

## THE DAWN TREADERS

September 20, 2011

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Well, the Harvest Gathering was wonderful as usual, not only filled with music and friendship, but (at least for me) more than a little eventful on top of that. Over the next few days I will try to cover some of the highlights as I have time. Let's start with the all-nighters.

Every Harvest Gathering there are at least a few hardy souls who never get to bed. They go all night, usually fueled by whatever they have consumed and around dawn they tend to migrate to one of the designated campfires that burn into the next day. It is usual for these campfires to be less than quiet although (unlike some previous years) drums have now been relegated to one of the fires way out on the periphery. It is really hard to sleep to a drum circle AND drum-circle folk are a special breed.

From where I sleep, one of these campfires is very close and sounds even closer. The few times in years past that I have gotten up and gone out to see what was up I have found a few stragglers trying to keep warm and dangerously close to teetering into the fire. This year was different.

I am not sure what time it was; it could have been around 3:30 AM, just a little early for me to be getting up. Anyway, I woke up to the sound of singing. I believe it was the Everly Brothers tune "Dream." Well, I love that song. Then it was an old Sam Cooke tune. And these tunes were well sung. I mean, it was music. By this time I was fully awake.

I was not about to lie there staring at the ceiling until dawn so I carefully extracted myself from the smallish bed where Margaret and I were, felt around in the dark for my clothes and what-not, and tiptoed out. Soon I was outside the house and heading toward the sound where I found more than just a few folks gathered around a bonfire. In fact there were so many that there was no room for me in the first ring of folk, so I found a little outside spot and looked on. I brought my camera with me.

What I found were professional musicians, at least many of those present, including two really good women singers. In addition, my friend and jazz drummer, Mike Shimin was also there and in high form at that. It took me a while to catch on to their plan but I finally understood that they were going to sing and play until dawn, until the Sun came up... and that was still a long way off.

And they were really singing too, especially the two young ladies, each of whom sang in a band of their own. Mike Shimin was keeping time with his hands and generally having a great time. And they did just that: sang until the sun came up. It was actually quite beautiful music. I was right there too.