

The End, Perhaps The Beginning This life event story was started during a disruptive, but not crippling snowstorm. At the time Mike was recovering from an illness; he was not bedridden, but could not drive, and was not whole. He barely walked outside his home unless Cindy was driving him to see a doctor.

At the time BH felt like the effort of recording temperatures and snowfall for a story, or at least attempting it, was rewarding in its simplicity and normalcy as, with an effort, he could actually perform the task (i.e., beginning of storm story). Over a year later, April 2014, he finally had the energy to edit and finalize his story. In part the new 2014 emphasis of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on web publishing stories for its storytelling and modern's programs encouraged him to share.

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Consistently unpredictable weather creates its own local anecdotal sayings where locals talk about their strange local weather; every community has them when neighbors talk about the weather, and this fits the pattern of unpredictable snowstorms and human behaviors. Both can be a mystery.

Anecdotal weather sayings are usually based on personal observation, sometimes case study reports, or random investigations rather than systematic scientific evaluation. Here in Josephine County we have several. Mark Twain feels close, "Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get."

- It's the climate (i.e., mild climate, including winters, and dry summers).
- Climate town (i.e., Grants Pass).
- Two seasons (i.e., warm and sunny, or cool and cloudy).
- It's has been known to sun, rain, and snow all on the same day!
- Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather, but all at once?
- February is a wonderful change with its near predictable one week of wake up sun shine.
- April-June rains cold and unpredictable. By June, you are often living under conditions that are colder than almost anywhere else in the country, then suddenly it is 100 degrees almost overnight.
- After hot July and August, beautiful and almost perfect September and the first part of October, the rains are not as unwelcome as you might think.
- Intense contrast like the weather. Hot and cool. Liberal and conservative.
- What's it gonna do? You can never be sure.

The biggest small talk cliché around is talking about the weather. Mike believes it is a really good idea, and he doesn't mean talking about the issue of climate change. The weather affects everybody and talking about the weather acted as a little bridge, sometimes to further conversation and sometimes just to the mutual acknowledgment of shared experiences, and talking about the weather leads into a whole lot of other subjects. But if you never get started with a "basic" topic like the weather, you might not get a conversation going at all — and thus you'll never get to other more substantial topics. Whether it was rainy or snowy, sunny or damp, each individual has their own relationship with the weather. They might be achy, delighted, burdened, grumpy, relieved, or simply cold or hot. Like anything of personal importance, most are grateful for the opportunity to talk about it. Soon the weather stories are addressing a whole lot more. All sorts of people, some known and many unknown, opened up about all kinds of things. You find out about people's families, their frustrations at work, their plans and aspirations, their kids, things they love and things they wish to avoid, and on and on.

The actual time of being sick in the December 2014 snowstorm did not immediately contribute much new to BH life experiences except to be slapped full face with his limitations. He learned how to cope, hopefully without getting in others' way too badly. He knew this is not the old normal, but you put one step forward, and then another . . . baby steps.

Climate Town does not get much snow averaging approximately 3 inches or so a year. This snowstorm was different. Thursday's blizzard dumped 2 feet of snow at higher elevations and a few inches in Grants Pass. The Walkers received 9" of snow that day, more snow in a day than Mike could remember for the lowlands without reaching back to the 1950s and 1960s. It could have been much more, in February 1917 over 34 inches of snow fell on Grants Pass.

The big difference was the storm's heavy, wet snow caused numerous trees and power lines to fail, resulting in extensive damage to equipment and widespread outages affecting more than nearly 20,000 of Josephine County's 45,000 Pacific Power customers. It was the worst outage in 34 years.

Being without electricity is like living in a makeshift elk camp - its O.K. for the young when prepared. The Walkers were among the fortunate first group camping only a short time. Even though it seemed longer, the time they were dark was part of a short, puny, two days and one night. It was much longer worrying about many neighbors and other residents of the county. For example, Cindy's Mom and Pop in Kirby, Jan and Chuck Stull, were without power for 4 days (85 hours & 50 minutes). Some others went without power for 7 days. A few weather thoughts follow.

- Be strong now because things will get better. It might be stormy now, but it can't rain forever.
- You can't have a rainbow without a little rain.
- Every heartache will fade away, just like every storm runs its course.
- Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while.

The end of 13th Mayan Baktun was a new year, not another scenario of the planet surviving yet another end-of-the-world prophesy. In hindsight, for Mike, it coincided with a new rough beginning with the acknowledgment that there could be a beautiful life rediscovered in some unknown, different way. The start of the 14th Baktun was certainly a new world age for the Walkers, especially HB and BH, so much had happened. The coincidence was obvious to BH, he thinks that it's his way of life that came to an end, the end of a chapter in his human history - and the beginning of a new one. These two chapter are between two worlds. It was the end of one time process and the start of another. Intermingled with all the change were beautiful aspects of nature remaining, like the view of Mt. Sexton from the Walkers' home (Photo 21).

