



WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

When Life Gives You Lemons

Probably most of us are familiar with the proverbial phrase, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." Wikipedia explains the phrase is used to encourage optimism and a positive can-do attitude in the face of adversity or misfortune. Lemons represent difficulty in life. Making lemonade is turning those darn lemons into something positive or desirable.

My husband is a master of making the most of unexpected, unwanted events around the ranch. This also can translate into the repurposing of something too old or worn out for its original usage into finding a new way to use it that makes it still functional and helpful. He doesn't realize his own creative genius.

Such a day happened recently. Our pecan tree limbs are so full and heavy that some have broken. Of course, we also have plenty of dead limbs that just haven't reached the top of our priority to-do list.

One day we arrived home after visiting with neighbors to find broken limbs lying over the bed of my husband's truck. Fortunately, the limbs did not hit any windows on our house nor do damage to his truck.

After all the limbs were cut and neatly collected in his truck bed, he came up with what I thought was a brilliant use for the little limbs full of green leaves.

Our neighbors had started raising goats. He contacted them to confirm what he thought: the goats would love to eat our fallen limbs full of tasty leaves. So off we went to deliver the leafy treats. Needless to say, the goats were delighted and happy to help us with finding a good purpose for our fallen leafy limbs.

The lesson reinforced for me that it is always possible, in some big or small way, to turn a negative situation into a positive one, to view a setback as an opportunity and transform hardship into happiness. In this instance, the result was very happy goats.

Indeed, life rarely turns out like we expect it.

I think these words by author Randy Pausch



The Bridges returned home one evening to find broken limbs lying over the bed of their truck.



The Bridges delivered some leafy treats to their neighbor's goats. (Photos courtesy Annette Bridges)

epitomize how to approach the uncertainty of life: "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand."

This is not to say we don't dream and have goals. I am a big dreamer kind of gal. My husband would tell you I always have a new idea for some new project.

I'm also becoming much more of a gal who loves to be surprised by my life and who overreacts less, who doesn't overthink or over plan like I did in my youth.

I'm inspired and encouraged when forced to look for new recipes for turning lemons into lemonade.