

## Thanksgiving Turkeys

Like most of you, we will celebrate Thanksgiving Day with family and friends.

Sarah and her family, Ryan and his family, my eldest daughter Shannon, home from Florida and two dear friends, Betsy and Russ.

Betsy and Russ live in Virginia.

Russ is a Dakota farm boy.

Betsy is a “California Surfer Girl.”

Betsy likes to learn about Midwestern farm ways.

She has even helped me harvest a bison.

It is customary here to harvest Gail’s turkey on Thanksgiving morning.

Gail normally roasts a 25-pound turkey.

We raised three types of turkeys this year.

Traditional colored broadbreasted, white broadbreasted, the especially beautiful, but smaller Bourbon Red turkeys.

This year, we sold thirty dressed turkeys.

We sold all the large breed turkeys.

Instead of one big turkey, we kept two smaller Bourbon Reds.

Betsy asked if she could help me butcher the Thanksgiving turkey. I sent the following letter to Betsy last evening.

Gail thought you might enjoy it.

We hope you have the best Thanksgiving Day possible.

Tom



Dear Betsy

I know you wanted to help me butcher a turkey tomorrow, but it is not to be. I am sorry about that.

It was my intention to harvest one late today and the other at 10 a.m. tomorrow. The one tonight was so that Gail could use an overnight brining technique. I planned to catch one turkey when they went into the chicken coup at dark. To my surprise, at dark, I found them roosting in the tree above the coup.

They have not roosted in that tree since the cold weather set in.

For reasons known only to Turkeys, they decided to roost outside tonight. It has been a long day. I harvested eight beef. Perhaps I was not thinking clearly. I decided to simply shoot one out of the tree.

I considered using a 22 rifle to shoot one in the head. That would have been a good choice in daylight, but it was dark already.

I would not have been able to see the sight on the far end of the barrel.

A shotgun was leaning in the corner of the garage. I have a lot of experience firing shotguns in the dark aiming by the feel of the barrel.

Do not ask.

The turkeys were two limbs high in the oak tree.

They were close together.

I suppose for warmth.

Nevertheless, I was confident I could hit a turkey in the head at that distance.

I took careful aim and fired.

Maybe the non-targeted turkey moved its head.

Maybe the shot pattern was larger than I expected.

Maybe I screwed up.

In any case, two headless turkeys instantly fell from the tree to the roof of the coup.

Gail is brining both of them now.

See you for turkey dinner tomorrow.

Tom

