

Giving Thanks



Good morning, y'all. Another beautiful, but cold mountain day here at [TackyToo](#). As the luck of the draw, and the terms of my parole, would have it, we were the lucky house hosting this year's Thanksgiving dinner. Setting up the Rec room for Thanksgiving is not that different than setting it up for the [Presidential Debates potluck suppers](#). Big difference is that folks are really proud of their Thanksgiving offerings, so you have to be real careful when comparing dishes.

As I looked out at the expanse of the 600 or 700 family members attending this year's bacchanalia, I thought of some of the things I'm thankful for on this day.

First off, is that my brother-in-law Lester was impotent. There is no reason on God's green earth that that lineage should be continued. Between Lester and his wife Saffron, there is not one piece of knowledge since time began that has been kept from their knowing. From quarks, to the best temperature to serve a really cheap wine, the Dr. Lester and Mrs. Payne are experts. The fact that they work a party as roving ambassadors of intelligence adds a certain game like atmosphere to the proceedings. I'd bet if you took the roof off the Rec room and had one of those drones with a camera shooting pictures from overhead, you'd see a scene sort of like the animals around the water hole on the Serengeti. As the predators get closer to the herd, the herd must move collectively to stay out of range. Finally the slow, or the old are caught and forced into a savage interchange that results in brain death. The predators then press on for fresh victims. You've got to be sharp to stay ahead of them. So far I've been successful by asking them for an opinion on this rash I've got.

Second thing I'm thankful for is that my brother-in-law Moore got a vasectomy after his sixth kid. Seems like all of the Payne potency passed by Lester and got dumped all over Moore. Moore's wife Deidra claims that Moore can get her pregnant just by looking at her. I'm pretty sure that's not true, so I was relieved for the community when I heard that Moore had got snipped. I mean, immaculate conceptions are one thing, but paternity by the "gift of sight"

would be a new one for the courts. The reason I'm thankful Moore won't be having any more kids is that the "know it all" gene got passed to Moore's kids. When a four-year-old tells you that you'll "never amount to nothing", it may be true, it's just not as cute in a social situation as some might think it might be.

Third thing I'm thankful for is that my kids are bearing the scars of their upbringing well. I look at Bud Jr., his lovely wife Crystal, and their baby Trey, and I am amazed at my good fortune for being in their lives. Looking at the grace and beauty of my daughter Melody, I take pride that her beauty and grace are not just "skin deep". I have a warm feeling that Melody has found her partner Alex, and they will soon be married. I am oh so thankful that at one point in my life I made a good decision, I married their Mom.

As we go around the table in our traditional "what I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving", I give a shout out to Mulva. It has been a helluva year, and Mulva has made it bearable. My sobriety, which I'm also thankful for, has been because Mulva gave me the strength to carry on. I mean, let's face it, I've had more face plants than a Mark Richt coached team. Mulva has always been there to pick me up, dust me off and push me down the path of the straight and narrow. At least I can say with certainty that one of the Paynes isn't a pain.