



Happy Sunday, Farm Friends! Happy Springing Forward!

Sorry for the late newsletter. This has definitely been one of those upside down weeks! Maybe it's the crazy winds or the crazy weather or the crazy world political situation... Whatever it is, it's been a week!

It all started with a porch... We began a project this week that we've been wanting to do for a long time. The farmhouse porch was just plain dangerous -- not to mention really ugly!



This porch has always been a challenge to maintain. Paint just would not adhere and the boards were starting to warp and rot. But we never seem to have the time to tackle a rebuilding project at the farmhouse. So we decided to bite the bullet and have someone do it for us. Removing the flooring was like

an archeological dig -- the contractor filled two 5-gallon buckets with broken pottery, glass, silverware and other debris (treasures?). This confirmed for me that the porch was not rebuilt when my parents moved into the house in the early 1970s. My Dad would not have left that mess behind!



The good news is that the foundation -- logs and rock -- were all sound. Not bad for a 160 year old!



One challenge this week has been to remember to not go through our main porch door! Thankfully, some flagging was added to help jog our memory.



The plan is for work to be complete this week. We are definitely looking forward to having a safe and sturdy porch to sit on with our evening coffee in a few days!

March Bluster and Blast Chill

Another turn-our-world-upside-down thing has been the wind and temperature extremes this week. We spent much of Monday crawling around trying to secure landscape fabric in a couple of fields. The fabric had completely blown off of the collards in one of the fields and we were trying to find enough bricks, rock bags and sod staples to get everything secure. And doing this in a 20+ MPH wind is a challenge! We got the collards back in the fabric and gently pulled the plants through the holes. And thankfully the frost blanket on the strawberries was well-secured!

Temperature swings were something else to deal with. We've bounced from the 70s to a low of 18 this morning. Friday had us scrambling trying to get the new planting of peas covered with frost protection as well as covering the peach and plum trees with blankets and hanging lamps for warmth. The peach tree started to bloom this week, so it was at particular risk.



And the plum tree was full of flower buds, so it definitely needed to be covered. But unfortunately, the sheet created a perfect sail for the branch in Friday night's wind and the whole tree toppled over. It turned out that the base of the tree was rotten. It was v-e-r-y old -- Daddy planted it a very long time ago. We'll be able to get some scions for grafting. This is the only plum tree on the farm... (and people always ask if we grow plums because of the farm name!)



And then there was the Pooch...

Thursday night, a Sheriff's Deputy stopped in the road checking on something in a field. That always makes my heart skip a beat -- is it one of our animals? Ray went over to investigate. In this case, it was a very large dog -- a Great Pyrenees. And we needed to get it out of the road. The dog was very friendly but wouldn't tolerate a collar. So, in order to move it, we had to put Ray's belt around its waist as a handle.

We were able to get it to the house and decided to bring it in to stay in the bathroom for the night. And what a sweetie! We have a very soft spot in our hearts for Pys. We had a Pyr-Shepherd cross when we lived in Albuquerque. So, when there was a Pyr in need, you can bet that we were on the spot to help.



A friend got the word out on social media to see if anyone might be missing a Pyr. She was bombarded with messages -- many of them sounded kind of scammy. One family sounded legit and they came to see him but it turned out that he wasn't theirs. So one more night of camping on the bathroom floor with the Great Furry Wonder.

In case you haven't guessed, we are animal lovers. We kinda fell for this guy. He was so gentle and mellow, and he seemed quite content to just hang out and snooze. We named him "Lil' Abner" after the old cartoon character who was a mattress tester.

Yesterday we heard from someone who was sure that Lil' Abner was his dog. The guy lives about 2 miles from here and his neighbor told him they saw the Pyr following someone who was walking down the road. His description of the dog seemed accurate so we asked him to come take a look. When he got

here, he seemed rushed and not especially excited to see Lil' Abner. Same was true for Lil' Abner -- he didn't even wag his tail. And all too soon, we watched the guy drive away with Lil' Abner in the back seat.

We are fraught with confusion and doubt and sadness. Were we duped or was this just the way some people act? We have rescued dozens of dogs since we've been here and have reunited most with their families. Nearly every situation has been joyful. This one was not.

So, say a prayer for Lil' Abner. We'll be keeping an eye out for him in the neighborhood.

That's the news for this week. We'll bid farewell with a hopeful sign of warmer days to come -- a newly emerged butterfly! We made sure that it was safe from the cold, windy weather -- it gets to begin its journey tomorrow!



Remember to be kind, love your neighbor and pray for Peace.

**Until next week,
*Cheryl & Ray***