

MOOSE FACTORY JOURNAL

February 2005

January 25, 2005

new blogware

This now is the third or fourth 'blog'... I've tried a number of different kinds of software/applications and services. I just keep fidgetting until I get it right -- or at least like something I can live with.

If you're shopping around....

Both iBLOG and BlogWave work on the MAC (OS-X) platform and utilize the iDISK that comes with the dotMAC account. Very easy to use. I was happy with neither, however, so far as comments were concerned. DreamHost (the server I use for non-.MAC pages) offers a free version of WordPress. However, I'm not advanced enough to take advantage of its flexibility. I tried 'Blogger' from Google for half a second. For some reason I just didn't like it.

My priorities were/are to have considerable control over format and comments. But I didn't want to have to write code myself. Everything would have to be 'off the shelf' -- so that anyone else could step in and continue managing the blog -- or so that I could manage it after i had forgotten everything I had already done to it. That effectively ruled out WordPress (because of formatting issues) and iBLOG (because of comment issues).

BlogWave is a close competitor to what I am using now (typepad.com). And I might even go back to it. The difference between the two: BlogWave is an application residing on your MAC; it utilizes your .MAC account. That makes it really great to work with -- when you're working at your MAC. But you can work with it only with a MAC with the right software on it. (Not good if you may have to use more than one machine -- not good for me when I'm on holidays, without a machine.)

I doubt I'd be blogging/journaling much while on holidays. But, if I'm going to allow comments, I have to be able to delete one or a number rapidly -- or turn them off. There's a scourge of spammers out there.

The RSS feed for this is:

http://moosonee.typepad.com/moose_factory_journal/atom.xml

or

http://moosonee.typepad.com/moose_factory_journal/

I can't figure out which...

Wednesday, 26 January 2005

blogware

With the application, ecto, from kula software (in Tokyo) I now have the best of all worlds (I think).

Typepad has an interface so that I can manage the weblog from their site -- on the internet. I can do it therefore, on any machine, off any platform. "ecto" -- a \$17 piece of software -- allows me, also, to write material on the desktop. I think ecto is available in Windows format as well as in the MAC format. In some respects Mariner's 'MacJournal' is a better application, as it has

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options for 'saving' that are very nice. But ecto conveniently manages two blog accounts. None of the other blog applications I have played with are quite so easy in this respect. And, since I'm running (or learning how to run) two blogs, (this and the MOOSEblog for the diocese) that's a priority.

gas

The Island is running out of gas. Moosonee already is without any gas. Two-Bay Garage has the only pumps in Moosonee. They ran dry yesterday or today. Over here, on The Island, we have Northern Store's 'Quickstop', where this evening there were dozens of cars lined up and waiting. 'TJ's Gas Bar' also is on The Island. But TJ's ran out some time today.

The demand for gas around here is intense this time of year. Folks drive in from Attawapiskat, Albany, and Kashechewan -- over the ice highway. They fill 50 gallon drums in Moosonee and cart them back up North in the back of pickup trucks. That's the cheapest way to transport gas up there. (And, while they're in the big city of Moosonee, they'll also stock up on groceries and whatever else.)

Evidently one of the tanker cars on the train had leaked some or all its load on the trip north to Moosonee. Moosonee got caught short in the middle of the crunch. No new gas arrives until Friday's train pulls in -- in the late afternoon, at the earliest.

January 27, 2005

chilly

Gilman, Vermont got 52* (F) below last night. Or, that's what VPR said early this morning at around 4 AM; they backed off later to citing Saranac Lake at 29* below. We got 24* (F) below last night.

January 31, 2005

warm, again

We had 25*(F) early this morning. Lancaster, NH had -7* last night..

January 29, 2005

HOT!

The CBC this morning stated that Moosonee and Moose Factory are now the warmest place in Ontario. We have 27* (F) this morning (at 6 am).

February 03, 2005

Scotch Mist

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Yesterday was Groundhog Day. There weren't any groundhogs running around yesterday. But the sun was out. AND, there was ***WARMTH*** in that sun. The temperature hovered around the freezing mark all day.

It felt just grand!

Today, it's warmer. We're up to 36* (F) at noon, today. And there's no sun. Instead we have a Scotch Mist -- sort of a fine fog/drizzle combination. This is not good for our transportation infrastructure -- the ice/winter roads. But a few days may be ok. I haven't heard of any closings -- yet.

February 08, 2005

Church Floors

Elsie has been agitating -- or politiking -- since August 2002 to DO SOMETHING about the carpet in the Rectory. She has not been without just cause.

The Rectory was carpeted -- top to bottom -- wall to wall -- maybe in the late eighties or early nineties with an indoor/outdoor/industrial variety of carpet. When I arrived, it was dark green -- sort of beige/green -- and singularly unattractive. The carpet just killed light.

Also, the carpet was not properly installed -- at least in the Living Room. Large wrinkles or carpet wandered through the center of the room.

And that's not all! The carpet in the basement was subjected to a number of nasty floods and never quite recovered. It DID breed mold -- lots of it. By the time I came on the scene several devout souls could not enter the building without enduring asthmatic attacks.

The Vestry finally was compelled to meet upstairs in my living room, because of the foul & moldy air in the basement. This provoked two reactions. One was guilt. The Sunday School meets in the basement. "If we can't stand it, what must it be like for those poor dear children?" So folks started thinking about fixing up the basement.

However, when we met upstairs in the living room of the Rectory, people didn't like that either. The Vestry found the carpet distracting.

At Annual Meeting, somehow, the subject came up. Instantly there was a pledge of a donation for a new floor in the living room. Bobby became a man with a purpose. The next day he went out and bought new tiles for the living room floor.

I'm afraid I may have done Bobby wrong at that point. There were ladies in the Rectory soon after the tiles arrived. I showed them the tiles. THEY disapproved of the tiles. The color was wrong. AND they objected to not being consulted about the color of the tiles in the first place. When did men ever know anything about the proper color?

Bobby heard of this and announced that what he got was what was within the budget. And that was that. More ladies visited and inspected and discussed the matter.

Then another donation came in -- for a better floor.

So Bobby went out and bought better tiles for a better floor.

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The originally purchased floor went to the basement for installation there.

This last week, Lawrence and Bobby put in the new floor.

Somehow a new floor wants new furniture. Another donation came in. New furniture was ordered and arrived yesterday. Everyone seems content. If, indeed, furniture (or floor) maketh the man, I am reborn! It's better than anything I was ever used to!

February 09, 2005

ASHES

ASH WEDNESDAY

Custom provides that on Shrove Tuesday -- Fat Tuesday -- Mardi Gras -- we eat pancakes. Last night we ate pancakes -- and sausage -- and bacon -- at the Parish Hall. Lots of warm fellowship and hot tea.

Custom also provides that on Shrove Tuesday we burn the palms used in last year's Palm Sunday procession and celebration. The ashes, then, are used on the next day at the Ash Wednesday Liturgy -- when we make a little smudge on our foreheads -- a little reminder of where we came from and where we will all end up -- someday.

Up here, however, we don't use palms. We use cedar branches. For my last two Ash Wednesdays here I had used palm ashes that I had brought with me from the States. Yesterday, however, I burned cedar branches, so that we might have cedar ashes today.

I had a plastic bag with several of the cedar branches left over from last year. I rummaged around in the bag; whatever wouldn't 'snap' came out; the rest I poured into an old roasting pan. Most of what I had was the dried out foliage from the branches. Anything amounting to a stem would break easily. I figured I had a combustible mix here.

It was a warm day -- only around 0* (F). The sun was out. I brought roaster and cedar outside. I wasn't going to take any chances so I poured some rubbing alcohol on the pile and lit a match. The mixture definitely burned! With a stick I mixed it around while it was burning. I wanted everything to burn as much as it could.

Within the hour I had a roaster with lots of ashes. Now came the hard part. I brought everything inside and mused the cinders around with a spoon. I then ran them through a rough meshed sieve. That took another half hour. I would have done better if I had worn a mask. A lot of the dust went up my nose. My work resulted in a pickle jar full of fresh good ashes.

St. Thomas' now has ashes enough for the next 25 years. But maybe I'll try to talk the kids into doing it next year. It's easy, and it's fun.

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February 19, 2005

Permanent Resident

This last Tuesday I took the train south to Cochrane where I retrieved the car and drove to Chapleau. The sun had set by then, and I parked for the night. I had lucked out on the motel. The owner had a beautiful iMAC sitting on the reception Desk. He also gave me a jump start the next morning. (The truck battery was till weak.)

Then, another 4-5 hours to Sault Ste. Marie -- the nearest Port of Entry to Moosonee and Moose Factory -- as best as I could figure. My route went along a the side of a river. The road twisted and turned through the hills to Thessalon. A wolf sauntered along on the shoulder, as I rounded one bend.

I crossed over into the States and approached Canadian Customs from the States. I had wanted to get the view from the bridge.

At the American Customs gate the attending officer looked at my passport (and I guesss, the Canadian Visa) and said: "Well, what did we do to make you leave like this?" I wasn't going to get into a political symposium then and there, and I said that I wanted to be able to keep working in the North, which, actually, was the truth. My projection, I know, but he looked at me as though I was a coward.

I lingered on the American side long enough to get a cup of coffee. Then I headed back to Canada. On the bridge -- still at the American end, at the tolls, there were several heavily padded young men with very large guns. They were stopping some of the cars on the way through. I slowed down and waited for one of them to stop me, if he wanted to. He waved me on, yelling: "Get the Hell out of here!"

I did. And stopped at Canadian Immigration. The routine there took, at most, 20 minutes. At the end of it the clerk shook my hand, and told me I'd be getting my card in 3-5 weeks. Then, in time, if I wanted to, I could apply for citizenship. The Canadians would not require me to give up my American citizenship. Now I had lots of things to think about.

On the way back, on Thursday, a rabbit darted across the road between Timmins and Cochrane. I got back to Moose Factory last night, Friday. The train was late. I didn't get home until 8 PM.

26 February 2005

The Anglican Consultative Council

The Anglican Communion (worldwide) has fired the Americans and the Canadians. The spat is over gay people. The Africans are leading the charge.

The Americans and the Canadians have been requested to disinvite themselves from the 'Anglican Consultative Council' -- at least temporarily. Further, they have been requested to repent themselves for their transgressions -- errant bishops ordaining or consecrating the wrong sort of people; misguided priests blessing gay people in their relationships.

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I have been a priest over 35 years. This is the first I ever heard of the Anglican Consultative Council. I can live without it.

The Africans need the North Americans a lot more than the North Americans need the Africans.

Anyway, I have these points (and a certain amount of attitude...)

1. Repent/reform -- for what? We did the right thing.
2. The compromise buys time. It does not resolve issues. (Typically Anglican....) Either the Africans will cut the North Americans some slack or the North Americans will have to jettison gay folk as yet another disposable group. (Some are warning that if the American/Canadian Church does NOT do this, then the 'conservatives' will leave....)
3. All of this provides a perfect excuse for the Church to avoid doing anything useful or meaningful.
4. A priest may bless a battleship or an airplane that has one purpose only -- the mass destruction of property and life. But I am not allowed to bless two broken people who have found stability and happiness in their lives? (And I call myself a priest? There's a parish in New Haven that has stopped doing any weddings until this thing is resolved....)