

January 28, 2009

Dear Linda

You have a new street address and I have a new email address:

cddoig@comcast.net

I went and bought a spiffy new iMac and then had it hooked up to a fast cable. This is a whole new world which I'm enjoying, and so I'm offering a small number of good friends (and two cousins) the entre. I still prefer sitting down to a nice long letter, but I realize the world doesn't operate that way any more.

One reason I'm doing this is because the PI is scheduled to die in March. A new guy was hired at Hearst central, and he promptly slit the throats of a fine news team. A small staff may be retained to run the online version. Damn. Further, the nyTimes is in bad shape financially. So what's a newsie to do? Perhaps we'll eventually wind up with two laptops at the breakfast table.

On to brighter horizons. We reveled in the Inauguration, positively wallowed in it. A couple of friends came by for lunch, then we went to Capital Hill for dinner with other friends, complete with very good champagne and wine. We're OK with Obama's cabinet choices and are watching with interest as he maneuvers through the Hill. We'd be happy to have your analysis from the environs of D.C.

Back in November, on the same day, Ivan learned that he was losing his editor and his hematologist. Becky Saletan had labored mightily to integrate the staffs of Harcourt and Houghton Mifflin, after both were bought by an Irish software firm. They wanted the educational divisions and Becky, the chosen trade publisher, was forced to fire a lot of people. After she got it all done and things finally were straightened away, corporate headquarters announced an embargo on new manuscripts. Becky quit. In what Ivan's agent says is the worst publishing atmosphere of her career, it took Becky just eight weeks to land a new job: she'll be editorial director of Riverhead, a well-regared imprint of the Penguin Group. So the agent called yesterday to ask: "Would you like to go to Riverhead with Becky?" Would he ever! This will take some time since she doesn't begin work until March 2, and Ivan's two-book contract will need to be bought out.

As to the hematologist, we see a new one next week. They keep a close eye on Ivan.

Enough for now. Dinner is calling. We're eager to hear about your new digs.

From: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>
Subject: **hello**
Date: February 8, 2009 12:02:12 PM PST
To: cdoig@comcast.net

Hi guys, welcome to e-mail. You and Peter Koenig are the only people who still send me stamped letters, it's getting to be a big thrill to see human handwriting on an envelope.

And isn't the world just going to hell! I am so sorry to hear that Harcourt was sold to furriners--it was just and right to think that Ivan had earned his way past the business hassles of authoring. And the Post Book World was killed. And the P-I! I've heard that on TV and couldn't believe my ears. Seattle has been struggling to keep 2 papers going for about as long as I've lived here, I think, but I always figured it would be the Times . . .

I have to track down my son and see if he's weathering this. I know about Boeing, Starbucks, Microsoft . . . you have to go back to the Boeing of the 1960s for such an economic clobbering of Seattle. Gabe won a couple grants to develop a TV show, so I think his rent is paid for now. But this ain't over, and he always lives contract to contract.

Do I know what Ivan's working on? A follow-up to one of his earlier books, I think, but that's all I remember.

I have a toothache and there are no dentists on Sunday and I don't know any dentists in Virginia anyway, so I'm feeling neither cheerful nor chatty. Otherwise, I am very happy in my new residence. I've been busy mopping up my previous life, re-investing my home equity (much of it in the stock market!), paying the taxes on all those deferred capital gains, etc. So I haven't gotten completely re-oriented. But I like being in a new place, having a new view, meeting new people, getting lost on my way to the grocery store. Most of all, I like not thinking about money every time I hear the furnace kick on, I was way past ready to give up home ownership.

Fran is back to work, facing great unknowns about raising money (a lot of it historically from NYC) to save the planet. Olivia is 6 months old and Max is two, so she will have her hands full for quite awhile. The place where I live is under perpetual construction, Max calls it "Nona's house with the backhoes."

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: hello
Date: February 13, 2009 8:48:47 AM PST
To: linda.miller008 <lmiller65@comcast.net>



Hello, linda. We got a new printer going yesterday --after the requisite problems trying to follow instructions -- so perhaps I've at least made it into the 20th century. Can't claim more since I don't have a blackberry or an iPhone (which Linda Sullivan proudly showed off last week), and we don't play video games. Our new Comcast cable does allow direct access to movies, but we haven't indulged yet.

Congratulations on your move. We're delighted that you like the new digs. I'm intrigued to hear that you've invested in this stock market. On the one hand there are some great bargains if stocks are near their lows, but on the other, every indication I can find suggests that 2009 will be one hell of a year, and some economists think 2010 will be, too. Did you just invest figuring that eventually stocks will increase in value?

You asked what Ivan's working on. He has a two-book contract with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and he's working on the first of those. It takes the teacher from *The Whistling Season* and sets him down 10 years later in Butte, where the plot possibilities are endless and of course involve labor strife. Morrie is no longer a teacher and winds up working in the public library. But his first job is as a crier at funerals, a device Ivan uses to write an hilarious set piece. Ivan's about 3/4 done with the ms. and will finish a year or more ahead of schedule.

The second book will bring back the bartender from *Bucking the Sun*, for much more fun.

As to publishing, his contract is at HMH, but his editor Becky has landed a job as executive editor of Riverhead, a respected imprint of the Penguin Group. When she arrived home with that news, her husband teased that "75,000 people in this city have lost their jobs, and you've landed one? She has called Ivan and his agent, wants Ivan at Riverhead and he wants to be there, but the contract will need to be bought out, if HMH is willing and if Riverhead agrees to spend the money. Always interesting, this publishing business.

We'll send along news of the PI as we get it. Eric Nalder was called to Hearst corporate HQ in New York last week, and we'll see what we can find out. From what's been said, the print edition cp will be history in a few weeks. The remaining question is whether there will be an online presence.

Gotta go and visit my 95-year-old friend. She's mentally sharp, still in her own home, now with round-the-clock help. On Feb 8, 2009, at 12:02 PM, linda.miller008 wrote:

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From: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>
Subject: **hell in a basket**
Date: February 27, 2009 10:17:38 AM PST
To: cddoig@comcast.net

Hi guys. How are you? I'm pretty good, busy becoming (not voluntarily and to my surprise) a big fish in a little pond. I've lived in a big pond for so long I forgot that could happen to a person. My calendar hasn't seen so much ink since my feminist thing.

Thanks for sending the photos of the house where I used to live. I never said Clint was wrong about that house, it is a gorgeous place. (I just never thought it was as completely fascinating as he has.) You look at "the collections" and see dust. I look at them and want an oxygen mask--really, his stuff gives me this drowning feeling. All I asked when I lived there was one room of my own where he couldn't put any of it.

I assume the article was published because they are going to sell the house, which will necessitate selling the stuff. Elizabeth has Parkinson's, and her trust fund has to be shrinking. They have talked for a while about going into an assisted living place, not necessarily in the Northwest.

The stock market. Yes, there's no arguing that the economy is going to be in the tank well into 2010. I'm hoping I've been able to pick stocks with strong enough balance sheets that they won't have to erase their dividends. I've played stocks since I moved to Washington (I used half the equity out of the Queen Anne house, it's how I put the kids through college), and there are stocks I've always wanted to own but couldn't afford. I'm just whooping and giggling to be able to buy Johnson and Johnson, MMM, and the like. I will get disability income for a while yet, so hopefully there will be time enough for the deflation to do what it needs to do and American optimism to prevail. There will come a day when I have no income but Social Security, so the goal is to set up enough dividend income to pay for my hobbies.

Any recommendations about fixed-income stuff? I have to find a safe place for a chunk of money, and I don't know anything that isn't paying dirt.

I'm glad to hear that Ivan is using humor in the current book. He has a terrific sense of humor, and always I've been delighted when he has worked it into his stories. I've always meant to ask him--you live so closely with those characters when you are writing, don't you keep thinking about what's happening to them after you send the manuscript off? I guess the answer to that is yes.

If I were there, we could kill a bottle of something over what's happening to the newspapers. Oh my god, this is so awful. If anybody has any questions about what happened to the Post's Book World, the Post's income was down 77% this quarter. And Newsweek just let 43 staffers go, it has about 5 pages of advertising. The corporation is surviving on revenue from its Kaplan SAT-prep subsidiary.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: hello
Date: March 8, 2009 9:47:55 AM PDT
To: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>



Heart Earth! Bless her heart. We think that's an underappreciated book: It sells, but not nearly as well as Sky.

I was about to email you when your message came in. It's frosty here, but we just had a spattering of white stuff. We hear that the passes are a mess, and no doubt the skiers are happy. Maybe Seattle could buy some of that snow removal equipment. Did you hear the howls of protest in December when the mayor decided that, as a matter of environmental policy, the city would not use salt? Therefore traffic was snarled for days. The mayor recanted. Jean Roden's daughter and son-in-law from Minneapolis were here at the time. They couldn't believe the state of our city.

I wanted to report on investment possibilities. In this financial climate I wouldn't presume to give advice, but I can report on one place we've kept our heads above water. Just got the February report from T.RowePrice which shows that their Summit Municipal Fund yielded \$4.75% and the Tax-free Income Fund 4.76% for the month. That's consistent with what they did all of last year. Most of the rest, with the major exception of my TIAA, is a disaster.

On to another disaster: the PI is scheduled to cease printing on Tuesday. Eighteen to 20 people (young ones) have been "provisionally" asked to stay and work an online model which will have no copydesk, no editorials, no SPORTS, for crying out loud. Sounds to me like one big blog. Hearst hierarchy apparently has not signed off on this yet. The staff has been treated like dirt.

Can you believe we've lived to see the disappearance of newspapers?

The good news: Ivan's beloved editor Becky started her new job as editorial director of Riverhead on Monday, and on Tuesday morning Ivan's agent called to say that the imprint would assume his two-book contract from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. HMH isn't expected to throw in any roadblocks. Meanwhile, Ivan has told his agent that he'll have his Butte novel submitted by June 1, a mere 13 months ahead of schedule.

On Mar 8, 2009, at 9:07 AM, linda.miller008 wrote:

I was in line behind a lady at Starbucks, she was carrying a copy of Heart Earth. I told her I know Ivan, but I could tell she didn't believe me.

The Weather Channel says it snowed on you again yesterday. We've had one puny snowfall this whole winter, we have rows and rows of snow removal equipment sitting around rusting.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Jack Gordon
Date: March 19, 2009 1:50:15 PM PDT
To: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>



Linda, hi--

For a change it's Ivan here, not Carol, and I'm just quickly passing along some hard news about Jack that you maybe already know. A mutual friend phoned yesterday to say Jack has been diagnosed with prostate cancer that has spread into his right hip, and he's in for a regimen of radiation, chemo, the whole works. If I understood this correctly, he and updates on his condition are reachable at thestatus.com, under the password 1tipi1. Damn, life never has wanted to give him a break, has it.

In this household, we're holding steady. I'm not far from having a full manuscript of the next book, and my beloved agent and beloved editor have trapezed me and the two-book contract (and the \$\$\$) over to the next publisher, the Riverhead imprint in the humongous Viking Penguin outfit. It's been notably more stable than most others--no layoffs, for instance--in the shakes that have gone through the publishing business, so I think it's a good shot. And Carol this morning saw our beloved doctor about a minor skin thing and was declared in fine shape. Glad to hear you like your new digs. All for now. Best--Ivan.

From: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>
Subject: **Jack**
Date: March 20, 2009 9:08:08 AM PDT
To: cddoig@comcast.net

Thanks much for telling me about Jack. That's one of my fears, that something terrible will happen to a good friend in Seattle, and I won't know. In this case, I do, he's been e-mailing me. He sounds upbeat and okay, lots of confidence in his doctor. (Seattle, as you know, is a very good place to be seriously ill.) He hasn't started radiation yet, so he's screwing his brains out with the current boyfriend before they take away his testosterone. If you recall, Jack (and his father) was an ordained Methodist minister, and I think that's a strength to draw on in the worst of times. I am never an optimist about cancer, my personal experience with it is Cancer 8, Friends and Family zero. But he will be able to take what comes with wit and courage.

The P-I's demise was on the national news. (Have you noticed how reluctant journalists are to wave red flags about the end of journalism?) The Washington Post used to run 3-4 stories per page in the newshole. In the front section today, it is ONE. One sad little story edging a huge ad for shoes on sale at Target. My god.

It's not just newspapers. The local news here is 1 or 2 stories they got off the police radio, then they fill with national news they picked up from the network. And the anchor is increasingly a nubile female with long hair--I expect them to be coming out of modeling schools before long, instead of j-schools. Medill is probably not going to tell us how bad it's getting for them, but I worry. Who would let their child go to journalism school?

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Subject: **maybe it's spring**

Date: May 18, 2009 10:06:15 AM PDT

To: Linda Miller <linda.miller008@comcast.net>



The rhodies are either in bloom or about to be, I'm giving the heather its annual haircut, and Ivan's garden is producing an array of glossy red and green lettuces. Last night we sat on the deck, watching the cruise ships march northward, and thought of you. Any travel plans for the summer?

We've had a bit, flying off to Helena 10 days ago for a short weekend during which Ivan collected his third honorary doctorate, this one from Carroll College. They're broadminded, since they're a Catholic institution but awarded two of the three honoraries to plain vanilla Protestants. The other is the former Vietnam nurse who spearheaded the nurses memorial on the Mall. The third recipient is the president of Catholic U. We had a good time, and Ivan says he thinks that's the most priests he's seen in his lifetime. About half had Irish names and quite a few grew up in Butte.

Speaking of which, Ivan is just putting the finishing touches on his Butte novel and intends to send it to his editor Becky next week. I read the entire ms. for the first time last week, and heartily approve. Lotsa wonderful characters, which I suppose Butte deserves. It'll likely be published about a year from now.

With the ms. on its way, I'm getting us to Ashland for some playgoing, and we hope to see friends in Portland as well. We'll be away June 3-9, which is about the most I can expect of the gardener.

So we seem to be doing ok, and hope you are, too. Bring us up to date when time allows.

Love, carol

From: "linda.miller008" <lmiller65@comcast.net>
Subject: **hello**
Date: May 23, 2009 11:10:13 AM PDT
To: cddoig@comcast.net

Good to hear from you and your gardens. I feel a twinge in my chest (I think that's where it is) when I see gardens here, really, like some small part of me has been recently surgically removed. I have gardened all my life. Pulling weeds in the vegetable garden was probably my first paid employment, and I grew and sold iris bouquets to the Franklin grocer when I was probably not much older than 10. But something had to give, there are not enough hours in my day anymore, and that was one of the things that gave.

The dog is barking at somebody walking down the hall. Shut up, dog.

Verdi's Macbeth is playing on the radio, so I may as well continue in this discontented tone. Max Miller died this week, I loved him dearly. Some consolation in his pronouncement a couple years ago that he had had enough of this life. And more in the fact that Gabriel was with him, Gabriel would be good at that. Then he got on an airplane and flew to Lebanon where he will be making a film for two months, so I don't know what they're doing about a memorial service.

Gabe was working on a film in Jamaica much of the winter, but I guess his luck ran out. He hates heat, always has, he is going to suffer in a Mideast summer.

Fran's biggest event of the year was Thursday, the day Max died, so they didn't tell her until the next day. Between the financial meltdown and Bernie Madoff, a lot of rich New Yorkers are now poor New Yorkers. The event revenues suffered, but it was also a huggy evening with the faithful still able to help save the planet.

Congratulations on another college degree. You're going to need a new wall to hang all the diplomas on. Aren't you compelled to give colleges a chunk of money when they give you an honorary degree? I always wondered.

We've had something else (sort of) in common all these years, Ivan. My father is Scots-Irish (an Ulster Scot), and I am way more than 50% by temperament. Learning that taught me more about myself than ten years in therapy. OMG, as the twitter-children say, no wonder I won't do what I'm told. I've committed to giving a speech here about the role Scots-Irish played in Virginia history, so I've been doing a lot of reading about them. They are a major reason this state is way different from Maryland, which was a Catholic colony and now is awash in Jews. I was thinking that you don't ever write much about where your book characters immigrated from, do you? They just sprout in Montana. The Scots were not nationalists, they were more committed to their clans and tribes. When they came to America, most of them became (oh, whatever) Americans, no Scots-Irish parades or dinners or clubs. Except don't take away their guns, and it's not burglars they're worried about. Both the National Rifle Association and the Gun Owners of America are headquartered here, and the Scots-Irish are the reason.

Glad to hear you have another book under your belt, and hope you're enjoying your hiatus.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: hello
Date: May 27, 2009 1:05:16 PM PDT
To: linda.miller008 <lmiller65@comcast.net>



You ask an interesting question about honorary doctorates: In the cases we're familiar with, the recipients seem to fall into three categories: Those who have given large sums or whom the institution hopes will give in the future; people distinguished in a particular field, and celebrities. I suppose that in Montana Ivan qualifies in the last two categories. At any rate, they paid our way and provided room and board, so it cost them about \$1,000. In coverage in the local paper, Ivan was the one recipient shown -- funny hat and all.

His idea of a hiatus is to shovel into the accumulated mass of ms, letters and such, and to begin thinking about the next novel. I could tell he was about the latter yesterday, when he seemed to be somewhere far off, in particular in his fictional Gros Ventre, Montana.

I'm planning a 70th birthday party for him, at his suggestion. The A-list of local friends, such as may be in town on a June weekend (his birthday is the 27th). We settled on a noontime picnic buffet, since that's the nicest part of our day. We'll keep the guest list under 20 and include writer and artist pals, among others.

Meanwhile, we're off to Ashland and the Shakespeare festival June 3 to 9, with stops coming and going in Portland to meet friends at a good restaurant.

So what do you think of Obama's nominee for the Supreme Court? He chose a twofer, and one I hope will cause lots of problems for the Republicans. From here it looks like an astute choice. Ivan hopes she's paid her taxes.

I'm off into the sunshine. So sorry to hear about Max. We liked him, too, and once on a cross-country trip we stayed at the family home. He had a lot of years on him, didn't he?

