 1 duct work and the rest of the sprinklers. Sprinklers only remain now on one bench where all the duct pipes are stored. For dinner we went out La Cosina where I ordered Pollo chipotle, my favorite there.

~

December 11, 2012 TAVS party

I worked on reading about MySQL software with PHP then it was time to dress up for the party. We had a wonderful party at JoAnn Raymers. Libbie made Lemon Squares and we had a bird tray and fruit cake basket for the gift exchange. JoAnn served meatloaf with an onion casserole and bean salad. It was wonderful. Dinner tonight was BBQ sandwiches with a salad and lemon squares for dessert.

~

December 12, 2012 New bern

It's a cloudy rainy cold day. We left for New Bern at 8:52. Stopped for gas outside of Smithfield then did a bathroom break in Kinston. We arrived at the Doubletree around 11:15. We met Jan and went to the restaurant for a DoubleTree lunch. I had the chicken parmesan sandwich with fruit. Libbie had vegetable soup because she had pain overnight, possibly her liver. She needs to nurse it along until gall bladder surgery tomorrow. We met Sue Hoffmann and Carol Van there and toured the place. It's a very nice hotel but it's in 2 buildings. We left New Bern at 2:30. It's a pretty cute town. Arrived home at 5 after stopping at Kroger for a bottle of Cranberry Juice for Libbie tomorrow. Dinner for me tonight was the leftover Pollo Chipotle from Monday night.

~

December 13, 2012 gallbladder operation for Libbie

Today is a warmer day, around 60. Libbie can't have anything to eat today because of her surgery this afternoon. I worked on SQL databases in my office for a while. We got a call from the hospital that they were ahead of schedule and to come over when we could. We were originally supposed to be there for prep at 2:15 for 4:15 surgery. We left home at 1:39 PM and went straight in. They collected \$200 at admissions and told us to wait in the day surgery area. In about 10 minutes they took Libbie and gave me a pager. I was called when she was ready for the OR and again at 4 when the operation was concluded. I spoke with her doctor who told me her gallbladder probably had not functioned in quite a while. They called me again at 6 to say she was awake. I went in and waited with her for a half hour then went to get the car and picked her up at the entrance. We stopped at Kroger first for pain medication then went home. I made chicken soup for her then escorted her up to bed. She's in quite a bit of pain and moving slowly. Tonight will be interesting. For dinner I had leftover BBQ and a PBJ sandwich.

~

December 14, 2012 New Router

This morning I made a scrambled egg for Libbie. Stayed around the house all day to make sure she was OK. The instructions were not to leave her alone for the first 24 hours. Our router is a pain in the butt. It keeps crashing. The replacement seems to be lost between Memphis and here. Dinner was a rotisserie chicken with Trader Joe Mac N Cheese and Kroger Cranberry salad. The salad has cranberries, cherries, celery and walnuts. It's way too sweet and suitable more as a dessert. Ran out to HH Gregg this evening and bought a Netgear router which is highly rated. After a succession of phone calls from her family, Libbie went to bed and I proceeded to configure the new router. The menu is extensive and the Genie tool is quite good. All seems to be working.

~

December 15, 2012 Aida

Got in the car with Libbie and drove to the greenhouse to get the mail then we stopped at Seagrove Farm and walked around the park they built around the lake. Examined the new pavilion and play area. Very nice.

Left for Aida from the Met at 12:20 today. We met Meg Calcagni and her Mother in the theater. The Opera was spectacular as Aida always is. The singing is first rate. The new Aida from the Ukraine is a treat. We had the usual collection of popcorn bag rattlers. I don't know why they choose the pianissimo moments to make their noise.

When

we came home we had the rest of the chicken for dinner. I had a carrot and sunflower seed salad and also the cranberry salad.

~

December 16, 2012 Lincoln

Libbie is recovering nicely but she stayed upstairs this morning and didn't come down till later. Watched the CBS Morning Show together, then on to our day. I did a little more configuration of the router and Traviata Server. We went to "Lincoln" in Apex at 11:50 am. It was quite good if not historically accurate. Reading Killing Lincoln at the same time was great for me since I had the scoop on the real Lincoln History. The local theater accepted our free passes from the failed Hoffmann of several years ago. I still have two more passes. Dinner was Libbie's excellent pizza which she managed to start from scratch after the theater today.

