

Winter Solstice Letter from ajo at *The Cat Drag'd Inn*

Family, e-friends, pen-friends... all to whom these presents come: Greetings on this Winter Solstice.

Been a busy good year mostly. I still have most of my teeth, passed my annual physical, TinyTruck has new tyres and travelled 3,513 miles but only 1,726 of that was driven, the rest was tow'd. The bus travelled another 1,787 miles. For my on-going effort to redistribute my pension I had a splinter of some sort removed from my right leg—bill for that still pending. Over all I've managed to burn my way through 299 gallons of Diesel (884\$), 309 gallons of 87 octane gasoline (983\$), and 280 gallons of propane (854\$). Up to now this year I've spent around-about 105\$ on postage to snail-mail letters and cards. Two cases of Merlot made up a tiny part of my comestibles expense; solid foods come mostly from volunteering four hours a week at Saint Mary's Food Bank in Buckeye AridZona and helping my Self to the Roadrunner Food Pantry in Pie Town. But still I spent about 4,000\$ on groceries this year. That includes sustenance for Hurricane Hazel-Rah, the dreads cat who lives at *The...Inn*.

Highlights for 2019 included: Escapees Escapade in Tucson; TinyTruck being AAA towed 67 miles back to Tonopah due to an ignition failure which also destroyed an almost new muffler; a visit to the Socorro ER for the splinter removal (supra); watching the Union Pacific Big Boy 4-8-8-4 climb the grade at Train Spotter Hill; descending about 6,000 feet MSL of the long-long hill from Payson down to Phoenix, about 73 miles, without overheating the brakes; being employed as a Maricopa County Poll Worker for a week of assisting voters; getting a bronze plaque together in memory of my friend and mentor Bill Pennington of El Dorado Hot Spring; helping Paul engineer and install another 3kW Grid-Tie PV array; the red fox who helped herself to lunch. Lowlights included several miles on several occasions of picking up the trash along North 339th Avenue, Salome Highway and Courthouse Road; my brother Gordon, next in line as Elder of the Tribe, perished in July; another Ham Radio friend, Tom, KD7ALH, went off the air—SK.

I am surprised to learn that my total fuel outlay is about half as much as the total I spent on groceries.

Actually, picking up the trash along the Way is not all that much of a “Lowlight”. Almost as if my calling these days is a matter of picking up after others. Sort of akin to repairing donations at the Food Bank Thrift Store. Great for the camaraderie of working with Friends of Saddle Mountain as well.

And for whatever this trivia is worth, to the best of my accounting I went through 720 gallons of potable water this year, not including a few showers and a laundry or three here and elsewhere.

Read the rest of these storeys and see more pictures at:
<http://thecatdragdinn.org/ajo19a.html>,
<http://thecatdragdinn.org/ajo19b.html>,
<http://thecatdragdinn.org/ajo19c.html>, and
<http://thecatdragdinn.org/ajo19d.html>,
tho this last letter is still being composed
or may not yet be posted.



Winter Migration of gold finches has arrived

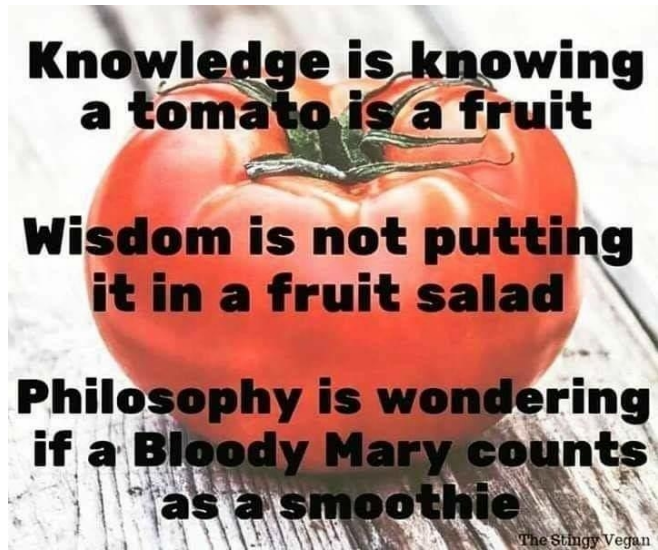
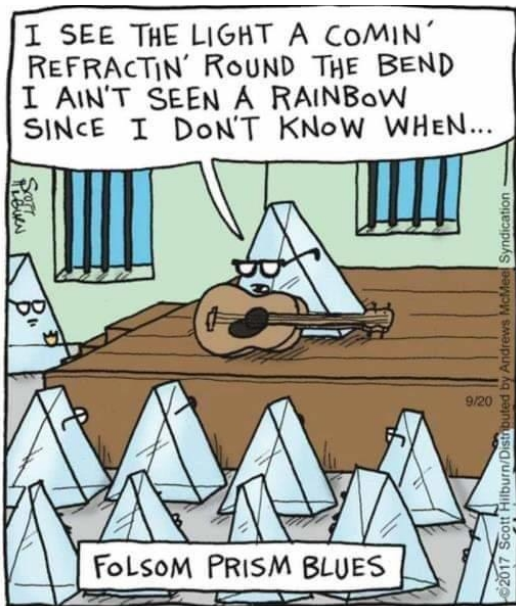
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Tryptophan Side Effects



The Fox Came for Lunch



I hope you all have a really Bounteous Boxing Day and a Terrific Twelfth Night. Remember The Maine and on 23rd April take a dragon to lunch.

Love, ajo

We come from dust.
We will return to dust.
That's why I don't dust.
It might be someone I know.

A.J.Oxton, SKP, TNS, ESL, OO, OAE, ISFA, INFP, FMCA, k1oIq, NU7DE
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