

April/May 2020



*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.*

## Ghost town USA

Similar to everywhere else in America, its eerily quiet at the ranch. This is the time of year when we would have much volunteer traffic while training mentors. Though we are training on a small scale in order to comply with the current “Stay at Home” mandate, the ranch still seems dormant. The horses are not being ridden as much so you would think that they would be happy to stand around all day and eat, however, I’ve noticed they seem kind of sad and quite frankly, are getting’ a little sassy. If horses have energy and no job, they’ll take that energy and use it by testing their limits. I believe our horses enjoy all the activity at the barn and just like us, when we are busy and exhausted, we just want rest. But now that the whole nation has been resting for almost 6 weeks, my perspective has changed drastically. Ministry is hard but add horses to that, 26 to be exact and running this organization can be exhausting. I was dreading the upcoming spring busyness a little bit. But God has reminded me that I am special and only I can fulfill MY job as God intended. Rest is good but it is also good to work.

***Ecclesiastes 2:24- Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God***

Recently, after the quiet winter months, and then the Covid-19 shutdown, I began to feel melancholy. One day just melted into another. Then, I had a request from the Veteran’s Breakfast Club for an online interview. I shared about the work that we are doing at RYYR and then my connection to Veterans. It was the last week of April, the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the last flights out of Vietnam. My family was on a flight here days before the fall of Saigon. It was a bittersweet interview. It made me realize how blessed I am to live in America. After the broadcast, I received several emails. One was from a Mom, desperate to help her son through some hard times.

I invited them out to the ranch (using the required guidelines and appropriate cautionary measures) and they came. The mom had disclosed that she was a 12+year recovering addict, but their son’s father became an addict about 5 years ago and dropped out of their son’s life. Their son, now about 16, was born with a cleft palate.

Praise God for the medical ability to fix this physical ailment, however, the scars that it leaves are quite obvious. Her son became the subject of much ridicule and bullying because of his cleft palate. He felt he was unable to “fit in” anywhere. He began to use drugs. This was his mom’s worse nightmare. She got him into counseling several times. Her last resort was to put him in a residential facility but she was concerned about the long-term effects. When she heard my interview on Veteran’s Breakfast Club, she said, “I felt hopeful.” She thought, “Maybe this ranch can help my son.” When they came out to the ranch, I could see and hear the mom’s

love and desperation to help her son. I shared this story to share that in that moment, with this mom & son, I felt alive for the first time in months. I did not realize how dead I was inside! It dawned on me that unless I am serving God, giving hope and encouraging others, I am dead inside. Covid-19 has taught me, that I am an worth nothing unless I am serving my Lord! Praise be to God, he constantly reminds me of why the ranch exists!

## I HATE BEGGING BUT AM NEVER TOO PROUD

Need your support now more than ever, especially now when we can not be out and about to fundraise! Our expenses this month:

\$1100	Farrier	\$190	Deworming Medicine
\$270	Dentist	\$495	Oats/Grain
\$150	Electric	\$540	Supplements & Daily Medicine
\$515	Liability & Auto Insurance	\$720	Hay – Square Bales
\$160	Sawdust	\$640	Hay – Round Bales
\$380	Worming Tests		

Would you please consider covering any of these expenses or a portion?

## GUARDIAN PONY



About two years ago, RYYR sent a mini horse named Latte to be fostered at our ranch friend, Sarah's place. We've changed her name to respect her privacy. Sarah was diagnosed with Lyme's Disease shortly thereafter. Lyme's Disease carries a long list of symptoms. Dizziness is just one of them. Recently Sarah sent me a message sharing what happens when she has one of these dizzy spells. Since then, Sarah has adopted the mini Latte and spoiled her rotten!

### Her message:

**I know you're always busy, so I try to avoid messaging you, but I wanted to tell you something.**

**Not everyone knows I suffer from dizzy episodes. I have medication for it, but if I'm not in the house, like when I'm out feeding, I can't get to it, so I sit on the ground and have to wait until it passes. Sometimes it's only 15 minutes, sometimes an hour. Anyway, when this happens**

outside, I wanted you to know what Latté does. She comes to wherever I am on the ground and stands watch over me KEVIN (my husband) said. He said if Dutch (my mini donkey) gets too close, she stomps her foot or tosses her head to get him away and won't let him near me. She stands right beside me, sometimes nuzzling my shoulder and nickers oh so very quietly, but he said she never leaves my side until I can get up. If Kevin sees I'm down too long and he comes out, he said as soon as she sees him, she lets out a whinny, like she's saying, "Hey mister! A little help over here!" Once I get up, she'll go back to her grass or hay or whatever, but he said she stays put right beside me, until I get up.

Thought that was pretty neat, so I wanted you to know. Guess I've got my own little guardian (Angel) pony.

