

The Caliche Times

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Dear Cousins,

You may wonder why I refer to you as a cousin even though you may not want to be a cousin of mine. Well, if you consider the family tree long enough and far enough back into history what do you have? Guess you might be a distant cousin of some sort huh? I'm sorry if you don't like the thought of being related to everybody but how did we get here anyway? I sometime cringe at the thought of being related to some folks I have seen and heard about. You know how the saying goes though "you can't always pick your relatives".

Overall, I guess we have had an interesting summer. May 17th a fire burned the outside wall of Lou Jane's rent house (home place) would have burned it all if our renters hadn't been home. June 22nd a cow side kicked me in the leg. I limped for several weeks until an x-ray showed my knee bones weren't broken. I was glad to find out I didn't have to limp any more. Lou Jane broke her shoulder July 4th and became the not so proud owner of an arm sling. We thought we could handle the situation but finally gave up and got health workers to come and help us on a regular basis. During June a hail storm destroyed our travel trailer and 8 windows and siding on the North side of our house; 14 screens were totaled and one storm door. Have you ever been caught under an open metal shed during a hail storm with the wind blowing baseball-sized hail horizontally for 20 minutes? You begin to promise God you will try to live better. When a hail storm of the caliber that came through and left a swath of damage for more than 30 miles from Eastland to Brownwood and destroyed auto windshields, windows, roofs throughout, you have to wait in line to get someone to put on a new roof.

Lou Jane's shoulder healed and just in time, I had just about run out of recipes and any desire to wash dishes. We still have hay to haul in. We have had enough light showers of rain that the grass is growing again. Technically we are still in a drought and the cattle do not have enough water to make the winter. We need rains that produce "run-off" water. Many people have had the heavy rains and all we can do is watch it from a distance.

9-19-09 Workers are here this morning to remove all the rock (gravel) from our roof and make room for a metal roof. It is a thunderous experience. Our herd of cows and calves came up from the pasture to watch and listen to the 5 workers as they made noise removing the rock. They watched and listened for about an hour. They finally decided it wasn't worth waiting around for and migrated off to graze. They didn't know we had been waiting for more than a year to get this roof work done.

9-21-09 Workers have completed the removal of rock and asphalt right down to the tar paper and have put wood laths on. Next the drip metal will be nailed around the edge of the roof just before the sheets of roof metal go on. The color of the metal roof will be light sand stone. We will get a 10 percent reduction on the cost of our insurance. They will remove our wireless internet antenna as they put metal on that area of the house and then reinstall it exactly where it was. I will still be able to send and receive email on my cell phone until the antenna is back in place.

10-7-09 Antenna is back in place on top of the new metal and we didn't lose any wireless service. The workers said, "We have put on a lot of roofs before this one". Smile. Well sure, I should have known not to worry about it. Lots of people in this area now have wireless internet antennas on their roof. Eastland County has several large wireless internet towers now so anyone that can receive a straight line signal from within a 10 mile radius of one of the towers can have the wireless internet service for a price. Most of the time the band width signal is 54-100 Mbps which leaves "dial up" service standing still.

10-12-09 the roof is completed now. I consider the work they did was very professional and couldn't have been done any better. We also got some good rain last week and put water in our tanks for the cows. One of my best bulls died and will have to be replaced; an unexpected expense. We don't know why he died unless he ingested hardware or maybe it was old age.

Lou Jane is working again and her therapy person (OT) is about to end her service. We hope she can continue to exercise; it has really helped her Parkinsons too. She is also on some new medicine that is taking care of most symptoms. We will miss the therapy people coming to the house and also our roofers with "boom-box" music playing all day. One of the roofers used to be a student of mine when I taught in Cisco. He is taking courses "on line" trying to work toward a better job.
