

## Country matters

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I am in Maine now and seeing first hand what the latest storm has done here. It followed, of course, a winter of huge snowfall...I am looking through the window at the moment at Alfie, playing King of the Hill, sitting atop a snowbank probably 12 feet high. Around the edges of the supermarket parking lot, the snow is as high as a two-story house.

The recent storm was more snow, then rain, then freezing temperatures. So there is ice everywhere, and when I got here, although the driveway was plowed, (thank you, Jesse), the garage door was frozen closed. Eventually, though chopping and shoveling and..yes...swearing...I got it open. And I carved a path to the place where the oil company feeds oil into the furnace; if I don't keep that cleared, they won't deliver oil. But there is no way I can get to, or defrost, or expose, the propane gas tank behind the house...it feeds the six top burners of my Viking stove, and it is now empty and won't be accessible till spring. So cooking will be a challenge. There will be a lot of roasted vegetables, I think, and micro-waved things. And next fall I will not start out with a half-full tank, which was my mistake this year.

The local paper, as always, is filled with local color. In the police blotter....two car accidents involving deer (no moose; sometimes there is a moose-car collision, and that usually sadly involves two deaths: moose and driver); a rescue of a woman who went through the ice at Moose Pond; and...surely there is more to this story but all I know is the terse report from the paper: a horse "went through the floorboards" and was lifted to safety with the help of "heavy equipment and a sling."

A friend of mine arrives later today: my friend Kay, who is on sabbatical from teaching at Harvard and is writing a book. She'll be in one room at her computer and I out here in my studio off the barn at my own computer. We'll have each other's company for meals (roasted vegetables!) and evenings for the whole week. And we both plan on getting lots done though we may be distracted by dogs. She is bringing hers; mine is here; the two of them play very excitedly with each other whenever they're together, and we are hoping that an extended visit may calm them down. Either that or we will all be crazy at the end of the week.

Yikes. I just heard a huge roaring, thumping, crashing sound. Snow sliding off roof. Luckily the dog was not underneath.

Bad news from The Giver Movie front. David Yates, the director currently working on the next Harry Potter film, was supposed to begin The Giver film next. But he has just decided he wants to do the final Harry Potter first, thereby postponing The Giver by several years. Maybe the opening of this film could be held simultaneously with my celebration-of-life service after I succumb to old age? Or the producers will decide to get a different director. Stand by. But without holding your breath.

Okay, back to work. That's what I came here for, and that's what I'm doing.

Tags: Untagged