

Another snow day: The beauty of the falling snow, predictions, myths, music, on being a snow angel, and “A Teacher’s Prayer for a Snow Day”



As I wrote in early December, everybody loves a snow day, especially students and educators. Since Harford County schools were scheduled to be closed today and tomorrow for faculty in-service programs, the private schools in the area were on their own to make a decision with the forecasts calling for 6-10+ inches of snow amid strong winds and arctic air. I was particularly grateful that my school made the decision to close last night. This allowed my husband and I some extra time for celebrating our 11th wedding anniversary last night with dinner at Scotto’s Cafe, our favorite local Italian restaurant. It was nice to be able to enjoy a festive late dinner without worrying about “staying up past our bedtime.”

Speaking of snow:

Undoubtedly, snow is beautiful to watch while it is falling. And to enjoy the falling snow during a bonus day at home is an extra special blessing. Kids love a snow day, and believe me, so do their teachers... Longtime educators have plenty of great snow day stories.

My friend Susan just retired last June after many years teaching English on the high school and college levels. She has always loved snow days. In fact, she is usually the first one to share of impending snow in the weather forecasts, as well as to predict

snow days and late openings. When she retired, Sue predicted that we would have lots of snow days this year since she has loved them so much over the course of her career. So far, she has accurately predicted each late opening and day off for this semester.



Myths about snow days?

When my kids were growing up, they always prayed for snow days. My son Joseph reminded me earlier that Katie would dance outside in her “inside-out pajamas.” I am laughing now as I remember one particular time where we all followed Katie outside in the cold and watched her dance with joy and abandon as she called on the snow to start falling and give all of us a day off... What a fun memory!!

I remember too always telling the kids-both at home and at school-to make sure they do all their homework and study for all tests/quizzes. Not doing so would definitely jinx the magic of a hoped-for snow day. This is a tangent of Murphy’s Law, I’m quite certain.

Four easy steps:

Michael Smith, the Superintendent at Tuscola Community Unit School District #301 in Tuscola, Illinois, writes a popular blog called Principals Page: The Blog.

Three years ago he wrote about how to get a snow day in four easy steps:

“So, just follow these simple steps and enjoy your day off from school.

Step 1 - Put your pajamas on inside out (bonus points if your pajamas have feet).

Step 2 - Brush you teeth with the opposite hand (harder than it sounds).

Step 3 - Flush a minimum of 6 ice cubes down the toilet (cubes... not crushed ice...

another common mistake).

Step 4 - Sleep with a spoon under your pillow (don't ask me why, just do it).

WARNING: Do NOT overuse the Snow Day Ritual. It must only be used for good, not evil."

More snow day magic:

Linda Ann Nickerson of the Yahoo Contributor Network wrote about 21 ways to get a snow day in her 2010 blog post "Snow Day Magic: 21 Ways to Make a Snow Day from School." I confess that I have never heard of a few of these ideas, but I was anxious to read them.

"What are the snow day magic tricks?"

- Do all your homework.
- Line your bedroom doorway with white chalk.
- Line your bedroom doorway with white crayons.
 - Plan extra appointments for the day.
- Put a frozen white crayon under your bed.
 - Put a snowball in the freezer.
 - Put a snowball in the toilet.
- Put a white crayon in the freezer.
- Put a white plastic spoon on your bedroom windowsill.
 - Put a white stuffed animal toy on your windowsill.
 - Put ice cubes in the toilet.
- Sleep backwards in your bed (head to foot).
- Stand on your head, and sing "Frosty the Snowman."
 - Stick a soup spoon under your pillow.
 - Stick a wooden spoon under your pillow.
 - Stick something silver under your pillow.
 - Throw ice cubes at a tree outside.
 - Wear pajamas backwards.

- Wear pajamas inside out.
- Wearing pajamas, run five times around the kitchen table in each direction.
 - Wearing pajamas, spin around ten times in each direction.

Of course, after completing all of these snow day magic tricks, folks may find themselves so tuckered out that they actually need a day off."

Be a Snow Angel:

D. Scott Miller, the Director of the Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, sent out an early morning invitation to do service and good deeds today:

"Let's make today's snow day a virtual event for young people. What kind of impression will you make today? Do something nice for family/ neighbor and then post about it with hashtag #snowangel."

Join me and watch this hashtag on Facebook and Twitter to see all the good deeds being done for others. Better yet, do some good deeds yourself and be a snow angel!!

A Teacher's Prayer for Snow:

The late retired Army Lt. Col. John F. Hillen Jr., who died suddenly in April of 2009, wrote this poem-prayer for his wife, Lisa, a Fairfax County schoolteacher. It has warmed the hearts of many teachers over the years:

*One night as I lay almost sleeping, I heard a voice, softly peeping.
I saw my wife devoutly praying. This is the prayer I heard her saying:*

*Oh, Lord, let it snow.
Let it drift and let it blow.
In the morning, no real fuss,
Just enough to stop the bus.*

Enough to make the County say:

"There will be no school today."

Let the radio report: "Snow's deep!"

And I'll roll over for more sleep.

Then later on, say maybe ten,

I'll turn the radio on again.

Just in time to hear them say:

"It's strange; the snow has gone away!"

And then I'll know, You made it stop,

So I can go to the mall and shop.

Please, Lord, just hear my teacher's plea,

And make it snow for the kids and me!

— Lt. Col. John F. Hillen, Jr. (1936-2009)

Music Video: "Amid the Falling Snow" by Enya:

Enjoy this beautiful music video with winter scenes and the beautiful Enya song "Amid the Falling Snow"

Lyrics:

How I remember sleepless nights

When we would read by candlelight,

And on the windowpane outside

A new world made of snow;

A million feathers falling down,

A million stars that touch the ground,

So many secrets to be found

Amid the falling snow.

Maybe I am falling down.

*Tell me should I touch the ground?
Maybe I won't make a sound
In the darkness all around.*

*The silence of a winter's night
Brings memories I hold inside;
Remembering a blue moonlight
Upon the fallen snow.*

*Maybe I am falling down.
Tell me should I touch the ground?
Maybe I won't make sound
In the darkness all around.*

*I close my window to the night.
I leave the sky her tears of white.
And all is lit by candlelight
Amid the falling snow.*



An afternoon look at the falling snow today in our backyard