

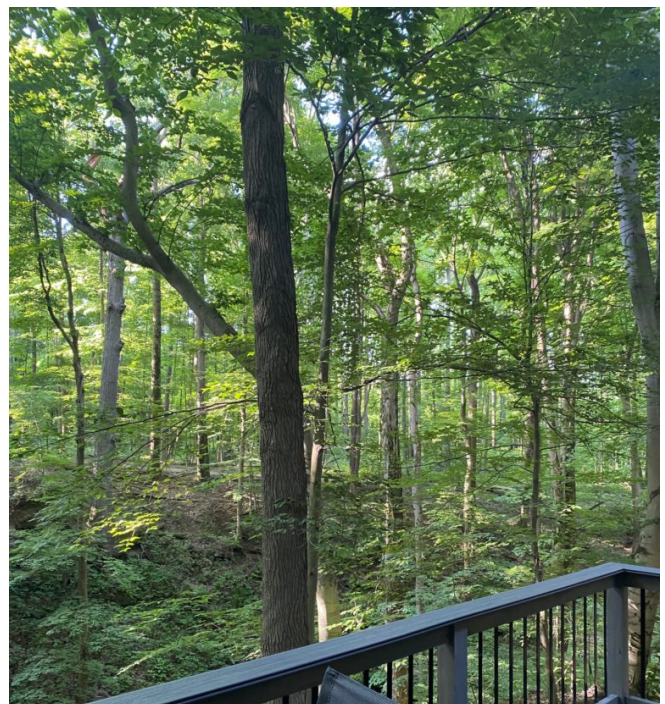
# STEPPING OFF THE EDGE

travels of a reluctant retiree

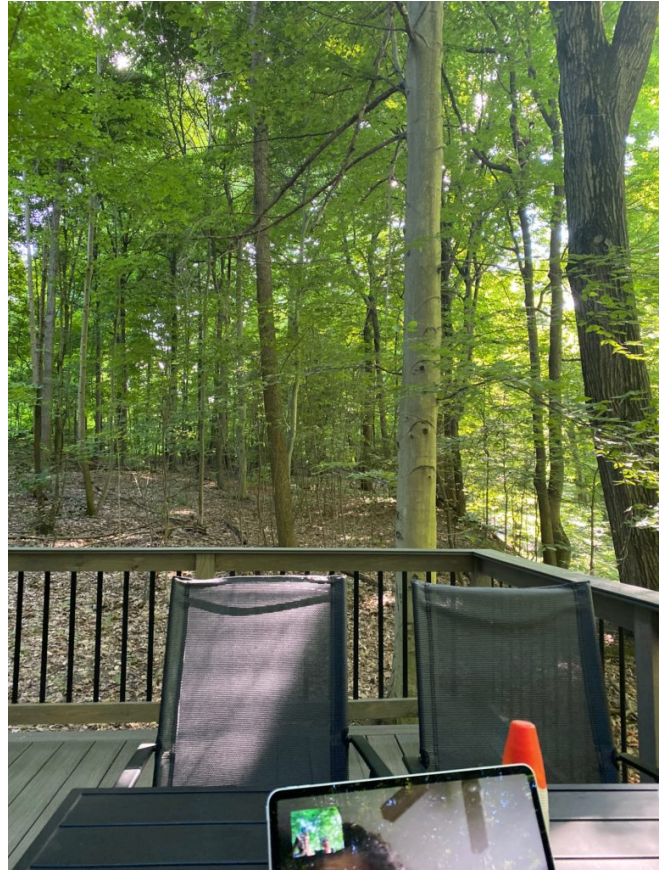
**JULY 17, 2020 BY MIKE T**

## A Long Drive, the Frightening Woods, Mennonites and Amish and Quakers, Oh My....

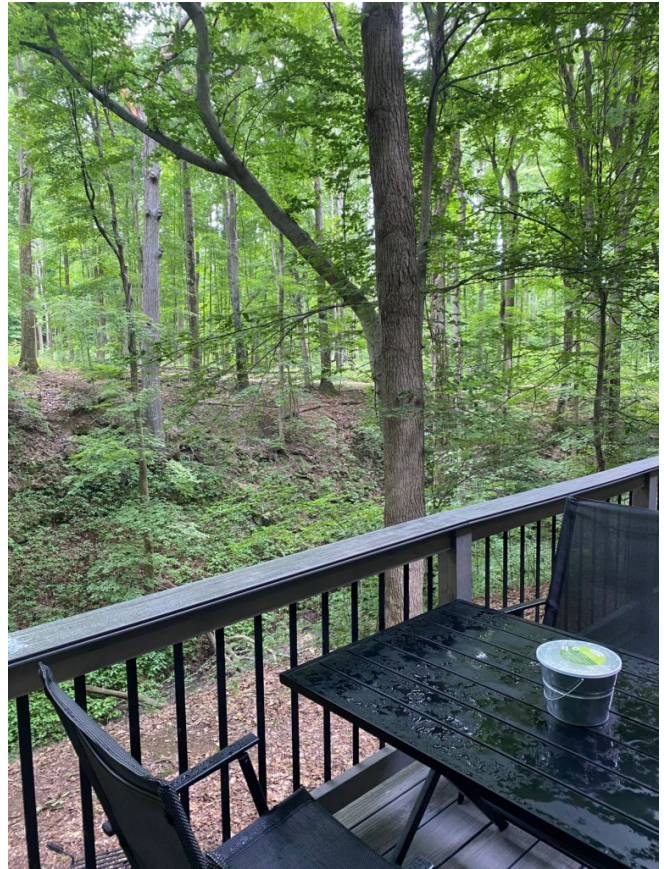
Yes, we arrived safely in beautiful Ohio. Now keep in mind that everyone we told about this leg of our journey was struck with a bit of pause. There is always a short delay and then, “Oh yes, Ohio, how nice... WHY?” Well, its half way between Caldwell, New Jersey and Knoxville Tennessee, our previous stop. Other than that, we had no clear plan except to find something remote and secluded. Below is the remote and secluded part which, for a North Jersey boy makes for some discomfort. There are wild animals or a dozen DEA agents hiding in those woods, either of which will make for a bad ending to the story, or perhaps I have been watching too much Ozark....











