



WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

Summertime Living

“Summertime and the livin’ is easy,” said no farmer or rancher ever.

To be very honest with y’all, summer has become my least favorite season. I do recall a time when summer was highly anticipated with joyful enthusiasm, but that ended after I graduated high school.

Summer on a cattle ranch in Texas is filled with hot days. Since work on a ranch takes place in the great outdoors, hot days means lots of miserable sweat. In my opinion, it is much easier to bundle up and stay warm in the bitter cold of winter than it is to stay cool in the steamy summertime. You simply can not dress light enough when you also need to protect your skin from the dangerous rays of the sun.

I do love the idea of “easy living,” and these days I spend more time than ever before wondering how to achieve it.

How would you define an easy life? I decided to Google for more clarity to see if what I long for was actually attainable.

One dictionary defined an easy life as living comfortably without any problems or worries, free from pain, care or anxieties. More definitions included not requiring much labor or effort, not difficult, simple. Interestingly, when you start comparing the meanings of simple and easy, there is much disagreement. It seems they are not necessarily synonymous. I have concluded that what is easy living to some is not so easy to others.

We have plenty of friends who are envious of our country life. Of course, these same friends have never experienced the demands and rigor of living on a working cattle ranch.

My husband and I are now in the social security season of our lives, and this is bringing with it new questions about what we should or can do in the years ahead of us.

Easier living is becoming something we are pondering and wondering how to acquire without changing everything about our life.

One idea being considered is the downsiz-



One way to enjoy easier living this summer is to take a trip to the mountains of Colorado. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

ing to a smaller herd of cattle. We are well aware that to do this would begin with saying sad goodbyes to senior cows that have spent almost two decades with us.

I am also ready to do some remodeling to accomplish an easier aging-in-place home environment.

The hard bitter pill to swallow may someday require the consideration of downsizing our ranch acreage to a more manageable size or even selling and moving to someplace new, but that is not a reality we want to face yet.

The truth is when making some big life changes we do not have to make every needed

change simultaneously. Just like in many other areas of life, one at a time is probably the easiest approach to take.

Another reality that is difficult to accept and totally out of our control is the approach of the sprawling metropolis to our south that continues to creep northward.

It may be possible that big change will be happening for us sooner than we ever imagined.

None of these changes are likely to occur this year, so my best idea for easier living this hot summer is to spend a cooler week in the mountains of Colorado. 🏔️