

## ***2017 Holiday Greetings from Laurel and Brian***

Wow, Brian sure is a tough guy to shop for. He says that all he wants for Christmas is a new bladder, since his old one is shot. So far nothing has popped up on Amazon. Maybe Ebay?

He hasn't lost his sense of humor, though jokes about those catheter ads on late-night TV don't seem quite as funny anymore. And you should be wary of asking Brian "How are things going?" because you might get a surprisingly detailed urinary answer.

On the bright side (such as it is), Brian learned that a great cure for his fear of death was feeling that he wanted to die. Fortunately he was able to get through this with a little help from his friends: a daily dose of an anti-depressant, Oregon-grown marijuana, and a glass of red wine.

So now Brian isn't clinically depressed, aside from brief moments when he can't reach the remote control fast enough to mute the television when Donald Trump comes on.

Given the serious nature of his likely chronic health problem, praying for a miracle might seem like something he'd want to do. However, not with an increasingly ardent atheist being under the same roof.

Laurel has carried on with her Freethinking Atheists of Salem group that meets every Sunday in fellowship of irreligiosity. They aren't quite up to a Mega Anti-Church status, though, numbering only in the dozens.

But Laurel has a rationalist letter to the editor published every month in our local newspaper. Converts to a belief in science and reason, rather than God, likely are growing. We both are open to believing in God, however. We just need proof.

(Hint to God, should She exist: President Trump choosing to resign out of remorse for the way he's treated women would be close enough to divine providence, being so damn unlikely absent your intervention, that we'd entertain thoughts of your existence.)

Shockingly, we've begun to consider moving from our non-easycare ten acres to a house in town. However, the criteria we've given a realtor are so stringent, we might be here until we die. Basically we want what we have now, just on a city lot: trees, nearby nature trails, privacy, quiet.

May the Great Lord Zillow look kindly upon us.

Our dog ZuZu has developed some sort of liver problem. After copious research, Laurel decided that she needed to be on a special diet. So now ZuZu's meals are a heck of a lot more involved than dumping kibble in a bowl, along with some spoonfuls of canned dog food.

She gets home-cooked turkey, broccoli, and Dr. Harvey's Canine Mix, "The Miracle Dog Food Pre-Mix." See, miracles DO exist!

We'll end with a secular prayer that arrived in this month's Freedom From Religion Foundation newsletter: "Dear God, we give thanks this day for giving us brains, which, when applied, we find that you are a myth. Amen."