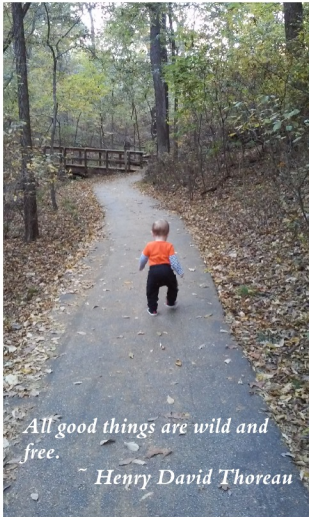


The Ozark Homesteader



November 2015



All good things are wild and free.
Henry David Thoreau

Happenings

- 10/12 - Columbus Day
- 10/31 - Halloween
- 11/1 - Daylight Saving Time ends
- 11/7 - [Fall Homestead Day 2015](#)
- 11/11 - Veterans Day
- 11/26 - Thanksgiving Day
- 12/22 - Winter Solstice
- 12/25 - Christmas Day

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Fall Herbal Care and the 2015 Conference on Homesteading

By SS Alexander

Hello again homesteading friends! Welcome to fall! Before I talk about fall herb harvesting, I would love to tell you about the annual homesteading conference I attended in Memphis in September. It was a wonderful day of multiple classes on everything from soap and wildcrafting to bees and butchering. Many of the class teachers have blogs, videos, and websites, so I will list a few at the end for you. Tiramam Farms Homestead and Thyme Wisper Herb Shop may link a site on their blogs for those who want to go next year.

So this is it, fall. Days are cooling and by now most of your herbs are coming to the end of their season.

Hopefully you had a good year because many of your herbs will be dying back soon if they have not already. If you are keeping your herbs in pots this is a good time to start bringing them inside for winter use. If you bring your herbs in remember that wood and electric heat will dry them faster so keep a close eye out for wilt because this is the sign to water.

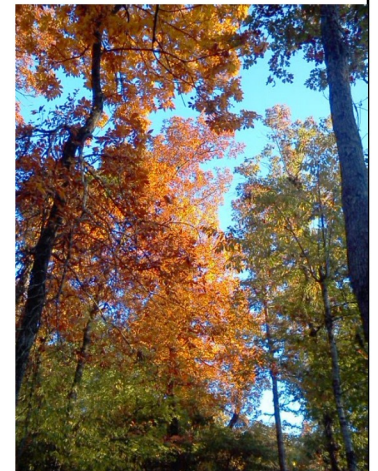
Some things like your mints and woody herbs will stay with you till frost, but it will not hurt to start cutting them back. Lavender that you did not harvest in flower should be cut back and you can use this for satchels in your drawers and closets. Not only will this smell wonderful but it will help keep bugs out of your clothes. Thyme, rosemary, and oregano can

be cut and dried and used for up to a year before the oils begin to fade. Even if you don't keep your cuttings, this is the time to cut back your herbs or pull up runners from mint and oregano so they don't take over your yard and garden.

If you have a dehydrator with an herb setting this will speed things up a lot. You can use an oven on a low setting (70 to 90), but be careful not to burn your herbs. I just use hemp or cotton twine/string and make a sliding noose over the ends of my stems and hang them from cabinets or pot racks. This can take up to two weeks if the herb is well watered. Dry cool areas are best and once dry you can cut or break the leaves off the stems very easily. If you have a tin can (popcorn or even coffee, well washed and dried) or old tea can, they work great because they keep moisture and sunlight out. If not, a Ziploc will work, just make sure to store your herb away from sunlight to slow down the breakdown of the herb's oils. Some of your less hardy herbs may have gone to seed. Save those seeds! Coriander and basil will sometimes reseed themselves, but having backup is always good as you will have to replant these every year in most areas. Don't forget to label your saved seeds so you don't find them in spring and wonder what they are. Small paper bags are best so your seeds will be able to

breath, but a plastic bag will work for a season.

Here are a few of the people from the [Midsouth Homesteading Conference](#). I could not get them all, sadly. Jared Stanley of [J&J Acres](#) (permaculture) has a YouTube series on permaculture that can be found [here](#). Another name from YouTube to look for is [Misty Prepper](#), who had her class videoed at the event. It's available [here](#) by [Appalachia's Homestead](#). They talked about the skills needed before switching over to a full homestead. One more interesting person there was Master Gardener Paula Sweatt, who talked about edible landscaping. As you can guess, this was a great draw for me, though sadly I cannot find a website listed for her. Hopefully she will be back next year. A few others were [Homestead Moma](#) (wild crafting), [Tiramam Farms Homestead](#) (livestock and lye soap), and [Thyme Wisper Herb Shop](#) (herbs and tinctures).



