**RECOLLECTIONS of SUPER STORM SANDY**

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The weather report for “Hurricane Sandy” started before the weekend of October 26, 2012. We picked up our son at the Salisbury airport on Friday night for a long awaited visit for the weekend. On Saturday morning we started hearing that the storm would be hitting the Delaware coast. Our son thought he better get out of town before the storm hit so he wouldn’t be stuck in Delaware. The Town of South Bethany informed us that we should evacuate by Sunday evening. Our son made a reservation leaving from Reagan National in DC for Sunday morning we decided to evacuate to our daughter’s, in Vienna, VA, and take our son to the airport on the way. Fortunately on our way out of DE, we drove our second car and parked it at the Lowe’s in Millsboro.

While we were in VA we received emails and phone calls from the Town mayor, Kathy Jankowski, and friends regarding the severity of the storm and the flooding on the bayside. Our next door neighbor on the west side stayed in his home and gave us daily reports. He told us water was coming over the bulkhead into our yards. He said the water and our boat had risen to the top of our bulkhead posts and the bow of our boat was hooked on top of the post and the stern and motor were submerged in the water. And he said the water had come up to the porch and he feared the water may have come into the house because he saw debris at the bottom of the sliding glass door.

We had to be evacuated for three days. On Wednesday, Oct. 31, we were allowed to come back. On the way home from VA we stopped at Walmart to buy high boots and cleaning supplies. We thought the waters would still be high but they were not. The canal was at a normal level. When we arrived to the neighborhood we saw debris everywhere. The town had cleared the streets enough to drive down but the yards were a mess. We got to our house and found wood and other stuff all over but the biggest surprise was a very large wooden deck which floated into our backyard from the house across the canal. Our propane tank was on its side. Our kayak was missing from under our neighbor’s house but it was found later on Henlopen. The boat was back in its normal position but we didn’t know if the motor would work. We saw shingles from our roof all over and a large area on the front of the house where the shingles had blown off. Several feet of water had gone into Al’s shop and many of his tools were under water.

I was almost afraid to go into the house. I peeked in the door and noticed there wasn’t any water on the floor and I thought we were going to be ok. But as soon as we started walking around we saw that water had come into all parts of the first floor of the house and the rugs were all wet. The first floor is our main living space. So the first thing we did was to drag all the area rugs out to the driveway and mop up the puddles. The water had come in during the high tide and drained out when the tide went down. Anything we had on the floors like books, equipment for the computer, modem for the TV were all ruined. The ceiling of our living room was wet from the water coming in through the hole in the roof. The hardwood floors were damp and had started to turn up on the sides.

Immediately, we had to contact the propane company to right our tank and the electrician because some of our electric didn’t work. Our electric under the house had to be repaired and our electrician said later that he had feared that we could have had an electrical fire if he hadn’t fixed some of the more serious problems early on. He worked in our house for two more months to rewire our wiring and bring it up from the underneath the house. One of the relay boxes under the house did catch on fire but the water put it out right away. That was scary. A house in SB did burn down because of an electrical fire so this was a big concern to home owners.

Our yard man came and cut up and removed the large wooden deck and cleaned up the yard soon after the storm. And we cleaned and dried all the area rugs.

The insulation in the crawl space under the house was all wet and had dropped to the ground. It took about 6 weeks before we got someone to clean out all the insulation. In the meantime our electrician had to remove some of it so he could get to the wiring.

We did not lose any furniture like many of our neighbors. In the days and weeks after we saw large pieces of furniture pulled out of homes ready for the trash pickup. The town made arrangements with trash companies to pick up on a regular basis and also had dumpsters set up near town hall.

We did not have flood insurance. Our family has owned our house since 1957 and we never had a drop of water in the house so we never bought flood insurance. But we did have wind damage so our home owner’s policy helped with the damage from the roof. The State Farm agent came to assess the damage and was very helpful in providing compensation for the roof, ceiling and floors. We had the roof temporarily repaired and the new roof was installed several months later. And after 3+ months the ceiling was repaired. We did not have the hardwood floors sanded and recoated because the dehumidifier we bought after the storm did a good job of getting the water out of the wood but we will have to do that someday to replace the poly finish in between the wood.

We had to replace the bathroom vanity as water ruined the veneer. None of the walls were damaged so we were lucky. We did not have any mold in the house or under the house.

In January, we had new insulation blown in under the house. It is waterproof so we won’t have problems if water gets under the house again.

We had some rust damage from metal furniture on the DE room floors so we replaced them with new vinyl floors.

We also replaced the propane hot water heater with an electric one. We had propane leaks under the house before the storm and since the propane pipes were all submerged we wanted to have them all removed and start anew with electric.

Al had high water in his shop. We had to replace power tools and Al had to clean rust off tools and throw some away.

It has taken five months to have our repairs done. Our contractor and other workers have been in demand and we had to wait for them to fit us in.

The cause of the record flooding in South Bethany was due to the combination of the southwest winds, full moon and high tides. It is being called the 100 year flood. We hope we don’t have another one in our lifetime.

COST SUMMARY OF REPAIRS

Cut up and remove neighbor’s deck and clean up yard$ 225

Temporary repair of roof 250

Right propane tank 199

Dehumidifier 220

Hot water heater 954

New roof 8,400

Ceiling repair 2,588

Electric repairs 6,150

New insulation 5,490

Building permits 50

Removal of old insulation 1,250

Computer surge protector 70

Power washer 200

New vinyl floors 4,100

Bathroom vanity 454

Lamp 60

Deductible for insurance 1,000

TOTAL $31,660

REPAIRS FOR BOAT 5,000

 Insurance covered most of the expenses