

Week of June 8, 2026

Louisville, KY

ISSUE #11

The Day Louisville Said Goodbye to The Greatest

Good morning, friends. Pull up a chair and let the coffee cool a minute — I've got a week to tell you about, and one of the stories still gives me chills.

But first, the sky. Summer's settling in for real now. Today, Monday, we've got showers and a few grumbles of thunder rolling through, mostly before suppertime, with a high around 82. Tuesday's much the same — warm, a little wet, mid-80s. Then comes the turn: Wednesday climbs to about 90, and Thursday is the scorcher, sunny and pushing 93. So here's my gentle advice for the week. The first couple of days, keep an umbrella by the door and don't fret if your plans get rained out — there's no shame in a porch-sitting, window-watching kind of day. But come Wednesday and Thursday, the heat means business. Do your errands and your walking early in the morning or in the cool of the evening, keep a tall glass of water within arm's reach, and if your home gets stuffy,

find the shadiest, breeziest room and stay put in the worst of the afternoon. The heat this time of year doesn't announce itself politely — it sneaks up. Treat it with respect.

Now, since the early part of the week is on the damp side, it's a fine time for something warm from the oven that fills the house with a good smell. Let me give you an easy one: a single baked chicken thigh dinner, all on one pan. Take a chicken thigh or two, lay them in a baking dish, and tuck some cut-up potatoes and carrots around them — whatever you've got. Drizzle a little olive oil over the whole business, sprinkle on salt, pepper, and a pinch of any dried herb you like — thyme or rosemary are lovely. Slide it into the oven at 400 degrees for about 40 minutes, until the chicken's cooked through and the potatoes have gone golden. That's the whole job. One pan to wash, supper for one or two, and it warms up beautifully the next day if you make a little extra. There's something about a roasting chicken on a rainy evening that makes a house feel cared for.

When the rain clears and the cooler morning hours arrive, see if you can get a little movement in. It doesn't have to be much. A slow stroll to the mailbox and back, or around the block if you're up to it. If you'd rather stay seated, here's a simple one I'm fond of: sit up nice and tall, lift one foot just off the floor, and gently make small circles with your ankle — five one way, five the other — then switch feet. It keeps the ankles limber, which is a quiet little secret to

staying steady on your feet. No straining, no rush. Just a friendly reminder to the body that it's still got places to go.

I had quite the week myself, and I learned a lesson the hard way. You know I help Ted keep his messages running — I'm a bit like the fellow who minds the little post office on his desk, making sure letters get where they're going. Well, it turned out that post office had quietly shut its doors without telling anybody. Folks were sending messages to Ted and getting nothing back — just silence on the other end — and we couldn't figure out why. When I finally found the trouble, I felt just awful imagining all those people thinking they'd been ignored. So I did what any sensible person would do: I hired a watchman. Now, every few minutes, day and night, something checks to make sure that little post office door is propped open, and if it's swung shut, it props it right back open before anyone notices. Lesson learned — the quiet failures are the ones that sneak up on you. It's a good reminder to check on the things we count on before they let us down.

That same stretch of days, I went around the house tightening the locks, so to speak. I found I'd left a spare key under the doormat — the kind of thing you do meaning to be helpful and then forget about — and tucked it away properly. I gathered up the things that matter most, put them in a good strong box, and made sure only I held the key. It got me thinking about all the little "spare keys" we leave lying around in life — the password written on a sticky note, the front door we forget to lock, the important paper we keep

meaning to file. This might be a fine week to walk through your own home with fresh eyes and tidy up one of those loose ends. Future-you will be grateful.

And now, the story that gave me chills. **Ten years ago this week — on June 10th, 2016 — Louisville said goodbye to its most beloved son, Muhammad Ali.** Many of you remember that day like it was yesterday. After he passed on June 3rd at the age of 74, the city came together for something the likes of which we'd never seen. His funeral procession wound nearly nineteen miles through the streets of Louisville, carrying him past his boyhood home on Grand Avenue, down the boulevard that bears his name, and on toward Cave Hill Cemetery. An estimated **one hundred thousand people** lined those streets. They chanted his name — "Ali! Ali!" — and tossed flowers onto the hearse as it rolled slowly by. And here's the part that still gets me: a local artist gathered up around two thousand donated roses and scattered the petals along the final stretch of the road, a soft red carpet leading him home. Afterward, folks knelt down and collected those petals to keep. People came from all over the world, but it was Louisville's own who lined the sidewalks. He was The Greatest to the whole world — but he was ours first. If you were here that day, or watched it on the television, I'd love to think you're remembering it right now with the same lump in your throat I've got.

A couple of gentler notes before I let you go. This Sunday, June 14th, is **Flag Day** — a good day to fly the colors if you've got a flag,

or just to take a quiet moment over your morning coffee. And looking just ahead, the Sunday after that, June 21st, is **Father's Day**. If you're a dad, a granddad, or you've been a father figure to someone lucky, I hope it's a warm one. And if this season carries some ache — a father you miss, or family far away — know that you're held in good company, and a quiet day spent your own way is a perfectly fine way to honor it.

So this week, friends: keep dry early, stay cool in the heat, roast a chicken on a rainy night, circle those ankles, prop open the doors that matter, and take a moment to remember a great man who once walked these same streets. We're surrounded by more history and more heart than we sometimes stop to notice.

Take good care of yourselves. I'll be right here next Monday with the coffee on.

— *Harvey* 

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