

It is a mere fortnight until Thanksgiving, one of my favorite days of the year; but it's never too early to give thanks, because daily gratitude brings joy. I am thankful to live in the north coast. It's easier for me to give thanks after recently spending a couple of days in Marin County. Sure, The weather in San Anselmo was good, and the economy is robust, but the traffic was *awful*—even in the middle of the work-week. Side streets felt like clogged arteries about to engage in vehicular thrombosis. Finally, on our way home, when we reached 101 going north, we started to sail along at about 60 mph—for five minutes. Soon we ground to a halt and it was bumper-to-bumper traffic stopping and going for the next hour. Normally, I expect to start cruising at 65 MPH once I reach Windsor. This time, the traffic did not thin out until about Ukiah. But once we went north of Ukiah, the air was clean, sunshine plentiful and the dense green foliage bright as an emerald due to recent rains.

I was thankful to arrive home where the last thing I worry about is how to negotiate traffic jams on a daily basis.

Second, I am thankful ^{for} the great outdoors where we live. Sure, it's remote: but if you like thinner crowds, that makes the North Coast the place to be. You ever hiked in the Trinity Alps? They are a lot less crowded than the Sierras and they look much the same. Then, there are plenty of hikes closer to home: from the Headwaters to Jacoby Creek; from the Kings range to the Hammond Trail; the Prairie Creek trail winds through old growth Redwoods and finally dumps you off at the beach by way of the mystical Fern Canyon. Ocean, beaches, rivers, forests, lagoons and mountains: Everywhere you look there is abundant beauty ~~waiting~~ to behold. All it takes is a pair of light boots or sneakers and a little gumption. My wife and I often go out our back door and hike for hours, seldom seeing a soul.

Third, I am thankful for the fact that we who live on the north coast are members of a tightly knit community. Yesterday's paper showed a man dancing the Tango with his dance instructor--from a wheel chair. I don't know how you dance the Tango seated in a wheelchair, but I am delighted that this Septuagenarian has an instructor with the patience, and himself the personal pluck, to keep on dancing! He hopes that he will one day walk again. Bless you and your dance instructor as you tango your way back to your feet! ~~you~~ makes me thankful to have two legs that work!

Yesterday was veterans day and I am thankful for the veterans, including my father and father in law, who defeated fascism and then rebuilt our nation and world. I am also thankful for my son, who is active duty with the Air Force and risks his life, and leaves his family often.

I am thankful for my church family and the opportunity to worship freely without hindrance or persec~~u~~tion. I am thankful for fall colors and falling leaves, for the smells of squash and pumpkin~~g~~ baking in the oven. I am thankful for friends and family and freedoms—all in abundance I do not deserve.

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment