

# WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

## Enjoy What You Have

"You can't take it with you!" This fact is often given as reason for enjoying what you have. It speaks to life as fleeting with all the more reason to make the most of moments and time spent with those important to you.

My inspiration for this column is from my lifelong philosophy about money. Or rather the enjoyment of spending money! Even when saving money was necessary, it was saving money with the purpose, plan and anticipation of spending it.

I find it interesting that when I recall the many years of my childhood when money was often severely scarce, my memories are not filled with anxiety, fear or even lack.

I remember many, many happy shopping excursions with my mom. The small amount of money that was in the bank was not a concern and didn't lessen the delight experienced while shopping.

Whether we had one gift or dozens under our Christmas tree each year, the merriment was not diminished or increased by the number. And along with all the glee, was gratitude for whatever we had.

I always had a job during my high school years. And regardless of how much (or little) money I had to spend, I only remember the fun in Christmas shopping for my family. I found satisfaction in how much I had, and I loved spending my money to buy for others.

My mom was the queen of making a little go-a-long way.



Annette's favorite joyful way to spend money is on travel adventures with her husband. (Photo courtesy of Annette Bridges)

She utilized lay-a-way plans when stores offered that service. She saved one month for purchases she wanted to make the next. When it

came to clothes, she also mastered the skill of bargain shopping and mix-n-matching. And she always had fabulous credit. But regard-

less of which method of spending money she practiced, there was an appreciation -- and joy -- for everything she was able to buy.

Money was not a source of worry for her. If there was a need or a desire, she knew she would find a way -- eventually -- to fulfill it. Consequently, I grew up not stressing about money.

I guess that's why I headed off to college without knowledge of how the tuition was going to be paid that first year, or even the years that followed. I never doubted there would be a way to pay my expenses -- whether it would come from my mom and I saving money, or from me working on campus or from a grant or a student loan.

There comes a time after years of saving money, when we need to start enjoying the fruits of our labor. And now that my husband and I are well into our senior season, I say there's no better time than the present to begin doing just that!

Perhaps it was my mom's perspective on being thankful for everything that provided the foundation to our enjoyment of what we had. So maybe with a grateful heart, we will not only enjoy what we have, we will have what we need.

Or we'll be so happy with what we have, that we'll believe we have what we need.

These days I say instead of fretting about what you don't have, why not enjoy what you do! That's my philosophy and I'm sticking with it! 