Blum’s Bits  
By Amy Blum

One year ago, I wrote about faith—not the western South Dakota town, but rather the ability to trust and believe in something you can’t see. At the time, producers were challenged by significant drought; my best friend had just buried her newborn daughter, and my great-grandma celebrated her 100th birthday.

Fast-forward 365 days … much of our state has been well-soaked by summer rains; my best friend and her husband have found new hope and promise in God, and my great-grandma will soon celebrate her 101st birthday.

The more things change, the more they really do stay the same.

In case we had forgotten, 2013 (so far) has reminded us about perseverance and the importance of living each day with faith. There will always be different struggles and new celebrations. Life moves forward, and each day, we are faced with the decision to move with it or live in the past.

Personally, I choose to move forward.

After an 11-year career in nonprofit fundraising, I left my management position on June 26. My work developing strategy, refreshing a brand and creating donor relationships was special. It had also become empty and, dare I say it, too comfortable. Being the easy place to be didn’t mean it was the right place for me.

Walking away from a comfortable career secured by great benefits and a steady paycheck was hard. For every time someone has applauded my choice, another person has shared disapproval at my apparent lack of good sense.

Lucky for me, I’m learning not to care. In my heart, I know I am walking toward something greater. I am choosing to live with faith and move forward, trusting that I am on the right path.

Can you say the same?

If you can’t, please don’t think I’m judging. Instead, know I empathize with you. Today, I feel blessed and content. Tomorrow, the 12 loads of laundry, eight piles of dishes, six acres of weeds in my yard and four screaming kids may have me doubting both my sanity and my faith.

Honestly, I think that’s okay. Without doubt, we can’t grow, and if we aren’t growing, we aren’t really living.

Yes, a lot has changed in one year. We aren’t withering away in heat and drought for starters. At the same time, nothing has really changed. We are still being challenged: will we get the hay up; will it freeze in September; what’s going to happen with the price of corn; what will the cattle market look like; will this year really be all we need it to be?

In the big picture, those questions are quite small, and each of us is left with a choice. Will we live in faith each day we’re given, or will we die without it?

Only you can answer the question for yourself. I’m choosing to be faithful.

In closing, I find Paul Harvey’s rendition of “So God Made a Farmer” helps me keep perspective, especially the excerpt below. Perhaps it can for you, too.

“And, on the 8th day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, ‘I need a caretaker.’ So, God made a farmer! … Somebody to seed and weed, feed and breed … and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk. Somebody to replenish the self-feeder, and then finish a hard day’s work with a five mile drive to church. Somebody who’d bale a family together with the soft strong bonds of sharing, who’d laugh and then sigh … and then respond with smiling eyes, when his son says he wants to spend his life ‘doing what dad does.’ So, God made a farmer!”

May your load be light, your journey be blessed and your fall be bountiful.