~

December 17, 2012 post office

A little bit of patchy rain today. Went over to the greenhouse and did another hour of cleanup. Took the large duct down on the heater in house 3. Will come back and remove the bench top in house 1 and also the piece of benching touching the wall of the cool cells so that I could start working on the conduit wall. Came home and did some click n ship then helped Libbie carry two big bags of packages and a handful of envelopes to the Post Office. She can't lift stuff after the surgery and this is the busiest day of the year at the Post Office. fun.

Dinner was spinach pasta from Trader Joes.

~

December 18, 2012 groceries etc

Did the grocery store this morning and also visited Home Depot and Lowes looking for a remote control. No luck at either store. Ace Hardware is my last hope. I want to use a power remote for the fan timer to control under the house and also control the outdoor lighting. Did some more greenhouse work. This time I stripped the bench top in house 1. Pulled the water hose out from under the bench and also took down some more conduit. At home I took the chain saw out back and started trimming some smaller trees where I want to locate the solar panel. I also removed the big cedar tree on the property line which would have shaded the panels. It's a 60 degree plus day out, very nice. Dinner was Briyani which we did not have for a while. We listened to BARber of Seville live tonight. It was a modified for families on Christmas version. Sung in english and shortened which seemed to work. Talked to Sue Hoffmann today about the New Bern hotel. She still isn't sure about what to do about a hotel. I'm going to try to back out of it.

~

December 19, 2012 tree clearing

Went to the greenhouse and took off one bench top and also removed the copper tubing from the Modine heaters. Little by little this is getting done. It's warm again for December - in the 50s. After my hour at the greenhouse I came home and took the chain saw to the back and dropped the Oak Tree against the pond dam. Cut the tree up and stacked it on my branches pile in the back. Still unsure about the viability of installing a solar array back there.

After lunch Libbie and I went

to Barnes and Noble for cookbooks for Christmas (Joe & Christa), then went across the street to Penneys to buy a new large suitcase. We paid \$110, the store was remarkably not crowded. The main entrance to the mall was gridlock but we went around and had an easy time.

On the way to B-N we first stopped in Kroger where I got a flu shot using the free insurance card. It was my first. Came home tired. Dinner was BBQ sandwiches and a salad.

~

December 20, 2012 Ezpdf

Went to the greenhouse and took down more of the cool cell wall conduit and collected the copper wire. When I was ready to come home I decided to strip another bench top. Walked outside and looked in the shed.

I found a nice spot in there for the benchtops and it will look like it belongs there without messing up the property too much. When I came home I started playing with the Nexus tablet. I bought an app for \$4, Ezpdf for reading PDFs. I really like it and the price is right.

The tablet is turning into a nice toy. Earlier today I installed Google Voice on the thing and made a phone call to our home phone. Now with the PDF reader I can read the family address list. I also installed the Next Issue app which gives me access to the free subscription we have to Southern Living. Joy came over and she and Libbie worked on the binding for her quilt. After lunch I went to Kroger for lettuce then tried out the roof rake on the front porch when I returned.

Next was a walk to my solar site again, picking up various twigs and sticks which had fallen on my defined pathway. The site still looks great although I have doubts about the amount of cable it will take to do the job. It may be cost prohibitive. I wonder what my threshold of pain is? \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000? This is in addition to the cost of panels and inverters.

Dinner was BBQ sandwiches again with a salad. Nice.

~

December 21, 2012 Lobster

Libbie got good news on her blood work from her Dr. Liver and Kidney function are back to normal. I went to the greenhouse and took down the rest of the conduit on the cool cell wall. I also carried a few rolls of 4 foot benching out to the shed. This is good storage for it.

I wanted to strip a table but ran out of time and energy. Spent 2 hours there. Helped Libbie this afternoon at the Post Office then went to Kroger and found lobster tail on sale, 2/\$10. We had them for dinner with broccoli, rice and Shiraz. Quite nice. After dinner we went back to Kroger and bought 3 lobster tails for tomorrow night.