*Our life is frittered away by detail...
simplify, simplify.*

~ Henry David Thoreau

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*Go confidently in the direction of your
dreams. Live the life you have
imagined.*

~ Henry David Thoreau



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So You Wanna Be A Homesteader?

By Tom Faber

(Originally published @ *The Cantankerous Cultivator*)

So... The notion of becoming a homesteader is appealing to you? That's great! I think the world needs more homestead minded people. Let's see if you're really cut out for the homestead lifestyle. Because I'll be honest with you. It's not for everyone. But, if you're ok with many of your friends & family thinking you have gone off the deep end, and you are willing to put in countless hours of work, continue reading.

Homesteaders job description... Applicant must be willing to work in excess of 12 hours a day, sometimes seven day a week, every holiday, in



Fall Animal Preparations

By Patricia Uveges

Fall in the Ozarks brings radical temperature changes, rain, mud and eventually ice. This is far tamer than the Lake Effect snow we moved from. But it still requires a lot of work to get our animals and barns ready for the fall season and eventually winter.

We always start with the pigs. This is my first year expecting a farrow during winter. Specifically, my

every kind of weather condition, for very little monetary return. Vacations are non existent, the work is hard, dirty, smelly, wet, cold, hot, sticky, painful, and endless. Nice clothes are easily ruined, manicure, pedicures, hair-dos, and clean floors are things of the past. Animal feed comes in 50 pound bags that you'd better be able to load, unload, carry, and stack. You must be able to carry, push, pull, drag, chase, and catch all manner of farm critter, vermin, and predator. Your confidant & best friend (besides your spouse) is now a cow, goat, sheep, chicken, dog, cat, or (my personal favorite) a hive of bees that you will learn to carry on very normal sounding conversations with. Still with me? You're determined huh?

Homesteaders fringe benefits... The satisfaction of living life on your terms. The guarantee of fresh wholesome food that you yourself produced,

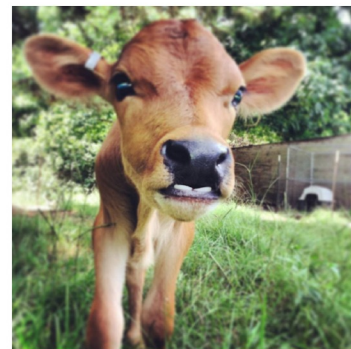
sows are due on Christmas day. This wasn't by design but rather lack of fence design. My boar walked right through panels and electric fence a few weeks ago and now my girls are starting to show.

Their huts have been reinforced. Additional t-posts have been added to reinforce pens and to extend some more pasture grazing areas. I have cut extra barrels in half. As



grew or nurtured. The unconditional love of a milk goat, livestock guardian dog, or other critter. The sense of accomplishment when winter rolls around, and you know there's plenty of good food and firewood to see you through till spring. Watching your children or grandchildren play in the country barefoot and free. The smell of summertime cut hay or wintertime woodsmoke. The good neighbors and friends you make at the farmers market.

So if you were to ask me I would say that the homestead life is worth it. The benefits far outweigh the cost. Just remember to live simply, work hard, and play harder.



the ones currently in use freeze solid, the new ones will be filled with water. I recently broke my arm and so I know my ability to break ice with my sledge or pick will not be available. I know I will have to use hot water, but the speed at which I can carry a single gallon from the house to the barn and

(continued from page 2)

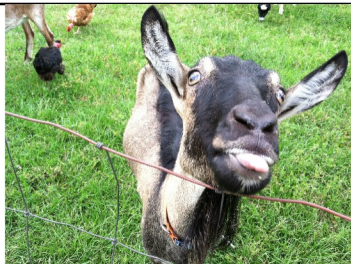
have it retain enough heat to defrost something is slim. I also did my seasonal pest maintenance and fecal check.

I love rabbits. They are by far the easiest animals we have. When freezing rain is imminent, we cover the hutches with an old blanket and then a tarp. This keeps our bunnies warm and we just have to shake the tarp to rid the hutches of ice.

All of the chicken tractors needed repaired this month. Loose wires, missing latches and wiggling hinges were all

fixed. We also cover these with tarps during our ice storms. The stack for them is ready and on standby. They have also all been moved into the garden area to help the soil recover during the late fall and winter. The two big coops have been cleaned and sanitized. Shutters have been put up and are ready to be latched when the temps drop too low.

My sweet goats are all bred and waiting to give us babies this spring. In the meantime, we trimmed hooves. I have had the displeasure of recovering a sweet girl who had ice buildup in her overgrown hoof and then refreeze. It wasn't pretty. I also put up about 200 bales of hay. Last year I used about 175 and really would have



been happy with more. It's not just for the goats; all of animals are given hay all winter long to eat and play in.

