

# April 2024



**Our Vision:** *For every child to experience redemption*

**Our Mission:** *LOVE the child, SAVE the horse, enable children and their families to realize the HOPE they can have in Jesus Christ*



## “Because We’re Called To!”

As I began to write this newsletter, I’m reflecting on the start of spring mentor training this week as we talked about WHY we do sessions. At RYYR, we have a vision to take every opportunity to share the hope we have in Jesus: ***“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”*** 1 Peter 3:15 (NIV). Our mission: Love the child, Save the horse - we know the words. But individual mentors expressed these in concrete ways, telling stories from their experiences: what brought them to the ranch, past session kids who have impacted their lives, and the encouragement of seeing God at work in these kids and ourselves as we mentor! At the end of the conversation though, we are simply here, as one mentor said to hearty agreement, “because we’re called to!” As followers of Jesus, we ALL have a calling to participate in sharing the good news. Whether you are at home feeling unable to be physically involved with a ministry but praying faithfully, live miles away but generously give what you are able, show up once a year for a work day or to stack hay, or are here weekly or almost daily doing chores or mentoring - thank you for answering that call!

***“For Christ’s love compels us...God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.”*** 2 Corinthians 5:14, 19-20 (NIV). Please pray for our mentors as they seek to improve horsemanship and to listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in preparation for every opportunity God brings our way this summer.

- Rebecca Kennedy



## Horse Sponsorship Opportunities

We’ve had multiple inquiries about sponsoring some of our horses and have created a variety of sponsorship opportunities. There are opportunities for small, affordable monthly sponsorships, up to a full year of sponsorship. Would you prayerfully consider choosing a horse to sponsor?

Details & Horse Sponsorship Form available here: [www.ryyr.org/ryyr-horse-sponsorship](http://www.ryyr.org/ryyr-horse-sponsorship)

# Similar Ministry Blessings

*by Rebecca Kennedy, Program Coordinator*

A travel dream of many years came to fruition this March as I was incredibly blessed through the gift of time and provision to visit Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch in Bend, Oregon! Crystal Peaks was the ranch that inspired Matthew and Micheline to start RYYR, and was also the source of the books I was reading twenty years ago as a teenager who spent hours a day in the barn, unsure what God had for my future but wishing for something that involved kids and horses! Little did I know how specifically connected these details would be.

Being able to see another ministry in action was incredibly encouraging. It started miniature-hailing in the middle of the first session I shadowed. No one blinked, just kept the focus on kids and horses. Turns out sun-rain-cold-cloudy isn't just a Western PA special! And there were of course ideas for improvements and future dreams, and learning from those with years more experience.

But most encouraging was seeing the truth of God's hand that makes every session possible. I tend to focus on the practical details: skills and tools to ease the work of mentors, horses, and volunteers as they show up so faithfully, listening for pain points, fine-tuning when they're found. But looking from the outside at Crystal Peaks, I could just enjoy the goodness of God in providing horses, mentors, and kids who want to be there and want to be a part of God's story at the ranch, wherever that leads. And I realized our sessions don't look so different. Our focus is the same, God is the same - and I could stand to trust Him a little (LOT) more and count my blessings (60+ volunteers, 20+ horses, 15 mentors, 1 husband who cooks dinner when I forget to eat, MANY similar ministries to serve together with across the world).

So for our volunteers, program families, and everyone involved at RYYR, know there's folks praying for you and this ranch from 2,086 miles away (according to their fun wall of similar ministries!). And if that distance isn't even a small step for God, then His power and love are always right here when we turn to Him in our depression, sadness, anger, excitement, or joy. He made the weather that is sunny one minute and hails the next. I'm not going to surprise Him with any of my troubles and emotions.



↑ Sessions with mountain views!

Found RYYR on the Crystal Peaks similar ministries wall →



# It is the LORD who sends the thunderstorms.

## Zechariah 10:1

What a good reminder for this spring season! We've had a LOT of water on the ranch lately. Thanks to God for safety and thanks to volunteers who showed up even when many roads in the area were flooded.



Ozi on gutter patrol duty



Aero's a pro at finding a dry spot to stand



# Welcome Phoebe!

(Born 2004) Phoebe is a POA mare who was surrendered to the ranch in March 2024 because her owner could no longer care for her. Unfortunately, abuse is part of her life history. Phoebe loves visitors but can be reserved at times. She can still be unsure of people but is willing and wants to be able to trust you. She is highly food motivated and very talkative to the other horses. We are currently working on socializing Phoebe in a positive way to encourage her to come out of her shyness. She really is a sweet and cute pony!

The name Phoebe means “bright and radiant” - we look forward to seeing the unique ways God has made this horse to shine as she learns to trust. Her name is found in Romans 16:1-2, where Paul says: “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.” We know our Phoebe was a kind riding partner before she suffered abuse, a kind pasture buddy in years since, and we hope to see what help we can give to her now as she adjusts to a new life!



## Our 2nd Annual SPORTSMAN’S BASH was a SUCCESS! Thanks to our generous sponsors and attendees, \$22,000 was raised to support ranch youth programs and horses!!



### - CAMO SPONSORS -



### - OUTDOOR SPONSORS -



### - TABLE SPONSORS -



# JUNE 2024 FUNDRAISER!

Register now @[RYYR.org](https://www.ryyr.org)



The poster features a green and blue background with a golf course scene. At the top left is a yellow flag on a green pole. In the top right corner is the RYYR logo, which includes the text 'RYYR' and 'READY YOURSELVES YOUTH RANCH' around a silhouette of a horse and rider. The main title 'GOLF OUTING' is written in large, bold letters, with 'GOLF' in yellow and 'OUTING' in white. Below the title, it says 'to benefit Ready Yourselfes Youth Ranch'. A golf ball with the RYYR logo is shown on the left. The date 'JUNE 15, 2024' is prominently displayed in white. At the bottom, it lists the location 'FOX RUN GOLF COURSE • 8:00 AM SHOTGUN START' and '4240 River Road, Beaver Falls'. A yellow banner below the date lists 'Skill Prizes • Team Prizes • Hole In One Prizes'. The pricing is '\$95 PER GOLFER' and includes '18 holes of golf, cart, hot dogs at the turn, dinner and prizes.' There is also a 'Dinner Only - \$50 per person' option. The event schedule is listed on the right, starting at 7:00 am with registration and warm-up, followed by shotgun start at 8:00 am, refreshments at 1:30 pm, and dinner/prizes at 2:00 pm. A 'Sponsorship Opportunities' section is at the bottom left, and a row of four photos showing horses and people is at the bottom right.

12th Annual Fundraiser

**RYYR**  
READY YOURSELVES YOUTH RANCH

# GOLF OUTING

to benefit Ready Yourselfes Youth Ranch

## JUNE 15, 2024

**FOX RUN GOLF COURSE • 8:00 AM SHOTGUN START**  
4240 River Road, Beaver Falls

**Skill Prizes • Team Prizes • Hole In One Prizes**

**\$95 PER GOLFER**  
Includes 18 holes of golf, cart, hot dogs at the turn, dinner and prizes.

**Dinner Only - \$50 per person**  
If you are unable to golf, please join us for the Social Hour and Dinner. It's a great way to support our organization while enjoying dinner and being eligible for the Chinese auction.

**Register by June 6, 2024 at [ryyr.org](https://www.ryyr.org)**

**Sponsorship Opportunities**  
Sponsorship opportunities are available for Holes, Skill Prizes, Dinner, Chinese Auction and more! For more information, please call Matt at 724-321-5034.

**Event Schedule**

- 7:00 am - 7:45 am**  
Registration and warm-up
- 8:00 am**  
Shotgun Start  
Beverages provided on the course
- 1:30 pm**  
Refreshments and cash bar
- 2:00 pm**  
Dinner, prizes and Chinese auction



## Upcoming Events:

RYYR benefit -  
**Pamela Beglin  
Licht Memorial  
Horse Show**  
@Brady's Run

**September  
7th**



**September  
14th**  
Tickets  
available in  
July!

## The Lord Gives...

And the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the LORD!

One of the hardest parts about being a horse rescue is when stories don't turn out how we hoped. Seeing God's clear direction even in hard times eases the burden, but doesn't take away the grief.

Concho came to us last August through local connections who wanted to give this sweet sweet boy a chance to see if he could heal. He had severe uveitis in his left eye, which required removal, a surgery and treatment process that takes time, money, and care to complete. We were able to give him that chance, thanks to generous supporters! He came through surgery well, and as volunteers spent time leading him for walks as he healed, one after another fell in love with his gentle spirit. We saw him come through rough days where he wasn't at peace to a point where he was beginning to be able to do more and were so excited for him...

Then we started noticing Concho was tripping over things that hadn't bothered him before - the edge of his stall, bumping his shoulder on doorways. A cloudiness started to grow in his right eye, but we were so grateful when it turned out to be just a cataract!