I know, I know, some duplicates but as our intrepid former governor Ronald Reagan once said... When you have seen one tree you have seen them all. I believe I paraphrase, it was actually if you've seen one redwood....

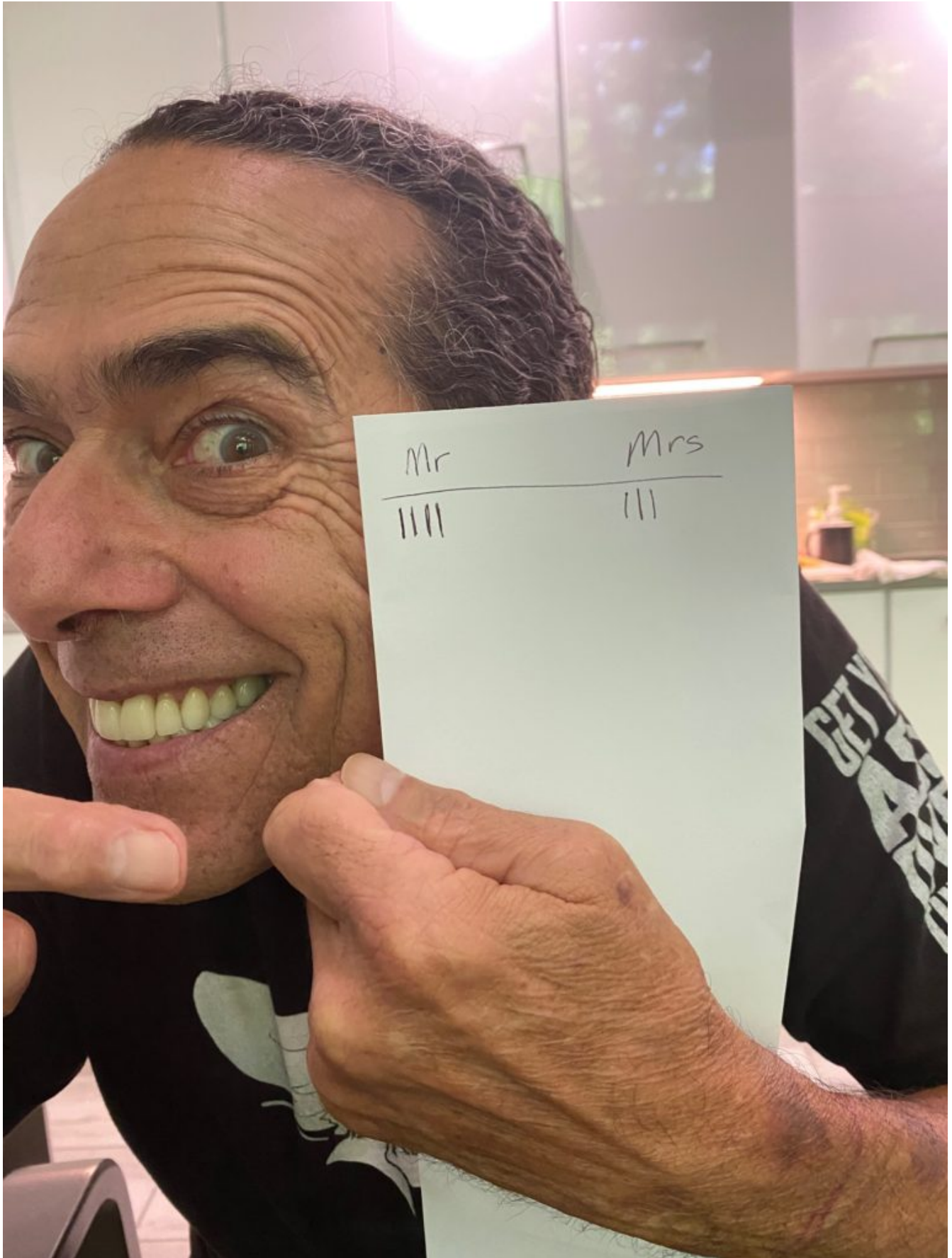
Before we start with the local color, which is white if you must know, allow me to give an example of the passive aggressive nature of our games played to while away the quarantine hours...

Bad Man		Good girl	
9	0	26	
8	20	26	
		22	
7	20	46	
	32	3	
6	52	49	
	32		
5	01	46	

See what I am talking about? Now for the events leading up to this, Mrs. T's score card for dominos. Yes, dear reader I have finally bested her in the dreaded cribbage, as you can see



below...





I have continued to experience good luck to the tune of being 8 games in the lead... now, to be perfectly honest, after today's bloodbath I am a mere 6 games ahead... oh well, the lead is the lead. We have agreed to tear up the score whenever we leave a city, so who knows where we go from here. Speaking of leaving a city, we have a very carefully orchestrated ballet of sorts that we go through a few days before taking off. Remember, we stay one month in each location, yes even Ohio, so we tend to be quite dug in after four weeks. I will not bore you with the details but we do call the flurry of activity "shawshanking." This week being our Shawshank week, we have been preparing our escape. This nickname seems particularly appropriate for leaving Ohio... the only more significant spot will be when we leave Maine, the location of that particular prison of fiction.

A last note on cribbage... my lovely bride piped up during a game with the following...

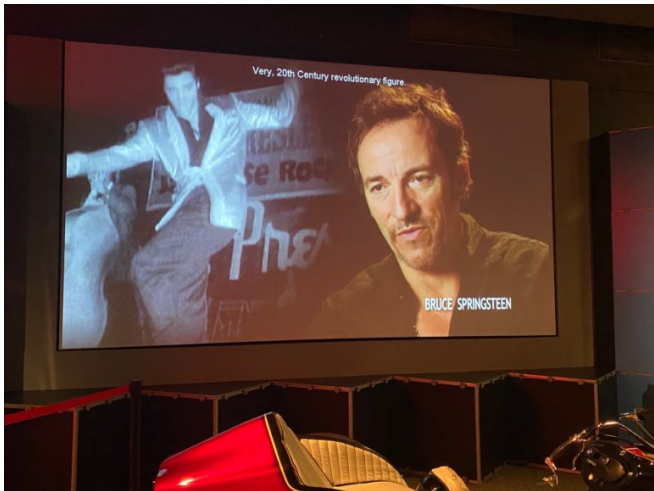
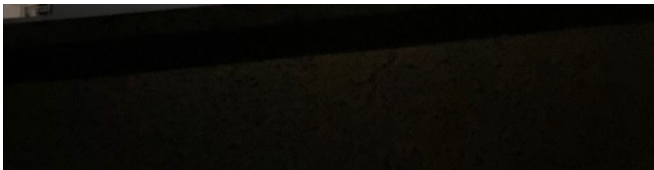
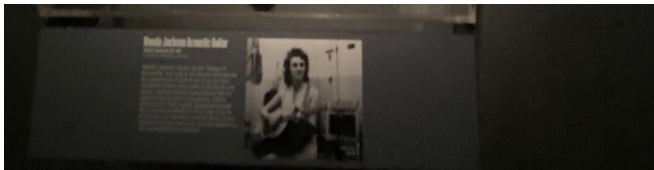
"Mr. T, you are too far close now"

Get back to me when you figure this one out...

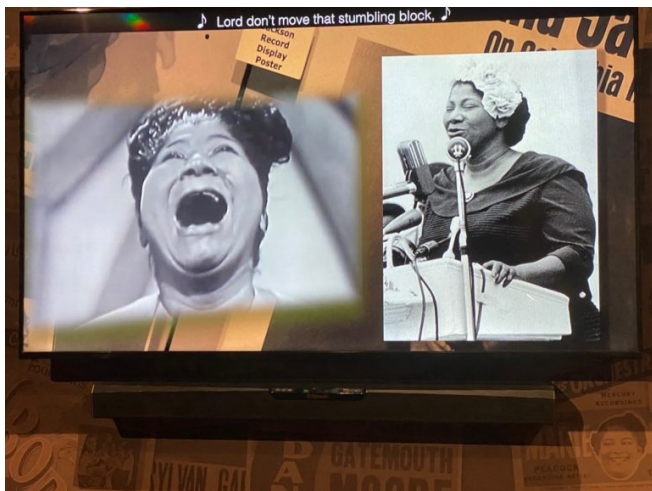
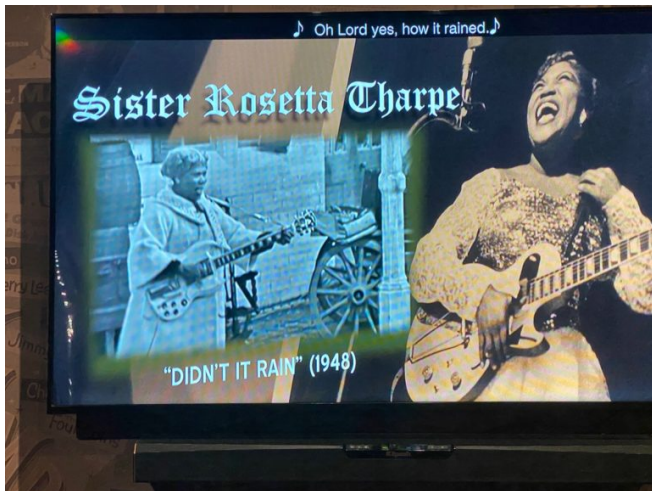
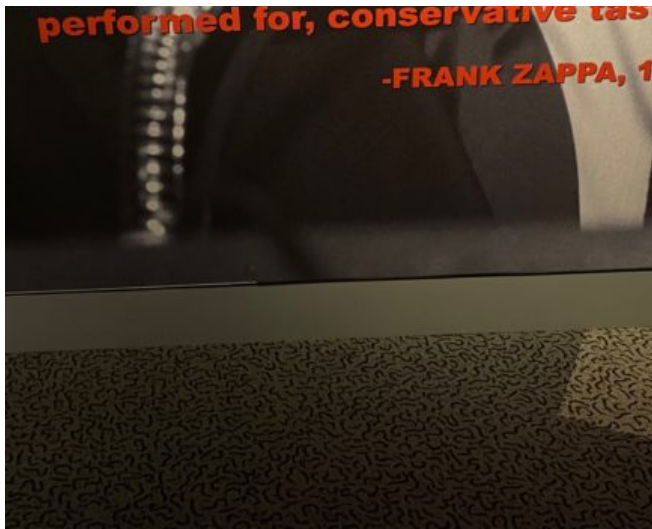
We had a wonderful day in the big city of Cleveland on our first Monday in town. For those of you who do not know the fame of the fair city, it is the home of none other than the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. I was not particularly excited about this trip except that it was going to be the only time we left the woods for the duration. Let me tell you this, do not miss the opportunity to visit this monument to rock. It was carefully curated with, most likely, donations from all the greats of rock. Well, certainly more organized than the cluster of pictures that follow...



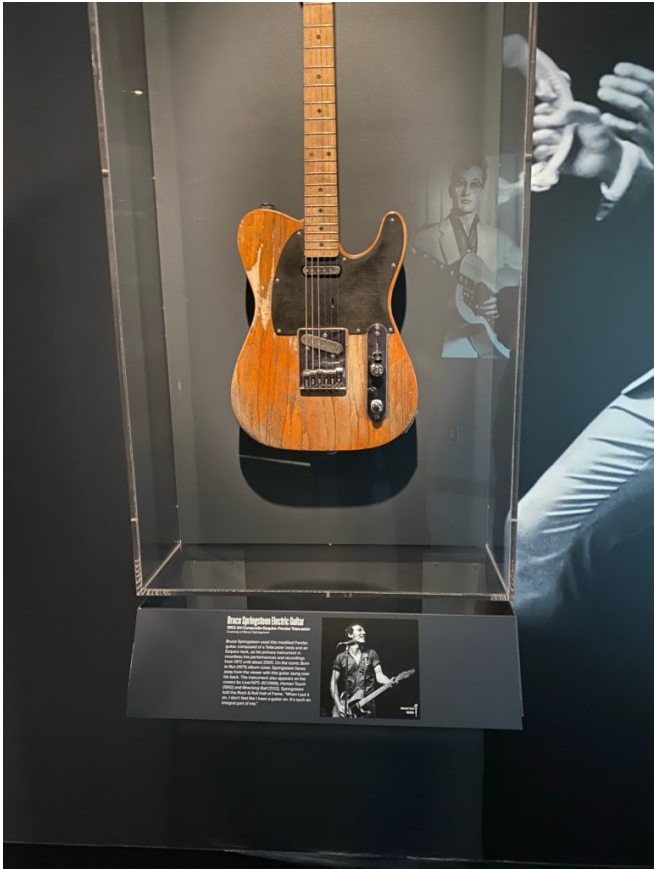
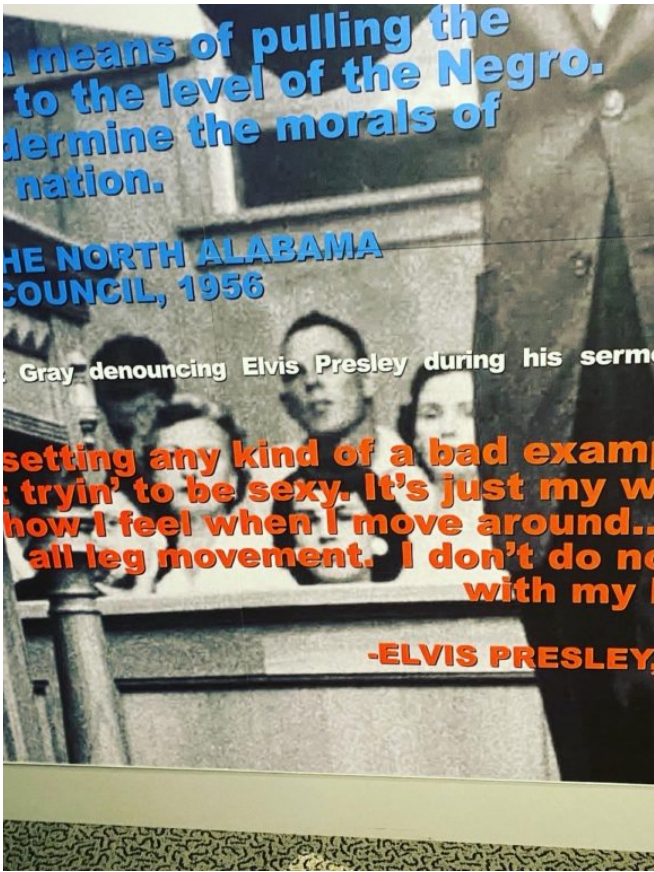




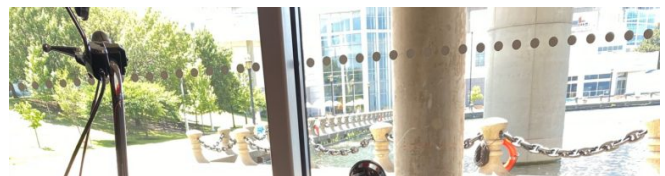
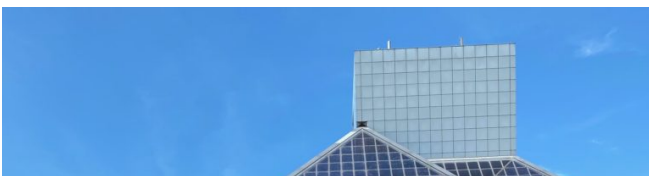
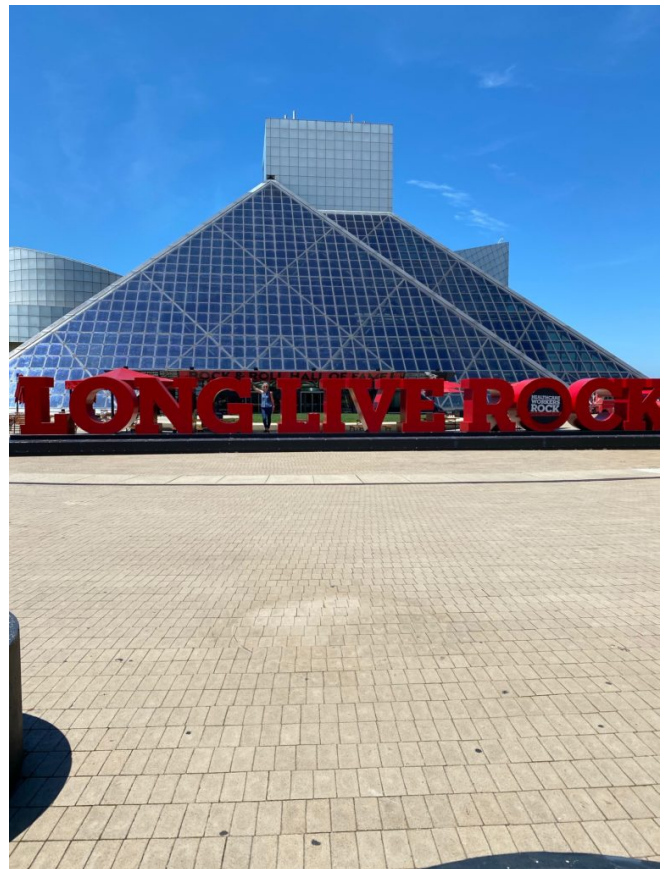




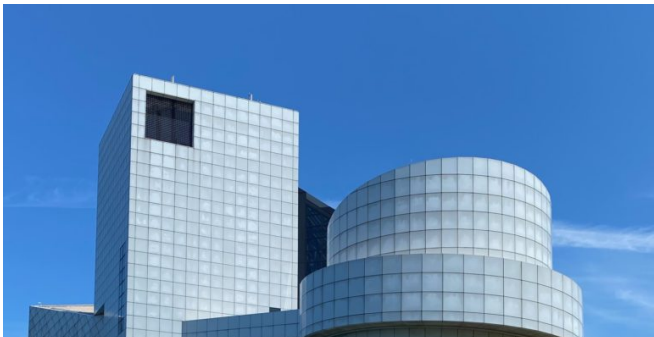
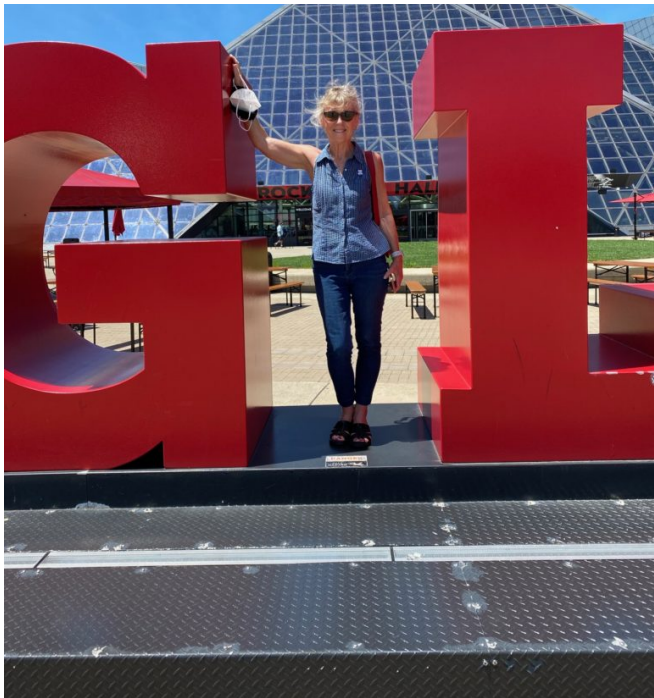




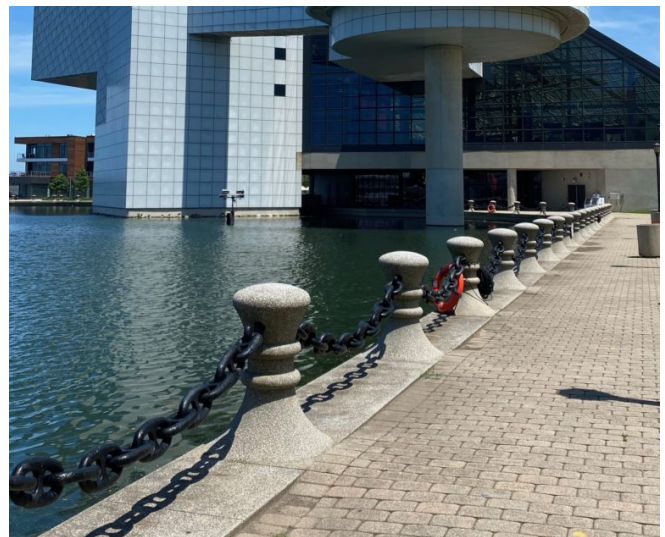




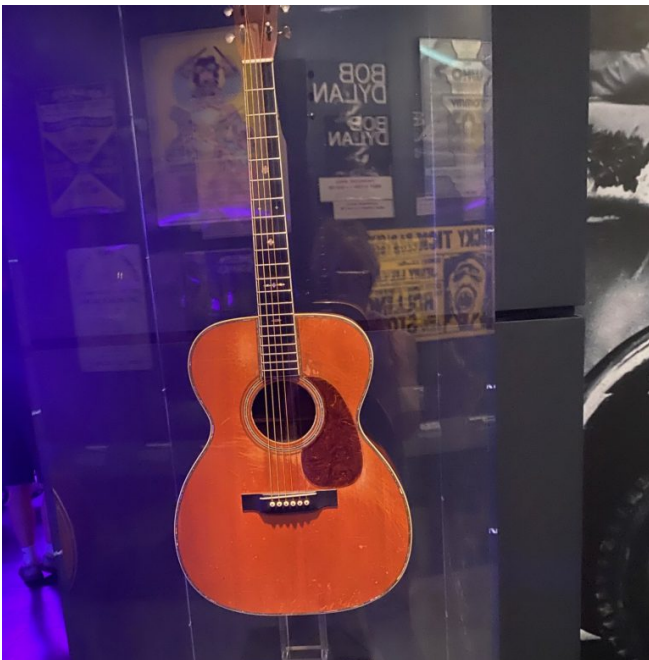
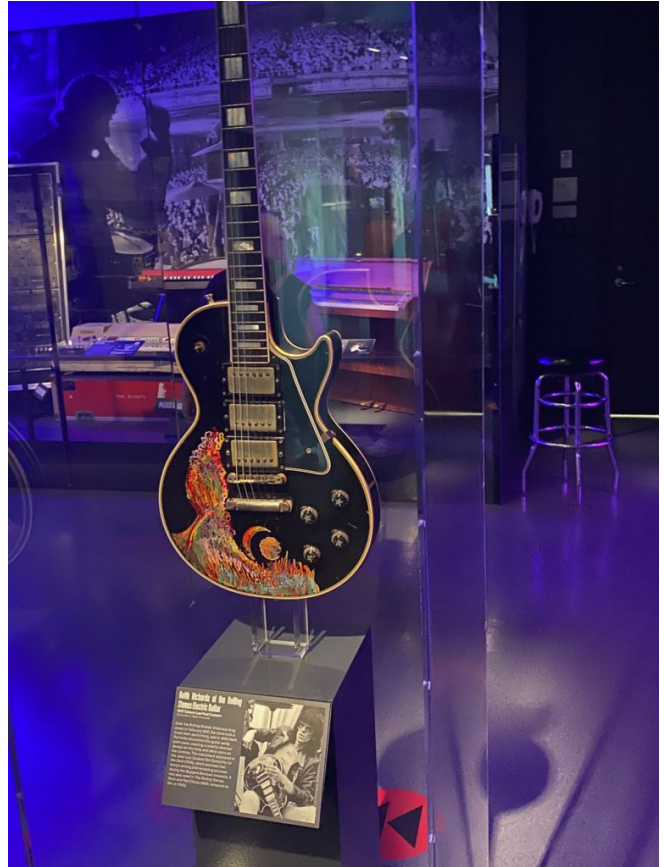




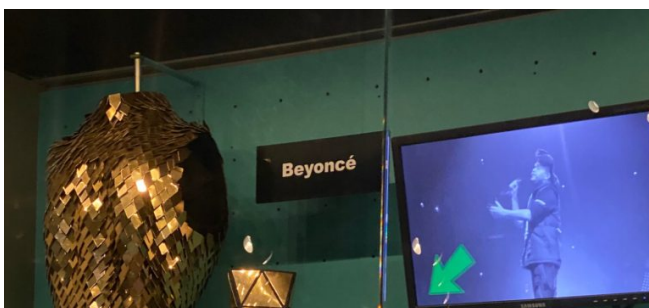




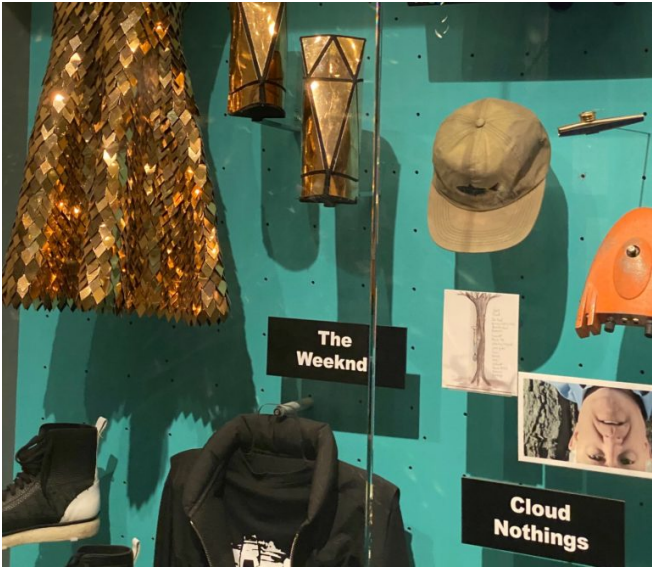




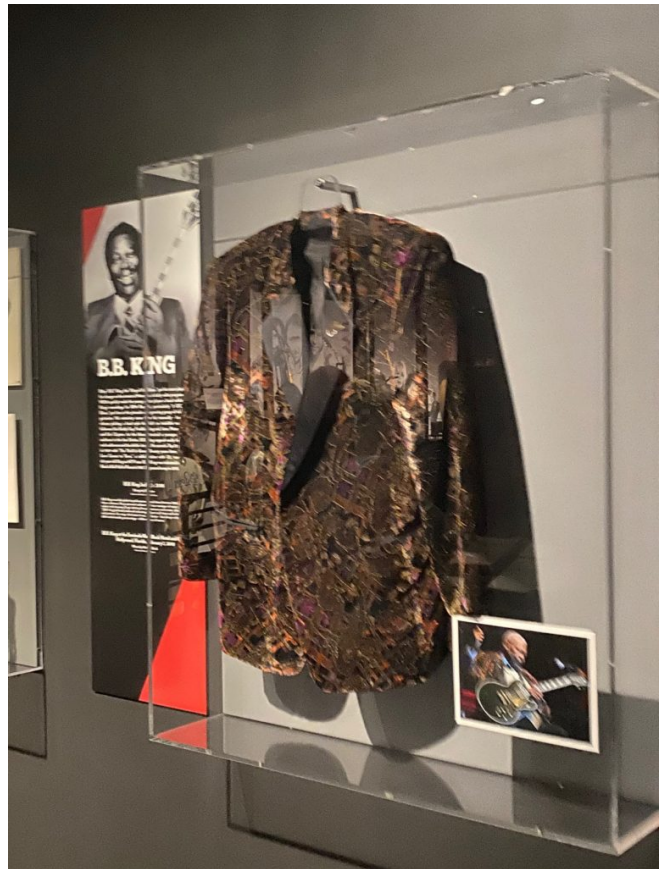
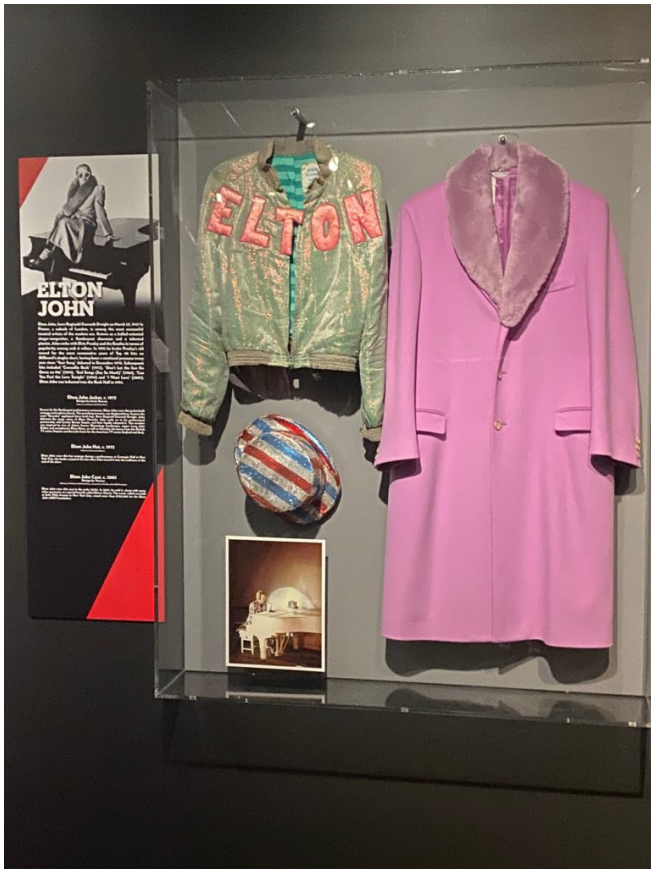




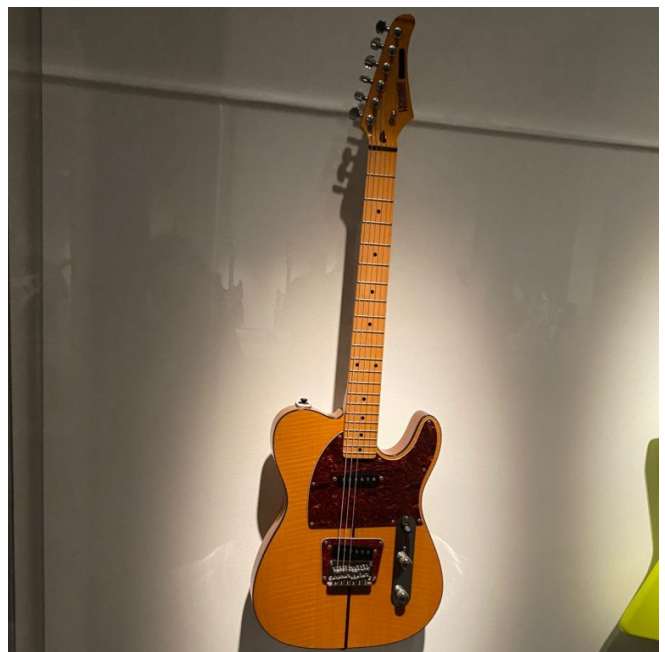
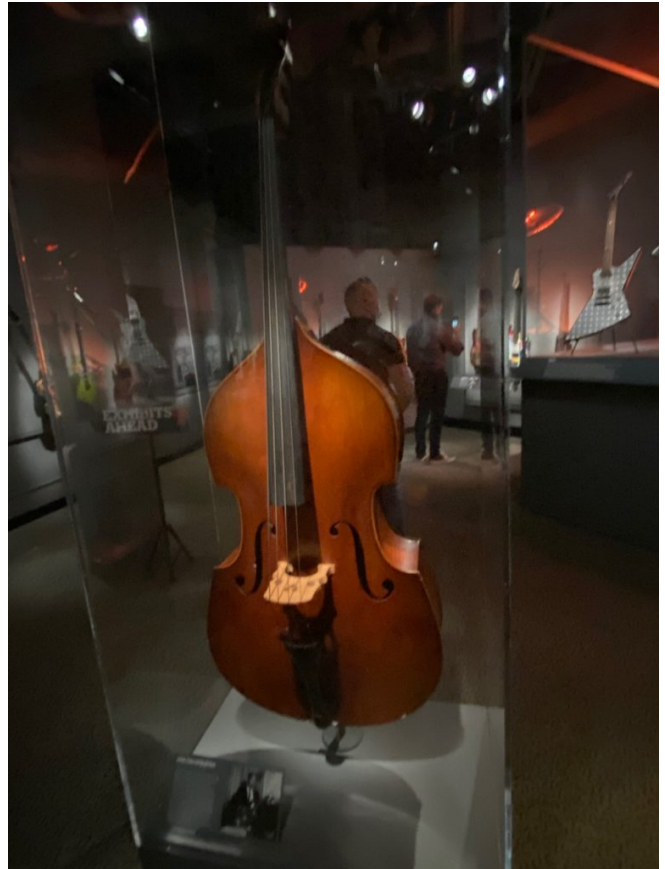


















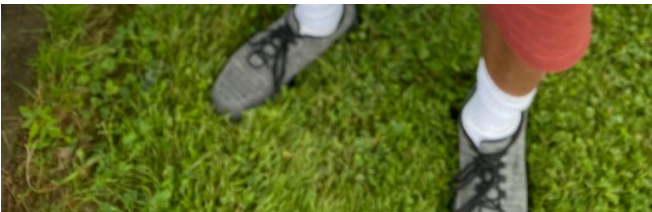
I might add that they were very cautious about social distancing. We had our temperatures taken, we had a specific time to go in, everyone was required to wear a mask and it was sparsely populated. I am certain this meant for a much more enjoyable experience for us as opposed to going before the pandemic with, no doubt, a thousand people in the building. And when I say sparsely, perhaps 75-100 total bodies in this enormous museum.

One of the high points of Ohio, well in addition to the glamorous nightlife in Salem where we are, is the presence of all sorts of religious farming communities. While we cannot make out the difference between them all, they do have one thing in common: all the farm stands are run by the young ladies of the community. Little ladies with rosey cheeks, plain home made dresses and sweet dispositions... as charming as this was, it did have a certain “children of the corn” vibe to it. Otherwise, some of the best produce I have ever purchased. I knew it was going to be a treat when we searched for farmers markets in the area (which we do in each new city) and instead of giving us the day of the week, location and times, just listed out the 35 farm stands in the area. Sort of a reverse farmers market. As you can see there are no pictures of these places and while I am a famous irreverent bastard, I felt disrespecting these ladies and farms would most certainly bring down the wrath of God.

As you can see below geocaching remains a constant source of entertainment for us... this, of all I have written, should give you a clear picture of what we have become!















We were able to stumble upon a little rock garden developed by the fine people of Salem on one of our searches for these little treasures...







A cautionary tale that I would never thought relevant before 2020... when on a facetime call do not carry the Ipad into the bathroom with you... how do I know this? let's just leave it as good first hand advice.

We have become accustomed to taking our temperature daily. This has less to do with our general health and more another activity to fill the time. A little workout secret, while we are doing our countless crunches in the morning and evening, I reach over and stick my finger into Mrs. T's belly button. When asked what the hell I am doing, rather than tell the truth which is trying to distract her from the endless count I came up with "taking your navel temperature, certainly it will be more accurate than the \$9 digital thermometer from Amazon!" Yes, that went over well...

As we ready ourselves to head to the glorious motherland (New Jersey for those of you who do not know me well) we have committed to having a virus test done. This is not only to sooth our minds but also to make certain we are not evil carriers of death. It has not escaped our notice that each city we visit experiences a dramatic spike in positive Covid 19 cases. We will keep careful records and will dutifly turn ourselves in to the CDC should the data prove positive...

The test upon leaving Salem (by the way, their claim to fame is being a vital hub for the underground railroad) was to go to the local Rite Aid and get our goodbye test. This was the first time we experienced a self test, meaning we had to jam that damn swab into our brains while the woman behind the drive up window counted to 20...

I will be a bit sad to leave this place with the woods all around and the sweet farms surrounding us but there has been one strange phenomena, either because of the wind or the squirrels being put out by our being here so long, the back deck is constantly covered



in acorns. This make the morning walk to sit out and have coffee akin to traversing a six year olds bedroom after a particularly robust session with their legos...

And now... what we eat..





*yes, that's right, that's chocolate covered bacon, I did that..*











 **UNCATEGORIZED**

## One Reply to “A Long Drive, the Frightening Woods, Mennonites and Amish and Quakers, Oh My....”



**Tess**

**JULY 29, 2020 AT 8:35 PM**

The ONLY and I literally mean ONLY good thing about you two being 3000 miles away are these posts...harrumph 🙄

*Comments are closed.*