On May 23, 2009, at 11:10 AM, linda.miller008 wrote:

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From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: **book stuff**
Date: August 24, 2009 9:44:52 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <linda.miller008>



Hiya, Linda. Thought you'd like to know that Dancing at the Rascal Fair has been chosen as the month's book club selection by the Diane Rehm show and will be discussed in the 11 a.m. (your time) segment on Wednesday. It's on WAMU and we'll stream it live here.

You just never can tell! We thought the book biz already was busy with the paperback of The Eleventh Man just appearing, with marketing and sales planning for Work Song, which will be published next spring, and with Ivan working on yet the next novel. But we're delighted with the Dancing choice, especially since editors and publicists give the show high marks for affecting sales.

The copyedited version of Work Song is expected to arrive tomorrow and will keep us ^{marketing} busy for a few days.

Meanwhile, our weather has markedly improved, with temperatures in the low- to mid-70s and a hint of Fall in the air. Ivan's garden is producing lettuce nonstop, we're waiting for the next bean crop, and we're harvesting berries like crazy. The applesauce crop is in the freezer, and the other fruit trees are modestly productive. We've had some tomatoes and are awaiting the deluge.

How's by you? Been surviving the D.C. summer OK? Love, carol.

From: lmiller65@comcast.net
Subject: **Wednesday**
Date: August 26, 2009 9:59:18 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Well, two thumbs up for that Diane Rehms show, yes? I thought she was going to interview Ivan, but got three experts sitting around talking about Rascal Fair for an hour. That must have just made yr scalp tingle, huh? I liked the way they kept talking about the characters' motivations and decisions, like everything was their own idea. I can never read yr books without remembering that you wrote every word, and wondering how/why you did what you did.

It was great luck to get Katty Kay to moderate, she did a good job. She's very well known, on the East Coast anyway. Dahncing at the Rahscal Feh.

Work Song!! I love it! That's the best title since Rascal Fair.

Yes, I have yr weather (and Melanie's in Israel) on the desktop of my computer. Seattle never had 90-degree temperatures for a minute when I lived there. We used to flee to Matthews Beach until sunset anytime it went over 80! Do you have air conditioning? I'm sure most people don't, it must be dreadful.

Everyone's weather has changed. We had the coolest summer since I've lived here, I was able to walk Mojo every day. It was gasping dry, the lawns were turning brown, but then we had a hurricane skirt up the coast last week and got 5 inches of rain in a day.

I can have a garden here if I want, but I said no. It always sounds like a great idea in March, but not so much in August. But now I'm weakening, this is the first August of my life when I didn't have access to real tomatoes. I have mentioned this to about 10 people with gardens (much as I cultivated friends with sailboats in Seattle.) So I've had three mercy tomatoes, but we shall see about next summer.

I will start teaching an English-fer-foreigners class in September. Wednesday mornings, all native languages welcome. That will be educational, so much for "hola means hello." I have avoided teaching Asians, apparently I have to get over that.

Max starts school in a couple weeks. It's called the Apple School, but he calls it Apple Montessori because he likes the sound of it. My mom is going to take me to Applemontessori and my dad is going to pick me up from Applemontessori. Olivia's first word was "good," which I think is a positive sign, and her second word is "dog," the dog being Mojo. She is walking and just had her first birthday. Max looks like Clint's family, and Livvy looks like Kaya, with dark hair and eyes.

Gabriel has been in Lebanon all summer, working on a film we know nothing about. We are so accustomed to his disappearing for months at a time, we assume he is well and will pop up one of these days.

Did I tell you Max Miller died a couple months ago? He was 96 and just pissed about living so long. The kids went to his funeral, which was quite the bash. He was a big deal in the business community and the Air Force Reserve. Those lowans, they don't forget you, even if you've been

cooped up in a nursing home for 15 years.

I've gotten addicted to the cable news shows, especially Rachel Maddow. During the commercials, I flip over to whichever idiot is broadcasting on Fox. That has been a scary First Amendment issue, with Fox endlessly reciting the Republican talking points, several of which are bald-faced lies. It could be really hard to govern a country when the TV is lying about everything you do. Are we completely helpless about this?

People here were forbidden in school to say Civil War, they had to say War Between the States. A civil war is inside one country, dear, and we seceded. There is much more sense of history in Virginia, I'm enjoying it. There's a big snit south of here because Walmart wants to build a store within sight of some battlefield we never heard of. It doesn't take long for somebody to start talking about "hallowed ground." Umm, hallowed . . .

Thanks for letting me know about the Diane Rehms show, that was fun.

I gave my Scots-Irish speech a couple weeks ago, big success. SRO, 300 people, now everyone knows me and I still can't remember most of their names.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: **Weather!**
Date: February 11, 2010 3:40:08 PM PST
To: Linda Miller <lmliller65@comcast.net>



Just a note to wish you well, and to hope you've got power and enough in the cupboard so that you don't have to venture out.

What a winter. Southern Californians are playing mudpies, while here in the el nino northwest we've had a warmer than usual start to the year. Rain, yes, but daytime temperatures in the low 50s and about 10 degrees colder at night. Ivan is watching for a chance between showers to plant the New Redfire seedlings that he started indoors.

We've embarked on a new book season, though this one is so drawn out it seems forever. Last week we had a conference call with the duo from publicity who will handle Work Song -- nice guys who are listening to what Ivan would like to do, and what he'd rather not. Most simply put, minimize the book store appearances and maximize the larger events. One of those requests came up this afternoon: an appearance at the Public Library Assn's national conference, which this year is in Portland. In this case he'll hang around the Penguin booth on March 25 and give away advance reading copies (arcs).

His editor, Becky Saletan, already has had arcs out to booksellers and others. I suspect she sent out plenty, since the bookstore in Durango received one. There, they wanted Ivan to keynote an arts festival. Nope. Hard to get to, and not many people when you do. The first response to the arcs came from a Tulsa bookseller, who wrote:

It's been a long time since I've read a work of fiction that didn't contain one or more of the following: multiple murders and/or suicides, drugs, cell phones, teenage angst, cheating spouses, international intrigue, state of the art electronics, the walking dead, and anything to do with a cosmopolitan lifestyle. All I can say is "What a relief."

Next week we fly to Portland for a brief overnight. Ivan will speak at the 100th birthday of the town of Lake Oswego, an upscale suburb where The Whistling Season was chosen as the community read. The library bought 800 copies! All month the town is sponsoring events: quilt-making, horseshoeing, a barn dance and on and on. Should be fun, and I'll get to visit with one of my favorite students from way back.

So we're hanging in, pretty well. We got away for a week in Tucson in mid-January, and that helped a lot. Sunshine counts. We have a couple of sets of friends in Tucson, and one of 'em took us to the wintering grounds of the sandhill cranes. Thousands of them, whirling in the air, remindful of an Escher print come to life.

When you get a chance, let us know how you're faring.

Love, Carol



Knock Knock!

Who's there?

Iguana! 

Iguana who?

Carol ° Ivan -

You'll be groaning
so loudly we'll hear it
over all the intervening
mountain ranges!

The invasion blew out
today - as the new weather
system has settled snow loads
back on the Big Belts —

I'm hoping you are
both in great fine fettle!

Juan & Carol

Iguana
wish you a
happy
Valentine's Day!

Truly!

Love -

Mauville





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SEP09

From: Imiller65@comcast.net
Subject: February
Date: February 12, 2010 8:53:32 AM PST
To: cddoig@comcast.net

Hello Doignesses. Good to get Carol's letter, sorry, I haven't forgotten that I owe you a letter, I just haven't done anything about it. I enjoy my days, they just aren't long enough for everything I want to do.

Everybody's schedule here is bollixed up by the days when we were supposed to be doing something beside watch it snow. Wow. Maybe that happened in Chicago, but too long ago to remember. 48 straight hours of whiteout--and it happened twice in one week. Kind of a bonding thing for a community, everybody who was here will remember that we did that. I Survived Snowmageddon t-shirts. Oh well, it was probably more interesting than what most of us were planning to do.

My Supermon daughter was in New York on business Tuesday. Her flight home was cancelled, so she took the train, wherein they announced in Philadelphia that it would go no further due to the probability of snow-laden trees falling on the tracks. So she rented a car, drove home in a blizzard, cooked dinner and breast-fed her baby! Gabe is here, too, working in New York and visiting us on weekends, but I haven't heard about his snow adventures. Business in Seattle is slow so he's been working in New York a lot, he has rented a bedroom from an old girlfriend, which he apparently has all over the globe.

Oh goodness, it's time to plant early vegetables in Seattle. I've forgotten you can do that it February. We have six feet of snow piled up everywhere and freezing temps at night, the whole metropolis is turning into one big ice sculpture. It may be April before it melts, and the Potomac will be something to see when it does.

Did I tell you I subscribed to the NY Times? With great guilt, the first time in my grown-up life that I haven't Supported My Local Newspaper. But the Post fired way too many reporters, and there wasn't much local reporting in it anymore, so screw them. I loved the story in the Times this morning, a public opinion poll indicating that Americans are figuring out that 1) Obama is a pretty decent president under the circumstances, 2) The Congress is a mess, 3) Democrats are doing a better job than Republicans, 4) tea partiers are idiots, 5) Sarah Palin is not qualified to govern anybody, and 6) Wall Street (not greedy citizens buying more house than they could afford) caused the economic collapse. I've always had great faith in the voters, they usually figure things out, but they were scaring me there for awhile.

Speaking of local newspapers, the Franklin News-Herald and Oil City Derrick (which share a Website) have gone offline. You can read the headlines and leads on the Internet, but all else is blocked unless you shell out \$85 for a subscription. Big loss, there are zillions of people who have moved away but kept in touch online. When they had a food drive or other charity appeal, most of the response came from out-of-town.

My health is okay. If you've seen the PR about a new pill that "helps MS patients walk," they left out the fact that it only helps a few people a little and costs \$13,000 a year. That's on top of the \$30,000 for "disease-modifying" shots that we're all supposed to be taking--and lord knows what other meds, there's a reason they call it "multiple" sclerosis. My mother's Christian Science stands me in good

stead, not because I believe that prayer cures anything, but because I don't expect much from medical doctors. Well, except the ones who replaced my hip joints. My baby brother just got a new knee, this will be a family joke in time, we all have our mother's arthritis.

I just got a new Dell computer with Windows 7, fun toy. My favorite thing so far is that you can put virtual Post-it notes in the corner of the screen to remind you of stuff. Cute! I was thinking it was time for a new computer, which was good because my Gateway was attacked by Chinese hackers. They got through my security screen and killed my hard drive. It's the most popular hobby in China--their hackers have clubs and magazines and conventions and apparently give out prizes. Back up yr files, and if you get any weird pop-ups, don't touch them. Turn off yr browser and computer immediately.

Now I know what an ARC is. Cool. Loved the early review of Work Song from Tulsa, a good insight into contemporary fiction, not that I read much of it. My guess is that his problem is the work of a younger generation who's watched too much TV and all want their novels to be movies.

I've read a couple books about the economic collapse and am reading "The Quants" next. OMG. Isn't that interesting--the OMG thing. I've seen it in a couple ads now, and I heard a five-year-old say it last week. It's no longer profane, little children are allowed to say it. But then, who knows, I never understood why "God's nightshirt" was a swear word.

See ya--Linda.

From: lmiller65@comcast.net
Subject: hello
Date: May 10, 2010 8:55:30 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

I just sent you Nina King's obit, but the message box was Twitter-size, so I'm going independent. I'm sure the info would reach you by some writer's media, but thought you might want to see the Post's memoriam to her.

Hope you and yr books and yr gardens are well. No big news, Gabe called last night (it was Mother's Day, I'm sure it was on his Blackberry: call Mom), his business is blooming after a dreadful economic year or so. Jack Gordon is sort of married, to somebody named Brian who's probably young enough to be his grandson. He sounds healthier and happier, I mean Jack. Fran is juggling family, a major house remodel/addition (I don't know why they don't just build a house, this is the second one they've revolutionized), and environmentalists who are not as rich as they used to be. Fortunately for almost everyone, things seem to be looking up, financially and politically. Unless you live on the Gulf Coast, OMG.

Teaching English to furriners is still my raison d'etre. I have my first Asian student this year who is teaching me why Asians get such good grades, I have never known a student to work so hard. I get a kick out of watching Max and Olivia (who is called Tulip for some reason) learn English--she is speaking in the past tense at 19 months, how did she learn that? Yesterday, Max and I were playing ball in the hall, and he says, "You need a hitter," meaning a bat. Isn't that amazing? There is no such word, he knows at age 3 how to form a noun from a verb! We should work harder on understanding how little kids learn. They are doing fine, smart and strong.

We have a history club here, with lectures. We also have a heap of retired military here, so lectures about battles and wars are particularly popular. So I got around to learning about wars--the French and Indian one since there was a French fort in Franklin. And now, finally, I'm learning about the Civil War which you may know is still something of an issue in Virginia. The main thing I've learned so far is that both the North and South were blowing hot air, neither thought the other would really fight until it was too late to do anything but shoot back.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: report from Seattle
Date: May 28, 2010 8:56:13 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <lmiller65@comcast.net>



Thanks for your letter and for letting us know about Nina King. We enjoyed Washington Post Book World for many years and we miss it. In my view it was a lot more interesting than NYTBR.

With so many review sources gone, early reviews from the professional journals seem ever more important, and Work Song is off to a strong start. The latest, Library Journal, calls it "essential." Atta way, librarians. A few days back the first hardback copy arrived -- the tradition of that first copy being overnighted to the author still obtains -- and the layout and design are handsome, even if the photoshopped and colorized cover illustration leaves me short of enthralled. It's not bad, but how I do miss original art.

There's another potential problem is buying one-time rights from a photo archive, too. Remember the schoolhouse cover on Whistling Season? Diane Ravitch's new book uses the same. Not a big problem, especially since Ravitch has recanted her avid approval of testing. At least she's gutsy enough to say that the evidence is in and it doesn't work..

It'll be some weeks before books are in the stores and Ivan gets his contracted copies, so don't hold your breath but eventually you'll get one. Meanwhile, ivandoig.com has been updated, and under What's New you can see his tour schedule, which is all local, Seattle to Bellingham. At this point in his career, there's little incentive for Ivan to trek around nationally, or even to the waning number of stores in Montana. The independents, through their indiebound site, are to feature Work Song in July, bless 'em, and the big retailers will make the bulk of the sales.

Let's see. What else. Whistling Season continues to thrive, and Book-It theater here in Seattle has Prairie Nocturne scheduled for next March. They have someone working on a stage version, so Ivan need not be directly involved. He, meanwhile, is working on the next novel, which is coming along satisfactorily though more slowly than he'd like, given the interruptions.

So, all good news on the book front.

It's Memorial Day weekend and raining steadily. We walked as usual and came home with raingear dripping. Sunday's supposed to be sunny and maybe we'll get a chance to grill a Copper River sockeye. I bought one a couple of weeks ago, a day after the season opened, and it was beyond good. Ivan's lettuces are thriving now, and so are we.

We borrowed Ann and Marsh's house on the Oregon coast last weekend, and enjoyed it despite the swirly storms. Next Tuesday we're planning a quickie trip to Ashland to see some plays. To avoid the long drive we'll fly to Medford and take an airport shuttle. See how that works.

Tell us more about your teaching when you get a chance.

Love

From: lmiller65@comcast.net
Subject: hello
Date: June 20, 2010 5:40:04 PM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Thanks for telling me about the You Tube video, I'm often reading something about electronic variations on publishing, like Kindle, and wondering how it affects Ivan.

So guess what was in my Sunday Washington Post. *Book World* lives! Your marketing people probably knew that, it has always been very pro-Ivan. It's still thin--12 pages-- and no promises yet that it will appear every Sunday. But a sign of hope that Washington will once again have a decent newspaper. I told you I cancelled mine and, after awhile, they called me up and gave me a 6-month free subscription. It's probably running out soon, maybe I will start paying again if they have a regular *Book World*. I looked Karen Fiser up on the Internet awhile back--a friend here has a lesbian poet daughter who teaches at Bellingham, which reminded me of Karen. There's no evidence that she's published anything in ages, I wonder if she's sick again. She had been doing better. I like her poems.

I was jubilant to read that the Republicans studied 11,000 Elena Kagan e-mails and couldn't find a single one of weapons grade. That so creeped me out that they could do that.

I'm moving pretty soon, did I tell you that? Only a few miles to a different old people's institution on the Potomac, the place I'm in is halfway to a nursing home. They didn't intend it to be, but the recession has freaked people out of selling their houses until they have to.

Happy publication . . .

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: **Re: On patrol**
Date: July 4, 2010 8:31:12 AM PDT
To: lmiller65@comcast.net



....and happy we are to have you on patrol, Linda. Much appreciated.

This has been a book launch unlike any other. The fun began Tuesday with Ivan reading at Third Place in Lake Forest Park, the premier bookstore now. An audience of 400, with 107 copies of *Work Song* sold. The next night, Bainbridge, and 85 copies sold. Meanwhile, his editor is reporting brisk sales at Amazon (though its site was down for some hours), and its competitors. The independents have it on their monthly list of 20 or so best releases.

By Thursday, editor Becky was calling with news that there'd be a further printing of 2500 to add to the 35,000 originally printed.

On pub day Ivan called his agent Liz, to ask when he should submit his proposal for the-novel-after-the-next-novel. As soon as you can, she advised. And so, on Friday morning he sent 5 pages. Mid-afternoon came an email from Marshall (who provided the title, by the way), with a reference to a Chicago Trib Sunday column which blew us away in the best sense of the term. Finally! And it took a cultural critic to do it. When I finish this I'll copy it to you. Ivan sent it along to Liz, and soon thereafter came a phone call, with the very veteran agent Liz sounding almost giddy. She loves his proposal (a follow-up to *Work Song*) and flipped over the Trib column. She'll talk to Becky -- probably from her home on a peninsula which she owns in Maine.

It needs to be said that the NYTBR prints its review next Sunday, and that's entirely unpredictable. Ivan and I are not much impressed with the publication, but it carries weight in publishing circles.

Stay tuned.

Carol

On Jul 4, 2010, at 7:00 AM, lmiller65@comcast.net wrote:

Hey guys, hope yr having fun with the book release. I love the cover design--totally compatible with my shelf of Doig books, but brighter and more eye-catching.