The storm ended with BH still being an invalid, but with a tiny glimpse of a new beginning; it was a bad experience and a good experience for Mike. Perhaps it was a fire drill, if you will, for home preparedness and new relationships. Too often events have been identified as various end-of-the-world scenarios rather than just surviving another basic emergency, such as a major snowstorm or earthquake, or living within a new different thought context. It seems like no matter what, our puppies Deeno and Pebbles, are certain parts of HB and BH's old and the new extended family (Photo 22).

It had been a rough, this last year an one-half after the storm, most of the pain creeping ever so slowly into the past. Mike felt it was so slow getting better that most times he did not know he are moving forward except when comparing long-term trends (i.e., quarter-year periods or longer). For example, a hundred plus pounds down from an earlier active overweight life. Chronic pancreatitis eating slowly your body with the weight loss not stabilized. However, there are many signs of a brighter future, and it is easy to convince himself that he is getting better, especially after his 4:00 a.m. pain pills for flank pains which are increasing in duration and intensity. The mornings are usually his new good normals.

Its also amazing what the human body can do to portray health and not be an overt burden on loved ones and friends. Like the puppies, these pictures of normal and happiness actually seen to work many times in tricking the brain, or in actually feeling better toward a brighter future escaping the limited present.

Being independent and losing seemingly control reinforces the wonder and power of a loving family and supportive community (Photo 23). We're not young forever; BH has a chance to help his family prepare for living; he can do more than secure a good supply of wood ready for the next snowstorm. He needs to get a good used generator.

Perhaps Mike could be more like Deeno? How to keep his balls and not be a disruptive influence while demonstrating his love to provide for, protect, and defend his family and community with the unknown time he has? He asks the question, "What do we understand about the pancreas and chronic pancreatitis?" His belief is that we understand very little. They are going to undress for us very slowly, way past his time constraints.

Can BH succeed? We will see. Loves & hugs, Mike :)



Photo 21. Mt Sexton From Home



Photo 22. Cindy, Pebbles, & Deeno At Home

The weather and my mood have little connection, except for sunny winter-spring days I when I feel better working outside. I have my brain fog and my fine days within me fighting to get out; my prosperity or misfortune seem little related to the matter.



Photo 23. HB & BH Clan: Thanksgiving 2013

Tables

- Table 1. It's The Climate, Grants Pass, Oregon
Table 2. Climate in Grants Pass, Oregon

Appendices

- Appendix A. Grants Pass, Oregon
Appendix B. Weather Resources

The Grants Pass Daily Courier's Bibliography

1. Duewel, Jeff, Reporter. December 20, 2012a. *Holiday Travelers Headed To California Likely To See Snow*. "The Grants Pass Daily Courier". Grants Pass, OR
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Photographs

- Photo 1. 11:00 a.m. Snow Starting To Stick On Walker's Sidewalk
- Photo 2. 11:20 a. 1" Of Snow On Bench At Front Porch (1" SBFP)
- Photo 3. 11:25 a. Red Fred & Black Deeno In Snow At Walker's Front Yard
- Photo 4. Noon With 3" SBFP
- Photo 5. 12:35 p. 4.5" SBFP
- Photo 6. 12:45 p. Ford Pickup At Walker's Lower Driveway From Garage
- Photo 7. 1:05 p. Cindy Taking A Picture Of Mike At Garage
- Photo 8. 5" SBFP, North Along Walker's Sidewalk
- Photo 9. Mike at Walker's Home
- Photo 10. 18-Wheelers Chaining Up North Of I-5 Manzanita Rest Area
- Photo 11. Giant Oak Tree Fell At Riverside Park In Grants Pass During Snowstorm
- Photo 12. Walker Home & Sidewalk Finally Cleared
- Photo 13. Walker Home December 23, 2012
- Photo 14. Walker Driveway A Mess
- Photo 15. Cindy's Toyota Parked At Top Of Driveway At Jess Way
- Photo 16. Sexton Mt. Showing Its Skirt With Overhead Clouds: December 23, 2012
- Photo 17. 5:00 a.m. Christmas Morning With Remnants of 8.5" SBFP
- Photo 18. Puppies Pebbles & Deeno Checking Out Their World
- Photo 19. HB Toyota Safe At House
- Photo 20. Mike In Computer Room of Walker's Home
- Photo 21. Mt Sexton From Home: December 2012
- Photo 22. Cindy and Puppies Pebbles & Deeno At Home: December 2012
- Photo 23. HB & BH Clan: Thanksgiving 2013

Satellite Photos

- Satellite Photo 1. Pacific Storms Around Low Pressure Zone