

It is interesting, and is perhaps telling us something about present times, that the same conversation we have been engaged in here on Coe Creek seems to be taking place all across the country. My “Long-Distance-Friend” brought it up in her latest letter, too. It boils down to this. Why do the American Oligarchs who were at the January 20 inauguration of their wannabe oligarch for whom they purchased the White House not want to use their wealth to help people who do not have the resources for a decent life? Is there some fundamental difference between the outlook or original makeup of the ordinary folks who try to contribute to a better society and to these obscenely rich people who do not see wealth as a vehicle for a more just society for all of us? I would be very interested in the views of any readers of these little essays. Go to the Contact Us page on www.cocreek.com and send us your thoughts.

Today, we are beginning Week Four of our annual “culinary trip.” This year, we are cooking and sampling dishes from four countries, spending a week at each. During the first week of January we prepared foods popular in Mexico. In week two, we used Swedish recipes Runo’s mother had served. Yesterday, we finished a week in France. We started that week with onion soup and ended with crepes. And today, we are going to begin a week of gracing our table with Italian dishes. To that end, our first venture is gelling and chilling in the refrigerator now. We made Panna Cotta this morning. This rich, gelatin-thickened vanilla pudding looks pretty, and we hope it tastes good as well. I will cook a blueberry or raspberry sauce to serve with it.

Jick and Tony, the kittens we brought into the house in July are getting so big that we don’t know if we should still call them kittens, or if they are genuine Cats now. I am not sure what the protocol is on that issue. They obviously consider themselves fully grown, completely independent, and the most valuable members of the household. However, since this cold spell came upon us, they have not been very enthused about the weather. They still go outside in the morning, but they do not stay long, and a short excursion into the snowy stretch between the cabin and the hay barn seems to be adequate. When we come from morning chores, they are waiting to come back into the house. Once in, with a sense of entitlement equalling that of the oligarchs, they park themselves wherever they wish, and spend the next hours in satisfied solitude. And, once again exhibiting their “rich cat syndrome,” they want their food dish always full and their litter box perfectly clean. I am the inferior being they allow into their territory who is responsible for food, housekeeping, and anything else they desire.

A Quote to Remember: Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis—“We must make our choice. We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both.” Seemingly, we have made the wrong choice.