



# COME WITH ME TO MYSTIC BLUFFS

**W**hen a longtime client, Randy Shelton, called and said he wanted to show me a piece of land, but I could not tell anyone, I knew it was going to be an interesting morning. Land is getting harder and harder to find, and Randy had been looking for some investment land for a development. What I did not know is how this piece of property was going to be a special place for my family.

As we pulled up to an 87 acre farm, I could see the years of hard work that once took place. Now cluttered with the remnants of time, this property was feeling its age. Randy had been told, by a family member, the farm had to be sold and the last generation was going to leave the place that had been in the family for around 100 years. As we looked over what included a farmhouse, 2 shops, barns, a chicken coop and an overgrown pond, we walked down the main ridge past the cattle feeder onto the dirt road constructed over time by hooves. This place was an investment to Randy, and it was about to be an investment to us also.

We went back for another look with Scott, my husband, when Randy mentioned he did not want the farmhouse and would sell it to us, because he knew we had personal rental houses. When Scott and I had a chance to walk towards the front of the house alone, Scott looked at me and said, "No way are we buying this house." He thought there was too much work for us to possibly accomplish, and as he has later said, he could see his whole summer disappearing.

**T**he next month, Randy closed on the farm, and we did end up purchasing the farmhouse with the buildings around. A farm is pretty hard to vacate, so the belongings that had been accumulated over the years were still there. Oh, and Scott was right, it was a lot of work ahead of us.

We oversaw work on the farmhouse during the day, and our family would go over in the evenings and attempt to unearth the outside. Over the top of the pond, I could see what had to be a substantial oak tree growing below the dam. Only the top of the tree was visible, but there were massive upper branches reaching above the pond. Payten, my 6-year-old, and I just had to get to that tree!

When we finally did, we measured it by 2 and ½ of us reaching around the trunk. Payten's motivation was apparently a tire swing, so we hung a tire swing as high as we could get the rope with an additional swing on the other side of the tree. Payten spends a lot of time lying on the swing, looking up at the branches of that old oak tree and swinging long passes past the trunk with her hair dangling upside down.

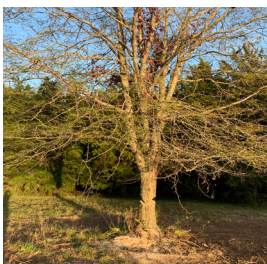


As we cleared brush, cleaned up and mowed, I could see the work of keeping a large farm running. Years past attention had been spent whitewashing fence posts around the house; cross-fencing pastures; building the chicken coop; planting fruit trees in the side yard; patching tin on the barns...and on and on.

When we were cleaning out one of the shops, I found a hand-carved cross on the floor; I sat it in the windowsill of the shop. There was a bulletin board to the side of that window that had pictures of the older gentleman that had owned this farm. I felt those pictures should just stay right where they were, as they were pictures of him in front of his dump truck years ago and pictures of family gatherings on this farm. They reminded me of my brother's shop where small mementos fill the walls of what life used to be.



## KANSAS BOY CUTTING MISSOURI TREE



I married a Kansas boy and transplanted him into Missouri! My father had always taught me to cut down locust trees because the 2 inch thorns get in cattle's hooves and also mess up tractor tires. Scott cut this 1 of 4 locust trees on the farm, but it would not drop. I was mowing in the next field, when he came to get me, and by the time we got back to the tree, it had fallen

on it's own. The next day, when Brenda Leydens (from Mid-America Bank) came to look at the property, she popped 2 of her tires. We had carelessly drug the locust tree across the road to burn. I'm paying off those tires + a tow, one dinner at a time since she will only take my apology!

(Sorry again, Brenda!)

While we spent more and more time at the farm, there were several simple occasions when I needed something, I would look around and the very thing I needed would be in eyesight. When the shop was almost empty, I needed a broom and I hadn't even noticed the one standing in the corner. I had been in and out of that shop for days. I strongly felt very appreciated when I did anything to make this farm look better. Several times, simple instances just like that happened to me, but I did not know they were also happening to Scott.

