

HELL HAS FROZEN OVER

We returned in February from a one week sojourn in Florida. Warm weather, gentle breezes, decks and pools...it was very nice and very welcome. Then we returned home. We fly via Syracuse because it's not much farther than Toronto, it's a small airport and you pass customs and immigration at 1000 Islands which is much preferable to the milling herds at Pearson, parking the car is cheap, and the airline tickets are a lot cheaper. This all sounds pretty good, but as most of you know, it is necessary to pass through the dreaded "Lake Effect Corridor" between Syracuse and Watertown.

Returning, we found that our little commuter jet to which we transferred in Washington would, indeed, land on time, but it was raining in Syracuse and it might turn to freezing rain. In Washington, they called the flight and we went down an escalator, then boarded a bus which took us to the airplane parked nearby along with maybe a half dozen others. The announcer said, "All Syracuse passengers take a left when you reach the bottom of the escalator. Do not take a right or you will board the plane for Manchester. You probably don't want to go there this afternoon. If you go straight there will be no bus and you will remain in Washington." We just followed the soldiers from Fort Drum.

We took my truck to Syracuse because last year we got caught in a lake effect blizzard on the interstate and were off the road twice in Diane's car. We figured increased road clearance, four wheel drive, and four snow tires would help. As we readied to leave the hotel next morning, the truck was hard to start, unusual because it usually erupts into life as soon as the ignition key is touched. Oh well, it had been sitting out for a week, so maybe it was just cold. Later, as we made our way through the slush and intermittent flurries on the interstate and the 401, the engine light began to blink and the engine misfired dramatically on acceleration.

Arriving in Prince Edward County, we were confronted with enormous piles of snow, way more than we had seen anywhere else. We followed a slush spitting transport truck from the bridge on #49 to Picton, being unable to pass the thing because it sent up waves of dirty mist which made passing dangerous because once one drew near it, vision became impossible. Did you know the average freight train carries the equivalent cargo of 280 transport trucks, is three times as fuel efficient and takes no space on our highways? Let's hear it for trains

Reaching home, a good neighbour had shoveled a little path to our door so we could enter. Around eight o'clock, my truck was towed away because the dealer said under no circumstances was it to be driven when the engine light was blinking and the engine was misfiring. Not good, but Diane's car was in the garage. But, when I tried to start

it, there was nothing, not even a click. I charged the battery, and once it was charged enough to illumine the warning lights, it was evident the trunk was a little bit open and the trunk light had been on for a week.

Once the car was rendered mobile and backed out of the garage, it got stuck. Never mind why, it just got stuck. So, after the back breaking work of shoveling a path to the garage, and one to the front door, and all around the stuck-in-the-snow car, ask me if I was in a good mood. I swear, hell isn't hot, it is cold. In spite of that, in spite of all that, I am really glad to be home.

- George Underhill

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