4-24-20

**THE ALMOST SILENT SPRING EDITION**

**Subtitled: “Lifelines, Nooses and Perpetual Parades”**

Haven’t written much lately… not much going on. The House only has between 6-10 guys at a time living here with 12-20 keeping Jackie and the meals program going! I keep puttering… weeding beds around house, scraping the basement floor (slow going!), and working on getting contractors in for minor repairs. So I thought I would do couple of short stories this time around…

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Stefan Davis is the President (despite the fact that he is trying very hard to become “Emeritus”) of the Miami Realty Association, the alumni group that owns the House…and quite frankly, the House would not still be here if not for his dedication and effort. Stefan was also the undergraduate president when I pledged and one of the reasons I joined. His career has been spent in alumni relations at Miami and currently at IUPUI… again, he keeps trying to escape but they won’t let him…there’s a pattern there, Stefan!

Anyway, during one of our many conversations Stefan mentioned that an old Miami colleague of his had made an interesting statement. “When you work in a college environment, it’s like standing in one place and watching a parade… the people in the parade keep changing but you’re still in the same place.”

That comment stuck with me… I imagine its very much the same with schoolteachers and it certainly applies to me in the House. We will totally turn over the residents living in next year (Lord, please let there be a “next year!”) and while the current sophomores and juniors will still be around and many in our meals program, it won’t be the same when they don’t live here. I’ve consistently said I want to do four years to see one class from start to graduation… but I’m just beginning to see how bittersweet it will be to watch them all parade to their “real lives.”

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Now that the world has “closed down” (including pickleball, trivia, Oxford Community Arts Center and the Circle Bar), one of the things that keeps me busy is Golf. There was a famous golfer who said, “There are two things in life you can enjoy without being good at… golf and sex.” No comments on the latter, please, but the former certainly applies to me. I’ve found a cordial group to play with in Oxford, but I particularly enjoy the opportunity to meet up with my friend Danny who lives in Columbus. When I was in Cleveland, we would meet regularly at Deer Ridge in Belleville… nice course, btw. Now we’re exploring courses around Springfield.

Our get-togethers allow Danny to alternately brag and vent about his place of employment and allow me to talk with a sympathetic adult about my experiences in the House. We are constantly joking back and forth about the “management / life advice” books we are writing… mine is whimsically called “Ross’ Rules of Order” and his is far more practical and reflective of his successful career climbing the corporate ladder.

During one of our golf adventures, I was talking about trying to hold the guys accountable and Danny gave me a good perspective: “You have to give people rope… then they can decide whether to make a lifeline or a noose!” Actually, that’s a pretty good description of how I try (operative word is *try*) to work with the undergrads. I try to put success in their way and try not to be “the hammer” when things go wrong. It should be all about helping them find their own path… and when that happens, I’ve had a good day.