

2018 Holiday Greetings from Laurel and Brian

We really don't need any presents this year, because last month we got the gift that keeps on giving — the midterm elections. With the Democrats taking back the House, we're looking forward to two years of DGTABT (Dems Giving Trump A Bad Time). Joy!

Here in Oregon we re-elected our bisexual female Governor, and the Democrats expanded their control of both the state House and Senate. Every ballot measure favored by Republicans was defeated, and the only measure progressives backed passed. WE LOVE OREGON!

Plus, us Oregonians still enjoy legal marijuana, assisted suicide when death is near, and the luxury of not being allowed to pump our own gas. Well, except in some rural parts of Oregon where this must be a pleasure, since there's not much else to do there.

And Oregon may vote on a 2020 ballot measure that would legalize psilocybin, magic mushrooms. Cool. Then we'd be able to combine assisted suicide with feeling one with the universe. Death could be, if not fun, at least an amazing (final) experience.

Now that we're pushing 70 — Brian has broken through, and Laurel isn't far behind — the "joys" of growing older are never far from our minds. Note the ironic scare quotes. Brian is still dealing with his chronic bladder problem. Laurel has struggles with double vision and aches/pains. ZuZu the dog, continues to have elevated liver enzymes that could signal a serious problem.

But, hey, as Brian's doctor told him a few days ago at his annual physical, "You're otherwise healthy." Nice sentiment, but that *otherwise* is bothersome. We can envision a day when one or both of us has bad knees, a defective hip, arthritis, depression, and heart disease, but, hey, we'll be *otherwise healthy!*

On the positive side, Laurel is continuing to enjoy meetings of the Freethinking Atheists of Salem group that she formed. Nothing like some weekly godless discussion to enliven her secular soul. Her dog-walking volunteering at our local Humane Society is still pawsitively satisfying. (It's a humane society rule that every written communication has to have an animal pun in it...must obey.)

Brian got a shorter and simpler version of his first book, "God's Whisper, Creation's Thunder," back in print. Yeah, it was weird for him to re-publish a book that his now atheist mind no longer believes in. But some readers will enjoy it, and on the slight chance there really is an afterlife, he can point to the book as some good karma that might get him a better seat at the heavenly table.

Recently Brian was thrilled to smash his Salem Political Snark blog's daily page view record with 5,192 views of a post about how a coffee house operated by the Salem Alliance Church discriminates against gays. Goes to show that if you enrage both Christians who dislike criticism of their fundamentalism, and progressives who dislike gay-bashing, social media attention results.

Best wishes for a wonderful 2019, with or without magic mushrooms.