

“My” time of year is here once more. A few snowflakes in the air from time to time the last couple of days have made it clear. The chilly, dark days of November have arrived and when they give way, it will be to several more months of cold weather and, hopefully, a good snow cover.

I finally accepted, after many years of perplexity, that there are people who just don't like winter. For some, I guess it has to do with SAD, the affliction that strikes when daylight hours and sunshine decrease. Others can't deal with low temperatures. And, I have known a few individuals who consider the mostly black and white world this area enjoys during the winter too depressing. For many years, I tried to persuade folks to love winter. But, I have stopped doing that, because it just doesn't work.

All of the things I like about fall and winter seem to annoy other people. They don't believe me when I say that they won't be “frozen” if they wear warm clothes. In fact, winter clothes are part of the season's appeal. Right now, I have a pair of leggings under my jeans. My socks are wool. I have layers on top, too—T-shirt, flannel shirt, and until I came into the warm cabin, a wool sweater. I am still wearing my red wool stocking cap; it keeps the cut-by-me-with-sewing-shears-during Covid hair out of my face. Today, it was my “baker's headgear” as I made rye flatbread and a batch of cookies. This evening, it keeps the hair from falling into my eyes while I try to write.

I am always surprised at the number of people who don't seem to ever wear boots, mittens, or caps. I have come to suspect that these folks don't want to be comfortable; it might cause them to begin to enjoy winter.

And the black and white landscape? I think it is lovely. As we also see in black and white photography, the lack of bright colors in our winter world makes the images sharp, yet without the glare of summer's excesses.

The long, dark evenings that seem to be so distressful to many people are “free” reading hours. It is 7 p.m. now. If this were a summer evening, I would probably be in the garden pulling weeds or harvesting for the next day's canning or freezing. Instead, I am looking forward to finishing a wonderful book, *Finding the Mother Tree*, by Suzanne Simard. And, when I have read the last few chapters of that beautifully written account, I have a biography of Aldo Leopold beckoning to me.

But, if I tire of reading, Runo and I might play Yahtze, or I could finish a letter to a friend. We might make popcorn and watch a lesson or two of one of the courses we have purchased from The Teaching Company. Or, my knitting needles or spinning wheel might get a workout.

When the winter days arrive crisp and cold with a good base of snow and some powder on top, we will put on our skis and head for the woods. In spite of our work, winter always seems like a vacation to me. I am glad it is on its way.