

**Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!** (Thanksgiving 2008 Newsletter)

I'm using a new free word processing program this year (Open Office Org. Writer), one that I'm not quite used to yet. It has so many great features it's like being a kid in a candy shop, hi hi....

Also I'm working in a totally new environment as well! I've converted 4 of my computers completely over to Linux distributions. One distro is CentOS which is based on Red Hat Linux, the next is Debian, which is a stand alone distro that's super powerful, and this is being written on Ubuntu, which is a Debian based Linux distro that has grown rapidly to take the Number One slot for Linux Distro's!

The two nicest things about Linux is that, #1 it's nearly immune to viruses and malware due to it's high security being the most important feature of Linux. Most trouble free ISP's and web sites use Unix/Linux Apache! Those with the most problems are usually running Mickey\$oft net framework. The #2 reason is nearly everything in Linux is FREE and Open Source. Even those few programs that do cost, you can still get the Open Source version and compile it yourself, so in essence, it's still free.

Ubuntu is fairly new and still has a long way to go to catch up to where Windows is currently at, but unlike windows YOU can change nearly anything you want changed to suit you. The downside to Linux is that Manufacturers of cheap homeowner type hardware do not provide support or drivers for their equipment much yet. Epson is currently doing the most, else you have to rely on third party drivers. Interestingly enough, some third party drivers are better than OEM drivers. Especially if some computer geek happens to have that same device and decided to go whole hog with it, hi hi.....

I had put together something similar to these newsletters when I went to visit Dink in Florida. It mainly covers the nitty gritty part of the bathroom remodeling and some of the hard things I had to correct to get the job done. I will bring a couple of copies for those interested in such things or add them as an addendum. Else I will just include a couple of the finished job pictures at the end here.

As the saying goes, one picture is worth a thousand words and I have quite a few for this year, even though I really haven't got all that much more done this year. Mostly just fixing problems, hi hi.....



We have a family of box turtles that live under a wood pile behind the back storage sheds. These little fellows all came out for a stroll one day and found their way to our front and side yard.

Image to right.  
Also, I'm still digging  
in the basement!



The ductwork at the top  
of the photograph is the  
half way point across  
the basement. I'm still  
down only 6 feet,  
enough for me to be  
able to stand upright.  
But it's mighty slow  
going with all the other  
chores around here.





As you can see, I haven't gotten a whole lot further on the ditch. The plantings have all grown considerably and a LOT of dirt has been added to the left side. But it's still a LONG way from never seeing a lawn mower again. All I can say is, it's getting their SLOWLY!

Meet our newest edition Boonleigh, (pronounced Boon Lay), but we just call him Boon!



The JOKES on US, you'll see why a little later!



Not pictured to the left is Lacie, our Beagle!

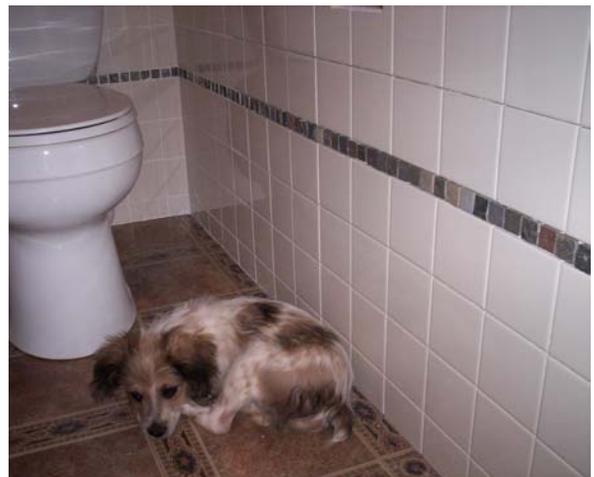
Marcie is on the couch, she's a Rhodesian Ridgeback mix.

My old Doxie Myrrh is on the lower right! Myrrh may no longer be with us through Thanksgiving.

And of course, the new Boondoggle is sitting there looking mighty pretty!  
However, that will be SHORT LIVED, hi hi.....

What's THIS? Boon is growing SPOTS!

Actually, I only stuck this photo in to see the right side of the bathroom, not included in the addendum. It's not grouted yet, but coming along.



**MORE SPOTS!!!!**

Hey Debi

Yes Dear

Are you SURE this new puppy is a PEEKAPOO?

Well, I know he don't exactly look like any Peekapoo I've ever seen either!

He is getting a little BIG, isn't he, I mean for being a Peekapoo that is!



Well, he may still not look BIG here, but what about compared to the other hounds of the Baskervilles to the right?

NOT exactly what would be classified as a Peekapoo I don't think!

Back left is Marcie, back right is Boonleigh, front left is our overstuffed Lacie and Myrrh. They are all watching the microwave waiting for the bell to ring. Thinking it's for them, ha!



Before I get on with some of the work around here, I wanted to show you a couple pictures from a friend Debi works with. These are NON-Professionals, a couple were quite OLDE and a couple were very Husky. Yet they spent 5 months in training in order to make an EIGHT MILE SWIM in Norris Lake to benefit Big Brothers Big Sister of East Tennessee. Seven started the race and all Seven completed the race. Such teamwork too! To insure NO individual winner, they all touched the wall of the Norris Dam at the exact same time. They started out together as a team and ended as a team, TOGETHER! It's a miracle a few of them made it at all, but they all did. Brought a tear to my eye!



OK, now for some of the WERK that has gone on around here! Ole Murphy has been hanging around!