And the text isn't bad either! I'll send a total mash note when I get further into it. Right now, I'm just thinking how can I forget every three years what an AMAZING writer Ivan is. The only writer I know--and I swear this isn't because you're friends--who makes me keep stopping to reread sentences just because they

are such dazzling work, on 3 or 4 different levels.

The Post Book World is hanging on, but as the last pages of the Outlook section, not usually as a separate tabloid. No Work Song review yet. You get the NYTimes, so you saw the advertisement today--super job all around by the publisher's ad people, and I am a master of turning pages without seeing the ads.

December 8, 2010

So I had this impulse to write you a real letter, I forget why. And I did, right before I found out my @#\$ Hewlett-Packard printer had died, and all the adventures of choosing, acquiring, and installing a new printer followed. I used to just run to Staples and buy a new H-P when that happened, but they are getting to be 99% plastic.

My new printer says it can do Wi-fi, I really have to learn what that means. And I still haven't gotten on Facebook. I'm getting a Kindle for Christmas. I have read an entire shelf of books since I moved into the home, at this rate, I will run out of shelves. The only other high-tech thing I'm doing is going to see a Met opera live in a movie theater.

Anyway so here's my real letter, now slightly dated. Thanks for yr holiday letter, you sound as satisfactory as ever. I know yr weather has been character-building. Ours is just Canada-goddam-cold, which enables me to prove my love to my dog twice a day. Merry Christmas!

November 27, 2010

Hello Doigs. Belated gratefulness, I always think of you on Thanksgiving, after all these years. This was another transition year, it appears. The year the Blairs decided we cannot find/afford a central location to hold all of us and a turkey. That's a loss. Our family of six is now 33 people, no wonder the world is overpopulated. Max and Olivia, who is called Tulip for some reason, already have seven second cousins.

Don't remember if I've written since I finished Work Song (Love that title) altho e-mail doesn't always stick in my mind. Butte was the most amazing place then, wasn't it--I saw a documentary about it on PBS, too. Sort of like trying to get yr head around the fact that there were big Mayan cities. Don't think I've ever read such a love affair with a library, though I should have, writers being book people and all. It made me think back to the Franklin (PA) Public Library. It must have been my second home, I can remember every inch of that place.

Do you know that Eli Intrator was a Gallician? He was, or "galitzianer" in Yiddish, the place was dotty with shtetls until the Holocaust. He lived in Israel for 15 years before it was Israel and Hebrew was revived. So they spoke Yiddish and identified with their last known address, and his parents were born-and-raised Galician.

1919, that was such a happening period of American history. (It was the year my grandmother died of the Spanish flu, leaving my 2-year-old father.) I'm reading the book now about the history of Prohibition. Our income tax was a gift from the Anti-Saloon League! Who knew? Also--did they ever mention that Frances Willard was a flaming lesbian? Her friends and family called her Frank and she had a lifelong companion named Anna.

I like the place where I live, tho I'd rather it wasn't called Leisure World. Florida can keep its incessant sunshine, I'd rather retire in Washington. High level of education in this city, very interesting neighbors. An art history professor who teaches one class a year for us--I just took her Sicilian architecture. Lecture on the Middle East conflict this afternoon by a retired military guy who was *in charge* of it. A retired spy who deep-sea dived in her spare time and has a collection of seashells she retrieved all over the world. A neighbor whose whole family performed in vaudeville when she was a child, and another who now volunteers at the federal women's prison. There are, however, an excess of Republicans in Virginia. The lady next door is very nice but they drop the Washington Times at her door every morning, so we don't talk about politics.

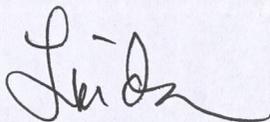
I told you that Gabe won an Emmy, didn't I? That's still our most exciting news. He's flying hither and yon working on a film about "superwomen" (that's all I know about it, I don't try to keep up with all his projects.) He was here to interview Lynda Carter and he sent me a picture of himself with Gloria Steinem.

I've had a bad year healthwise, I don't do stress well, and moving is stress. I am finally bouncing back in terms of stamina, etc., but I acquired a couple new symptoms that don't appear to be temporary. Shit.

The big buzz in the MS industry is "the liberation procedure," an Italian doctor decided that the whole autoimmune theory of MS is a crock. (Some of us kinda suspect that). He says that we have clogged arteries and that we just need a low-risk procedure much like balloon angioplasty to get unclogged. People are flying to Costa Rica and Bulgaria to get it done, and (for reasons still unknown) coming home vastly improved. It is a HUGE issue in Canada, which has national health care and hence citizens who get really pissed when the government will not fix whatever ails them.

All of which has brought me to the point where I have to get on Facebook. Groan. I have several MS friends who are forwarding me replicate Facebook discussions about the liberation thing, and it's time I figured this out for myself. So that's what I have to do today.

Hope you are well and enjoying all your holidays

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Linda". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: catching up
Date: February 24, 2011 2:42:58 PM PST
To: Linda Miller <lmiller65@comcast.net>
glassmilk



Hello there, Linda. It's been a busy start to the new year, some of it planned and some not.

We took ourselves to Tucson for our usual mid-January break, and enjoyed perfect weather, highs ranging from 71 to 77. All that by day and a full moon at night. We arrived, however, shortly after the Giffords massacre, and it was much on the minds of our friends there. One couple had worked diligently for her since the first time she ran for Congress, and they live near the Safeway where it all happened. We stay in that area, too, and one day stopped by the store for routine supplies. Out front was a large area of flowers, candles, signs, teddy bears and so on. At the hospital, also nearby, a much larger area was dedicated to get-well wishes, and people were visiting as if on a pilgrimage.

We came home with airplane colds, very nasty (Ivan still is trying to get rid of the vestiges). I knew I had a really tough bug, my sinuses draining like crazy. I didn't know that I was getting dehydrated, until I went to pour soup into bowls for our lunch, and froze. Ivan couldn't get me to respond, did get me sat down, and called 911. They arrived almost instantly and I got the fast ride to Virginia Mason in the red van. So the ER set me up with IV, I felt back to normal, and Ivan and I watched Green Bay beat the Bears. Fine, I thought, now I'm OK and can go home. Uh uh. Admitted. There followed a major work-up to make sure nothing else was wrong: Xrays, CT scans, an MRI of my head, and more.

The answer is that I was dehydrated, a situation worsened by a blood pressure medication I was trying. It kicked in at the wrong time and sent my pressure over the cliff. But given a chance, doctors will test everything, and probably more than once. The follow-up tests go on, but I'm OK.

On the brighter side of medical, quite literally, I've had cataracts removed from both eyes, the first in early January and the other one two days ago. When that eye settles in I can throw away the distance glasses I've worn since second grade -- 70 years! --and buy reading and computer models over-the-counter. I'm thrilled.

Things are doing well at the homestead, where Ivan is making good progress on the current ms. He's given himself until Labor Day to complete, which will be nine or ten months ahead of the contract schedule. Then it's on the the next novel, which will return Morrie and Grace to Butte. I don't know what he plans after that, but he's not going to run out of ideas.

Where he's stalled is in planting his garden. It's cold for Seattle and not time to plant peas and other seedlings. Today there's a bit of snow on the ground, but we've had such an easy winter compared with most other parts of the country that we don't dare complain. I imagine you have stories of your own.

I loved getting a snail-mail epistle from you. Had no idea Eli was from a Galician background. I loved the skinny kid that Ivan invented for Work Song and hope he'll return in the next saga.

I'm glad you like the place you live, and I can see why, from the cast of characters you describe. I hope that this is a better year for your health. Do keep us up-to-date. We miss seeing you.

Love,

Carol

From: "Linda miller" <lmiller65@glassmile.net>
Subject: hello doignesses
Date: February 27, 2011 9:34:48 AM PST
To: <cddoig@comcast.net>
▶ 4 Attachments, 2.9 MB

I promise, you were right there on my TTD list, it was indeed time for catching up. Thanks for yr letter.

I thought of you when the shootings happened in Arizona, I thought it was about the season when you migrate, but truth is I don't know the difference between Tucson and Phoenix, so not exactly sure where. The event struck resonant chords with Americans, unfortunately involving a couple of notes that produce national paralysis. There was a big article about Gifford's recovery in the Wn Post today, maybe she will rebound enough to introduce a bill or two in Congress. Take that, NRA.

I've read Newsweek for ages, Tina Brown has taken over, OMG. Celebrities, this magazine is going to be about celebrities. George Clooney on the cover!

Speaking of celebrities, Academy Awards tonight. It's a high holiday in our family, I haven't missed them since I was in school. If you haven't seen The King's Speech, go see The King's Speech.

Photos of Fran's kids attached--Max looks like a Blair/Miller, Olivia looks like a Turk. Olivia has a stick that she uses like a cane, she limps around the house and announces "I am being Noni." Imitation is said to be flattery.

Gabriel has been wildly busy, the Emmy was a rocket booster for his career. Production on a couple of films/videos is being held up until The Emmy-winning Gabriel Miller is available. Good news, except that Gabriel hates pressure, he always did. He truly doesn't sound happy when he talks about it. He had to cancel his trip here for Christmas--he loves playing Uncle Gabriel--and hasn't had time to reschedule it. He has made a couple videos for Bill Gates, I don't know what else.

I am still pondering going to Bulgaria or someplace and getting the MS procedure done, I still think it will help. The National MS Societies of both Canada and the US have been pressured by members (who mentioned that they might stop giving them money) into multi-million-dollar research projects on it. An answer is promised in two years, with six-month status reports. So for \$10,000 (which the procedure and attendant travel cost), I will wait for the next (1-year) report. If it even hints at okness, drs in the US will start doing the procedure and I won't have to travel to Timbuktu. Anyway, all that has distracted me from thinking about my next trip to Seattle.

It has been a historically cold winter here, as opposed to last year, which was historically snowy. I continue AMAZED that the media and its readers/viewers are not more bothered by the fact that the OCEANS ARE RISING. I read a NYTimes mentioning that parents henceforth will all need to have "the talk" with their children. The talk being that their planet will be getting warmer and warmer and we're real sorry.

Otherwise, a news junkie can't complain . . . holy Moses, or Mohammed as the case may be. I still talk to Melanie in Tel Aviv all the time--little Israel is surrounded by pissed-off Arabs. I would like to think the upheaval is to their benefit, the autocrats have been using Israel-Palestine as a distraction from their own failings for 50 years. But there will be chaos for a very long time.

And then there's the union-buster in Wisconsin. Wow . . . such a time. I have mostly passed the winter reading the news and watching Rachel Maddow. I still have several paper books to finish before I will try my new Kindle, but it's cute.

I was walking my dog the other day, still dodging dirty snowbanks, and I thought, Geez, it's February. I used to plant peas in February! I think the ground is still frozen here. I hope yours gets warmer soon.







From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: grand
Date: March 2, 2011 2:39:05 PM PST
To: Linda Miller <lmiller65@glassmile.net>



Thanks for the pix of the grandkids, Linda. They look terrific. So you have a Grammy-winning son, and a daughter with a professional career and two cute-as-can-be offspring. And have you ever earned them all. I well remember you're saying: My kids come first. You lived it, too.

As I write this I'm looking at the Sound, where squalls are passing by, providing whitewater as far as I can see, with gusts up to 40 mph. Before all this, Ivan sneaked out this morning and planted lettuce seedlings. You're right: Peas are next, and Ivan would have liked to have had them in the ground 10 days ago. I haven't even gotten primroses into the front pots yet..

So you're still watching the Academy Awards. We did get ourselves in gear and up to the cute theater in Edmonds to see The King's Speech. Much impressed. I thought it was perfectly done throughout, and Ivan particularly praised the tight script. You and several other friends can take a bow and our thanks for getting us off to the movies. Most of the time we're just so comfy at home....

Keep us informed about the medical procedure you're contemplating. Here's hoping the U.S. gets in gear so you can do this at home. Or maybe in Seattle? For my part, I'm seeing first-hand the over-use of technology. I got dehydrated, a blood pressure medication I was trying backfired, and I turned into a zombie at our dining room table, much to Ivan's alarm. Far as I can see, that's all there was to it, but after X-rays, CTs, ultrasound and an MRI, I'm still facing more tests. My impression is that, as long as Medicare pays, work-ups are over-generous. At some point, I suppose I'll just say: enough. (And I quit all blood pressure medication. I think the pressure acts up only when medical personnel take it.)

The cataract operations went well, at any rate, my distance vision is now just fine without glasses, and the surgeon says I can buy reading glasses at Costco. It'll take a few weeks before the right eye settles down.

I'll wait until another day to comment on the current state of politics. At the moment I'm laundering bedcovers, which at least provide positive reward. My mood not helped by a NYT story today that Frank Rich is leaving to write a monthly column for New York mag, as well as dabbling with HBO content. Damn!

I do agree that this Republican destruction machine is mightily entertaining. If only the country didn't have to put up with chaos. I expect the turkeys to be voted out of office as the results become clear, but when's that? And how much damage will be done in the meantime?

Meanwhile, smell the posies.

Love, Carol

SmartZone Communications Center

cddoig@comcast.net

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hey

From : Linda miller <lmiller65@glassmile.net>

Tue May 10 2011 8:58:58 AM PDT

Subject : hey**To :** cddoig@comcast.net

It's a week of very perfect spring weather here, hope it is for you, too. Bin Laden is dead and Glenn Beck is cancelled and Obama's approval ratings are up, things are pretty positive. And the Republican party once again appears to be self-destructing, but then I thought that four years ago, too.

My hair is growing. It's almost down to my shoulders. I haven't worn it this long since the 1970s, remember the 1970s?

I read a book about clouds, so I label them in my brain whenever I walk the dog. Oooo, look dog, stratonimbus . . .

I read, that's mostly what I do, it doesn't make me tired like most other things. I read a really good book called *Overdiagnosed*, which is one of the reasons American health care gets too little health for the money we spend. He talked about an experience exactly like the one you had, Carol, a patient was taking a blood-pressure med and dehydrated and passed out. I can't tell you the page number because Kindle doesn't have page numbers, and I miss them. I like to know how many pages I have to read until the end of the chapter.

Gabriel called last night--his Blackberry undoubtedly told him to, it was Mother's Day. He has been working for Bill Gates' foundation, making one of the films they will use in the reformed-education universe to keep the children's attention so they don't drop out of school. Very long hours, and it could be practically a real job. If they agree on the particulars, there will be many films after this one. He doesn't do anything, he's like the producer who hires and manages the people who do the pictures and the sound and the music and the graphics and stuff. He's had the same girlfriend for what I think is a record length of time, but maybe he's just been so busy working that they haven't had time to disagree about anything. He still lives on Beacon Hill.

This September, Fran will have been at Conservation International for 20 years--she's considered Old Guard--do we believe that? (What's more, this time next year, both of my children will be over 40! I, however, am not old.) Fran has another new boss, she's gone through a million of them. We updated her resume, that's what we always do--but THIS time, she's mathing out what her severance pay would be and how long she could stay home and play with her kids! That's serious!

Olivia will start school in the fall. It's a Montessori school, which I don't understand. But it

somehow enables Max and Olivia (upon request) to be in the same class, sort of like the one-room schoolhouse of yore. How cute.

How's your respective healths? You asked about CVSSI, that's the illicit procedure they're doing for MS. Canadians are hopping up and down about getting the research needed to legalize it, so I'm waiting to see some of their results. (It also costs \$10,000 to go out of the country and do it. If I were a millionaire, I would have already had it. It's really safe.) So the first study is out, and it probably shows that the "blocked veins" are a symptom of MS, which in turn causes other symptoms. Unblock the veins with angioplasty and, voila, many very disabling symptoms can go away. People really have gotten out of wheelchairs and walked. So, no, MS is not just blocked veins, they appear to be an effect and not a cause. There will be another major study released this fall, and then I think American doctors will start doing the procedure and I won't have to go to Bulgaria. Insurance won't pay for it for years, so it will still cost mucho money, but I've had MS too long to wait for the American health care system to get its act together.

I'm going to a Steven Sondheim play, *Follies*, that's the most exciting thing on my calendar. Bernadette Peters!! It was one of his first (1971) musicals, and it's so famous nobody remembers that it flopped. But some of the songs caught on and a London production 5 years later was successful. I think it's still sticking in Sondheim's craw and he wants to do a revival on Broadway. We get to be the out-of-town tryout, lucky us.

That's my news, hope you are well . . .

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: **This one's a doozy**
Date: May 17, 2011 9:53:15 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <lmliller65@glassmile.net>



Politics, yes. M'gawd. The New York cops treating Straus-Kahn like a common criminal, leading him on a perp walk, and then the judge (a mere woman) denying bail and throwing him into the slammer at Rikers Island. How ungracious! Now his lawyers claim he wasn't in that hotel room at that time. So, perhaps some other naked man, who looks just like him, was using his suite. Or perhaps the African immigrant housekeeper hatched this plot against him, to keep him from becoming president of France. How do you spell predator?

Makes U.S. politics look kinda bland, doesn't it, even on a day when the ex-governor of California admits fathering a kid out of wedlock. And poor Donald Trump, upstaged. His announcement of foregoing the GOP presidential carnival buried at the bottom of page 15 in the NYT. Romney gets slightly better treatment for his carefully staged fundraising show in -- Las Vegas. Way to go, "committed" Mormon. Of course reporters weren't allowed very close to this pre-planned charade.

Let's not even deal with Gingrich right now. He has so little credibility that it's hard to believe that even the Republicans can take him seriously. Gail Collins took him apart on the editorial page of NYT the other day. She, among others.

On the local scene, a couple of weeks ago there was a kerfuffle when Dennis Kucinich made it known that he was looking for a new congressional district, since his Ohio district may disappear. But, aha, the State of Washington is expected to have two open seats: one from an added seat the census is presenting us, and the other our district, where Jay Inslee is expected to run for governor. The Seattle Times headed a lead editorial: "Thanks, Dennis. But No."

Republicans have not yet found a heavyweight candidate to oppose Maria Cantwell, who's seeking a third Senate term. She's good, but a real wonk and not as user friendly as Patty Murray, who's now in her fourth term, after a lot of effort from a lot of us.

On to what we sometimes call the real world.

We appreciate the health update, and wish for you the treatment you want to have. Sounds like that might come to pass in Canada even if the U.S. lags. Keep us informed, please. We're doing OK here. Ivan's condition remains

stable on 50 mg daily of thalidomide. The side effects aren't pleasant, with stiff hands and neuropathy in his feet. Also some effect which changes his perception a little but helps with the writing because he focusses so sharply. He's well along on the next novel, partly because the weather has been deterring some yard work and he just keeps writing.

I've cleared most of the tests that followed my dehydration episode, but am scheduled for another MRI of the head in early August, to compare with the one in February. I resisted the idea for awhile, but then researched meningioma, which is what the first test uncovered, in the brain lining several inches above my left eye. About 94% are benign, so that's not an issue. It's about the size of the first digit of a thumb, and it's causing no problem. Likely it won't, but if it grows and needs surgery, it can be removed. My original idea was to leave it alone unless or until some symptom emerges, but I've come around to letting a neurosurgeon do a comparison. Other than that, I'm through with cataracts and am taking no prescription medicine, having decided that high blood pressure medication is not for me.

Good to have news about the family. May Fran get what she wants; she's worked hard enough. And if Gabriel does a lot of work for the Gates Foundation, that sounds like an enviable gig.

Today the fog is clearing and we hope for an afternoon in the yard. A few warm days are supposed to follow, and we may even get one to 70. We have not been there since last Fall and last weekend's rain broke records. In two days we surpassed the average for May.

Take care and do keep in touch. I enjoy your take on politics.....Carol

From: "Linda miller" <lmiller65@glassmile.net>
Subject: hey doigs
Date: September 28, 2011 11:12:04 AM PDT
To: <cddoig@comcast.net>

I saw a black person named Doig the other day, that was a first. There are a few African-American Blairs wandering around, there were a couple members of the family in southern Virginia comfy enough to buy people. Pretty rare though.

Did you read that Medill magazine? Hard to believe that's the same school we went to, isn't it? They're all out risking their necks covering shooting wars in faraway countries.

My father died, he was 94. We buried him with his pipe in this country cemetery where I knew an awful lot of the people under the headstones. It felt like the 3rd act of *Our Town*.

I have a new knee. It's very nice, I am a huge fan of joint replacements, I would have spent the last decade in a wheelchair without them. But it also inspires me to take the best of care of my other knee, which is now the only major joint God gave me.

Looks like we'll be seeing a lot of yr friend Patty Murray. I don't envy her that task, but I'm glad she's there. Methinks we would have been better off with a couple more women on that committee.

Olivia started preschool this year, so both grandchildren are out of diapers and into the educational system. Max is also into the dinosaur phase, I don't know what it is with boys and dinosaurs.

I sorted out the financial tangle with my first old folks home and got my money back, finally. I had done a rent-to-buy deal in the meantime, but now it's all mine. I made a profit, since home values were sinking the whole time, now I'm spending some of it on ceramic tile, a ceiling fan, and stuff. The apartment has a little fenced yard and a sunroom with glass on three sides, which is a really exciting place to be during a hurricane. I was in a rehab place after my knee surgery, sound asleep, when the earthquake hit. I woke up thinking, oh how nice, they have vibrating beds here!

Gabriel is making another education-reform film, this one for George Lucas' foundation, who got his name from Bill Gates' foundation. The kid is working for George Lucas. He was here to bury Grandpa, we hadn't seen him in ages.

That's all I know. What's up with you guys?

From: "Linda miller" <lmiller65@glassmile.net>
Subject: **Re: hello**
Date: December 9, 2011 10:10:27 AM PST
To: <cddoig@comcast.net>

Address is 19365 Cypress Ridge Terrace Apt 119 Leesburg VA 20176 Phone is 571-291-2751. I'm going to send you a Christmas card this year, too, out of solidarity with the postal workers.

I'm doing fine, a little cranky today. I'm down to those things on my TTD list that I've been avoiding--the camera doesn't turn on when I press On, the Roku won't communicate with the TV, and I have a new cellphone to set up. I never communicated well with machinery. Maybe some Christmas music on the stereo will help. Did I tell you Gabriel is making a film for George Lukas? His people got Gabe's name from Bill Gates' people. He's almost done, promises to be here for Christmas, but we always have our fingers crossed behind our back where he's concerned.

I've hit that age where I know the Northwestern magazine in my mailbox is like turning to the Obituaries page. Ray Mack, he taught Race Relations in the Soc department which in the 1960s was a REVELATION to a kid from Franklin. I babysat for his family, spaghetti sauce in our household is still called Ann Mack sauce. They had brat redhead twins who wailed in heartsick abandonment when their parents put on their coats and didn't stop it until they were out of sight. Then they stopped until it was time to pee their beds. I think I read they both have PhDs from Yale.

Newt Gingrich?!?

<-----Original Message----->

From: carol doig [cddoig@comcast.net]
Sent: 12/8/2011 4:11:53 PM
To: lmiller65@glassmile.net
Subject: Re: hello

As this golden anniversary year comes to a close, you'd get an old-fashioned Christmas letter if only I had your address. How ya doin'?

Carol

On Aug 7, 2011, at 5:03 PM, Linda miller wrote:

| 2011 minus 1961 equals, oh yes it does, 50 years. Happy golden anniversary, guys. 😊

March 3, 2012

Hello Doigs

It's Saturday, I'm listening to the Metropolitan Opera on the radio--good old *Aida*--and cleaning up my desk. It's spring, the croci and daffodils are in bloom, unbothered that we never had a winter. Less than a whole inch of snow in total, it was pathetic and I feel very deprived about it. For consolation, we are getting tornados instead, they were aiming straight at us all day yesterday, but got tired before they got here.

Do I have any news? Ummm. I spent much of my energy this week doing my taxes (one of the rewards for playing the stock market . . . When did I buy this damn thing?) My reward for THAT (the same day I finished!) was a letter from the IRS that says I owe them \$2000 of penalties for things I neglected to declare last year. This has happened before, and it was somebody else's mistake, so I refuse to worry about it until next week. I am not letting the IRS ruin a weekend.

Fran is quitting Conservation International, having just collected her 20-year service award. This child is loyal if nothing else, I thought she would retire there. But she has a new boss she despises, and they cut her staff and increased her workload, so screw them. It looks like she is going into the health care fundraising field, Washington is lousy with American This-and-that Disease Societies. Most of them are here because NIH is here, and their staff members rotate among them, just as the environmental organization staffers do. I am not a fan of these outfits (including the MS Society), but it's not my career.

Gabe is making another film for Bill Gates' foundation, he actually has money in the bank anymore. Can I nag him yet about getting health insurance? It is tremulous ground, being the mother of a sometimes-employed filmmaker. I hope Obamacare will cover him somehow, he will be forty years old this year.

Rumor has it that Clint and Elizabeth are selling the Federal Avenue house, but that rumor has gone around before. Elizabeth has Parkinson's (does he know how to pick 'em?) and doesn't want to keep it up anymore, but there's the problem of "the collections." I think she actually is moving to an apartment on the front side of Capital Hill--and they may keep the house for warehouse space. Family tradition, Clint's parents did that for years because Mary Jane couldn't bring herself to sell the furniture.

I had a knee replacement, but it was successful only in that it fixed the pain. Well, shame on me, that's not nothing. But I still can't bend it very far. My whole left side is weak because of MS, and I don't walk straight, that's what messed up the knee and probably will again. Which is all beyond the insight of modern medicine.

Isn't the 2012 Republican nomination fun? I haven't liked Republicans since Dan Evans left office, and now I loathe them. So I like to think that I'm watching the self-immolation of the party and all its millions, and every day brings a new delight.

Contraception??! OMG, do these fools ever talk to anybody but each other? The last stand of the old white rich men . . . They really are a good economic stimulus program when you think about it, going from state to state, buying hours and hours of advertising.

Ah, the Triumphant March . . . Do DOO do do do do do do do. I forget what Ivan is writing. Have you had any ceremonies or awards lately? Probably. How is your health? Mine is okay, I rented one of those little gardens that they have in retirement places and am drooling over seed catalogues like days of yore. You probably have your peas in by now.

I read heaps of books. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, *Pity the Billionaire* at the moment. It's my contribution to literature, where would all the writers be without readers? I bought a lot of Kindle books at first, but I am sneaking back to paper. I can never remember who wrote Kindle books, I need to see the name on the cover, and it's just not right to forget the author. Besides, I love books, the cover art and the typeface and the feel of the paper. I always have something on Kindle to take to dentist's waiting rooms or whatever, but in general, I think I'm going retro.

I still email Melanie in Israel all the time, she just had a grandson named Ze'ev. I am more worried than she is about missiles from Iran. Somebody is always trying to kill them, she says I'm not going to think about it until they tell me to go to the bomb shelter. They have total confidence in the government to keep them safe, and it does help that most of their enemies are stupid. The US media would have apoplexy twice a day with what they go through.

I have to go make hummus. I have to make dinner after lunch, because I'm too tired to cook by dinnertime. Cope, cope, cope. Hope you do, too.

Y.
Jura

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: how many years?
Date: April 20, 2012 8:55:35 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <lmiller65@glassmile.net>



Dear Linda

This week we celebrated our 47th anniversary, and we of course thought of the few special friends who came to the wedding in that impossibly cute chapel. To celebrate we went to Poppy, our favorite Capital Hill restaurant, with Ann and Marsh, who were just returned from a dog show in Sacramento. Ann now breeds, trains and shows wheatens -- really nice dogs, but they've always got three or four around the house! Their daughter Sarah, now 36 and on tenure track at Harvard Med school (she's a statistician, not an MD), apparently didn't have enough to do with two smallish boys, a demanding job and a commute (her husband teaches at Smith and they live in Northampton). so she decided to run in the Boston Marathon, and by golly did the whole route. Meanwhile, Laird and his family are going to move out here and find a place on Bainbridge Island, where Ann and Marsh also live.

As to the Doigs, we're perking along nicely at the moment, although we certainly agree that life is cope, cope, cope. Just now Ivan is taking a recess from thalidomide and its nasty side effects. He's full of energy and says he feels 60; not bad for a guy who's 72. This is a two-month respite, after which he'll do a full bank of blood tests again, then see his excellent hematologist. Maybe medication can be held off a while longer -- maybe not. We don't think myeloma is going to disappear on its own, but at least now there are a couple of other medications available. All of course, have side effects.

On the book front, we're gearing up for another tour since *The Bartender's Tale* is scheduled for publication on August 21. So far Ivan's committed to the usual stores along the I-5 corridor, Bellingham to Portland. And to the big book fair in Missoula in October, and well as the bookfest here, now using Kirkland as home base. There will be other events, but Ivan will try to avoid much long-distance travel.

Ahh, the book biz. Looks to us like the business model is irreparably shot, and we expect Ivan's next contract negotiation will be tough. Luckily, the novel he's working on now has been contracted for some time. E-books and Amazon pricing, with help from the Justice Dept., looks to be the final straw. Perspectives from DC are welcome.

On the political front, we're tired of it all -- and only 7 months to go! Dennis Kucinich, having been beaten in the Ohio primary, is once again looking at WA state, where we have three congressional seats up for grabs. He's getting widespread derision from Dems and the press here, but he doesn't seem able to let go. Senator Maria Cantwell seems set, with lots of money and no serious GOP challenger to this point. Our congressman, Jay Inslee, quit his job to run for governor, leaving quite a few of us disgruntled, but I'll vote for him in November. This may be the year that a Republican will win -- his challenger is the current attorney general, Rob McKenna.

We plan to leave all that behind, at least for tomorrow, when the sun is supposed to pay us a visit, and go pay a visit to Dungeness Spit, where we have not been in a long time. The weather has refused to cooperate with previous plans.

Liked getting your snail mail, but I'm going to shoot this one off email since our mail service has declined severely.

Love,

Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject:
Date: July 15, 2012 11:49:58 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hello people. Know yr busy selling a new book, I'm just saying hello. It's what they call Dog Days here, but all my days are dog days, I call it tomato season. I've gone through my 18 favorite real-tomato recipes, given tomatoes to all the neighbors, it's getting time for tomato soup and spaghetti sauce for the freezer. Perish the thought that even one should go to waste, they are treasures..

I know the book is out, it's on the Web, but too soon for reviews, I guess. The Washington Post never got its separate book section back, just some "book pages," complete with Johnathon's column, that show up in the back of some other section on some schedule that remains a mystery to me. As does the arrangement by which they pay reviewers, most are by Post writers paid to write other things, some are of recent releases, some of books released last year . . . they have clearly lost my attention.

The annual trip to western Pennsylvania is next week, it is slowly coming to replace the Thanksgiving reunion, there are too many of us and we are too scattered. In the summer some of us can camp out, and a buffet picnic is easier than the turkey thing. Nephew Jeffrey the Nerd just got transferred from Pittsburgh to Boston, so another one escapes the Rust Belt.

Fran is giving her notice at Conservation International tomorrow, with very mixed feelings. She is going to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, after months and months of dickering. CF is in Bethesda, walking distance from her house on a nice day, so she will reclaim the two hours a day she spends commuting to CI. There are lots of other pros and cons, it has been a tough decision. CI's CEO is shackled up with his second wife in Seattle and running the company with a video camera, so I for one think its high-growth days are over. Fran was there for 20 years, ever since she graduated college.

Gabe is still working for George Lucas's foundation, among other things. He made a film set in a whole school year in some Seattle school, something to do with education reform, I'm sure.

We had a spooky heat wave, inspiring at least two television networks to say out loud that the climate is changing! That only took 20 years. Nobody seemed very upset. I might observe the occasion by writing a letter to my Congressman (who's a lockstep Republican idiot) to ask him what he's going to do about it.

I am enjoying living in a swing state, I feel so important after 30 years in Maryland which is so Democratic I don't know why I bothered voting. Obama and Romney are both here a couple times a month. I have an Obama bumper sticker on my car, which is probably asking to get keyed in a retirement community.

I'm reading *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*, gorgeous work. Semi-fiction, set in the slums of India. Lord, what a good life we have.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject:
Date: October 6, 2012 9:55:37 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hey Doigs. Happy autumn. It is lovely here, hope it is there, too.

Sweet story in the Post Travel section today, about how a major reason to travel to Seattle is that (corporate nerds to the contrary) the natives still like words on paper and still support some great bookstores. How about that--bookstores as a tourist attraction for a literarily deprived nation?

Is the book release excitement waning yet? Why do you think this book hit so big? I really can't guess. I only saw the one review in the Post, but if others were that enthusiastic, that could be an answer. I loved the Post review's appreciation of Ivan's writing in the context of a twitter era. Really, if this keeps up, we may need a special high school class just to remind our children that good writing is possible. There was a news story a couple weeks ago about how national SAT scores have fallen, complete with socioeconomic guesses about the cause. My lord, educators should know better than anybody how many hours a day their students spend mangling 140 words instead of reading decent writing. They don't think that's going to show up in any measure of their education??

Biggest news here is that Max (who was just born) started kindergarten and is so excited to go back that he can hardly get to sleep at night. He accepts, with some sympathy, that I went to school before computers were invented. But he cannot imagine how I got a whole education without a backpack.

Less happy news is that my Israeli friend Melanie, whom you met, has pancreatic cancer. She has been my MS buddy for 12 years, we've had a pact to complain to each other about our symptoms and not bore anyone else. I will miss her terribly. The process exposes a grievous weakness in electronic communication--it is very hard to help somebody die with email. She's doing the "long courageous battle" shit, sick as a dog with chemo even though she was Stage 4 from the getgo and it won't help. We've long agreed we would never fall for that bill of goods, I don't know how they persuaded her to change her mind, and it's no comfort to harrass her. Then one day there will be this silence . . .

And how about this election season? Historians will get to chew on this one for years--the money, the lies, the bifurcated news media and their audiences. I try not to believe the world is coming to an end, but some days . . .

Frannie did up and leave CI, so she has a four-minute commute now instead of an hour. The CEO said he would not accept her resignation, only grant her a sabbatical to raise her children, then she must come back. Is that a nice farewell gift in this stressful age--you have a good job waiting for you, no matter what. She doesn't like saving sick children as much as saving the planet, but she gets regular emails from CI colleagues wailing about their crazy boss and telling her she was smart to flee.

Washington DC is revelling in the success of our baseball team. It is good for the city with its racial divide, class divide, and many political divides. The Nationals put on an exciting baseball game, although I'd vote for six-inning games myself, I cannot stay sat in front of a TV set for nine. I was a raging Pirates fan in my youth, although I think they only had two or three kinds of pitches then. Now they have splitters and changeups and somehow the TV announcer can tell which is which.

It's Saturday morning, and I have this list of things to do. Hope you're well and still having fun with the bartender book.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: off the road
Date: October 24, 2012 9:58:50 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Hiya, Linda. We finished the tour for *The Bartender's Tale* last week, with a breakfast talk by Ivan at the PNBA trade show, the best place to find bookstore people assembled in goodly numbers. Ivan snagged a coveted spot as a breakfast speaker, the last among four. First two did fine, but then came the bunny lady, who also does her own illustrations. The bunnies all look alike. After describing her granddaughters' delight with her work in some detail, she turned to the latest book, and it became clear that she intended to take us through the whole thing. By the time the MC got her shut down, she'd used 25 of her 15 minutes. Ivan figures he got the undying gratitude of the booksellers by shortening his own presentation.

The rest of the tour he was solo, except for the Montana Festival of the Book, which turned out an audience of 900. David Quammen and Pam Houston were the other speakers, Ivan had insisted on being first, and everyone behaved anyway. The most inept bookseller in Missoula was in charge of the signing, and promptly ran out of Pam's latest, *Contents May Have Shifted*. She was not amused.

Ivan's readings and appearances were terrific, from the Seattle Public Library, which even overflowed the overflow room, to Bozeman, where 350 copies had been ordered back in August. By the time Ivan finished two solid hours of signing, fewer than 10 were left.

More than 32,000 copies are in print, and Ivan's efforts are a small part of the marketing. It doesn't get any easier, since traditional publishing has lost its business model, with Amazon threatening to take over the world. Also, Ivan notes that trade paperback sales are down, and e-books don't make up the difference. However, Ivan's next novel (*Morrie returns to Butte in 1921*) is finished and on his editor's desk. She says Riverhead ought to be able to publish it next August, along with the paperback of *The Bartender's Tale*, timing that worked very well for the hardback. And he's just agreed to a contract for the novel after that (in the spirit of the *Bartender*, but a very different story). So it's a busy household as usual.

Any insights about the political scene would be appreciated. I've taken to skimming Nate Silver's 538 blog, which is the best roundup I've been able to find. It attempts to mimic the electoral college, and acts as a kind of poll-of-polls, too, with useful commentary. Like you, there are days when I just shake my head. So much sound and fury, so little substance. Just this morning the NYT was reporting on the garbage launched by the Romney PACs. You're in the middle of the action, whereas the left coast is all blue on the maps, and we're heartily ignored.

Take care,
Carol

XFINITY Connect**cddoig@comcast.net**[±](#) Font Size [-](#)

weather

From : Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>

Mon, Oct 29, 2012 05:00 PM

Subject : weather**To :** carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

You're probably doing something beside talking about the weather. Nobody on the East Coast is, having a hurricane bearing down on you is extremely distracting. I finished everything else on my Things To Do Before The Power Goes Out, I'm down to Catch Up on E-Mail. Carol, you're probably concerned about Asbury Park and rightly so. It's going to get hit by 90 mph winds in a couple hours, the whole Garden State Parkway is already closed by flooding. But New York, OMG, the damage is going to be awesome. Ah, life in the penthouse, with the building swaying for 12 hours and the elevators out.

You asked about life in a swing state, this was back when the sun was shining. Like most swing states plus Washington State, it is divided between Democratic urban and Republican boonies. So living in Leesburg isn't that different from Seattle. The big difference is our popularity, we are deluged with campaign commercials (the TV stations add news broadcasts to gin up more ad time to sell) and endless robocalls from both parties and calls from polltakers who are forever measuring us. I've been polled twice already today, and it's noon. I get hustled by the Democrats because I give them money and Republicans because they buy the phone number of everyone over 60. There's another wrinkle here, being one of the lucky states where Republicans control the Legislature and passed all their laws to chop the edges off abortion rights, which really pissed off women. (Rachel Maddow calls our governor Governor Ultrasound.) So we do hear lots of stories about couples where the husband is pro-Romney and the wife is pro-Obama.

The polls show the candidates neck and neck. I am carefully optimistic, unless I go out to the small towns where there isn't a Obama sign for miles. But Northern Virginia is "high density" zoning, which means the developers really pack the houses in here. There are a lot of us if we get off our duffs on Election Day.

Lordamercy, you should hear the wind blowing. It is SCREAMING. It's going to start blowing much harder in a couple hours and not stop until tomorrow morning. I'm going to hate it when the power goes out and the TV goes off.

Glad the book tour was a great success and hope it did no harm to skip yr meds for the interim. Did you note the NY Times Mag article on CCSVI? It was all the rage last year and I never ruled out getting it, but the MSers in Canada pressured their govt and MS Societies into researching it. So what the heck, I'll wait for their conclusions, even though I've always expected them to diss it. It costs \$10,000 plus travel. Albany NY is the nearest reputable dr who does it, which is better than Costa Rica, Egypt, or Bulgaria, where people went at first. MS is not psychosomatic, I have to believe the people who say it helped, but you hear more and more reports that it "wears off" and needs to be repeated. Expensive habit.

Do you believe the JUNK that is on the NY Times nonfiction bestseller list this week? Is the American intellect going to hell or what? No wonder the critics are so grateful to read Ivan's writing.

The President is on TV (it's on in the next room) giving his daily speech about the hurricane. Is that just too funny? It's free, the Republicans don't get response time, he sounds so wise and comforting . . . I love it.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: christmas
Date: December 24, 2012 9:45:03 AM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

I tell you, there is money to be made in Belated Christmas cards. I even bought some (regular cards) this year, the box is unopened on my dining table, and tomorrow seems to be Christmas. So Merry Christmas and best wishes for political peace and sanity in the New Year. Hope yr selling lots of bartender tales for Christmas presents. I got Gabe the Edward Curtis book and Fran the Where . . . Bernadette? book. It's been an excellent year for Seattle authors, yes?

We are fine. Gabe is on an airplane, arriving Dulles at 6:30. He has just finished the George Lukas film--it spanned an entire Seattle school year, so we haven't seen him since last year. He's taking a break that includes four whole days playing Uncle Gabriel, which he loves to do. Fran is having a hard time adapting to her new job, she is really bad at change. She is working on a Celine Dion benefit concert in Las Vegas. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is much bigger than CI, it has chapters in every state and these national benefits bring in mucho millions. Stressful.

I just heard that a guy set a house on fire in NY and then shot the firefighters when they arrived, so I guess now the NRA will want to arm every single firetruck. I'm glad Obama chose Joe Biden to head that committee, he is tough and smart. Save us, Joe.

I have to send emails to several other people that I really meant to send Christmas cards to. Be well, happy New Year.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: hey doigs
Date: February 14, 2013 10:43:56 AM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

It's still winter here, although we just get "coatings" of snow like once a week, not enough to get excited about. Some expert, I forget who, said that will be our new climate, not as much snow as we used to get. Did you see what Marco Rubio said in his "response to the State of the Union"? "As for global warming, the government can't change the weather." Then he changed the subject.

Fran is having career adventures. She has been discovered by a humongous donor, and he has invited her to lunch tomorrow. Her colleagues (and boss) are in a snit, what does he want? He gives CFF enough money that he can have it. I have my own guesses, I don't think that organization has very impressive personnel, she just got there and she may be in for a sudden promotion. She is one charming lady, everybody loves her. She has some of my skills and smarts, but I think she got her personality from Clint's mother. She was one of the few people I've known who never pissed me off one single time.

A short documentary that Gabe filmed is nominated for an Oscar. It's called *Kingspoint*. He threw a party to celebrate getting nominated.

He finished the Lucas Foundation film, it took a year, and they have signed him for another one. He's on his way, what with one award and another. He still doesn't have health insurance, though, thank you Mr. Obama. Gabe does almost exclusively cinematography now, he tried directing but didn't like it. He's making a film of his own, it's about hookers on Aurora Avenue. Who knew? It's called *Sweetheart Deal*, is that a great title?

Max's class celebrated the 100th day of kindergarten. They wore hats that said 100, they ate 100 cookies, and they counted to 100 at the top of their lungs. They got their picture taken in their hats, and the picture was sent straightaway home by cellphone. Education is apparently more fun than it used to be. The teacher sends cellphone messages every day telling parents what we learned today so they can discuss it at dinner.

If you took any note of the Democratic strategy convention last week, it was in the hotel next door to our building. Everybody was there--Obama, Bill Clinton, Biden, Pelosi. You have never seen so many emergency vehicles in one parking lot, complete with German shepherds. We had snipers on our roof and Secret Service agents in our gardens. Obama arrived in one of three helicopters so al Qaeda couldn't tell which one he was in, and he left in a convoy of 20-30 vehicles. I cannot imagine what it costs to let him out of the White House.

Did you go to Phoenix this year? How's your health? Are things calming down after the book release? That always seems like a shocking change to me from the isolation of writing every day, but I guess the whole process has a rhythm to you by now.

You know who I think of lately? That Chicago newspaper guy who wanted to shorten English words and spelled through "thru," was it Colonel McCormack? The way kids are shortening words in their text messages now makes me think of him. Finally!

Newsweek died, and *Time* is for sale cheap. I have a degree in magazine journalism! Is that anything like buggy whips?

February, almost time to plant peas. I'm going to give up on greens this year, we have this rabbit, he doesn't live here but visits when the lettuce and spinach get just right. They are just 10-foot-square gardens, I will devote mine to other crops and let my neighbors feed the rabbit.

From: carol doig <CDDOIG@COMCAST.NET>
Subject: hey, Linda
Date: March 5, 2013 1:10:32 PM PST
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



It's March in Seattle, and Ivan has planted his sugar pea seedlings, surrounded by mousetraps and netted against towhees, one of which came to a bad end by exploring a trap. Lettuce seeds have been planted in the cold frames, and radishes in a small spot near the house. We've pulled weeds, too, and Ivan managed to strain his left hand, which brings me to my next topic.

To spare the hand while it recuperates, I've been doing a bit of work for him on his trusty old PowerMac, and doing some research from my iMac. The latest came during a walk, when he was trying to find camp songs for a bus full of 12-year-old boys and asked me if I knew "Great green gobs of greasy, grimy gopher guts..." I had an LOL moment and told him I'd never heard of it. We're curious about whether you have. It is supposed to date from the mid-20th Century. I've just inserted a stanza into his ms.

So the household stays busy. Ivan's been telling neighborhood friends -- the 40ish walkers and runners who are closing in on 50 -- that he has 11 titles coming out this year: a paperback of *The Bartender's Tale*; the new hardback, *Sweet Thunder*, a sequel to *Work Song*; and nine e-books, eight of them from Simon and Schuster. We had a go-round on the wording of the amended contracts, which are cleverly written so that a title is never out of print as long as it's available as an e-book. Which, once available, never goes out of print. With the help of an Authors Guild lawyer we amended the language and, to our surprise, S&S took it. Ivan wants physical books available, and wants to retrieve rights if a publisher empties its warehouse.

We're expecting *Sweet Thunder* galleys (still called that) soon, followed by layout, cover art, marketing and all the rest.

Meanwhile, the *Bartender* has been on various lists, including one for the American Library Association's Carnegie Gold Medal for excellence in fiction. Big list, though: 25. It's good publicity even to make the prelims, so OK.

In answer to your health question, Ivan's latest test showed a spike in a urine protein, and so now he's on both Revlimid and dexamethasone until that's brought down. That means more side effects, including leg cramps that can rocket him from bed at night, and hand cramps, too -- not the best thing for a writer. He manages, and keeps writing. He does plan less of a tour in the Fall for *Sweet Thunder*. The neuropathy in his feet (another side effect) makes driving less than fun, too. For all that, the cancer-causing blood cells remain under control, stable as his cool hand doctor aims for.

As for me, I'm way slower than I once was, but am on no medications and am healthy for my age, which at the end of July will be the big 8-0. Surely that can't be right! Your turn: how are you faring?

Your letters are always welcome; we have quite an archive of them by now. Loved the description of the meeting next door, helicopters included. And it's always a pleasure to hear about children and grandchildren. We'll be interested to hear the next episode of Fran's new job.

Take care, and tell us more about politics when you can stand to.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: happy may day
Date: May 1, 2013 10:26:49 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Just cut my finger trying to open a sack of cat litter. My family has been pressuring me to join them on Facebook, I am the sole holdout and it's getting time to plan the family reunion. That is the kind of thing people say on Facebook. Just cut my finger. Really windy today. It's about as interesting as I expected.

Reading another book by a Seattle author, *The First Muslim*. Jeez, you guys could have a very large club out there. Just read *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?* and hardly a day passes when I don't see somebody on TV with that Space Needle picture behind them.

Both gardens all planted--my little community square and my front yard.

We have a little bus that takes us on daytrips. Last week I went to the theatah, and in June I'm going to a baseball game, to Montpelier where James Adams lived, to Andrews AF Base, and to the US Capitol (boo, hiss). No driving, no finding a parking place, I love it.

You asked about my health. It's a deteriorative disease, you know. The muscles that make my lungs work are controlled by nerves that goes on the fritz when I'm tired. I'm on oxygen at night, but so far have learned to breathe consciously when necessary (don't forget!) I read a lot of books. Best one lately was *The Hemingeses of Monticello*, all about slavery and the multi-colored children that resulted from it. I thought Thomas Jefferson was my favorite president, but now I'm confused.

I found some liberals, so I'm much happier here. On Fridays, the Current Events group gets together to complain about the state of the world. We include a priest who decided he'd rather be married and an imam named Mohammed who is sooo sexist . .

Are you taking a break from the computer this summer? Are you still going to Phoenix? I'm going to send you a couple pictures, but have to sign off for now.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: memories
Date: May 9, 2013 9:01:34 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Wow! Clamming at Dungeness Spit. Looks like that digger is going deep for riches. I remember camping, cooking clam chowder, and later you and Clint, sure you were made ill from the green gunk, hastening to the bathroom under starry skies, so clear you almost enjoyed the experience. Ivan and I slept soundly, thereby missing the midnight beauty of the scene. So there's about half a bushel of memories, right there.

I think of you every Boat Day, too, and those picnics we once conjured. We haven't been to the center of action in some years. What we do now is sit on our deck, share a beer, and enjoy the sailboats that emerge around the Sound. The weather this year was mid-summer-like, a postcard scene.

So yes, 80 years of memories, and you're in on more than half a century of those. Wouldn't have wanted to do it without you, Linda, and I'm game for some more. I don't mind that you're rushing the occasion a bit, knowing that July 24 is just a few weeks away. I'm grateful and lucky to have lived the life I've had, and I take the birthday as a chance to say so, most especially to best friends.

Ivan's garden is producing quantities of lettuce by now, and he's mother-henning snap peas, green beans, and much else. Since his current round of medication (Revlimid and dexamethasone) causes outbreaks of terrific hand and leg cramps, he finds that garden work relieves it. Nights are tough, but he slogs through them, says he feels OK and goes back to ms. work. A few days ago we received advanced reading copies of Sweet Thunder, and we're working on the book tour and marketing. They're into social media; Ivan has said they can blog and twitter to their heart's content, but leave him to continue writing the next book, which is coming along well. Penguin is like a big battleship -- slow to turn, but it'll get the job done. What interests me most is that Ivan's publicity person at the Riverhead imprint has arranged for Ivan to speak at the Northern California Independent Booksellers Assn. in San Francisco in early October, and included me in the trip. Nothing like that has happened in recent history, and I'm prepared to enjoy it. That is, if the crick don't rise. We'd go on from there to Portland and the big Pacific Northwest booksellers' shindig, as well as a signing at the Powells mothership. And so on.

So we continue as best we can, as do you. Thanks for your update on health, Linda. I've always prized your forthright reports. I don't like the point you're at, but I'd rather know than not.

Special thanks for a photo I didn't know existed. Indeed, memories.

Love,
Carol

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: gardens
Date: May 28, 2013 9:45:22 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Hi, Linda. Been meaning to ask you what you're growing in your garden -- or is it gardens? Back there in warmer weather you probably can get homegrown tomatoes before September. By now we have terrific lettuce, including a new-to-us Australian variety that grows early and fast and is yellow. They add nicely to the usual oak leaves and other varieties. For the rest, including my favorite sugar peas and green beans, we wait.

Memorial Day is behind us, and back east at the little Methodist town on the Jersey shore, that meant the start of the summer season. Here it means temps in the 50s and 60s. I do remember that 20 or more years ago the sun did shine (I have old color slides to prove it), and we'd walk the entire perimeter of Lake Union, then go to someone's house -- often ours -- for a picnic-type meal. I think you'd quit the country before we started that.

The feature of this Memorial Day in the Northwest was an oversize truck that took out a bridge span on the Skagit River, about an hour north of us. That's an I-5 bridge, which promptly tangled holiday traffic. Maybe there'll be a temporary span in place by mid-June. Meanwhile, avoid the whole thing.

Plans for Ivan's next novel, to be officially published August 20, are coming together, and we had good news last week when the sales force picked Sweet Thunder as Penguin Select, a special promotion they do for half a dozen books a season. That selection is from all the titles published by Penguin imprints, so it's quite a boost. Interesting about the select half dozen: three were from Ivan's editor's imprint, Riverhead, and another went to a friend and neighbor, who's publishing with Viking. Hot imprint and hot neighborhood!

We've been working on the book tour, too, and Penguin has decided to send me along on the one considerable trip, which will take us to San Francisco for three nights, where he'll talk to the Northern California Independent booksellers and sign in a couple of stores, then on to Portland for the Pacific Northwest indies Fall meeting, and a reading and signing at Powells. That'll be in early October, if the crick don't rise and all goes reasonably well with Ivan's medications. Aside from that trip he's doing less elsewhere, but will try a Skype visit to a favorite bookstore in Salt Lake City. Someone will appear at the house to set the thing up for voice and pictures. New worlds to experience.

And that's how it is.

Love,
Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: hello
Date: August 29, 2013 9:03:33 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Got Ivan's book, gratefully as always. Carol, you knew someone from Franklin PA but I don't think you ever went there. The cover photo looks just like Liberty Street in Franklin, another town awash in natural-resource money (oil, in our case) in that era. Also always think when I see the cover of his books that the graphic designer must have sent heavenward thank-yous to his parents for giving him a name with four letters.

Read the first chapter last night. Great beginning--that "who's following me" thing really sucks in the reader. Ivan, your continuing observations on Butte make me think you must dream about it at night.

I had a lovely chat with a Washington Post reporter yesterday, I emailed her that her story was so good it should have been on the front page. Turns out she thought that, too! and told me all about it. I don't think I've ever emailed a writer like that before--if I did, it was probably to complain about something.

I've kicked in \$20 a month (!) on top of my hundred-dollar cable bill to watch Al Jazeera America (Comcast said if I don't like it, just call and they'll stop the \$20). I'm hooked already. You know they have a bureau in Seattle and @ 15 other cities--when was the last time NBC did that? And guess what, there are more than four news stories going on in a day! This morning, they did a story on the "microhousing" in Seattle. OMG. Shades of Chinese labor. This is important, and please don't build one next door to me.

Fran doesn't like her new job much, but her least favorite part is her bitchy boss. And her boss quit! That is the best news from here. Well, yesterday was the first day of school, and Olivia started kindergarten. Schools are wonderfully good here, and they both came home reporting their day "amazing."

Hope yr enjoying the book release. We are enjoying the @#\$\$% Washington summer coming to an end.

Hey Doigs, happy autumn. It has been so damn dry here this summer, I've had fantasies about catching a plane to Seattle just to feel a raindrop. Such fantasies are possible, we are in spitting distance of Dulles Airport, it makes me think about taking where-shall-we-go-for-lunch flights.

I thought I had a decision to make--Nats baseball or Redskins game--but I picked up *Sweet Thunder* instead and I was still reading it when the Packers beat us. Clearly a more productive use of a Sunday afternoon. I really liked that book, all the bad guys and corporate bastards and brass knuckles give it sharper edges, I thought. Love your paeans to books and libraries, as always, and the newsroom stuff. Ivan never worked in a daily newspaper, did he? Somehow he hit all the marks. I spent two summers on them in Pennsylvania during college, Lordy what a soft place in my heart. The type and the presses and the Speed Graphics and the handwritten edit symbols--and a human editor to correct the copy, he taught me to spell *pompon*. There's a photo of me in the Oil City Derrick newsroom hanging above this desk, one of my greatest treasures. Lede? Lede? Have I been misspelling that my whole life?

I cannot begin to imagine how you organize all the information in your head--time, place, cool words, the weather in Butte, what the character did in the last book 5 years ago. I'm pretty sure it's not 3x5 cards.

Hope you've been enjoying the release, how was San Francisco? Damn, I haven't been there in 40 years! Hope you're okay on balancing your health and all the book excitement.

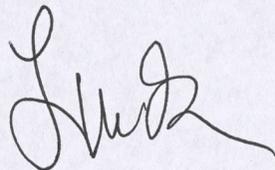
Did you see somebody just opened a public library in Texas with no books in it? All electronic. I have totally bagged Kindle, real books aren't that much more expensive and you get a lot more for your money. If I live to be 100, I think I'll have all my walls lined with built-in bookshelves and just live encased in books I liked.

I'll see if I'm smart enough to print a photo of the grandchildren. Due to arbitrary birthday rules, they are just one year apart in school, kindergarten and first grade. They take the school bus with their little backpacks--they cannot believe I got a whole education without a backpack. The schools here are so good they bring tears to your eyes. The children are well. Fran still liked Conservation International better than the disease industry, but she is knocking their socks off, working on an event on Broadway for October.

I am so enjoying watching the Republicans self-destruct. The arc of history bends toward justice.

Oh, I signed up for Al Jazeera America. It's very very good. I do not have a clue why this Qatar guy is paying for it, but I hope it puts some pressure on US journalism to improve.

No big news here, I've been out of commission in the summer heat and am just rejoining the human race. But wanted to say hello and bravo and hope you're having fun.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. M. G.' or similar, written in a cursive style.



From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: home from the range
Date: October 21, 2013 1:37:16 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Hiyeh, Linda. Sweet Thunder was officially published exactly two months ago today, and this week Ivan concludes the book tour and does it right here in Seattle. He's to be interviewed on KUOW, then kicking off something new here, Lit Crawl. The idea is to have an evening of free readings in venues downtown, followed by a party at Hugo House. Ivan, who'll be interviewed on stage by the book editor of The Seattle Times, will come home after his opener. No party guy, he.

The San Francisco trip was the heart of the tour, and it went well, with Ivan talking to upwards of 250 independent bookstore people (and a few friendly Penguins) at the Northern California Independent booksellers and the Pacific Northwest booksellers fall trade shows. Lotsa bang for the buck.

And I loved being back in San Francisco, where I'd worked hard to persuade his publicist to get us in to the Argonaut hotel, at the very west end of Fisherman's Wharf, ^{From} where ~~out~~ our window we could see the Golden Gate in the far distance, a slice of the Bay and, in the foreground, Marina park, the Hyde Street cable car, and, high in the sky, the giant, lighted Ghirardelli sign. One night Venus perched overhead, a kind of celestial punctuation mark. The historic ships were right across the street, but thanks to the House Republicans, we couldn't go there. We did ride a cable car to the top of Nob Hill, and the small park where mostly Asians come to perfect tai chi. And back in the 'hood we strolled to the Buena Vista for Irish coffees and to watch the performance while a bartender filled a couple dozen glasses at one time, running coffee and whiskey along the top of the whole lineup.

San Fran presented us with summer weather with blue skies and a temperature of 83 as our literary escort took us north of the city to a flagship store, Book Passage, in Corte Madera. It's become one of the premier venues in the country, and Ivan's reading at 1 p.m. on a perfect Saturday filled the place, with others to come at 4 and 7. I've seen a lot of bookstores, and this one had me hugely impressed with inventory -- cards, calendars, too -- and the classes and other events they sponsor. En route we managed a fine lunch, and later an afternoon drink at an old fort, now a resort, just about under the north side of the Golden Gate, with view to match. Nothing like having a canny escort: 76 years old, a retired executive who figures he's honchoed about 500 writers so far.

^{say} You can tell -- I liked it all. And the whole trip went well enough that we're pondering a winter trip to Tucson if, as we always ~~so~~, the crick don't rise. Ivan's hematologist let him take two weeks off from medications, and new tests will indicate the next step, which could mean added medication. We hope not, since side effects are difficult, but we've learned that these medications lose their effectiveness sooner or later. Now, at least there are several choices and his doctor says to think of the treatment as a marathon, where you stay with each medication as long as it's effective. I imagine you may have run into something similar. And how's it going with you?

To change subject: What's your take on the whacko Republicans? I suspect that the Tea Party types do want to destroy the government and, by extension, the country. I did notice in NYT last week that McConnell said there'd be no repeat of shutting down the government. I also see that he has a Tea Party primary opponent. First time ever that I'm rooting for McConnell.

So -- I eagerly await your comments.

December 2013

Hi everybody. Or everybody I owe letters to (Not President Obama or The Staff at MSNBC) Never sent one of these letters at Christmas, but I am way behind on my correspondence so am sneaking this under a Forever stamp.

I am still retired, shackled up with a lot of other retired people. I still make Things To Do lists, but deep down I know I don't really have to do them. Washington is a wonderful place to retire, I belong to a political discussion group with a retired priest, German banker, US warship captain, and an Afghan imam.

We take daytrips on our little bus--to Virginia's many historic sites (you know all those movies that show Lincoln working in the White House? Not true, any fool could walk right through the front door. Every morning, he took a carriage ride to a house on a military base. It's open to the public now, called Lincoln's Cottage and worth a visit if you're in town.) And sometimes we put on our good shoes and go downtown, saw the roadshow of *Book of Mormon* this summer and the Bolshoi ballet next week.

But my favorite thing about living in Virginia is voting Democratic! I feel so valuable, Maryland was soooo blue. We just saved the world from Ken Cuccinelli and elected a Democratic attorney general by a margin of 165 votes, including me and two Democrats I drove to the polls. (His opponent --who nearly won!--had introduced legislation requiring women to report all miscarriages to their county sheriff.)

My favorite headline of 2013, in the *Washington Post*: DON'T BLAME US, AMERICA. YOU SENT THESE WACKOS HERE.

One of the other benefits of retirement is that you can let your children make all your news for you. Gabriel was cinematographer for a film nominated for an Oscar. Fran moved from Conservation International to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and raised \$4.3 million for them last Saturday night. Max just got his purple belt in tae kwan do. And Olivia started kindergarten and demonstrated a new talent for telling whopping fibs, which she inherited from me.

Merry merry Christmas, peace on earth, and an even better new year.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: ring in the new
Date: January 1, 2014 3:44:13 PM PST
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Greetings of the new year, Linda. I hope your holiday season worked out well, and that it wasn't too taxing to sit up straight and smile on Christmas day. Many thanks for the Christmas letter, by the way. You have a special way of sounding like yourself when you take to a keyboard.

Thanks, too, for referencing the Washington Post article on independent bookstores: it agrees with what we see, and yeah, it's heartening. As for the Doig e-books, eight backlist titles produced as e-books in 2013, it's too early to know how that will play out in royalties, which always lag by at least six months. They cannibalize the more expensive paperbacks, of course, but on the other hand pay a higher percentage. Hardbacks are increasingly hard to sell, and we'll need to wait until the dreaded returns of the new year to see how Sweet Thunder has fared. That, of course, affects the advance for future books. Ivan does have a contract for the one he's writing now, but nothing nailed down beyond that. By the way, his original thought for the title on the work-in-progress, The Dog Bus, now has competition from Last Bus to Wisdom -- a town in Montana's Big Hole where his 11-year-old traveler winds up.

The holiday season worked out well for us, with a slightly smaller Thanksgiving gang (which we wanted), and with two of our favorite couples here for Christmas dinner. We maintained tradition by saving new year's eve for ourselves -- nice and quiet, with only the fireworks across the Sound on the Suquamish reservation to break the midnight silence.

And so we turn to the new year with good cheer, even though Ivan is taking three strong medications, all with side effects, to bring down the offending monoclonal protein. It's working, and perhaps he'll be able to cut back on some of it before many months. Multiple myeloma is nasty, but there's promising research and new drugs in the pipeline, and it's not impossible that a cure may be found in time to help Ivan along.

Nothing wrong with me except a troublesome toenail (to be excised on Friday), and age.

Take care. We look forward to your next communicate.

Love,
Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: happy new year so far
Date: January 4, 2014 9:29:12 AM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Don't think I have a lot of news, I just wanted to vote for Last Bus to Wisdom. That dog title doesn't draw me any pictures.

Glad Ivan and his docs are coming up with new tricks. Are you going to Phoenix this year? It is a bitter cold winter here, all over this half of the country actually. My Eric sister has had 80 inches of snow already, and it snows until April up there. We have snow here, too, it's all white and scenic out there.

Christmas was great, hard to beat having a 5-year-old and a 7-year-old on Christmas morning.

I am having a WAR with my doctors (you will disapprove of this, everybody does) in which I proclaim victory because I'm getting Prednisone sans prescription online from Bangladesh or someplace. It is the real stuff, they just buy it from the American manufacturer for a fraction of what we pay, mark it up, and ship it back.

I feel terrific as long as I'm on Prednisone, planning to return to teaching ESOL. They are going to need me because you know our sweetheart Congress will require immigrants to learn English (among many many other things) before they will let them get in the back of the line for god knows how long. (they call this outreach to Latinos)

I'm still out of commission at sundown, but you know, so many books, so little time. Just finished a book on the Persian Gulf monarchies, I now know the difference between Abu Dhabi and Doha. Ah, the wonders of planet earth--the total-autocrat sultans just divvy up the oil money, everybody is rich, working for a living is optional, and who needs civil rights? Totally medieval.

As opposed, of course, to our Congress, which returns on Monday. The Tea Party took some serious hits at the end of the last session, you know they've been plotting plotting plotting over the holiday--and what have they come up with?

Gabe couldn't come for Christmas, he was working on Christmas Day. He often does, it's a downside of filmmaking, Christmas is a very photogenic occasion. He is working for HBO on a really depressing film about an autistic kid. He hopes to visit us in February when it wraps. He was sorry because he does love playing Uncle Gabriel on Christmas.

That's all I know, good to hear from you. I listen to the Met operas on the radio on Saturday afternoons. Magic Flute today!

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: updates
Date: January 8, 2014 7:40:21 AM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

The Boeing flap lowered my opinion of the company, they will pay more than they know for that. We can remember the days when they laid people off and hired them back like they were buying toilet paper, and workers responded as workers will: attending frequent grandmothers' funerals, calling in imaginary illnesses. Boeing had come such a long way in gaining employee respect, they just wasted a large share of it. Cutting benefits when they have \$400 million in back orders!

About the Prednisone, I left out the details, you have no idea how MS patients can go on and on if they include the details. Yes, it's generic, it's not the cost. When I lived in Maryland, several Kaiser drs prescribed it, I took it off and on for 8 years, no problem. They don't know why it works. MS has somehow damaged communication with my lungs, when I get fatigued (at 2 pm, every day), they can no longer exchange oxygen and CO2 (you didn't know--your lungs do this every time you breathe), and my oxygen level drops. Which is why I end up in bed at 6 pm.

For equally mysterious reasons, Prednisone helps. But I moved to Virginia, to a new clinic where all the drs are under 40, and they all look at me like I said Street Heroin when I ask for Prednisone. Reason?? "Side effects," they all say. I never had any side effects, I say. They will not prescribe Prednisone. (My personal theory is that the drug companies have bought themselves some science that proves drs should prescribe new drugs with a higher profit margin.) I have talked to pharmacists about this, and they say it's perfectly safe for me to take it--but so far I can't get a prescription. I will get this straightened out in time (Kaiser has an appeals process), but I want to know that I will never be without Prednisone again in my life, it makes that much difference in how I feel. So I'm testing prescription-free Internet access to meds, a new high in managing my own disease. The pharmacy is in India, but they put a maple leaf on their Website so you'll think they're in Canada.

The temperature has risen all the way to 17 degrees, so I have to walk my dog.

On Mon, Jan 6, 2014 at 1:17 PM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:

Thanks a lot for the vote for Last Bus to Wisdom. It's growing on us, and our most astute friends like it, too. Now to get it past the publishing house....

So Seattle has a new mayor who is openly gay and married to his soulmate. The newest member of the City Council is a young woman who beat (by an eyelash) a well-regarded incumbent, and she's a full-throated socialist. The mayor has set the machinery in motion to move every city employee to a minimum of \$15 an hour. The socialist wants every person working in Seattle to get at least \$15. (The state minimum just rose to \$9.37).

This all started in the small municipality of SeaTac, where a \$15 initiative went on the ballot. Corporate donations against it came in by the truckload. or should I say planeload, since Alaska Airlines was prominently opposed. SeaTac's jurisdiction doesn't include the airport, but it does cover all the adjacent hotels, motels, restaurants etc.

I'm delighted to be living on the West Coast. in the soviet of Washington.

Not so delightful but still good news is that Boeing's machinists were absolutely split over a new contract offer, Boeing offering to build its 777X here if the workers would accept givebacks. The first vote went down 2-1, but after Boeing sweetened the pot a little, 51 percent of the machinists voted for it. Boeing also has promised to build a vast wing production plant here and train workers in the new technology. Even the union leaders were split: the national wanting to retain their \$25 million a year in dues rather than seeing Boeing move the work to a right-to-work state. That was the Boeing ploy, and they solicited offers from 21 states that would like to have welcomed them. And, oh yes, the State of Washington, in a special legislative session, voted about \$9 billion in tax incentives over several decades.

I'm happy for the workers, since these jobs, even with the givebacks, are top of the line. Some of the machinists are taking home well over \$100,000 a year, including overtime. Then there's the business for ancillary companies, and there's all the

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: hello
Date: March 29, 2014 9:38:33 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hey Doigs, happy spring. I know it is raining in Seattle, it's on the news because of your mudslide workers. That is all beyond imagining. As Rachel says, "Eventually, we need to talk about policy here." That shouldn't have happened.

I'm teaching again, thanks to new energies caused by my illegal Prednisone. I'm teaching a class of domestic workers from various Central American countries, they work for the company that has a contract with our community to clean our buildings. One of them has been in the US for 20 years and speaks about ten words of English. One of them is illiterate, not a day of school in her life--can we imagine? I love teaching again.

Did you love the NU alum mag with the cover story about fiction writers who went to Northwestern? With no mention of the alums who figured out how to do it before they could just take a class! Boo hiss.

And just when I was being all proud of them (well, some of their students) for raising the organizing rights of football players. It's really a twist, isn't it--white-bread Northwestern as a landmark in union history.

No big news here, just savoring glimpses of spring after the hardest winter anybody can remember. I like winter and somebody else has to shovel my snow, so it was fine with me. I turned 70 years old this week, which I really hated, but guess no sympathy from you. I bought myself a new bookshelf for my birthday, I quit on Kindle, decided books are my friends and I like looking at them and remembering what they said. So now I'm going to assemble the bookshelf while I listen to the Saturday opera.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: teaching
Date: April 16, 2014 9:14:49 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Loved your last email, with your enthusiasm for teaching. It indeed gets to you, you know. After 17 years retired, I'm still an advocate of live teaching, as contrasted with online, or any other manifestation. And the teach-to-the-test stuff drives me straight up the wall. Bill Gates, for god's sake, went to Lakeside, with small classes and good teachers. Now he wants data. Uh uh. Doesn't work.

When I get letters from former students, and I still do, now and then, what I gave them in content pales in comparison to the encouragement. What they needed most was an authority figure to tell them that they could, too, transfer and get a worthwhile job and be successful by their own standards. And to not be afraid to apply to first-class universities and ask for scholarships. If I could teach over again, I'd do more of that.

Sounds like what you're doing is essentially one-on-one. (I hope you're teaching those who might be citizens how to register to vote.) I hope the classes are small.

Yeah, that NU alum magazine had eyes rolling in this household. A little too much hothouse atmosphere. In the broader area of contemporary fiction, I can't understand the overwhelming amount of angst in the plots. Ivan and those hardy others who resist it are the enduring storytellers, seems to me.

Oso slide: It shouldn't have happened. Tell Rachel she's absolutely right; it's a policy issue. The Seattle Times has done first-class reporting, digging out years-old reports that warned of this. It's an absolutely blatant failure, especially by Snohomish County, to demand and enforce sensible building and logging regulations.

Tomorrow we celebrate our 49th anniversary! And you're 70. Enjoy it; we've all made it this far. We'll go to lunch at a favorite restaurant, and save bigger things for next year, when I hope we can manage a nostalgia visit to Monterey, Pacific Grove and environs. If Ivan currently is taking an 8-week break from three high-powered medications. They did the job of stopping and reversing direction on the offending monoclonal cells, but they also trashed his immune system, which is now getting a chance to recover. Given that he didn't get my 3-week classic head cold, I assume the immune system has indeed rebounded.

The Doig anniversary usually corresponds to gloomy weather, but at least our new decorative plantings and Ivan's tender veggies are being watered. He has told me that he can now produce lettuce every night, and I'm delighted to be free of buying inferior stuff at the markets. Radishes are prime, potatoes, onions, beans and peas are in, and the raspberries and blueberries look promising.

And it's spring in the Northwest, so we're enjoying the color as azaleas and rhodies, and much else, has its season. We've had the deck pressure-washed and can sit there with our pre-dinner drinks when the weather cooperates.

And that's it for now. Keep truckin'. I'm cheering your upbeat report. And I'm on your side with the prednisone. You're the one who knows what works.

Love,
Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: summer
Date: July 2, 2014 11:10:39 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hello Doigs, how are you, hope you are well.

It is 98 degrees, too hot to even safely walk a dog, makes me wonder what the Indians did when it got this hot. Just returned from the annual family get-together in Franklin, where it is not 98 degrees, hammering the point that I did choose to move to Washington. The third generation is doing well, several females starring in sports that did not exist for girls in our day. Turns out we are pretty good pitchers and catchers, who knew? My grandson is at that age when he is figuring out gender, wants nothing whatsoever to do with anything purple because it is for girls. Just frosted because his Happy Meal toy was purple. We visited the cemetery to pay respects to our parents, which evoked many, many questions from children who had never seen a cemetery. Five-year-old Olivia asks, Noni, are you going in the ground or in a fire?

Teaching English is still my favorite thing. We start classes now with reports on the English they spoke this week--Lileanna made her first phone call!

How bout that Hobby Lobby decision? This is the first time in my life that we don't have a Supreme Court we can respect, ick! I don't think the world is coming to an end, but I cannot foresee how we will get out of the mess we've made of our government. Talked to my brother, who is a Tea Partyer, and could really see how we need different laws for red people and blue people. His property floods and he could easily fix it, but it's illegal because he would destroy wetlands. The law, hence the government, looks insane to him. The less of it, the better. Franklin is unchanged, except for the frequent appearance of these trucks hauling huge tootsie-roll-shaped silver tanks to carry oil/gas from fracking, they carry them to the trainline and put the tootsie roll on the train.. Franklin is on the Marcellus shale.

I wrote an article for the newsletter here. People stop me in the hall and tell me how good it was. I say thanks, I do not say I've had practice.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: another birthday
Date: July 6, 2014 3:16:34 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Hiya, Linda. Always good to hear from you. Yeah, the Supreme Court ended its term with fireworks from the three women. What are those old men thinking? I agree that it's not a court to be respected, and it's doing such harm that I can't figure out when we'll ever get over it, or when the House might actually get some work done. And what about the Senate? My campaign giving is going to Senate women and to Michelle Nunn, mostly through Emily's List, but my \$100 checks are no match for the Koch brothers and their like.

We're better off here on the Left coast, where the Seattle city council has voted to phase in \$15 an hour pay, where the socialist on the council is raising hell, and where the newly installed police chief is a woman with a terrific job history. She is also the best paid member of the city bureaucracy. Hurrah! New mayor Ed Murray has married his same sex partner. Jay Inslee is doing a better-than-expected job as governor, and our two women senators seem well entrenched. Patty Murray is up for re-election this year, and I have no idea who the GOP will run against her. She has plenty of money which she's unlikely to need, so I haven't even written my ritual check. I just turned down a chance to meet with her at a small-group lunch (for \$ 500), and I skipped her big fund-raiser at the convention center, which starred Elizabeth Warren.

Too bad the country isn't in as capable hands.

In the Doigs' world, Ivan has celebrated his 75th birthday and is working furiously on his next novel, which is scheduled for August 2015. He'll finish by the end of this year. The working title (which is a closely guarded secret, of course) is Last Bus to Wisdom --Wisdom being a small town in Montana's Big Hole country. So his 11-year-old hero, shipped across country in the summer of 1951 while his grandmother has surgery, and his German uncle run away from his aunt, whom they can't stand, and head back West. Lotsa adventures along the way.

Summer's under way in the garden, and Ivan's deer fence, built by a cabinet maker and as expensive as it looks, seems to be doing its job, so we have plenty of lettuce, green beans, raspberries, and so on. The living is easy, but the temperature this afternoon has climbed into the 80s, and in Seattle, you may remember, that makes us scramble for the downstairs. We're invited out again tonight, and the cook is glad to be away from the kitchen.

Tell us more about the teaching, when you have a chance. Do these classes go year-round? How long do they last?

As ever,
Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: another birthday
Date: July 6, 2014 7:02:43 PM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Yay for Last Bus to Wisdom, I voted for it. Great title, you always have great titles.

We have three young does visiting us here--and a black bear! This place is surrounded by a five foot fence. It would be lovely to see the deer jump it, and the bear would be pretty funny. We've all had to string netting around our 10-foot-square vegetable patches, or else call them deer food. There's a housing development going up next to us, and I think they bulldozed somebody's habitat.

The women I'm teaching work for the company that has a contract to provide housekeeping services here, so I'm assuming they (like our contract landscapers) are underpaid illegals. Their employer gives them time off work to learn English, that's the deal with most of the people I've taught, it's a win-win thing for the employer. (I taught most of the housekeepers in my neighborhood in Maryland, everybody in the synagogue had my phone number.) I will probably teach them forever, which will be a new challenge, I've never taken anybody from zero to 60. It is just about impossible to teach people of such different levels in the same class, it's given me a new sympathy for every 3rd-grade teacher. I told you, the Salvadoran woman never went to a day of school, I have NO IDEA how much she is picking up. But then, you never do, do you?

On Sun, Jul 6, 2014 at 6:18 PM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:

Hiya, Linda. Always good to hear from you. Yeah, the Supreme Court ended its term with fireworks from the three women.

What are those old men thinking? I agree that it's not a court to be respected, and it's doing such harm that I can't figure out when we'll ever get over it, or when the House might actually get some work done. And what about the Senate? My campaign giving is going to Senate women and to Michelle Nunn, mostly through Emily's List, but my \$100 checks are no match for the Koch brothers and their like.

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As ever,
Carol

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: robin williams
Date: August 12, 2014 2:58:55 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



The world is a poorer place now. Even the Doigs know that, from our several days in his company while on Paul Allen's trip to St. Petersburg. He had no entourage, was not "on stage" at any time, and stood quietly in the crowd as the tour moved from church to museum to

During the evening at Catherine's summer palace, which ended with fireworks, Ivan and I spied him watching, copying the noises and adding gestures. He had no idea we were there. He was just naturally funny: on the longish bus ride back to the ship, he stood uncomfortably in the well of the rear door; he'd neglected to trek to the men's room at the palace --the rest rooms, apparently a late addition to the building and at a far end of the lower floor. (Ivan met Bill Moyer on his trek, and they joked about the mileage.) So Robin took the consequences, and had the bus full of people laughing. When we finally arrived at dockside, the rest of us paused, while he scampered off and up the gangplank.

He seemed relaxed for those few days. I remember overhearing him talking with a seatmate at one point about his son Cody, who was about to enroll at NYU. Just a couple of dads comparing notes. But it must have been hard to be him. Too bad; we've lost a nice guy, a singular talent..

Ivan says he has enough notes from that trip to write a piece on Williams, but he won't. Days of short pieces are long gone. Thank goodness! He's writing up a storm on *The Last Bus to Wisdom*, though. I just read more than a hundred new pages, and had a fine time with it. It takes Donny and his uncle, on the lam from Donny's aunt, to Yellowstone, where they're robbed, then on to Wisdom, where they jungle up with hoboes and look for haying jobs.

Ivan has 75 to 100 pages to go -- some to finish the adventure, the rest to fill in a space he left earlier.

Meanwhile, temps here have reached into the 80s, and yesterday to 93, so he's busy in the garden, watering, watering, and covering the leaf lettuce during the heat of the afternoon. I just paid a water bill of \$378.

So the summer is disappearing, the paperback of *Sweet Thunder* is just out, and we're visiting a few bookstores to keep the publisher happy. Tomorrow it's Elliott Bay, now on Capitol Hill in what's called the Pike-Pine corridor, so jammed with people and traffic that we've had his publicist order a car service. Other than that, I'm doing the driving, something useful I can contribute.

I'll skip politics and world affairs for now, and will limit comment on media operations throwing their newspapers overboard, with massive debt attached. Goodbye to all that.

to those
^

Love,
Carol

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: How nice we look
Date: December 1, 2014 7:57:37 AM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

I'm impressed that Group Health is recommending acupuncture. I miss them and am grateful you're getting good health care.

Condolences for your pain. Back pain is the worst, it punishes so many things we like/need to do. I can only hope you are finding some artistic value in it, that one of your future characters will have profound lessons to teach us. You and I have been fortunate that it hasn't been any significant part of our lives, and it's under-explored in our literature. But now you know.

On Mon, Dec 1, 2014 at 10:38 AM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:

Hi, Linda. Ivan here, using Carol's fingers. I had two acupuncture sessions, recommended by our Group Health doctor, and in both cases:

I barely felt the needles going in, much to my surprise. They're small, no bigger than a sewing needle, and as the acupuncturist said, none of the insertions should be felt more than a mosquito bite.

My first session was 45 minutes, my second an hour. Lying motionless on my right side, both times my back felt better, more relaxed and less painful.

But then came getting off the table, which in my particular case brought on screaming agony in both cases. All in all, without the peculiarities of my particular back problem, I thought the acupuncture might be worth it. Hope this helps.

Ivan

On Nov 30, 2014, at 8:57 PM, Linda Miller wrote:

> Watched a TV show tonight about marijuana sales in Colorado. One guy said he ate marijuana chocolate bars for back pain, so it works for somebody. I still want a report on acupuncture. No miracles, apparently. How do you get a compression fracture--from sitting all day at a computer/

>

> I have to assume that my mother inherited her verbal DNA from somebody, but we'll never know. They were farmers before her with no schooling beyond 8th grade, so they weren't given to rhetoric. She was no great writer, either, but she loved words and had the most amazing vocabulary for a high-school graduate. When we were rowdy as little kids, she would say, "Don't be obstreperous."

>

> On Sun, Nov 30, 2014 at 12:44 PM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:

> After your note, I couldn't resist sending this photo of this year's gathering. You might remember Frank Zoretich, back row right; Ann McCartney, back row second from left. The woman on the couch, third from right, is Betty Mayfield, who will return this Thursday to begin assessing the Doig archives. For some years she was Paul Allen's librarian, and now she does consulting for other billionaires. Despite the high-flying, she thinks it would be fun to work on our accumulation, with a view toward finding all of it a happy home.

>

> Meanwhile, Ivan is selling complete signed runs of his first editions, through a bookstore in Moab, Utah, partly owned by Marjory Kittle (back row, fourth from right), and David Williams (on couch, second from right). We've now assembled four sets and may have to buy a few more fine firsts. Strangely, Work Song is hard to find.

>

> I want you to know that your mom's wreath was again decorating the door, as it has ever done since before Fran's birth. A tradition I wouldn't part with.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: catching up
Date: February 21, 2015 9:44:40 AM PST
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Long time since I last wrote. We've been caught up in a medical marathon since late October, when Ivan's back began to hurt. He thought he might have pulled a muscle during garden chores. It kept getting worse and, weeks later, an X-ray showed a compression fracture in his lower back, which should heal itself. Nope. Weeks later there was a second fracture, then a third. After 14 painful weeks, he underwent a vertebroplasty, where a very talented surgeon used bone cement on L1, L2, and L3. We were warned it might not work, but it did! By the time he was off the operating table, the pain was gone. Seems like a miracle to us. But that's not the end of the story.

After 14 weeks of sitting around "like a potted plant" as he describes it, he is having to learn how to walk normally again and to tune up all those muscle groups. He's two weeks into that, with a physical therapist visiting the house every week, and he's also using acupuncture to relieve other pains.

The biggest problem is increasing neuropathy in his lower right leg, which has settled in with a lot of pain.

All of the above is from more than 8 years of steroids and other tough medicine to try to hold the myeloma in check. Next comes an even tougher dose of three medications, one of which is an infusion that will require weekly trips to GH Capitol Hill. I'm the chauffeur and we've already worn a groove in that route, so you can imagine how popular this is going to be. Never mind; do the chores.

On to brighter topics. His ms. for Last Bus is into production, after a bit of tuning up by his editor and Ivan himself. We have cover art -- after several false tries by the art department. And Ivan has hired our Montana friend Marcella to do research toward the next novel. One problem: he must get a new computer and he's in no condition to shop right now, as he navigates the house with a walker. I think he could talk with savvy friends and have them buy a new setup.

Finally, a fun project: getting the Doig archives in order to sell to a university library. Our friend Betty, who was Paul Allen's librarian for some years and now does freelance consulting to Seattle zillionaires, has undertaken an inventory, and we've hired an appraiser to put a figure on the whole thing -- pocket notebooks, diaries, photos, recordings etc, etc, as well as notecards, ms., letters and so on. Betty thinks we may have 100 shelf feet, which astounds me. We've made inquiries of UW and Montana State University, and both are interested, and while we have a way to go on this, I hope we may be able to nail it down this year.

A final note: We've had such a mild winter that Ivan's hired a friend to start his garden. She has enriched the soil and planted lots of lettuce and spinach so far. I've trimmed blueberry bushes and she'll do more. Ivan's pleased.

How about you?

Love,
Carol

~~FILE,~~
Please

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: hello
Date: March 2, 2015 8:00:28 PM PST
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hi guys. Any signs of spring in Seattle? Not the teeniest one here, historically cold, snowbound February and the next week's forecast is no better. I saw the news about Seattle's low-income transportation discount, you're doing more than any other city to address income inequality. But shocking, too, that housing in Seattle has become so expensive that people have to commute from Tukwila. I shake my head and remember what I paid for houses there--\$75,000 for the Federal Avenue house.

I'm sorry that you've had so much pain, Ivan. I have a lot of things to complain about with MS, always with this BUT, that I am not in pain, never have been.

We choose the same summer to surrender on gardening. The undeveloped woods next to us is being developed, bulldozers and cranes displacing a lot of wildlife. (I think I told you we had a black bear.) Mostly we have deer foraging for new food, last summer was a frustrating succession of defensive maneuvers to protect our vegetables. I spent enough money on it that I decided to spend it on trips to weekend farmers' markets this summer instead. I've had a garden most summers of my life, we'll see how much I miss it. I live on the first floor and have a backyard, so I'll still have stuff in containers, although I've never found them very satisfactory for vegetables.

Time for Jon Stewart, hope you're on the rebound.

From: <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: update
Date: April 6, 2015 6:41:29 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Hey Carol. Thx for the update. I was going to email you today, although I'm not sure what I was going to say. Mostly that I'm thinking of you both and asking nosy questions like is he in pain, do the pain pills work, how are his spirits? And you, how are you coping? I know you've had a long time to get used to this idea, but he is such a huge part of your life, this is going to be hard. That's all of my nosy questions, thx for helping me understand melanoma, I know nothing about it. Kidneys, damn. Are they putting him on dialysis? Did you see the NY Times article on people turning down dialysis? I was glad to see it--I've seen too many people turn into robots when they get sick, including one cousin right now, the medical bills will have many, many zeros--but know how it might help Ivan be more comfortable. Can he go outside to visit his garden and enjoy the signs of spring? I hope so.

Is he writing? Pretty hard to stop when your brain has been connected to a typewriter/keyboard nearly yr whole life. What happened with the archivist? Any decisions yet about where his papers will be?

Are you getting a million calls and visitors? I am thinking that's a big part of your role in this, herding the callers/visitors so that they boost his spirits but don't sap his strength.

I will send you a picture of Olivia and her tae kwon do instructor if I can. I'm still struggling with Windows 8 (boo, hiss) and don't always succeed in transferring files.

Take care of yourself, too

Sent from Windows Mail

From: [carol doig](#)
Sent: Sunday, April 5, 2015 6:44 PM

Dear Friends

Ivan is home, having been seen by specialists who say they've done all they can. His kidneys are badly damaged by the myeloma, which is in the ascendent. His bones are brittle, too, and he has severe neuropathy in his lower right leg. Because the kidneys are not working well, he has edema....

So comfort care is where we are, and we're getting wonderful help from Group Health hospice, which is expert. And from friends. And from 24-hour caregivers, who also cook!

Doctors don't like to specify life expectancy, but hospice care suggests no longer than six months, and the nephrologist put it at weeks. I hope Ivan will have some time to enjoy friends, which he's doing right now, pain diminished and the poisons of the cancer care draining out of his system.

I'll try to send updates from time to time, and please feel invited to keep in touch.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: hey
Date: April 11, 2015 8:19:35 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Yes! Perfect!! And the gathering will give you all the benefits of hiring a hall, etc., without the hassle.

How fortuitous that Becky was there, Lord, how would you have handled all that without her? She did good. it was on Wikipedia by early afternoon!
(and I saw yr credit under his picture in the NY Times).

Somebody will say something at the gathering about his immortality and our lasting ability to pick up his work and hear his voice. It will be a beautiful afternoon, I'll be there in spirit.

I have always been a better writer for a couple weeks after I read one of his books. That's what I would say.

On Sat, Apr 11, 2015 at 11:03 AM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:

Ivan said that some time ago, and didn't explain. My view is that he felt his work stood for him, and he didn't much like the ceremony surrounding a big event. And I suspect he didn't want to put me through that ringer.

He didn't say I couldn't gather a group of friends, and so tomorrow at 2:30 about 20 of us will come together to exchange remembrances. Also, some of the writers are talking about readings of his work, and I hope some of that will occur with the publication of Last Bus to Wisdom in August.

Though their book editor was on vacation, the Seattle Times did a solid piece yesterday, jumping it from the front page. Ivan would have liked that, son of itinerant ranch workers that he was. His editor, Becky Saletan, orchestrated national coverage from our dining room table. She had flown out to visit Ivan; she saw him but was a few hours late in being able to talk to him. So she got to work through the publicity director at Riverhead. I'm told that Facebook and other alternative outlets picked it up instantly.

And, yes, the days are hard, but nothing is as hard as watching him in major pain for six months. That he went into a deep sleep and just didn't wake up was a relief. I could see it on his face.

It's a cliché, but no one gets out of this world alive, and it was Ivan's time to go. He sure made full use of the time he had and, Ivan being Ivan, finished that last novel. Whatta guy.

On Apr 11, 2015, at 5:11 AM, Linda Miller wrote:

> Thinking about you all day yesterday, how hard it must have been. Just read the NY Times obit--just wow, that would have pleased him. The research, the sought-out quotes, it so befit him. The author has to be a fan.