It is amazing what animals can sense. This is why we use them at RYYR to help kids heal from their traumas. Praise be to God!

## I LOVED THAT LIFE

-by Micheline Barkley



Jim Ploof & Terri Holman

Meet our volunteer, Jim Ploof. Jim's fiancé, Terri Holman, had heard about the ranch through her sister. From the moment Jim & Terri showed up, they gave it 130% effort. Jim & Terri have been faithful volunteers helping with barn chores and repairs around the ranch. Jim is a diesel mechanic but is a very talented carpenter/repairman. Jim has done it all at the ranch, fixed a leaking well spicket, repaired and replaced many hay nets/hoops, installed top doors for horse stalls, replaced broken stall walls, stall doors, and on and on goes the list. We are very blessed to have them both volunteering at the ranch. Jim was especially drawn to serving at RYYR as being around horses

reminds him of the days, he spent on a ranch as a teenager.

When Jim was 16, his girlfriend, Kathy, had an uncle who owned a 3,000-acre ranch. He was in his 70's and lived there with his 3 older sisters. Even though he was just a scrawny teenager, Jim would spend summer weekends with these four people and work the ranch. The 3 sisters would gather the eggs, milk the cows, tend to the garden and cook all their meals on a wood stove. They made fresh biscuits from scratch every morning. Jim thought it was awesome, especially because these women were in their 80s! Kathy's uncle had 6 mammoth mules that he used to work the farm plowing and cutting hay. Jim spent his days milking cows, driving the mules, baling and storing hay. He learned to fix everything around the farm, including fencing. Riding horses along the fence line to check for needed repairs was Jim's favorite thing to do. It was hard work, long days and sometimes super-hot but he said, "I loved that life." And you can tell by the way his eyes shine as he talks about those days. "I was clean, sober and life was simple on the ranch." Jim stated matter-of-factly. Working the farm, was a wonderful escape from this home life.

Knowing Jim now, with his bright smile, great sense of humor and his gentle giving heart, you would never know that he came from a very dysfunctional family. When Jim was 4, he and his brother had

accidentally overflowed the bathtub and used every towel in the house to soak it all up. His dad came home very upset, packed up and left. For at least half of his life, Jim thought it was his fault. The truth was that his mom had been unfaithful and his Father he had enough. After that, Jim was lucky if he saw his dad twice a year. Jim's mom began riding with over the road truck drivers. She was gone for many days at a time, and left her oldest daughter, Kathy, to care for the other five children.

His mom's first live in boyfriend was Glen. He was strict and physically abusive. Glen later proved to be mentally unstable. After the end of their relationship, Glen had strangled her, and left her for dead, but she survived.

Jim's Mom continued to party and take off with strange men. Until he was 11, Jim only had hand me downs for clothing. He was considered white trash. Their home was filthy with piles of laundry everywhere and they had 13 dogs in their home. It was like something out of an episode of "Hoarders." In steps the next boyfriend, Phil. He had a good job, spent money on the kids, made sure the house was clean. Phil took Jim hunting, to go see monster truck shows and he taught him how to repair engines. His life seemed to be looking up. At 12, Jim remembers receiving a carton of Marlboros in his stocking at Christmas. It was shortly after that when Jim began to see Phil's other side. Things accelerated from bad to worse when they moved to West Virginia. Jim's Grandfather had died. And although his grandfather was not often visible in Jim's life, he did keep Jim's mother in check. Now that he was gone, his mother was accountable to no one. This is when Phil really ramped up the verbal, emotional and physical abuse. At first Phil made up excuses to explain Jim's injuries but after a while, it became obvious that his mom just didn't care. Phil beat Jim so badly, one time that Jim laid in the yard for hours afterwards because he was in so much pain, he could not get up. When he finally came in, and told his mom, her response was, "Well, I hope you learned your lesson." Sadly, this is just one accounting of countless abuse that Jim endured as a child.

Jim was 17 when his mom completely abandoned him. She moved away with Phil, leaving Jim to fend for himself. Jim got a job and paid rent and the bills while he finished high school. When he graduated, Kathy bought him a suit and his vo-tech teachers pitched in to pay for his cap & gown. After graduation, his brother decided to move away so Jim he went with him. Jim put himself through mechanic school, suffered through failed marriages but still found his way back to God. Although Jim was saved when he was five, it wasn't until he pursued a relationship with Christ that he was able to heal from the years of abuse and neglect. Jim started going to church with the love of his life, Terri. With the help of a healing program at his church, he was able to break through the strongholds that held him back from his spiritual growth. They were to go on a motorcycle ride for a date but Terri had to call him with bad news; her motorcycle wouldn't start. He eventually rode over to see if he could help her. When he arrived, he'll never forget what he saw. Terri was standing there in a white t-shirt, wind blowing her long hair around; she was elbow deep in grease trying to fix her motorcycle. During our interview, