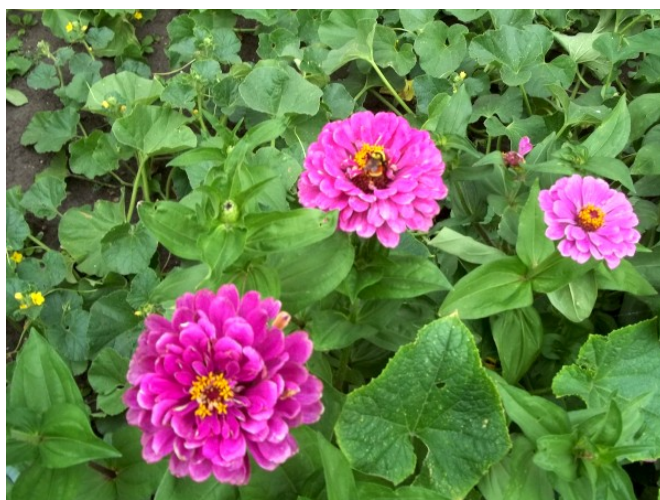


End of Summer Letter – August/September 2021



See the bee on the middle Zinnia?

Dear Friends

I realize it is not quite the end of this summer yet, but it always takes me a while to put together a letter like this with photos, so I know I'll be working on this for several Sundays before it is ready to send to you. Sunday evenings are my letter-writing times, but sometimes other things crowd in and it doesn't come to pass.

My Day-Trip to Moose Jaw

Well, Sunday, July 11th, went fairly well, I took a drive to Moose Jaw to help a friend celebrate her birthday. It has been decades since I last made a highway trip that lasted about 3 hours one way, so that was something to adjust to.

That Sunday morning, as soon as I'd had my bath and got dressed I went to the kitchen and started to pack for the day - which took about two hours!

One thing I had not thought through ahead of time was that the picnic hamper would be very heavy. I managed to carry it out the back door, through the garden, past the car in the tent/garage, and then into the trunk. Before I got there I started to pray that I would NOT get another fracture in my back.

That did not happen, and I praised God for it most of the morning. However, I began to notice that my left elbow was feeling weak and achy. That got worse later on, when I lugged the hamper from the car to a picnic spot in the park.

Anyway, aside from all that, I arrived at the care home just before 12 noon, and my friend was waiting. I was a bit surprised when I saw my friend, whom I had not seen in person for many years either. However, I did recognize her face.

Funny thing is, she wasn't sure who I was and asked my name. :) Turns out she had not seen me with white hair before, and thought I looked much too short to be - me. (Can't blame her; I've lost 7.5 inches).

She showed me her room first and several things, then we decided to go check for a suitable park. I'd studied the map of the city, and knew where there were several, but I wasn't sure which might have a picnic table. Not the one on the other side of the block. A kiddies' playground. Not the one a bit north of her Care home. So we headed downtown to find Central Park. I ended up circling around it with no place to park, or get through the fences and hedges, until we were on the 3rd side. There was a gap in the hedge, and I thought I saw a park bench.

We settled for a shady spot under some trees near that gap. (And I'd forgotten the foam mats I'd brought up from my basement - in case we ended up on the grass). But we managed with a cushion and some fabric shopping bags to sit on.

I opened up the hamper and brought out onto my circular tablecloth, shake n' bake chicken, potato salad, coleslaw and cucumber slices, and a tall jar of iced tea. Later I brought out the square pan with a Saskatoon berry cheesecake.

When I was packing things up again, I let her open and go through the gift bag with her birthday gifts. Was she ever excited once she realized that in that one small box was a brand new flip phone! It was very similar to one she had when she moved to this care home from Regina. But she had showed it to me in her room, and I saw it was terribly corroded; I suggested she toss that into the garbage!

My friend was keen to go shopping for clothes at Walmart. (I had to stop at a fast food place to ask directions). Then we spent most of the afternoon there. At one point she fell as her walker slipped away on her, and two women rushed to lift her up. (I was glad for that as I didn't think my left arm was up to it; I was nursing my elbow more and more!)

At that point my friend decided that she was finished with shopping but she wanted to get a cold drink in the McDonalds that was in the store. We went through checkout for the few items we'd picked up, and then into McDonalds.

She was very tired when I returned her to her room. I realized that I had more stamina than she did, but I was quite tired too, and worried about staying awake on the way home. So I said my good byes, and headed out just before 5 pm.

Instead of lugging the hamper back into the house loaded, I divided the stuff into smaller shopping bags, and carried most of them in that way. I brought out my brown garden cart and rolled the hamper inside that way.

I did snack a bit on the leftovers, watched the morning Church service online (replay), and did a bit of typing on the e-book I'll cover later. But then I went to bed early.

I do have a new rule for my friend, and others who call too early in the morning, when I'm still waking, or in the bathroom, or bathtub; I will refuse to answer any phone calls until I'm dressed and ready for the day. (They can leave a message if they wish).

Photo Garden Tour

I've often told friends that the best time to see my garden is late in July or early August. After that the plants began to brown off and it is time to pull up the dead plants and prepare for winter. To that end I was starting to invite friends over, as they don't seem to just drop by.

I took these photos a week or two before the end of July.

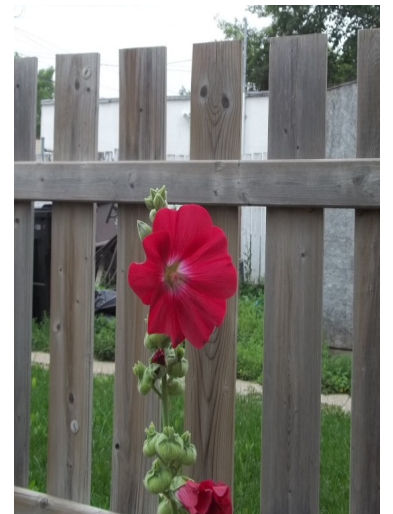
My rosy pink hollyhocks are blooming brightly near the west fence.

Here's a closeup (below) of one if these lovely flowers!



One of the tomato plants I started indoors in spring - a little too close to the path though. I took this one of this tomato plant after I trimmed out a number of branches - this will produce more tomatoes. Also, keep me from hurting it when I hurry by!

In fact, the second week of August I started eating one small yellow tomato almost every day from this plant. I believe they are called Lemon Boy, and are the shape of a small pear.

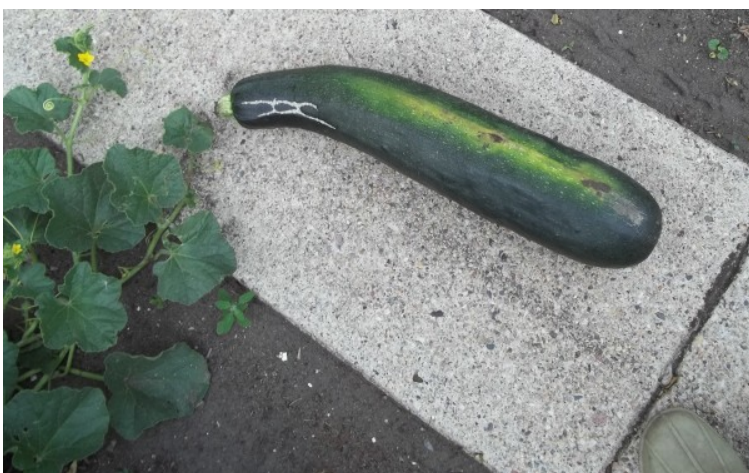


Look now at this next picture. See those big jumbo pumpkins growing there? I sowed white pumpkins. How come that one is turning orange? (There's another under the leaf to the right, and at least 3-4 are bigger than my head!)



Not many zucchini plants came up, but this one has a number of small zucchini started.

Now have a gander at this humungeous zucchini. I thought I might have to hire someone to help me grate it for the freezer and winter baking uses. (Didn't think my left arm up to it).



Turned out it was 6 lbs. My friend Irene came over to cut it for me, and grate it in her food processor. All done in about ½ an hour! (7 tubs of zucchini in freezer for baking!)

This year my watermelon plants had flowers! There was hope of real melons! Now see them about 6 weeks later! I've counted 12 watermelon there!

I guess they LOVE the HOT SUMMER we've had!

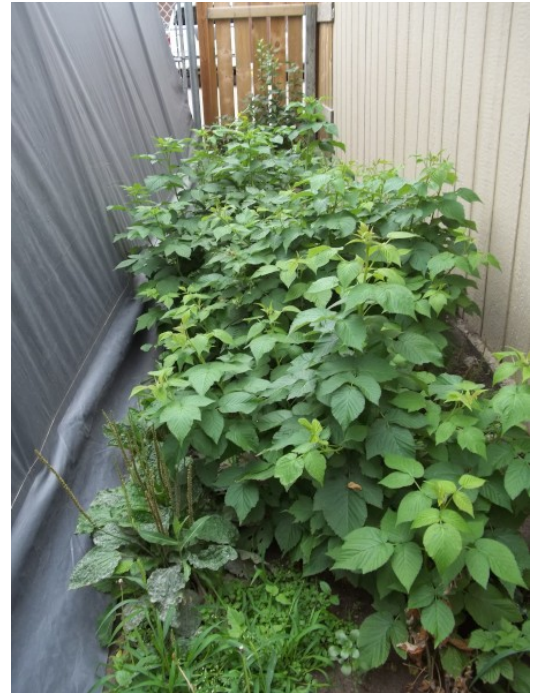


My canteloupe and cucumber plants have been more reluctant, but I have picked 3 good cucumbers and there are more small ones now.

My first radishes bolted and gave me seed-pods, but the second batch just came up 2 inches and froze at that size in the heat. Now with the rains last week they are starting to grow.

My raspberries have multiplied and become a hedge between my tent garage and the neighbour's garage, though I hardly ever water there.

I've only found 7 berries to eat yet. Since this is mostly 1st year growth, I believe the big crop will come next year.



This tomato plant I started indoors in March. It is beginning to die off, but is giving me a snack of one or two Lemon Boy tomatoes each day. (Shaped like tiny pears).

Can you find the small green grape tomatoes on this tall plant to the right? It is in my pink planter tub. Can hardly wait until I can pop those into my mouth!

There are more in the fridge planter, but not sure they will bear before the growing

season is over.



There are 2 rows of tomatoes in front of this row of sunflowers, and yeah! There is the first sunflower! Maybe there will be lots more yet before the garden shuts down for winter.



A Birthday Party on Short-Notice

I was plotting how I could invite some friends over to see my garden, and how, as they were leaving I would thank them for coming to my birthday party. I hesitated to invite anyone though until I was sure I had enough time to clean up the patio area as it would be most convenient to have us sitting around the back steps. I got that done on Friday evening.

So Saturday morning, when I was about ready for breakfast I quickly emailed three friends at the same time, and phoned another one, asking him to invite another mutual friend, who doesn't have a phone, but with whom he has coffee most mornings at about 11 am.

I had already told Rita, my neighbour-friend about my plan when I went over to have a piece of her birthday angel-food cake to celebrate her birthday the week before.

Before I got to breakfast she had phoned to complain about the unfinished job of reshingling her roof, and though she had got a government grant for that job, she was not going to pay the boss until the job was done right. When she mentioned that the old shingles were in a dumpster parked in front of her house, I asked, "Oh, are they up for grabs?"

You see, about 13-14 years ago when I moved here, I'd passed a house on my way home from WTM where they were tearing off old shingles to do that roof again. I stopped. It occurred to me that those old shingles would probably cover my path beside the house which is only 40" wide, and they would keep the weeds from coming up. So I'd called up to the men on the roof, "Are these garbage?"

One of the men called down, "Yep. Heading for the dump." I explained that I'd like to put them on a path to keep down the weeds. "Help yourself," he called down.

So I went home, got a cart, and loaded up the best-looking pieces and fixed up my path.

However, over the years, those pieces have broken up and slipped and slid around and the path was mostly dirt now. I'd even gone looking to buy some the Saturday before, trying the Re-Store, and Home Depot. I found nothing suitable or affordable.

Well, Rita said I could have these but the man was coming to take away the dumpster at 3 pm, so I should hurry. I called Gary (my handyman cousin) and he joined me there, jumped in and threw down the best, newest looking shingles. I found I could pick up 3 at a time, so I carried them to the trunk of my car. When we got to my place, Gary carried them to the path just inside the gate at the side of the house, and he started laying them out and arranging them neatly.

Soon that path looked like a nice carpeted path, or as if he'd cemented down two-tone grey paving stones! I found myself praising God for this nice birthday present!

I quickly heated a pizza from the freezer so Gary and I could have lunch. Then I went back to my main agenda for the day, making the big Saskatoon Berry Cheesecake, and a big bowl of potato salad, and so forth. The meat decision was easier when I concluded that I could pick up a bucket of KFC just a block away through the alley.

But I felt like I needed some fruit and maybe ice cream too, so I dashed from there to Giant Tiger which was just another block further on 22nd Street.

When I got back, Wayne had already arrived, and let himself through the gate. He was willing to help. So we spread some plastic tablecloths on an old weather-worn table. Then I started handing him trays of food from the back door for him to set out on the table.

Rita waited all day for that man (the boss) to show up so she could complain that the job had not been properly finished. She showed up for a few minutes at 8 pm. but was still waiting for him to show up. (He came on Tuesday).

In the end, the other guests I had invited all showed up about 6 pm. Eugene, Gary, and Lynn brought Shirley and Gaynor who needed rides. Fortunately, I had just enough lawn chairs, in-door chairs and a stool for each of us.

Some even brought last minute gifts and cards. (I guess word got out that this was a birthday party). 😊

[Shirley took the photo at right].

In fact, another friend from church, Verna, brought a big red shopping bag full of gifts about mid-afternoon! (I don't recall ever telling her when my birthday is, so I'm not sure how she heard about it).

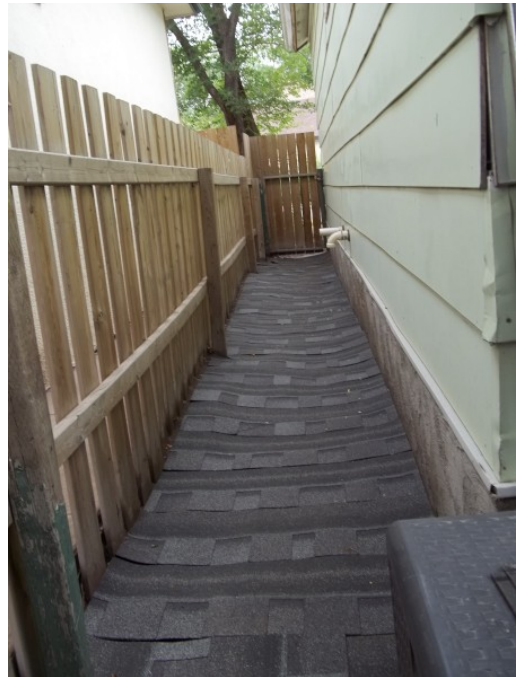
My long-time friend and prayer-sister and I usually try to celebrate even briefly together the last week of July. We did that on Thursday, and I got a large bag full of a number of gifts!

Don't worry about birthday cakes. I'd rather have a cheese cake, and I've had 3 within a month! I made one for the friend's birthday picnic in Moose Jaw, but once she saw her gifts she didn't care about dessert any more, so I took it home and ate about 2 pieces at a time, and about 2-3 times a day until it was done. I made another large Saskatoon berry cheese cake for my birthday on the 31st. Again I was left with some to finish off over the next few days. A week later I was planning to invite some older ladies, from church, but living in care homes now, so I made another cheesecake with strawberries and Saskatoons. They didn't come. So I had desserts for a week again! (I think I'll stop making those for a while now).

Oh yes, shifting to health news. I had a Bone Density test done a few weeks ago. (I've had some in the past, but about 6 years apart). My new doctor - whom I haven't met in person yet, just over the phone - called a week later to give me the report. She said -2.6 is considered a clear indication of osteoporosis. (I knew that). But now apparently I have some bones with -3.6 and some with -3.9 readings. She wanted to prescribe an injection (I forget now if it was monthly or bimonthly, but it costs \$400 each time!) Yep! But she felt that the gov't would cover that cost for me. But an application had to be made first. She gave me the name: Prolia. So I researched it online. Whoa! That has all kinds of side effects. The first being that your teeth fall out, and if you should STOP taking these injections your bones will get even worse! I've decided to continue with the supplements I'm taking and the exercise plan of working in my garden about 30-60 min. most days. I'll save the gov't that money!

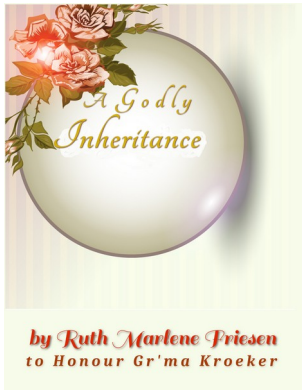
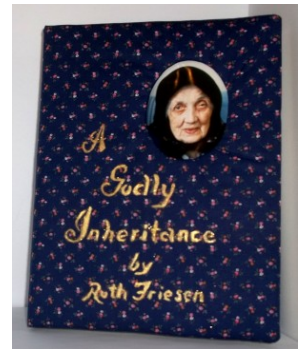
I'm not in any pain as a rule, unless I'm on my feet too long at a stretch, but I know enough to give in and go curl up in my recliner for a nap, and when I wake up I'm good as new!

I do have an achy left elbow/arm, but I think that's due to a pinched nerve. I've been trying reflexology on myself, which helps some, but I can't always count on my favourite arm for everything I want to carry with it. Writing by hand is tricky now too. (I chalk this up to all the snow I had to shovel and THROW in November).



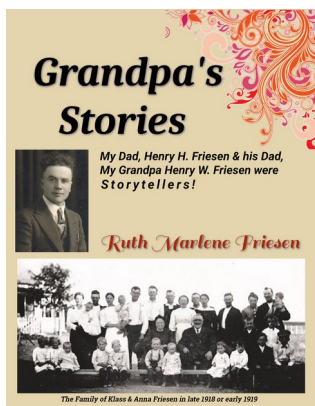
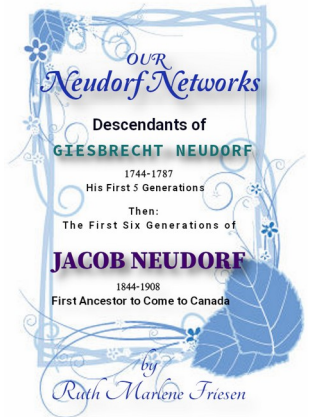
I've been working diligently on my genealogy e-books since mid-February, and I'm nearly ready to set them up for sale. In fact, by the time this letter goes out I will probably have reached that goal, and have written up good sales pages, and put up the PayPal **BUY** buttons so that people can buy and download the e-books. Hey, would you like a peek at them, and a brief description of each?

Do you recall the heavy hand-made-bound book I published from a gestetner behind our furnace in Hague? Well, I've typed it up now to make an e-book of it. (Back then I hadn't even heard of computers yet, or the internet.) The one I published in 1988 looked like this on the right: (200 copies - very much hand-made!)



The new 2021 edition looks like this on the left! (I was so blessed while I transcribed it for the e-book edition. I'd forgotten so many of those scenes when I cared for Gr'ma. I'm so grateful for her godly example!

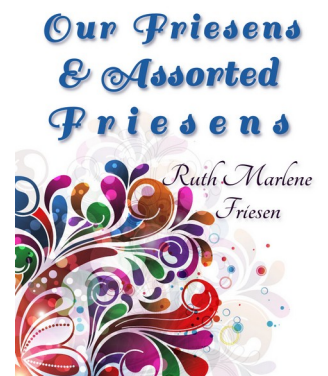
My old Neudorf Networks book is now updated & redesigned to look like this on the right. It doesn't include every Neudorf in the world, but I have it from a good source that all those with Neudorf blood are descendants of that Giesbrecht Neudorf, born in 1744. Gr'ma's grandfather, Jacob Neudorf had 18 children, and so she has 81 first cousins on that side. :)



I'd also researched and done up a book on Dad's side of the family tree, but the last edition was in 2005. So it needed a thorough updating too, and a redesigned modern cover. It has greatly increased in number of pages.

But the biggest shock comes with this 4th ebook. In an effort to discover whether Dad's Friesen line and Mom's Friesen line tied together way-way back, I had collected 30 other (assorted) Friesen family trees. So in 2005 I'd put together a book that showed all of them so that others who are researching their Friesen roots can check to see if they are in any of these. It may turn out that they have already done a lot of reseach, and they may in turn help me out with the clues that will join my two Friesen lines together back in the

1700s.



However, when I researched those Assorted Friesen lines again this spring in the GRANDMA database (which has over 1 million Mennonites in it!) I found that earlier generations had been discovered for some of them, and lo and behold, that tied some of them together into just one tree! I don't have the connecting link yet for **Our Friesens**, but now instead of 30 of these Assorted Friesen lines, they have been reduced to just 20. However, the page count because of all the information I found, and the photos I inserted, has jumped from about 200 to 622 pages!

My most current project is to tidy up my basement, downsize (remove stuff!) and hang up background curtains to make video studios so that I can show people how to do things. Like first item: how to print out an e-book and bind them the way I have, with cerlox combs, or, to put in a binder, or to take to a print shop and have them do it for you there.

I'm still on a learning curve about making videos. I'm not satisfied that I have something ready for the website, but I may in the next week or so. If you can go on the internet and find my genealogy site, <https://agodlyinheritance.com> you should soon be able to tell if the e-books are for sale yet, and if the how to print & bind them videos are there as well.

A Surprise Gift from Sask Energy (Our Provincial Gov't)

About two years ago, a man from Sask Energy, which supplies the natural gas line which fuels my furnace and water heater, came around with an entourage of summer students/interns, and he checked my gas meter out back, and asked what I might want changed, as they were planning to come through this sub-division and improve all their lines.

Well, I perked up. I explained that I'd meant to have a wooden garage stucture built, but I'd been told by Sask Energy that I was NOT allowed to build one over their gas lines, and mine comes right down the center of the garden, under my sidewalk. What with my property being only so wide it meant that no matter which side I would have a garage built, it would end up over that gas line. So nix that idea and go for another, better quality tent/garage. Which I did in the fall of 2019.

Well, the man who showed up told me that since they would be doing a lot of thorough work in this neighbourhood, they would be willing to move my gas line under my garden - which way would I like it to go?

OH-h!! Really?!

So we discussed it and agreed that if they moved it over to the east side of the path I could get a real garage after all. That Sask Energy man and his entourage drew diagrams, and when I told them of my

dream of having the back porch removed and an office/sunroom built there instead, he suggested they would just move the meter to the corner of the house, so it could still be checked from the outside.

But then COVID-19 hit, and all kinds of restrictions, so I assumed all those plans were shredded.

Let's return to the present. A week mid-August, another Sask Energy man came to my door to apologize for the delay, but yes, they were still planning to do this for me. At their expense! Starting the next week!

Sure enough. Next Tuesday morning I heard heavy machinery outside. It was coming from the back alley. I dashed out to my gate facing the alley. Ah-h! Sure enough, a big white truck, and two machines that were digging holes into the alley surface! Mostly behind each property.

The man who came the week before had marked out a lot of lines with his gismo that squirted yellow and white lines, in the alley and in our backyards. (Yellow shows where the current lines were, and the white ones where the new lines were to go).

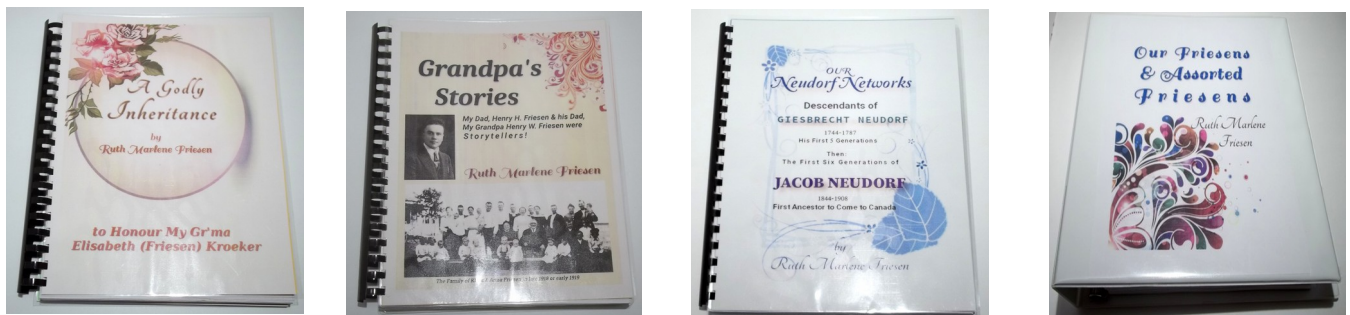
Wednesday and Thursday a crew came to dig up a few feet of the patio cement - a trench about 3 feet deep, and then they fed a yellow hose down there and lo, it snaked under the garden, not disturbing a thing, and connected to the new line in the alley. The meter was moved and a shiny grey pipe installed. One man came into my basement to make sure the pilot light on my water heater was back on. Voila!

Oh, and they told me they had run out of supplies, so I was the last one in this neighbourhood to get this service!

"Praise the LORD!" I exclaimed aloud!

Now Gary tells me that building materials are terribly expensive this summer, so I'll wait until next year and see which project I should plan for first, second, and third. I'll line them up according to how much money I can save by then. :)

I do feel very blessed of the LORD. I thank Him daily for bringing me to this "Spacious Time & Place" He has brought me to, and that I have so many good friends, and these meaningful projects to work on, which I trust will bring in good streams of income for my generous "giving fund" which I've promised to the LORD for so many years already.



(my display copies are bound now!)

Blessings & Thanks,

Ruth Friesen