>

> Why didn't Ivan want a memorial service? That surprises me, writers usually think that words are the cure for anything. It does give some kind of "closure"--that much overworked word now--a kind of marker for the bereaved.

>

> My mother died too young, we all adored her and ached terribly at her loss. Some months later, my sister Diana said, "Well, time does not heal all wounds, but they do sort of scab over after awhile." She said to send you her condolences.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: hey
Date: April 19, 2015 1:11:56 PM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

I only know because of my mother's death, that it is pure physical pain for awhile, and that there's no way around it but through it. You are consoled, I can tell, by the support of friends and the fact that so many people want you to know that they share his loss. (It would be a lot harder, wouldn't it, if nobody else gave a damn?) You can email me every day if it helps, and tell me it still hurts.

And I can tell you that I knew it was your 50th anniversary and couldn't decide if it would help or hurt to mention it. I was there, remember, and I married Clint Miller five months later in 1965. I don't know how to observe it, either.

Oh damn, the estate. Somehow I thought that was already in place. Maybe it can't be until the time comes. Well, like I said, good time to know a lawyer, and one you can trust.

Yeah, I received condolences from Pamela King in Santa Cruz, California, a colleague from my speechwriting days and a major Ivan Doig fan.

Can you take some comfort from the fact that he died in your care, all those terrible months? I understand that you suffered not being able to do more. But he knew you were there, and you know that meant all the world to him.

I don't know that the regret about what-might-have-been ever goes away, but the pain will turn to sweet memories one of these days.

From: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>
Subject: **thinking of you**
Date: April 28, 2015 8:39:19 AM PDT
To: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>

Ten minutes before I have to go teach ESOL. Thanks for the Seattle Times piece, that's a keeper. You realized this a long time ago, but I'm just now thinking about it. It's unusual, isn't it, how people loved Ivan? I respect writers, enjoy them, admire them, but people speak differently about him. They love him, love his work. I'm thinking about my California friend Pamela, she always talked that way, and she never met him.

One of my favorite memories of him is when he read at Politics and Prose here, and a guy came up and wanted him to sign a book--not on the flyleaf, but on one really-good passage of the book. I thought that was so cool.

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: hey
Date: May 14, 2015 9:18:42 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



My, this has been a busy few days as Betty-my-personal-archivist has gotten into high gear. Now she and Roy are going off to a family wedding in Victoria, then onward and upward in Canada to a memorial service for a sister-in-law of Roy's. I'll be away much of next week, so we'll get back to the big project week after next. Just as well to take a break; it's hard going. One day spent sorting cards Ivan and I sent to each other over the decades, his often with typed notes: a love story in greeting cards. I'm keeping those and other memorabilia for my lifetime. Next day dipping into Ivan's medical files, expecting to save just a few, then finding that Ivan's 8+ years of myeloma are an essential part of the story. How did he get those four novels done while he and his doctors fought back the myeloma for as long as they could?

By now the inventory has grown to 17 pages, with more to come. Betty thinks we're about a third through the sorting of boxes and files, and that it'll be complete before my birthday in late July. Then we can begin trying to find a permanent home for it all.

The first review of Last Bus is in, from good old Kirkus, and much cheering at Riverhead because it's starred. Kirkus has a lot to do with library orders.

Thanks for the update on your health, and hope you'll pull out of latest episode promptly. It's good you can do stairs, and yes we do have handrails and also grab bars in the tub/shower downstairs.. We should be able to figure out morning activities around town, then back home. There's a house full of books. after all, and I'm no night owl these days. I'd think it would be easier than the Swiss Alps! To help the view, I've had some cutting done downslope, and life is pleasant on the deck. About the time that was accomplished, Betty and I heard major clunks starting, and the house directly upslope was being demolished to make way for a bigger one. It doesn't take long to knock 'em down and make me think of the impermanence of it all.

Now onward to pay the month's bills and accomplish a variety of chores.

On May 11, 2015, at 8:06 AM, Linda Miller wrote:

Hey. No, no, certainly wasn't implying that you should leave that spectacular house. I misread yr comment that you were feeling lost in such a big space and thought it was one of the many decisions you need to make. I will "pencil you in" as they say in Washington for 3-4 days in late July, and we will both have a little more time to decide for sure. I've been feeling lousy lately--MS has its bad days--and don't feel energetic enough to travel. But it's probably a passing thing and one of these days, I'll wake up and it will seem like a wonderful idea. Yr right, late July is insufferable in DC, that's the worst for heat and humidity. I don't think the two floors are a problem. I can't go down stairs or inclines that don't have handrails, my sense of balance is long gone. But uphill/upstairs is ok, and you probably have handrails. (I'm signed up to go to the Swiss Alps in September, do you think they have handrails?) My main MS shortcoming is fatigue, I live my life mostly in the mornings, and I get tired after that, I am useless in the evenings.

Glad you are starting to feel better.

On Tue, May 5, 2015 at 4:44 PM, carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net> wrote:
Now you have me laughing. Please, Linda, no cat, no dog, no wandering away from this terrific house. At least not unless and until my health demands it. When I think about living somewhere else, I feel ill.

I know logic is on your side, but this is a matter of the heart. Which, if I turn the cliché inside out, is where home is. If it makes at least some sense, my walking partner works for a small health care company that provides home care, and in the course of recruiting business she is constantly in retirement homes and health care facilities. So should I need help in choosing such a place, she knows 'em all.

From: carol doig <CDDOIG@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: how it's going
Date: July 3, 2015 2:16:07 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



The scene here today is once again cloudless sky, snowless Olympics, and added to the picture small boats by the squadron, having been disgorged by the Locks. Presumably all headed to the San Juans for the weekend. It's picture perfect and comfortable here on the lower floor and, upstairs the bedroom now sports an air conditioner that Marshall miraculously picked off yesterday by arriving at Home Depot as a new consignment arrived. Seattleites are waving sweaty white flags. This gadget looks like a cousin of R2D2; it doesn't talk but it charmingly chimes when it powers on and off.

Mornings have been just fine, and I still think we can maneuver around the heat when you're here.

Today I was riding the exercise bike and idly looking out the window when a quail family with seven chicks appeared. I know they have a home somewhere nearby and this summer they've taken particular interest in the back yard. They came to breakfast in the freshly irrigated garden, eating anything green on the path right in front of my nose. I enjoyed 16 minutes of watching as they ricocheted from one clump to another, doing no damage at all to what we humans want.

On the archival front I've heard from Richard White, a noted historian who was in Ivan's graduate class and taught at UW until he got discouraged by state underfinancing and went off to a chair at Stanford. (They actually gave him a chair.) He's interested in the archive, and has put me in touch with two people at the library ^{who} and want to see the inventory. That's progress: Richard White carries a lot of weight in western history.

You asked about the process and, yes, we hope for a bidding war. The money is the lesser of my concerns: what I most want is prompt, easy access to Ivan's papers for anyone interested in using them. That's why Ivan and I hired Betty last Fall to get them into spiffy order. The work of organizing will be done, so they won't have to sit in some basement for years, waiting their turn. I can't predict the outcome, but I hope it's interesting.

Finally, you and your imaginary shrink are undoubtedly right, but what's a buttoned-up person to do? I've never learned to just let it all go, so I'm hoping time will help. We may have some conversation about this.

Are you doing the family thing this Fourth? Ivan and I loved to just stay home, out of the way of crowds and roads, and I plan to follow tradition. But when you have family it's a chance to visit, and I hope you have a good day.

On Jul 1, 2015, at 6:04 AM, Linda Miller wrote:

I don't know what it means, riding a duck, so surprise me. Touristy is good, I always love seeing Pike Place, Golden Gardens, etc. again. It's been nearly ten years since I've been there. With all the money pouring in, there are probably humongous changes. Seems like US traffic is impossible everywhere, Washington, Denver, Chicago have all reached the point where they can't build another highway, there's nothing to do but let traffic back up and let people think about alternatives to single-passenger cars. Washington has been in the phase of creating express lanes and charging tolls to use them. Not clear to me how this helps the traffic.

Yes, last week was historically wonderful. The media goes on and on about left and right justices, but never mention that there are way too many Catholics on the Supreme Court--six, I think. Obama says last week was his best week, but already this week, he's raised overtime pay for 5 million people. I watch Fox in times like this, just to watch them holler--and my car radio is set to Rush Limbaugh's station. I've heard three pundits/crazy callers contend that the justices are being blackmailed like Denny Hastert--there can't be any other explanation for their recent votes.

I can probably handle 80 degrees if need be. Washington is closer to 90 in July and raving humid.

You'll have to explain how the inventory thing works. Like a bidding war now, or what?

I think a shrink might say that you need some good cries before you move on to the next stage of grief, whichever one that is.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2015 at 7:42 PM, carol doig <CDDOIG@comcast.net> wrote:

Hi there, Linda

Marsh stopped by this afternoon to pick up the legal and financial records I told you about, and Betty showed them around the archive, where she was finishing a miscellaneous file drawer. I had put in a busy few hours providing background. Now Ann and Marsh have headed home, as has Betty. With her husband, Roy, they intend to drive to their boat in Anacortes, then head north tomorrow to celebrate Canada Day. Since they're U.S. citizens now, they can do the Fourth of July while they're at it. She'll be back next week to tidy up, we'll check the inventory one last time, then we'll send it off to UW, Montana State, The Huntington, and Stanford. Then we'll wait. If needed we'll add to the list.

For the moment I'm up to date on the records hunt, and the social schedule has quieted after friends rallied once again to see me through the 27th, Ivan's birth date. Potluck the previous night at Tony Angell's. and dinner out next night with Mark and Lou Damborg, true -blue friends for more than 40 years.

Got through that just fine, but sitting on the deck today with Ann and Marsh, talking about Ivan, I was on the verge of tears. I just sometimes get ambushed. We'll see how I'm doing by the time you arrive and, hey, it's about to be July, so we're making progress. It's still hot, i.e. into the 80s every day, thanks to a giant high, blocking Pacific breezes and bringing weather from the east. And still no rain in sight. I'm hoping by the time you arrive we'll be in a more normal pattern. Hoping.

Out in the world at large, what do you think of that conservative Roman Catholic Justice Kennedy? Last week certainly was a bad one for bigots: Obamacare and gay marriage both with the seal of approval. And what timing! The gay rights parade is a big deal here, and it must have been tumultuous. My walking friend Tiffany, who is not, but who works with LGBT people and has adopted their cause, was in charge of a float with a lot of older people, one of whom "came out" right there and then. Imagine living your whole life without feeling able to admit, maybe even to yourself, who you are.

Even though it has major traffic problems, I love living here. Want to do something really touristy and ride a duck while you're here?

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: Re: hello
Date: July 5, 2015 1:48:17 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



The weather explanation we hear is that there's an immense high sitting out in the Pacific, blocking our normal weather, and so we've got hot air coming in from the east. The temp is supposed to go to 92 today and stay in that neighborhood for days. It's gotten so bad that Seattleites are waving sweaty white flags in surrender, and I now have an AIR CONDITIONER in my bedroom. Ann and Marsh visited last week and decided I needed one, and Marsh tracked down a new shipment at Home Depot and hurried in. The cashier said the whole shipment would be gone in an hour.

I'm giving up on most of the blueberry crop. It would be economic stupidity to try to save it at this point, so I'm concentrating on one patch just outside the back door, where some of the bushes get watered by the irrigation system. But the raspberries look good, the bush beans are coming along nicely, and Lee-the-gardener harvested the garlic crop yesterday. I've still got lettuce, but at some point I'll be between crops. Ivan used to overlap plantings, but Lee hasn't got the hang of that yet and, besides, has a busy life to lead. I'm grateful for what she does.

On the news side, I agree with you about Tim Egan's op-ed piece. He's a little slapdash at times and tries to do too much including books. Ivan and a writer buddy said Tim is a heavy borrower from other people's work. Still, he often does good work op-ed. This one was a summer thumb-sucker.

I'm having trouble with the Sunday Times. Just read the travel section where the lead piece was by a staffer who went for a 700-mile drive in parts of MT/WY/ID, and took along a driver! She was so proud of herself that she did the whole thing herself! Ye gods. Of more significance is that the entire paper has less and less that interests me. What used to be called Week in Review is now a mishmash of freelance features, many of them trying but failing to be think pieces. The only things I count on any more are Frank Bruni and the public editor, and neither of those appear today.

We seem to have gotten through July 4 and, to answer your query, the news outlets here were not fixated on terrorists. We did have more neighborhood fireworks than usual (it's such a hot, dry summer why not tempt it), and at one point a missile sailed over my roof, leading me to wonder if the most spectacular part of the show would be the burning of my house. At least there was a pretty show across the Sound.

I hope the family gathering is/was good one. Do they serve fried chicken, corn, and potato salad while people take turns cranking out ice cream? That's what I remember from Montana.

On Jul 4, 2015, at 8:31 AM, Linda Miller wrote:

This is how I know I'm aging (slightly). The town of Leesburg sets off its fireworks on the golf course behind our building--about as close to fireworks as you can safely get, and I have a glass-enclosed sunroom--dazzling view. I watched the first half last night, then went back to whatever I was reading.

The Blair gathering is next week. Bluecollar class that we are, we always have people--firefighters, cooks, blackjack dealers--who have to work on the 4th. I will watch the Capitol lawn concert and fireworks on PBS tonight and remember how lovely they were before we had to spend two hours getting through security. I don't know if you're getting this security hysteria or if it's just a New York-Washington thing. TV news has been talking incessantly for days about how ISIS is going to attack us on the 4th of July. Somebody wants their budget increased.

I've been watching your weather, it's been on the national news actually. What explanation are they giving you? Our heat waves are caused by the melting ice caps, which is pushing the jet stream south, locking us into weather patterns with Alabama.

I saw the op-ed in the NY Times this morning, thought it was a terrific waste of opportunity to affirm climate change. So the

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: happy weekend
Date: September 4, 2015 1:14:02 PM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



Here you are, less than a week from takeoff, and I hope the physical therapy has you in top shape. That first travel day sounds huge, and all the more do I applaud your decision. Today the email has calmed down some, I'm tired, and I thought I'd put away the paperwork and do something I'd like -- so you're getting greetings from Seattle.

And a query about how your sister's doing. Generally speaking, recovery is much faster and better than it once was. The mother of a friend, 81, just had one of these surgeries where they cracked her open to fix some heart valve problem, and after a few days in a hospital, went home to about 10 days with a caregiver, and then planned to attend an opera.

Last Bus made the national Indie bestseller list again this week, to my delight. I have no word of a repeat in NYT and I doubt it repeated, but it takes them a couple of weeks to get the lists published, so it's this weekend that Last Bus will appear. It's done well again on the regional lists, so I'm well satisfied.

I did sign a statement of intent to send the archive to MSU and feel good about it, given that they'll put it online. It's a big project and will take awhile. Yesterday I got the formal paperwork, which the lawyers will need to work over. It contains a standard indemnification clause --that I'll hold the university harmless for any nitwit legal claim -- and Marsh definitely won't buy that. And while the rest of it reads all right, he'll want an explicit sentence that I hold the copyrights. And who knows what else. But it's Labor Day weekend and nothing will be accomplished for days, though I'm impatient.

The accountant, after researching tax deduction, concludes that because the archive is Ivan's own work, it's not eligible. Huh. I've asked the estate attorney if there's a way around that, but have not heard back. These well-paid professionals had better get in gear next week, or I'll be making decisions on my own and may regret it later. There's lots of work to be done and I'm eager to get to it.

Lois Welch, who will be in town for a wedding, will visit me for a couple of days starting on Labor Day, and I'm eager to get her take on loss. Jim died twelve years ago at age 62, and she's carried on heroically, has a good network of friends, and has traveled. But from what I've heard from two other good friends whose husbands have died, I doubt if she's over it or ever will be.

The weather here is cooler and we've had some rain. Last weekend we experienced our worst-ever summer storm, with high winds. Massive power outages, too. My power stayed on, but the house alarm was somehow triggered though we've never used it, and the computer lost power, then came back on just as mysteriously. There are forces in the universe.

Be well and take care.
Carol

From: carol doig <cddoig@comcast.net>
Subject: update
Date: September 26, 2015 7:20:45 AM PDT
To: Linda Miller <miller9820@gmail.com>



I'm glad you got home in time to folo yesterday's news. Poor President Xi might as well have stayed in China. When he arrived on the west coast, the pope was arriving on the east coast and national media concentrated on the pope, while Xi was roundly criticized here for the traffic mess occasioned by his visit. (His handlers wouldn't accept helicopter transport or various other traffic mitigating plans.) Then yesterday, he's in DC at a joint news conference with Obama, and all the reporters want to know about is Boehner's resignation. AND, the pope celebrates a high mass in Madison Square Garden, which is covered by MSNBC, CNN, Fox and I don't know what else.

Thanks for the trip report, which sounds just like what you expected. But La Scala! Nifty.

On the homefront, I signed the contract with MSU yesterday and hurried it back into the mail. I've done lots of last-minute chores on the archive and trying to decide once-and-forever what will go and what I'll hold back. Betty thinks Ivan's diaries ought to go now, and I keep changing my mind. Just now I'm leaning to sending them since once they're online they'll be easier for me to use. So far as I know they contain no secrets and no libelous material, but I haven't read through them either. Drat. The other things I'm holding for my lifetime include contemporary mementos, my diaries, and personal correspondence.

Now MSU has to hire a specialized moving company, or their archivists have to rent a truck, and they need to do it by October 10 when Betty and her husband leave for their Tucson home (they'll be back for Thanksgiving). I'm putting in some hours this weekend, and Betty will be here Monday to work with me.

We're having good, standard Fall weather in Seattle now, some rain, some sunshine, a snap in the air. I shoved the bedroom into the back of my closet and hope not to use it for a long, long time. We're supposed to have a strong el Nino winter, and we'll see what that brings. Ac

Last Bus, with all those pub day events, made two national bestseller lists right out of the gate: NYT and Indies. That's a first, and that's what a smart editor can do. Now it's settled back into a more regular pattern, making regional bookseller lists each week. Becky says it's getting good word-of-mouth and I sure don't think it's going to embarrass itself or Ivan.