We were all outside, around the four-wheeler, and Scott said he could really use a chain to pull with. As we stood there, he looked down and the tip of a piece of metal was sticking out of the ground. He started pulling on the end of the metal piece and pulled up a complete log chain! Really...it was one of the strangest things. The more we were over there working, the more we were drawn to the farm and wanted to make it look to its former glory.



Several weeks in, when everything was almost empty in the shops, I was sweeping the floor and saw that wooden cross I had laid in the windowsill. There was a card beside the cross and when I picked both up, I could see the name on an old funeral visitation. It was from 20 years ago of an old family friend which lived down the road from where I grew up. I just couldn't throw that card away, so I sat them together back up on the windowsill where I had put the cross originally. After several months, I finally knew what to do. I mailed the cross and card to the family of the man on the visitation card. I told the family the dirty visitation card was found beside the wooden cross, which ended up on the floor beside it. I told the family these two ended up together on a shop floor of an old farm I am helping clean up. I am mailing them because, I thought perhaps they needed to know how they ended up together and where. Maybe, it would mean something to one of them or maybe one of them just needed to know.



As we worked, we stopped to make trails on some of the prettiest, most diverse land around. With a natural bluff running across the back of this property, this place has the backdrop for a tremendous view. We finally found our way down the bluff where an old road had been bulldozed in many years past (Lot 1). The family had run an excavation company, and we had found their path, after clearing fallen logs, down to a rock bottom spring fed creek. With each new trail, a new adventure on this land seemed to take place. Gavin, my 14-year-old, and I went back to the land one Saturday morning to finish a trail down to that same creek, but from the opposite side of the farm. It was a lot of work cutting and clearing up the hill until we found the trail Randy had made with the skidster down the ridge at the top. When we were driving home, Gavin actually turned to me and said he had a lot of fun.

Once we got the farmhouse complete and the outbuildings cleaned up, Gavin and a friend ended up in the pond pulling cattails (from the excerpt on the back cover of my September Magazine). I kept mowing our property and then started mowing the fields with my Dixon commercial mower. I joked all summer about how I was saving video of all the bailing twine and barbed wire to send to the lawn mowing company as proof that you can mow anything with a Dixon. We kept spreading out further into the 87 acres where we did more and more mowing. We teased Randy that he sold the farmhouse to the right people, because we are a family that has to stay busy. Cleaning up fence rows, or burning a brush pile is our relaxation time.



See our family videos on this land at [McMichaelRealty.net](http://McMichaelRealty.net)



As we worked many evenings and weekends out on that land, our kids had the run of the place. They played in the dirt, rode their four-wheelers, climbed trees and caught tadpoles in the pond. Payten took a special interest in the chicken coop, and Gavin liked running Dipper, his dog, across the fields behind his four-wheeler.

We had friends over in the evenings where we played music, roasted hot dogs and burned the brush piles. As we sat around the fire talking, we laughed about sending Randy fake messages about what was happening on his land, because he was at his out-of-town farm on the weekends. As more nights were spent in front of fires laughing, we started sending Randy text messages about all the RV Campers that were parked in the back 40 joining our massive weekend parties we were hosting on his land. We even took a picture one Friday afternoon of an RV crossing the Missouri River Bridge and sent it to Randy saying, "They are starting to gather for the big party tonight!"

When we were almost done cleaning up the farm, we sent him one final text telling him that Randy's RV Park was shutting down for the season and all the RV Campers wanted to thank him for hosting a great camping season and that they will certainly come back next year. Obviously, there were no RV's parked or parties out there, but it was funny teasing him on Fridays with texts that would say, "Can the Bike Club meet in the machine shed for the weekend? It's going to rain and they cannot get their bikes wet."

This farm holds a special place in my family's heart. The first acreage off of this land just closed, and it is a bit sad for me but happy for Randy. I do love this place; my family loves this place. We are excited to get to know the first buyers, and we hope they find this place as special as we have. I'm not sure what leads people to where they end up, but something lead us to spend some time here.

Enjoy our personal family videos of this special time on [McMichaelRealty.net](http://McMichaelRealty.net).



I'd love to show you this land.  
We'll jump on the four-wheelers and check it out.  
Call Kristina at 690-2075