

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE SOLSTICE AND A HAPPY WINTER

Here's how I spent the longest night of the year...As darkness moved in and our timers turned Christmas lights on all over the house we headed into town.

We stopped at Pegasus, our local go-to art gallery. We cheered on a young artist showing his first work. His excitement brightened the night a bit.

Then we went on in dark rain to attend the annual Christmas music of the Repertory Singers, with orchestra. The place was full, even the balcony. We go early for good seats. It's in Latin and German. I don't hear that well anyway, and besides, that kind of music has a way of reaching beyond words. Inner light on a dark night. You know what I mean.

Paul (yes, the Moment music man and one of the Repertory singers) and Mary joined us for a late night supper that meant near midnight before we arrived at our dark house. The timers had turned out our Christmas lights. I hummed a little of the Hanukkah song, *"Don't Let the Lights Go Out!"*

A long-time pre-Christmas ritual Jean and I observe is to open a nightly window in our Advent calendar. It helps us realize how rapidly Christmas approaches. We enjoy the shared chocolate reward for opening the window. Why isn't there a window set aside for winter Solstice?

We always have a pre-sleep candle and sip and talk time before we step out on the deck to look for the moon. It was peeking through clouds, unusually small but very bright. It was the Solstice moon.

Winter has officially begun.

I seriously suspect that far more humans have celebrated Solstice than Christmas. Connection with whatever "God" is has come more often by way of nature than by holy writings and creeds.

Next thing I know it is morning. I over-slept my usual pre-dawn wake-up time. What better way to use the longest night?

Now to make use of the shortest day. Even the shortest day is to be treasured.

Christmas Eve at the Old World Deli and Pub

We've been doing Christmas Eve at the Deli since 1983. It is a gift to the community from Ted Cox and the Deli and Moment Ministries. It was the first unrehearsed, impromptu Christmas nativity scene in Corvallis. Participants come from those present in the audience.

The official program starts at 6:30, but music begins about 6:00 (because a lot of people come early). The printed program takes a half hour. We usually sing ourselves out the door at 7:00 pm.

Going Through My List and Checking it Twice

I count almost one-third on my list as friends we have seen personally or had e-mail conversations with in 2013. I cherish the unspoken "moments" we share with many others through these "blue" pages as well.

Is Jesus the Reason for The Season?

Christians looked for a story of origin. They found it in about 325 AD...finally. The date was adopted from ancient Solstice season celebrations of life and renewal of light. It fit Christian ideas. If you want to insist on Merry Christmas, OK. I'm fine with that. But today I would like to say:

"Have a merry little solstice and a happy winter!"

—For the Moment...Art Morgan, December 21, 2013

