

Grampa's Browns Corner Daily Blab 4-22-20

No, I didn't forget a day. It was a slow day and I decided to skip.

Google does not know everything. This morning Google calendar sent a reminder about our flight to Lisbon today. Hah!

This is a slow news day. Only two pictures.



First Iris

I get a kick out of watching Nana on her trek to the mailbox. Because we have a large mailbox there are sometimes big and heavy packages in it. So Nana brings one of her Talking Buddies or Playgroun Heroes tote bags to carry it all. Today the alert Dr. Toughlove spotted the first Iris blooms of the season.

I am getting very excited because a riot of flowers is commencing. My Lazy Man's garden now has hundreds of yuccas, and lilies and thousands of day lilies. Due to the deer problem, I sprinkle Milorganite on the flower beds. It supposedly consists of the dried sludge from the Milwaukee sewer plant. It smells vaguely bad and deer have sensitive noses so they hate it. And even in the small quantity I use, it makes the flowers robust. So all these robust flowers are soon going to be popping out.

LOOKOUT TOWER ROAD

I told you last time about the plans to build a woods road from Point A to Theodore Bridge and from there to the Lookout Tower. In fact, until I build that road I can't transport The Lookout Tower (Theodore Randall Supt.) to its proper place. The geotextile is supposed to arrive next Monday but the RCA (recycled concrete aggregate) arrived yesterday.

It was pretty exciting and in the excitement I neglected to take many pictures. The tuck was a large 20 wheel dump truck. It was full of this stuff which is basically recycled concrete crushed to be the size of gravel which is what it mostly is anyway.

I forget whether it was 20 cubic yards or 20 tons but it was a heavy load (times two).. The driver, Randy, remembered

me from when I built the new driveway ten years ago.

He wanted to accommodate me by dumping the load as close as he could to the opening in the trees at Point A so he backed off the gravel driveway. That turned out to be risky. The left rear tires, all nine of them, began to sink into the ground. So rather than proceed, he began to raise the dump body to unload. Uncle Tim could predict that just like a tractor with a heavy load in the loader, when you lift the load it gets tippier. As he raised the dump body the truck began to tip more as those wheels sank into the ground. It didn't seem soggy at all but under such heavy loads it was like



mush. Well, he managed to dump two loads of the stuff so I'm ready for Monday when the geotextile comes. Meanwhile I'll be focused on other projects.



SILVER DOLLAR FLOWER

Lila, I'm going to leave it to you to find out why this plant, technically a *luminaria*, is also called a Money Plant or Silver Dollar Flower. I took this picture eight days ago on April 14. These are early blooming "flash-in-the pan" (Tyler, what does that mean?) flowers and as of yesterday the blooms were fading and petals dropping. But it does brighten things up in early spring.

Tim's Corner (Another entertaining tale of woe)

From Tim:

Took the BCBA Power Wagon (love the new pic) for a nice joyride during a window of nice weather yesterday afternoon. I removed the aging

assembly of springs and canvas and straw mat and mouse nests that constituted the bottom and back of the driver's seat and replaced with harbor freight foam floor mat (which was what I had on-hand). End result was spectacular—not because the seat is comfortable, but because it moved me four or five inches down and back, which makes it nearly infinitely easier for me to horse around the non-power steering wheel...

Also took to fix another lingering annoyance—the failing gas gauge on my tractor. (Worked fine in Greenwich, but not since Japan.). I thought I'd find crappy connections on the sending unit. And boy, was I right. But even after cleaning them up, it still didn't work, so I pulled the sender out. The whole assembly was a rusty mess. Sobering to see how ugly something that I'd have thought spent its life immersed in diesel could turn out to be. (Maybe the tank was empty and it was covered by condensation while we were overseas?). The tank is plastic, so at least I don't have to worry about that... Anyway, new sender is \$150(!), so I took the old one apart and cleaned it off to the best of my ability. I returned it to some degree of functionality, but the corrosion and cleaning has shorted out some of the sections of parallel wound wire on the rheostat, so I think it will read "full, full, full—EMPTY!" But even that will let me limp home before running

out, which was my old situation (and terrible for the injection pump).

SCIENCECORNER

Determining the age of a big tree

I told you I would try to figure out how old the big oak near Theodore Bridge is.

Here is the big oak tree.



If you zoom in you can count the inches. It is 44 inches in diameter.

Here is the cut trunk of a fallen oak tree about 30 feet away. I had to cut it to make The Woods Road.



I count 43 rings between inch #2 and inch #5.



That's a radial growth rate of 14.3 years per inch. The radius of the Big Oak is half the diameter. $44'' / 2 = 22$ inches. Multiply $22 \times 14.3 = 315$ years. Wow. I'll bring in a specimen from the downed tree to verify. The tree began to grow in 1705, twenty seven years before

George Washington was born somewhere across the bay.

FORENSIC ARCHEOLOGY



This picture needs some careful explanation. In the upper right quadrant you can see some orange surveyor's tape tied around a greenish wire. If you follow the wire with your eye, you will see a piece of black insulation near the end where it disappears under a "rock".

I have told Tim about encountering this super tough bronze wire elsewhere. I went

over it with the mower deck and got it all wrapped around the shafts and actually stalled out the tractor. I have long since figured out that it was used as some kind of fencing, generally where I have found barbed wire. Now I know that it was an electrified fence.

But that "rock" I think may be a badly weathered concrete surveyor's monument. It seems to be located more or less on the property line. If I find that it is a monument, it will be one more piece in the perimeter puzzle. Further examination required.

It was early in the morning when I started this and wrote *This is a slow news day. Only two pictures.*

That turns out to be very wrong after I went for a tour to investigate the age of The Big Oak.

Later- *Grampa*