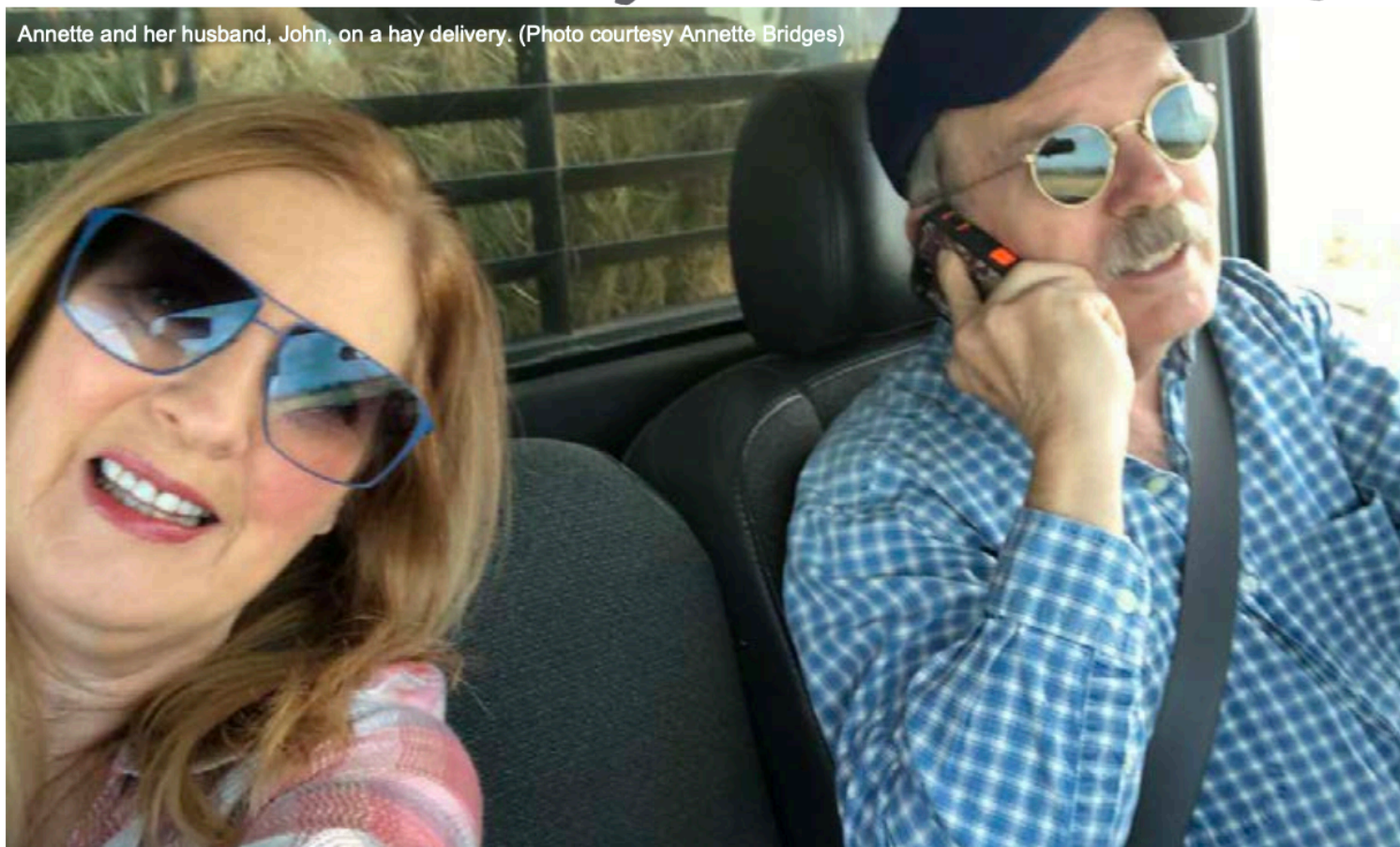




WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

Annette and her husband, John, on a hay delivery. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)



I've been perusing through our 38-year collection of photos thinking about fitting ones to use with my columns. I've found many pictures from vacations and special occasions and not so many of everyday life.

I'm wondering if this speaks to the perspective that our everyday life isn't noteworthy. My pondering has led to a review of what everyday life has generally looked like for us through the years.

When we first married in 1981, I was a public school teacher. Our home life took on what some would describe as traditional roles with my husband doing most of the outside chores and me doing most of the inside ones - the typical stuff like cooking meals, doing laundry and tidying the house.

The time of year has often determined our daily routines - at least the outside ones around the ranch. Mornings are about checking, feeding and moving livestock to new pastures.

When we tag team, one opens and shuts gates while the other drives through. Loading cattle into the trailer and working cattle to deworm, vaccinate and tag are other team tasks.

When it comes to hay production, my husband sprays, fertilizes, cuts, rakes and bales. I have raked before, but my husband is faster than I am, and he's pretty picky about the process so he prefers to do those jobs. I drive my beloved red tractor when picking up square bales and a truck when picking up and moving round bales.

Along the way through the years we did juggle raising a baby girl, homeschooling and caregiving other family members, but those topics are stories for another day.

I must admit it doesn't surprise me that we have few photos of our everyday life. I'm pretty sure I never thought about them as momentous events. Of course, in our early years cell phones didn't exist so we weren't walking around with a camera in our pockets either.

During my photo browsing, I was amused by one that was obviously taken by my husband. I'm not happy. I showed it to my husband to see if he had any memory about what impelled him to take it. He didn't.

I suspect it had something to do with the fact I was dressed in fence-painting clothes,



and I'm quite certain at my obvious youthful age I would not have wanted my photo taken wearing such stylish attire. I wish I could say that expression on my face only happened that one time in our long marriage, but I suspect that is not the case. It is, however, the only unhappy photo I found among thousands.

It did remind me how important it is in a marriage to remember there will be times when we are not happy or we get upset and angry. By the same token, that those times will pass into a faded memory and we can't even recall what made us unhappy or mad at the time.

I think turning 60 and having many loved ones pass away in recent years has made me reevaluate what's most important - even pay more attention to how I spend my precious time on this earth.

I do believe the new craze of taking selfies has significant meaning. I see people recording their everyday moments and mini milestones. Selfies are becoming a celebration of the small things in our lives.

I've started capturing such moments like us delivering hay bales to our customers, and that, my friends, is reason to celebrate. ®



The only unhappy photo of a young Annette found among thousands during a recent photo browsing. Her husband claims he doesn't remember what impelled him to take it, but Annette suspects it has something to do with the fact she was dressed in fence-painting clothes, and is quite certain at her youthful age she would not have wanted her photo taken wearing such stylish attire. (Photos courtesy Annette Bridges)



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