

When

As I returned home from my nephew's wedding on Labor Day weekend in the hot Central Valley, I noticed the pile of leaves on my driveway had grown to about two inches thick. "Here we go again," I thought to myself: 6 months of raking leaves, as I cursed under my breath. The quantity of Redwood leaves on my driveway and yard seemed like insult to injury because I just finished raking leaves off my roof a little a month ago and had the satisfaction of a clean pristine roof—for about 4 weeks. Then the deluge of dead leaves comes raining down. Nevertheless, I dutifully got out the leaf blower and began blowing and raking and vacuuming the leaves into the bag... with a grudge on heart and curse on my breath. Redwoods are beautiful, but living under them a curse, I thought to myself; and I was quick to remember several friends who said the same thing. Then, I remembered how miserably hot and dry the Valley had been two days ago, and how much I would have given to be sitting under a redwood tree. I began to change my attitude.

The redwoods are beautiful even when they blush and strip their leaves: providing shade for us all and shelter for all kinds of bird and wildlife. The cool shade, is refreshing this time of year, as opposed to the direct heat of summer sun in most parts of California and the Nation. The wedding I went to last weekend in Chico was beautiful, if you like baking in the sun until you feel medium rare!

So, I began to think of the cooler days of fall with a tinge of gratitude rather than the flavor or resentment, and somehow, the mandate to be raking leaves for the next few months began to feel more like a privilege and less like forced labor. While I like the longer days of summer, I also <sup>am trying</sup> to appreciate the colors and cooler days of fall.

Rather than lament the loss of summer, I decided to celebrate the coming of fall--- fall with its cooler days, rusty reds and yellow colors, fall with its rhythm of back to school; fall with the fresh fruit of apple trees and pumpkins in the field growing plump and waiting to be harvested. Fall with its happy autumn fields, misty mornings and even the prospect of rains... Fall the harbinger of winter with its plentiful rains on the coast and snow in the mountains. Fall which ushers in the happy holidays of Halloween and Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Ok, next time a leaf falls, I'll thank the tree that produced it and salute rather than curse. <sup>intend to</sup> After all it makes more sense to be thankful for the season that's about to come than try to turn the clock back to the one that is about to pass.

God makes all things beautiful in their time... even, especially, the leaves in fall.

This has Dan Price for CommunityComment