Not ideal for an already one-eyed horse to lose sight in his remaining eye, but our operations manager, Savannah, went all out researching how we could best transition him and care for an effectively blind horse. Again, there was walking on lead and volunteers patiently working through Concho's initial moments of panicky pushiness and frustration as he learned to listen to our voices and trust what he heard. When he tuned in to his leader, "Whoa" right before he reached a wall of the arena became his source of safety and comfort. He learned to navigate the indoor arena independently, and would often come with a head-swinging walk to greet volunteers whose voices he recognized. He learned to listen to key words, could lounge both directions with a lead line, and LOVED his giant long rolls in the arena sand!! His usual greeting was his soft, gentle nose touching your arm as you walked past his stall - just a "hi" to let you know he'd like some of your time.

Then, again, volunteers and program kids started to notice changes - a few tears from his right eye one day, a return of panicky moments when turned out, and Concho started to nip instead of that gentle nose greeting. They saw this for what it was: pain. Sadly, our broken world shows evidence of sin's effect all the way through. Concho and all of our horses show that - their sicknesses, injuries, past abuse, and pain are evidence of a world that's not as it should be, not how God created it to be. This time, Concho's only remaining eye had also succumbed to uveitis, and with his recent struggle adjusting to blindness, requiring a familiar environment, and increasing age, vets recommended against a second surgery. Concho was clearly in pain and mentally struggling despite eye and pain medications multiple times a day, and we knew the answer we didn't want was coming.

Sharing such heartbreaking news with volunteers and program participants is never easy, but the number of folks who had recognized the difference in this sweet horse's demeanor and were sad but glad we would choose to keep him from suffering further was a relief. God goes before us. Concho's life also prompted conversations about how we got to a world where things like this have to happen, and the hope we can have in the new heaven and earth promised by a good God who is with us in these difficult times.

We were blessed with a few sunny days in the middle of February - almost unheard of for the Pittsburgh area! When the vet arrived Concho was surrounded by volunteers whom he loved and who rubbed and hugged him.

"Concho went so peacefully and down easy. Olivia [who initiated his coming to RYYR] was by his side and we all surrounded him with love...[the vet] did mention that is the nicest he's seen a horse go down."

It wasn't in our timing, but till the end Concho was ready in God's timing.

"The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised." - Job 1:21 NIV



# RYYR Wishlist:

- **Gift cards (needed before summer!)**

We love to give the kids small value gift cards to reward them when we catch them doing good. When they've done something without being asked or when they've been more thorough or thoughtful and especially kind, we give them a thanks and a gift card to show them we noticed. Some of these kids don't get encouragement so this is just a small way that we can do that. Small value of \$10 to places like Subway, Chick-fil-a, McDonald's, Dairy Queen, etc.



- **Plastic forks**
- **All-purpose cleaner**
- **Toilet cleaner**



Or you can donate to RYYR and we will put it towards current needs!

**Paypal: @ryyr2010**

**More ideas: See our Amazon wish list [here](#)**

If you live locally, some items on our Amazon wish list are cheaper when bought locally and brought to us.

**THANK YOU!**

We love our new wheelbarrows! The horses thank you for making manure removal more efficient :)

## Prayer & Praise Requests:

We are in need of prayer for one of our most beloved horses, Juliet. Since December Juliet has been battling an unknown health issue. She has been itching so badly that she is scratching the hair off her body and causing wounds. At the suggestion of our local veterinarian and our equine hospital, Juliet has been through numerous types of blood tests, exams and multiple rounds of prescription drugs that have not changed her symptoms. We are now taking her to Ohio State University (on April 12th) in desperation and hopes that they can figure out what is causing her such miserable discomfort. We are out of options and are asking for everyone to pray for this situation. Thank you! - *Micheline Barkley, Co-founder*



- For RYYR's board members and leadership as we work on updating various ranch forms/information and seek God's vision for future plans.
- Praise for a few new folks training to become mentors, and prayer for more mentors willing to share their time and faith, and learn about horses!
- Prayer for mentor training happening through the end of May, for us to seek God daily in preparation.
- For us to be bold in seeing and taking opportunities to speak God's word in the lives of youth who come during summer programs.
- Praise for sunshine and spring! Prayer for all the transitions that come with spring/summer seasons.

**THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND PRAYERS!**

Come and visit our website at [www.RYYR.org](http://www.RYYR.org), share our video <https://vimeo.com/392571914/5c6f4c7d20> and don't forget to follow our Facebook page for all our event updates!