

Lemons-to-Lemonade: A Different Twist

We've all heard the familiar saying that goes something like this: "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." I was searching the Web the other day and stumbled upon this blog posting: it brought that old, but sage, advise to heart. I hope the writer knows how insightful her story turned out to be.

*

Lemonade from Lemons

"Even into her seventh decade LaVena Moreland could work rings around any woman half her age. She was strong, resourceful, hard working and full of life. Her family had fond memories and they remembered many stories about LaVena. But the one told at her memorial service said it all.

When she married her husband Lyle, during the 1930s, the Great Depression years, they lived in a tent and picked crops to make a living. Ever frugal, they finally saved enough money to buy a small farm of their own. Those were days when the modern conveniences of today were just a dream. No one had a refrigerator; the lucky ones might have had an icebox, which is just what the name describes: a box where ice was kept to keep the food cold, or just cool, depending on the season. Simple luxuries that we enjoy today, like ice cream in the summer, were not available. Most farm homes kept food in an underground cellar. Blocks of ice were hauled to the cellar from the frozen river in the winter and then covered deep in straw to hold in the cold. One would hope there was enough ice to last through the summer season to keep the food [from spoiling.] They could not afford to waste the precious ice on frivolities such as ice cream.

The Moreland's were a friendly couple and grew to know nearly everyone in the small farming community. Often after a hard days work people gathered at their (Moreland) home to socialize. There came a year when the wheat crop and the gardens were growing abundantly and it was predicted to be the best farming year ever. The farm families were dreaming of paying off mortgages, buying new tractors, buying the wife that fancy new dress from the general store and buying the children new shoes. The community was a buzz—the crops would be ready for harvesting in [a matter of] weeks. It *was* a buzz, at least until that fateful afternoon, when the skies grew dark, the wind began to blow, and the hail began to fall.

When it was all over, there was nothing left of the crops in the fields. Everything was flattened for miles around. When the storm passed the people began to gather at the usual spot: the Moreland [family] gate. Men held their heads down to avoid having others see their tears—and they kicked the ground [in disbelief]. Women held each other and cried. Children, sensing the seriousness, stayed at their parents' side. But where was LaVena and where were her children? As [the people] looked beyond the house and out into the downtrodden fields, they could see her scurrying around. While others wept, she and her children were racing back and forth to the house with buckets—filled with something. What could [possibly] be left out there? All the crops were destroyed. Then they could see the buckets: they were filled with round white

Lemons-to-Lemonade: A Different Twist

balls, hail stones–ice. LaVena held up the big bucket, the one with the hand-crank, for all to see and sent the children running to tell them, ‘Come one and all, we’re having ice cream tonight.’”

Karren Moreland

Posted by Thought Well Editor on September 28, 2007 12:50 PM