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Thanksgiving by Carl E Beyer

Long ago and in a far far away place on Thanksgiving Day a boy was born. I do not remember it but my mother says she wasn't hungry for Thanksgiving that day, says I ruined her appetite. But since I usually get presents on Thanksgiving week, it is an especially nice holiday for me. Of course, the second part is that this is one holiday that we are supposed to stuff ourselves and that helps to make it special.

Another landmark on this day occurred four years ago. We were able to move out of the 840 sq ft home to a 2800 square ft home. The extra space was nice but with a family of five I most enjoy going from one bathroom to three bathrooms. With the kids getting older I was about to build myself an outhouse at the 800 square ft home. Our first full day at the new house was Thanksgiving so we bought about a dozen of those turkey TV dinners and celebrated the wonderful gift of a new home.

I cannot see us celebrating in the same manner in the foreseeable future though. I much rather go to grandmother's house and see the family and enjoy the annual potluck there. My brother-in-law makes a peppered turkey that is to die for. Then the traditional mash-potatoes, corn, stuffing, pumpkin pie OK I'm back, I made myself hungry and had to grab a bite. ☺

But on a more serious side, this is a day to be thankful. There are so few of us in the United States who know the true meaning of being hungry and to be truly grateful for the abundance of food with which we are blessed. When I was twelve, I worked on a dairy farm about 90 hours a week. I got Sunday afternoons off and then was required to mow our lawn which took about three hours. We do not have a lawn now, go figure. I calculated that I was earning about 25cents/hr working on the farm. But the hardest part was the farm was three miles from my house and the owners didn't feed us. So, I almost starved that summer. I would be too tired to make my meals before or after work and hardly ever made myself lunch. Once a week we would be paid and instead of buying any kind of reasonable food I would bike down to the town and buy all the candy and sodas I could carry. God forgive me but I would steal milk out of the tank to stave off the hunger pains. So, I am thankful for each and every meal.

The other basic need we Americans often forget to be thankful for is shelter. How many of us, in our comfortable lives, can say we have been without shelter? Personally, it was only a week in college, during the summer, between sublets, but living in a truck. That week gave me a new perspective on coming home to a comfortable bed every night. We are truly blessed with our massive homes compared to the rest of the world. I often say that if things become difficult here, I could probably shelter four or five families in the house I am now in. It may not be comfortable but our basic needs would be met and we all would be grateful.

So this Thanksgiving, as you are saying grace with family and friends in a comfortable home and abundant food, be sure and not puff your chest and think how well you have done for yourself but give credit to God that he has allowed you these blessing. Be sure and share either your time or money with the less fortunate.

God Bless you all, now go forth and have a great Thanksgiving.