

Life has a funny way of throwing curves at you sometimes.



I was just thinking that it has been nearly a year since we hauled up stakes and came on down to the lowcountry, effectively starting a brand new chapter in our lives.

This time last year, I was perfectly content. My Beloved and I had a great house on a quiet street in a lovely little downtown in the midlands. Brick flower boxes flanked our patio table, loaded with aromatic herbs and wildly blooming flowers. Next to our little distressed wrought iron table, a flame maple with thick branches shadowed our patio in glorious cool green shade, and many a serene late afternoon could be spent here.

Then all of a sudden, we moved here. It literally went from a “Wouldn’t it be nice to be back in the lowcountry someday” conversation to a phone call, an interview, a job offer and a house purchase. It all unfolded in the space of about three months – too fast to second-guess. But while I’m not the most religious cat in the bag, even I can tell when the foot of the Almighty is planted firmly in my backside. There’s no question this move was meant to be.

It’s also true that God laughs while you make plans. We never would have dreamed it would have unfolded the way it did. After all, who tries to buy and sell real estate in the worst financial collapse since the fall of the Roman Empire? Who throws a bucket full of new stress onto a marriage not quite a year old – who moves on their anniversary, for cryin’ out loud?

And yet nearly a year has passed since we jumped off the bridge, and now that things have shaken out and settled down a bit, I am again quite content. Life is good here. Life is, in fact, happily amazing.

It’s funny what a few months can do to make a house a home. I mean, the first night we spent in our house, we had a box springs and a blanket and that was about it. The movers came the next day and we had furniture. And boxes. Millions of boxes. A never-ending supply of toe-stubbing, tripping-hiney-over-teakettle-in-the-dark boxes everywhere.

The yard was kind of pathetic, too. We had grass but that was pretty much it. No trees, no bushes, no flowers, nothing.

But in time, things change. Boxes disappear and get stored. Rooms come together. My Beloved, a veritable fountainhead of ideas, was soon haunting places like Lowe’s and the local nurseries. And here we are, five months later, and this house is truly ours, from newly painted old kitchen chairs to major landscaping projects.

I like our neighborhood as well; it seems to be laid out very logically and has a number of terrific amenities, including lots of walking trails, green spaces, and neighborhood ponds. Some may scoff at storm water ponds doubling as scenic green spaces. I think it’s a terrific recycling idea. I mean, why not get some aesthetic use out of what essentially could have been just another five-acre hole in the ground? True, I wouldn’t eat a fish I caught here, but what of it? The ponds aren’t big enough to grow anything big enough to eat, and anyway, around here, it’s about being able to walk out your front door and wet a line two blocks away without having to pay through both nostrils and one ear to fit on a square foot of waterfront. Or sit on a park bench under a shade tree and read. Or whatever.

Life is good for other residents, too. We were walking by one of those ponds when I saw one of those weird looking black and red ducks sort of guarding a tree on the other side of the pond. A closer look – from a respectful distance, of course – revealed that he was a she and she was guarding a nursery, not a tree. Seven little yellow fuzz balls – they all looked like fuzzy tennis balls with beaks and feet – sat around Momma, happily awaiting instructions. Presently, they

queued up and trundled down to the water's edge for what looked like their first swim. Later, when I was coming back from the store, I saw them following Momma out of the water, seven little yellow fuzz balls hopping up to the bank, still dutifully in line. Since then, they've been caught in various and sundry random acts of extreme cuteness that will undoubtedly persist throughout the spring and early summer. Gotta like that, right?

Hmmm, wonder what we're going to do on our second anniversary...