~

December 22, 2012 the dump

At the greenhouse today I Carried some of the 4 foot benching into the shed and stripped a few more benches. Came home and listened to the Sat broadcast of Barber in Seville from the Met. After that we went back to the greenhouse and picked up the 4 bundles of pipes and 2 garbage bags and took them to the dump. It was a good night for this - nobody else was there. I'm happy we got rid of all those pipes. Hooray. At dark we went over to Crimmons Circle to see a synchronized light display in the Woods of Kildaire. The guy has speakers outside so we were able to see the lights and hear the music outside the car standing in front of his house. Very nice. We got back around 6:30 pm. Dinner was Lobster tails once again with rice, broccoli and Shiraz.

~

December 23, 2012 Target

Libbie reminded me this morning that we have to check in to Southwest at 8:05. I did it exactly at 8:05 and got a B06 ticket. Libbie booked a free flight to Providence in January using Southwest points. I found that American has \$99 flights from LAX for Mary Elaines wedding.

What a deal. We paid \$121 for tickets to go out. I went to the greenhouse and stripped a few more benches and moved some bench top scraps to the shed to get them out of the way. After lunch we went to the Post Office, Credit Union and Target. The iron quit so we did a Target trip to replace it. Used my \$10 gift card from BAC which was good.

Picked up ingredients for ting a lings but had to return because one of the packages didn't make it home. They had a shopping basket of packages that people had bought and left behind. This must happen hourly! Libbie made her wonderful pizza again for dinner.

~

December 24, 2012 travel to sna

I set the alarm for 5:15 but it didn't go off. The battery quit at 4. Good thing Libbie set hers as a backup. Left the house at 5:54 for our

8:05 flight. The parking lot was pretty full but we had no problem. Security and check in lines were long. Our flight left on time and was pretty pleasant. We were 30 minutes late due to a late departure from Phoenix.

Our seatmate was a pleasant Indian guy who just graduated with his Masters degree and was going to a new job for Intel in Oregon. Christa and Joe met us at John Wayne. After we got our luggage we went to Rubys in Newport. It's a little hamburger shack on the beach. The food is good and the view is spectacular. I had a cashew chicken salad sandwich which has cashews, cranberries, raisins and chicken on whole wheat. Very good. Came back to decompress while Joe and Christa went to Target for a helmet. TSA unwrapped the presents Libbie had in her suitcase. They also dented one of the cookie tins. Dinner was by Christa. We had ham with green bean casserole, and cranberry salad.

~

December 25, 2012 Christmas

We slept very well last night. Woke this morning at 6:30 . Joe was up and made coffee already. Christa came down later. We had a nice pancake breakfast then opened our presents with Joe & Christa. The Lapworths came over at 1 with the grandchildren. It's amazing to see how they've grown. Cailyn is 3 and the boy is 6 months. They got over the top grandparent gifts such as an electric car. Joe & Christa got them a bicycle and helmet. Joe made a fantastic pizza dinner with a salad and lots of hors d'ouvers. We hung around all day then at night went to Fountain Valley to see a house with 92000 Christmas lights. It was a lot of lights and very little choreography. The rest of the lights in the neighborhood were pretty spectacular.

~

December 26, 2012 easy day

Spent some time this morning on the tablet reading and then added the Downloader to Libbie's laptop and a cable to the D7 camera and downloaded the camera to her laptop. Libbie and I walked the neighborhood in the morning. I tried many times to access Traviata but did not know the FTP password. I tried all the usual suspects with no luck. In

the evening we went out to a Korean BBQ which was pretty unique. They brought various kinds of shaved meats such as brisket, pork, chicken and shrimp where we cooked it ourselves accompanied by veggies such as lettuce, rice paper, potato salad, etc. Very entertaining and unique. As we left there were long lines waiting to get in. On the way home we stopped at Home Depot for parts to repair the toilet.

~

December 27, 2012 hb gardens

This morning we went to the HB Community gardens that Joe and Christa are members of. It's a beautiful day for being out and about. Later in the day we went to Target where I found a pair of Wrangler jeans in luck for \$16. Excellent. I didn't bring enough pants for the trip.

For

dinner we went to Gulf Thai for the Thai experience. I had chicken Pad Thai with egg rolls, dew drops, thai tea and fried bananas for desert. Bill for 4 was \$45 including tip.

~

December 28, 2012 Begin Road Scholar

After breakfast we left Huntington Beach around 8:30 and went to Pasadena with Libbie, myself, Joe and Christa. We found the Cal Poly tent and Christa's school group and joined them decorating the Cal Poly float. It was great. First task was to separate blue flower petals from seeds on dried flowers. My next task was to climb the float and glue Malakai bark on Penguin hands then paint elmers glue on the ice sections of a float and sprinkle rice powder on the glue. This simulated ice between the rocks of black onion seed. This was a fun morning. Libbie glued cinnamon on the back of letters while Joe painted Dill seed on the edges of the Cal Poly letters. After the float work we drove to Woodland Hills and had lunch at the Baja Fresh. I had chipotle mango salad on a tortilla. Lots of good food. We checked into the Hilton and got room 1237 on the concierge level. It was quite a nice room. We checked into Road Scholar. We are the Orange group of about 50. We are split into 7 groups since there are 300 participants which is quite a few but Road Scholar is able to handle it with their super organization. Dinner was a plated dinner of chicken with wine, broccoli

and rice. Desert was a yogurt fruit cup. Nice kickoff to the week.

~

December 29, 2012 Bandfest

It was cold outside. We heard Julie King, Rose Queen of 1988 speak about her experiences as queen and the selection process to be a queen. Some of the stories are amusing of her as a 17 year old going anywhere for the first time in her life sch as Miami and entertaining the football team at night since her chaperone was several floors below in the hotel. She was excited at meeting the team she called her Dad to tell him. Her Dad was upset and called the Rose tournament the next day. The chaperone got fired. After a coffee break we saw the DVD about how a band gets to the Rose Bowl, focusing on a small town band in Butler PA and their fund raising efforts. The trip was going to cost \$1300 each which they had bake sales, raffles, etc. After a cold cut sandwich lunch we left for Bandfest. We stood in the very cold rain outside the stadium before getting in. There wasn't too much rain in the bleachers but it was very long and extremely cold. The last band from El Salvador was worth it. They had a Samba beat and their dance team really knew how to move their bodies. Quite nice. We had a nice easy bus ride back and had a buffet dinner of pork, stuffing, potatoes, and cranberry sauce. Desert was cherry crumb cake. After dinner we heard about the White Suits and how they get picked. They handed out posters after the talk.

~

December 30, 2012 Kiwanis Decorating

Up for a 5 am breakfast and then to the Rose Bowl at 6:15. We worked all day float decorating. Libbie and I put white carnation blossoms on the words ♦Freedom is Not Free♦. It takes 7,500 white carnations to cover the letters. The Kiwanis supplied a Kiwanis tee shirt and fed us lunch. We got back at 5:00. I ran across the street and got a mailing tube at Staples before dinner. Dinner was lasagna with veggies and bread pudding for dessert. After dinner we listened to an equestrian unit talk about their culture and preserving the Western costumes. The costumes were quite nice, the talk was very interesting. They will

be riding in position 70 in the parade. Can't wait to see them. I bought Internet access and posted a lot of decorating photos on Facebook. We got a lot of feedback.

~

December 31, 2012 Getty Villa

This was a leisurely day. We had breakfast at 6:30 then went to the lecture about float judging at 8:30. Tommy Cairns was excellent. He had a good presentation and was a dynamic speaker. Amazingly there are only 3 judges and they judge a float in 5 minutes. Wow, too much to absorb at once. At 11 we went to the Getty Villa which was excellent. Well done collection of antiquities. There was a lot to see. Sculpture was the most prominent feature of the museum but it has similar architecture and landscaping that the Getty Center on the hill contains. We got back to the hotel around 4:30 and were very very tired. Dinner tonight is at 7.

~