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A Silent Night -- Not At My House

By James L. Snyder

People say, as they get older their hearing is not what it used to be. I have found this to be true for myself. The older I get, and I plan to get as old as I can, the more I hear noises in the middle of the night. Noises, I might add, that I have never heard before.

I'm not against noise. Personally, I try to make as much noise as possible. I'm just against noise not orchestrated with my sleeping habits.

And at this juncture of my career, sleeping has become a habit. In fact, I might describe it as an addiction. I tried breaking this addiction once but my wife complained I was just becoming crotchety.

When I was younger, I didn't need as much sleep as today. Some experts opine that as a person gets older they don't need as much sleep as they used to. I find this absolutely, positively untrue. I need more sleep today than I have ever needed in my entire life.

Actually, what I really need is to be able to sleep all night without disturbance. My definition of disturbance is anything I hear when I am trying to go to sleep — and I demand everything to be quiet. I will not mention any names, but this also includes persons who have the annoying habit of trying to talk while I'm trying to sleep.

It is not that I'm not interested in what this unnamed person has to say; it's just that I don't want to hear it when I'm trying to go to sleep. People have all day to get whatever is on their mind all talked out. That is why God gave us daylight hours.

It seems of late that no matter when I go to bed or how long I have actually slept, in the morning I always need just one more minute of sleep. That one minute more of sleep is the most crucial aspect of my nightly siesta.

Personally, I do not believe in alarm clocks. I think they have evolved over the years from some Neanderthal idea that it is important to get up at a certain time in the morning.

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I'm of the opinion that getting up is a relative thing. One man's wake-up time is another man's "please, don't disturb me yet."

If God wanted me to get up at a certain time every morning he would have made it a little more appealing. As far as I'm concerned, I know I have slept enough when my wife is standing at the bedroom doorway, both hands on her hips and saying to me, in that wonderful voice of hers, "Are you ever going to get out of that bed today?"

I suppose I would be more willing to get up earlier if wasn't for all the noises in the night. I believe in silent night, and not only at Christmas.

It is amazing to me how intelligent these nighttime noises can be. They are absolutely quiet until I'm just about ready to drift off into La-la-land, then there is a medley of screeching and yelling and screaming right outside my window.

It is not that I hate cats; it is rather I abhor cats making noise when I'm trying to catnap. Cats are wonderful creatures. For the most part, these cats mill around throughout the day and refuse to pierce the daytime with any fracas.

They stay out of my way and I reciprocate by staying out of their way. They keep quiet all day long but when I'm just about ready to drift off to sleep ,they start a Hullabaloo concert right out my window.

Show me a cat that is silent all night long and I will show you one that has been run over by a truck. Cats do not know how to be silent at night. This confuses me because all day long you don't hear one little whimper from these creatures.

It does not matter what time I go to bed, all of the cats within a 10-mile radius of my bedroom are alerted to this pertinent information. All I can figure is there must be some sort of a feline union, or maybe it is tabby-telepathy for all I know. Just two nights ago, I counted 2,972 cats outside my bedroom window, all fighting each other at the same time.

Perhaps, and this is pure conjecture on my part, these cats are working in shifts, which is why the entire night can be thoroughly covered with screeches, squawks and meows that grate on my fragile nerves.

When the neighborhood cats finish their nocturnal routine and settle down for the night, quietness settles over my backyard, which is conducive to sleep. At this point, the only bird the neighborhood cats have not successfully chased out of my backyard awakens to serenade a new day.

If it is not the night noises keeping me awake it is worrying about something n anything.

But a verse in the Bible gives me some encouragement. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep." (Psalms

127:1–2 KJV.)

Not all the cats in the neighborhood can take from me what God delights to give me.

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Silent Auctions - All Done? All Done? Sold!

By Ken Snow

Silent auctions are a way of disposing of auction items without employing the services of an auctioneer - one of the main reasons silent auctions are popular as charity and organizational fundraisers. Here's how it works.

The items to be auctioned are put on display. For example, a chamber of commerce may have solicited goods and services from people in the community for sale at an annual chamber banquet or other event. If you're interested, you simply browse through the offerings. Find something you like? Bidding is easy. You just pick up a pen and write down your name along with what you'd pay for that item

The point is that you're not bidding "in the dark" like sealed bid auctions. In that case, you submit your bid in writing in a sealed envelope. The envelope is opened and the highest (or lowest, as the case may be) bidder is notified. But in silent auctions, you have the opportunity to see what someone else bid on a particular item. Often, you can even see who submitted that bid, though some silent auctions assign numbers for your bidding to ensure anonymity.

If you enjoy auctions, there are some real pros and some cons to silent auctions. One of the biggest pros is that there's no need to stand around and wait for the item you're interested in to come around - a process that sometimes takes hours. Instead of waiting until the auctioneer comes to that item, you can just walk around and bid on whatever catches your eye.

If you think that the excitement of bidding against another bidder is absent from silent auctions, think again. The bidding can sometimes become fierce with several people "guarding" the item they are bidding on to watch for opposing bidders. When that happens, the people who are most interested in the item may get into a "silent" bidding war, just as in a traditional auction. One will barely wait for another to move before placing a new bid.

One negative of the silent auctions is that you have to watch an item you're interested in. Typically, there will be a notice that the auction is about to draw to a close so that you have one last chance to check the status of your bids, and to make one last bid.

Another negative is that it's more difficult to make small increment bids that really count. The best way to scare off other bidders and potential bidders is to simply make a large jump in your bid amount.

Silent auctions can be a good way to raise money, and can be incredibly fun for the bidder.

To get more information about silent auctions visit

<http://www.bestsilentauction.info>



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