



## Countdown to sunshine

Well, in just a few days from now we'll be wending our way down to "One happy Island." This will probably be our last trip to Aruba, as most of our friends have left the island and while it holds fond memories, it has changed so much over the years. Besides, there are other places to visit!

Reflecting back, Tom moved down there in the early 90s and it's been almost 8 years since we left! Unbelievable.

In preparation for our trip, Tom and Emilio have been going swimming every Monday night. Emilio is now fully nautical and can swim and dive in the deep end. It's the highlight of his week, but coming out of the recreation centre where the pool is in -12C temperatures is not fun! Aruba will be a real treat for him now and Tom plans to take Emilio snorkeling so he can put his new-found skills to good use. Details in the next episode!



Even though the Mill Pond has finally frozen over and the city is grooming the ice surface, Our thoughts are clearly on warmer climates and our visit with Petra in Aruba.

## If a tree falls, do you know where it lands?

Winter finally showed up in the middle of February and the temperatures have been at seasonal levels. The cold came too late for the Winter Carnival that takes place at Mill Pond on the first weekend in February and the pond was closed because it was not frozen! All the usual attractions were there; rides, bad food, live music - but without the frozen pond for skating, games and hay rides, things were not the same.

Not to go on too much more about the weather, but since it has been so erratic of late, it came as no surprise that there was a huge storm a few weeks ago that came complete with 100km/h winds, thunder, lightning and snow! We thought we had bared the brunt of it quite well until a few days later when we found what looked like a tree that had fallen in our front yard (funny how you can go a few days without noticing it). As it turns out, it was not a tree from

our front yard, but rather a part of a tree in the back!

We have a 20m spruce tree in the back yard and the top of the tree had snapped clean off and landed in our neighbour's yard! Now mind you, the part where it snapped was a good 20cm in diameter and it came away clean! Must have been some wind!

As some of you may know we have a great neighbour on one side of our house and a crotchety couple on the other – and as always happens in the movies – the tree-top blew into the yard of the not-so-nice neighbour. It seems they dragged the tree-top into our front yard without even a word or a phone call and just left it there. Emilio was the one that finally figured it out by noticing that the top of the spruce tree was "missing" and so that's when we discovered where the tree was from. It was blowing so hard, that it broke away clean and

touched nothing on the way down. It just blew right into the middle of our neighbour's property. The sad part of all of this though is that it probably means the tree will have to come down. That's something none of us is looking forward to. It must be 40 or 50 years old at least.



The red dot shows where the tree used to come to and the line shows where it broke