It took us two solid weekends of prep. I am glad it's done. Now on to the garden, cabin, camper, wood, brush clearing...

Happy Fall Y'all!

Read more about our journey to homestead in the Ozarks at reinventingthepast.com or check us out on [Facebook](#).



News from The Gray Homestead

By Richard Gray

It's been nine months since my last post to thegrayhomestead.com. I didn't realize that it had been so long. I guess life is really zooming on by.

We've only made a few trips to the homestead this year. It's tough to make the 3 hour or so one way drive with the baby. He is ok for about 2 hours, but then he gets bored. Once we get there, he doesn't have much fun either. With the ticks, the rocks, and the hilly terrain, he doesn't get walking time - and he is really into walking right now.

Our last trip resulted in a total of one hour actually spent on the homestead. And that was to load up my motorcycle, which had been sitting in the same

spot for about 3 years.

Finding the time to go is also tough. There is always plenty to do around the house. I feel guilty making a trip to the homestead to work on things there when there is so much to do here.

I have also started working 6 day weeks. That subtracts even more time from the homestead.

The dogs are good. The little guy is good. Jen is good. I'm ok.

We have some projects in the planning stages. Things that we can do here to improve our quality of life once we get back there. Here, we can build them and tweak them without having to rely on them until they are ready. The first



planned project is a solar air heater to keep the cabin warm during the day without having to burn wood. Of course, since it will be solar, we will still have to use wood at night and on cloudy days. It will be an interesting project.

We plan to share more in the next couple of weeks. As always we have big plans.

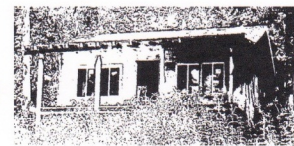


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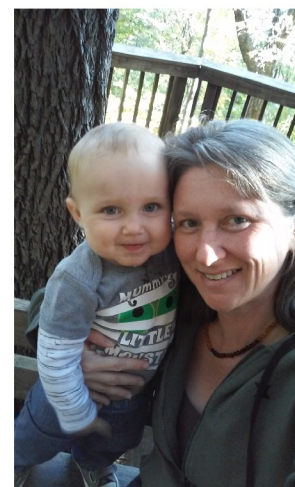
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The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it.

~ Henry David Thoreau



I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately...

~ Henry David Thoreau

writer. artist. mama.



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writer, artist, henna artist

Have something to say?

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Nitty Gritty Dirt Farm

By Patricia Uveges

Homesteading is a beautiful thing. There are things growing. Lots and lots of things growing. Chickens and basil and cows. Children even seem to grow as fast as the weeds around here. There is beauty in the ripe apples and changing leaves. Honestly, there is never a lack of beauty to see here.

When I knew I was destined to homestead, I started my research. It kept my mind active and happy when I was stuck in a life of smog and hour long commutes. I read every issue of Grit and Mother Earth News. I found blogs that had beautiful farm layouts and posted pictures of their farms often. I borrowed and purchased books filled with planting schedules and coop options. I decided on starting breeds and land type, even the state I would move to.

Then I took the big step. I found the perfect piece of land, but it wasn't in the state I had originally planned. Granted, it was just ten miles from the border. But it was what I wanted and needed. There was already a drilled well, fenced pasture and acres of hardwood trees. "Pasture" may be a strong word. Although the fence was in good

shape, nothing had been kept in the fields for at least 20 years. They were overgrown with brush and small trees. The hardwood had been selectively cut in the last ten years, so it would be another ten before it could be harvested. There were ponds and springs but they were also overgrown and in pretty rough shape. The buildings were in disrepair and there wasn't even a liveable house.

A month after I bought it, I was struck with two terrible and harsh realities. First: No matter how hard I worked, no matter how much money I spent, and no matter how much effort I put into my little farm; the work would never, ever end. Second? All of those books, websites and glossy magazines have professional or near professional photographers and a little thing called photoshop.

Not to mention they have had more time, sweat, blood and tears put into the soil than I have. So guess what comes with my new homestead? That's right. Broken bones, blood, tears and more sweat than a Swedish Sauna. But I am learning and we are all working hard. Today, I took a great picture of my mama



hen with her four babies. I then went through and cropped out the burn barrel and removed the pieces of trash the dogs had drug from the can all over the yard. It looks so beautiful and perfect! But in reality it is beautiful, just not perfect. The same way those other farms and homesteads that I follow and research are. They may be much nicer now, but even they started out as nitty, gritty, dirty little patches of Earth.

Don't ever be afraid of the work. No place is perfect. Carve out your own piece of Earth. Make it your dream place. Just know that once you start, you will never be able to stop. And that's a good thing!

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