



Farm News from August

Round and around and around and around. That's haying. Cut the hay, rake the hay, bale the hay, all in circles, clockwise. This summer was our best haying season ever in contrast to last year which may have been our worst.

What makes a good haying year? For one, the weather cooperated which allowed us to put up the hay early when the grasses and legumes were young, maximizing protein and with little rain that encourages mould. The green hay is full of nutrients and tastes better than the grey coloured stuff we made last year. The other thing that made for a good haying year was that the equipment ran without any major breakdowns. That in itself was amazing. Our old baler and even older tractor tend to break down every year and as they get older, so should the frequency of breakdowns. Not this year, first time ever. Everyday I thanked the "hay spirits" and I think they appreciated it.

Along with the good quality hay comes a feeling of satisfaction, knowing that every mouthful of hay the animals will taste this winter, will be delicious and nutritious.

Every year since we moved onto the farm in 1980 we have had our annual barbeque (the third Saturday in August). It had been a tradition on the ranch long before we showed up. The event used to be a rodeo which became so popular that it moved off the property to it's own rodeo grounds. The Rio Grande Rodeo advertised that this year was the 98th annual so we think that our annual barbeque was also the 98th annual. The event is never advertized nor do we extend invitations. People just seem to know (3rd Saturday in August) and show up from the neighbourhood

and hundreds of miles away. Aside from good food, great music and the occasional bit of elbow raising, this year we tried something new. My son had an idea to create a human foosball court and proceeded to build one of plywood, 2 x 4's and sewer pipe. It measured 12 feet wide by 24 feet long and needed 12 players. It was a hit! Five players on each side try to shoot the soccer ball past the goalie. Since their hands are attached to the sliding pipe they have to move together as a team. A friend shot this video.

<https://vimeo.com/103645581>

It's always a treat to be reminded of the wilderness that we live in. Last year I saw a cougar and this year saw several bears. My neighbour spotted a lynx but I was thrilled this month to see a black wolf. Although they live in the neighbourhood it is rare to see the elusive animals.

Edith the goat continues to be a family favourite. I wish everyone could have a access to a goat, they are non stop entertainment. Better than a TV. Edith gets along well with all the animals, most of the time. At night she is mellow and curls up to share the cushion with Jack the dog and Jesse the cat. But during the day, be prepared for anything. We were sitting at the kitchen table watching Dudley the cat through the patio door. He was snoozing in a lawn chair not paying too much attention to Edith who seemed to have devious plans. Gently, trying not to attract too much attention, Edith kept nudging the lawn chair a few inches at a time. The cat kept snoozing until the last nudge which sent the cat through the air and the chair flying off the deck.

Jerry