

DISCOVERING THE GOOD PLACE. . . IN CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS

By: BreeAnne Clowdus (April 15, 2021)



BreeAnne Clowdus, Courtney Howe, Daughter Vivianne, and twins Dashel and Shepherd care for 72 animals on The Good Place Farm.

Like so many new families to the area, Courtney and I first became aware of Chattahoochee Hills after visiting Serenbe. But our journey didn't stop there. We'd often drive around the surrounding roads and backroads dreaming of the day when we could leave our suburban life of traffic, frenzied schedules, and perfectly mowed patches of weed-free grass behind.

One day we took a right onto Jones Ferry Road and found ourselves passing by the very land we now own. I remarked to Courtney, "I think, if I could pick anywhere to live in this area, it would be on this road. It's just magical."

Fast forward almost a decade later when, after two solid years of searching, we were just about to put an offer in on a property that was good enough but wasn't perfect. We were just too tired to keep looking and the kids were getting older and we really wanted them to have as close a "Little House on the Prairie" childhood as we could manage. So good enough would have to do.

But then a link comes through my phone and a text from Courtney: "This place looks good. Go see it real fast this morning just to make sure before we put in the other offer." I had no clue where the address was exactly but as I got closer and closer and my wheels landed on that familiar gravel, I realized I was pulling onto the very road I had dreamed of living on a decade earlier!

Now, I'm thinking, "Please let the property be perfect," and it was! It was neither too big nor too small. It was not in ruins nor was it renovated: we could put our own mark on it. It had a lake which I absolutely had to have for fishing and there was a beautiful old barn which we would need for future animal additions (of which there would be many). It was the Goldilocks property and we put in an offer within 15 minutes and soon after it was ours!

It took us about 18 months of work along with our amazing carpenter, Robert Whitaker, to clean up and renovate the property and then we were off to the races!

We turned our garage into a rehearsal space for the kids' band, we added pasture after pasture to accommodate the many animals that would seek refuge on our 15 acres, and we caught a hefty amount of fish in our little lake.

The kids made music, made art, did schoolwork on hay bales, learned to drive a tractor, cared for animals, learned to grow and preserve their own food, and soaked up as much fresh air as their lungs would hold.

Once we started to share our farm on social media, word spread of this magical place where life is good and the grass is plentiful. Then came the donations of animals: misfits, refugees, side of the road finds - they all made their way to our farm and with each new addition, the "Good" multiplied. Turns out the more we have to love and care for, the more loving and caring we become. Today, humans are not the only noisemakers on this little plot of land. The sound of 72 animals fills the air each day.

Every time I have to go to town (which is a necessity from time to time) I am always so excited to hit my gravel road again. The sound of the rocks under my tires, the sound of my kids playing music in our garage, and the never-ending sounds of the many creatures who now call our farm home are truly the music that goes straight to your heart - it's the soundtrack to life at The Good Place.

Ours isn't exactly the "Little House on the Prairie," but I think Laura Ingalls Wilder would approve. We are so very lucky to live here. We named our farm, "The Good Place," because short of heaven, this is as close as you're gonna get.