Our water main from the street to the house sprung a rather expensive leak. Water never appeared in the yard, but we finally found where it was leaking, AFTER I put the new copper water line in, of course!

In this picture we see the ORIGINAL water shut off to the house. The original pipe is galvanized iron as expected. The bent shaft is the handle to turn off the water, which hasn't worked since like the 1950's. The vertical pipe was to an outdoor faucet. That's what was under the gray bucket you see in some past newsletters of front yard photographs.

I'm only including two more pictures of the digging to replace the pipe. The first is where I dug down to 16 inches using a deepshooter type shovel and the second picture is where I dug down to 26 inches using a bladed pickax. Whew, that was not easy in the TN Clay. Boon was checking the depth of the hole!



Naturally, when installing new plumbing, one has to have something interesting and unique to make it all worthwhile. So I built a fancy header for the cold water supply lines for the basement.



Taken in the bathroom, as the only space I had suitable to take a picture of this thing.

This gives me a shut-off to each utility in the house.

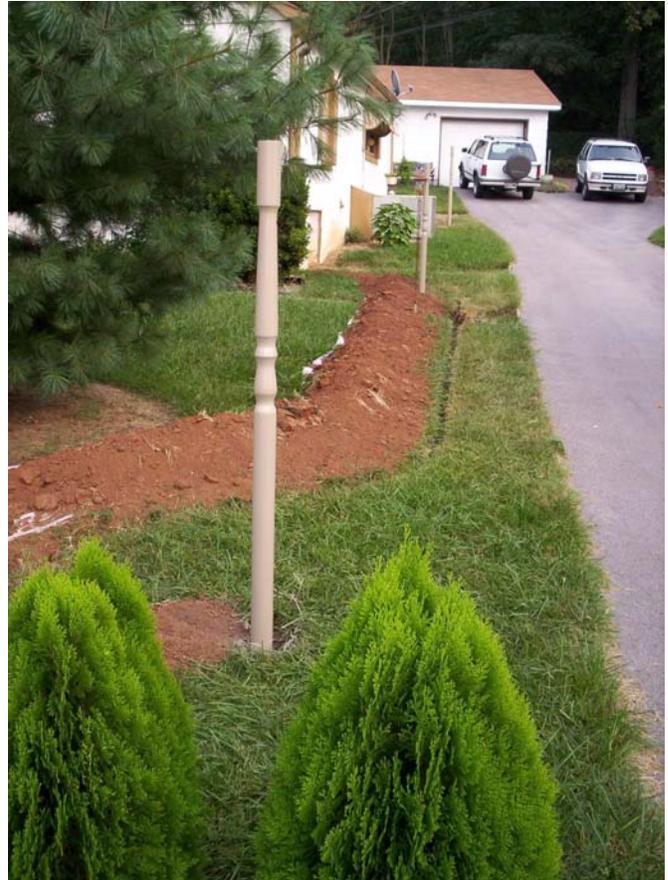


Now of course, after digging a long trench like that, we surely didn't want it to go to waste. So besides the new copper water main, I also installed a black plastic line to be used for a sprinkler in that hot ditch where everything seems to fry in the hot sun. No pictures of that, it's just black tubing, hi hi.....

But, after I installed the black tubing 6 inches above the copper pipe, I added another foot of dirt and installed electrical lines and purchased some rather nice outdoor pole lamps to line the driveway.

I have a few pictures of this because of the steps involved to get the finished product.

Rather than steel poles which can rust, I opted to buy aluminum instead. But who likes plain ole straight poles? These were spun on a lathe to give them the appearance of turned wood, when they are completely finished. On another note, each lamp is wired individually as well.



Black is how they came from the factory. To the right is the first coat of matte tan enamel. Aren't those SHARP looking lamp poles!



Lower left is the first stain coat that was applied to the poles.

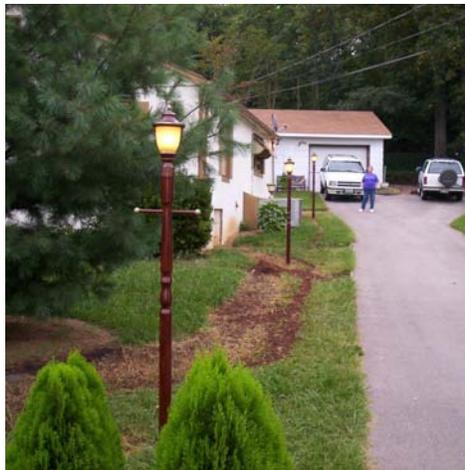
Near right is the second reddish stain coat and to the far right is the black stain coat, which I overdid slightly.

You can see the loose end of the black plastic tube where it wrapped around the bushes.





I wasn't going to include this picture of the poles with the wiring installed, but thought I would to save yet another picture that shows our old Heat Pump Schmeat Pump. I got a really good deal on a new energy efficient one and had it installed only last week. It's twice the physical size of this one, but is one-half ton smaller in btu's. And a whole lot quieter. So I guess I will stick these pictures here now too.



Now for my finished lighting job!  
Including the sidewalk superintendent, making sure I'm doing it right!  
And a shot at night too!

I need to squeeze a few pictures of the near finished bathroom in here, not shown in the addendum.



Country living is pretty darn nice!

Have a Very Happy **Thanksgiving**, a **GREAT Christmas** and a Wonderful **New Year**!

Love Gary, Debi, Maw and the critters!

November 2008 Newsletter.

