

Saturday Meanderings



My patriotic charcuterie tray

As I am writing this I am in the mountains of Arizona and out of the insufferable Phoenix heat. The only downside to owning a second home is there is always some maintenance problem to tackle. But I'm not complaining, as it is cool, green and gorgeous here. So let's get started on our chat about all good things this past week. Thank you for joining me for Saturday Meanderings on this July 4th holiday weekend.

Speaking of home maintenance..



Dead A/C and dead lawn

Upon our return from our 10 day trip to Nantucket, the air-conditioning unit servicing the kitchen, mud room, and library died. Fortunately, our HVAC person is able to quickly respond and get us a new one. OMG! When did the price of air conditioners skyrocket? But after a full day of installation, the kitchen is now nice and cool.



Painting the deck railing

Our cabin has decks made of wood. One of these days, I know we should go to the expense to replace them with a composite material, like Trex. But that too is expensive and anything to do with construction materials is difficult to get right now. Well, I just couldn't stand the blistering surface of the top of the deck railing by the front door. So a couple of quick passes with a belt sander and a few coats of Behr's Weatherproofing All-in-One stain and sealer, and it's a temporary fix for now.

Isn't Nature Interesting?



As you may recall, we bring our big pots of geraniums up to the mountains for the summer. They LOVE the cooler weather and occasional rains. One of the first things I do when I get to our cabin, is dead head the plants and water them.



However, yesterday, a bird did not appear happy that I was near the plant. It was chattering at me looking quite disturbed. Sure enough, look at the beautiful nest I found buried in all the foliage. But why 3 blue eggs and a speckled one?

Why is a cowbird egg in someone else's nest?

Cowbirds are brood parasites, which means females lay their eggs in the nests of other birds and let the other mother bird do all of the rearing.

The cowbird will wait for a resident bird to leave her nest and then will usually damage or remove one or more eggs and replace that one or more eggs with her own.

The foster parents unknowingly raise the young cowbirds. Who knew? Thanks to my son, Benjamin for sending me this information.

Update on Furniture damage



Thanks to many of you who shared their remedies for repairing the damage to the dining room table. I did try mayonnaise, but to no avail.



Once we return home, I may try a few more times, but in the meantime, are also seeking knowledgeable furniture repair specialists.

Grilling



It's that time of year for lots of barbecuing and I cannot recommend these grill mats enough. Not only do they minimize clean up, but the grill marks still occur and the food tastes the same. Recently, we did grilled peaches and they were perfect!



I like the fact that you don't have a messy grill when you are finished cooking. The mats clean up easily and are reusable. You can find them [here](#).

My Garden



Pedilanthus macrocarpus, Lady Slipper. Image Green Meadow Growers

The high summer heat does fry many of the plants in the garden. Surprisingly some plants are actually blooming, like the Lady Slipper, a succulent that looks a bit prehistoric to me. The thin, lime green, leafless stems, create wavy, straight or arched clustered growth.



Lady Slipper in bloom

Right now, they are flowering with delicate pink blossoms that look like a lady's slipper. Sorry the photo is a bit blurry.



Pumpkins in July? I just picked two pumpkins from the garden. One of these years, I am going to get the timing right. Last time I grew Fairytale pumpkins they were done by mid-June. But aren't the stems wonderful?

Beautiful Pillows



Pillow sham from My Stylish French Box

One of the beautiful items I received in the May box from [My Stylish French Box](#), is this gorgeous pillow sham. The colors are perfect for our master bedroom (see the master bedroom [here](#)). Not only is the quality very good, but I am able to order another one through the website. The second pillow sham arrived and don't they look fabulous on our bed? Here is [the link](#) to the pillow sham.



Saint-Tropez

Apparently the theme for the August box will be *Un Weekend à Saint-Tropez*. To learn more about this box, click [here](#). These boxes make perfect gifts too.

Happy Independence Day!



Patriotic table

Wishing you all an enjoyable, safe and happy holiday. Remember to celebrate the true meaning of July 4th~our freedom and the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Thank you again for following me and sharing all your stories, inspirations, and recipes. I am so grateful to all of you!

If you missed any of my posts this week, you can find them

below.



[DIY Patriotic Wreath](#)



[A Trip to Nantucket](#)