

August, 2005

Waitin' on the Man

Oh I had a joyous time waiting for an interview with one of Maryland's illustrious public servants this afternoon. 110 minutes of waiting and less than five of interviewing and I was out of there. What a freaking waste of time! Don't ask me why I was there....

TOO Cool in TOronto

I am living large and cool in Toronto for three weeks. The company condo is up to speed with broadband Internet access which is sweet. I've got the windows and doors open for generally fresh, dry air...considering the location is next to a major east/west artery and mall. With the porch door open it's a bit noisy on the twelfth floor but it's not 95 with the AC on!

I hoped to do some exploring down by Lake Ontario this weekend but it is supposed to be rainy. I've got only two weekends here so I may through caution to the wind and get out anyhow.

TOO Much Fun in TO

Oh it's too much fun in Toronto tonight. We just had an alarm in the condo building but, being a newbie here, I really did not know what it was for. The unit that displays such things did not indicate a fire. I stuck my head out in the hallway and saw a woman doing the same. She did not know what was going on and got on the elevator to head down and check it out.

I did not really think too much about that but I stuck my head out a few minutes later and saw a guy headed down the stairwell. I considered it but figured twelve floors down was a bit much. Then I wondered about the elevators...one would normally disable them in an emergency. I hit the down button and got nothing. I wondered if the woman who headed down on the 'vater made it. I put on shoes and pants in case I had to jet.

The concierge finally came on the overhead speaker in the condo (hopefully is it is not also a listener) and said that someone had set off the fire alarm on the fifth floor. I looked out front and saw a fire truck pull up. They did not appear to be in any hurry. I could not smell any smoke...just the usual scents of cooking from the building and the restaurants across the street. I saw the woman from my floor outside the building so she obviously made it down somehow.

Finally I figured out how to disable the alarm in the condo and shortly thereafter the concierge came on the overhead to give the all clear from the fire department.

Fucking thing just came on again. Maybe I should go over to Jack Astor's.

TOOrrential Downpour In TOronto

We had torrential rainstorms including thunder, lightning, large hail, and heavy winds in Toronto today. Everyone in the office was standing by the windows, contravening conventional wisdom about protecting oneself during a storm, watching the action. I was worried about power outages and we did have few blips off on and off which shut down a few of my servers. It took a while to get everything back up and running but we did so before I left the office.

The commute back to the condo was a bit tedious. Traffic was a mess. Standing water on the road was as deep as six inches in places. Odds and ends of cars were just shutdown on the road presumably due to shorted out ignitions. Every time I thought it was going to clear, the rain picked up again. I kept going from intermittent wipers to high speed whacking the water off the windshield.

Pic Your TO

Here are some test pics from a digital camera I just bought. I'm not looking for great quality here...just the ability to snap some quick picks and post them to my web site or blog. Serious picture taking will still be done using the SLR's I have collected over the years.

Self Portrait:
Interior Views of Condo:
Views from Condo:
Gadgets Are Good
Intelligent Design, Evolution, or Black Labels?
Probably thought I wouldn't do it, eh?

TO Zoo Roo Doo

I went to the Toronto Zoo, reputed to be one of the largest in North America, today, which was enjoyable. I did not see any obvious kangaroo dookie but it made the title of my entry a bit cooler. The exhibits are well spread out which is nice but even with the map and brochure I was confused at times. The times they had listed to do the specific areas were a bit off track. I think I managed to see everything in a just about four hours.

The outdoor exhibits definitely bettered the indoor ones. I went through one whole pavilion section of the Malaysian exhibit that had no signs identifying the creatures. The signs in the pavilions, as well as outdoors, could have been more informative to get the visitor through the exhibits without repetition and without missing things.

None the less, the trip was well worth it as it was an easy drive of about 15 minutes to get there. The weather was perfect and the crowds not to disruptive. I have to admit to being a bit disturbed at seeing many of these animals in captivity especially those that obviously would normally cover a vast area in their daily lives.

The mating eagles in their caged facility particularly bothered me but when I saw that they had been recovered from the wild, wounded, and unable to fly capably to survive, I had to modify my concerns. The zoo had created a nest for them, not unlike the one I first saw two years ago in the wild on the Potomac river off the C&O Canal near Point of Rocks, MD. There is hope that the eagles will use the human made nest to produce offspring who can be introduced into the wild.

Also, when I heard so many people make indicating their relative lack of knowledge about the world's wildlife, I could only hope that what zoos are doing educates people. The education should help in the long term to preserve our community of animals and vegetables and even the humans that are destroying it.

Check out the Toronto Zoo website here:

Toronto Zoo

and my pictures of some animals using the inexpensive digital I bought yesterday. Oh wait, I was using the digital camera...not the animals. English what a funky language! :

My Pictures (edited using Goggle's Picasa2 not PSP since I am on the road. Mi Picasa is Su Picasa!)

TOo Much of a Walk

I had a great walk on the Highland Creek Trail on Sunday. It was about eight miles of level terrain. It was interesting to note the high water marks of the creek after the big storm we had on the 19th. It was apparent that that extensive use of front-end loaders was required to clean up the flood plain, creek bed, and an adjoining park. The high water mark from the storm appeared to be about 10 feet over the normal creek level. The walk along the bluffs (not to be confused with buffs) of Lake Ontario was invigorating but the walk back along the beach was depressing. There was obvious wreckage from storm surge and way too much garbage on the shore. The warning about nude sunbathers was apparently addressed at a couple of undressed middle-aged men lounging at various points on the "beach." Sad...

Here are some pics...of the landscape.

Pictures