

Thirty Days Hath September...

The sun came out today after a prolonged vacation during which it cruised to such destinations as Majorca and Cozumel, Rio and Adelaide. It is a stunningly beautiful morning, now that the sun's back. Unfortunately, I see on the office calendar that he's scheduled to start additional vacation two days hence. Seems like poor scheduling to me.

Now, don't get me wrong. The sun has every right to take time off. After all, the job has been a seven day a week commitment for the last four billion years or so. That's a serious case for taking some personal time. There is no more reliable worker than he, and his on time record is, well, you could set your watch by it. Seriously. Working every day for us and every night over on the other side is a grueling schedule. So I want to make it clear that I do appreciate the sun's diligence and in no way begrudge its just reward.

But why here and why November? Why does Houston County have to be the locale vacated? Why do we get to spend every day in the pea soup where old Sol used to be? Why must SE Minnesota be singled out to bear the consequences of the sun's sojourn to points south? Why are the good folks along the Root River always chosen to be the poster children for Vitamin D Deficiency? Don't we plow and harvest on schedule? Don't we celebrate the equinox and solstices with the best of them? Doth not a Minnesotan need sunshine? Dothent we?

And why does it occur every November, without fail? Why can't the sun's hiatus be broken up into weeks evenly spread over May, July, October and December? What's the big deal with November? What did old #11 ever do to deserve this annual dissing? Doesn't November bring us Veterans' Day and Election Day and Thanksgiving Day; all very important days? Would it be so terrible to spend one or two of those days basking in the sun of Indian summer? Would it? Would it be somehow wrong to sneak in an extra round of golf or one more ride along the Root River Bike Trail? Would it?

I think we should, at least locally, revise the old axiom. It should go something like this. "Thirty days hath September, April and June do too. All the rest have thirty one except for February which has twenty-eight and November which, in Southern Minnesota, has about eight hundred and thirty days, all of them cloudy."

I admit it; I'm barometrically challenged. As the pressure falls so does my mood. Every passing day my dampened spirit sinks deeper into that autumnal cave from which one can barely see the point of light way up at the opening. A pinhole where brilliant daylight used to reign. I sit shivering while still clear memories of "mostly sunny and seventy-two" mock me.

I am considering some kind of sacrifice to get this monkey off our backs. There must be something we could do that would change our run of weather woes. Perhaps I could take one of those "Acapulco Suntan Barbie" dolls and toss it into the river with a little note tied to its ankle; "Come back sun or the next time it'll be Ken" Maybe we could stick pins into that smiley face yellow disc; always wanted to do that anyway. Hey, what if we hung large orange orbs in the trees all over town to show the sun that we don't need him after all, that we'll do just fine with our mood lamps and vitamin supplements. I don't really think any of this stuff would work but it might make me feel better. I guess that's always been the point behind rituals.

I used to think that animals' hibernation had to do with winter conservation of energy and the increasing scarcity of nourishment. I have now come to the conclusion that it's really all about November. The woods are full of furry critters that are just as susceptible to socked-in syndrome as I am, only they have the good sense to pull up the covers and snooze through it. Rather than fight it, they throw in the comforter and commence the November nap.

Which gives me an idea...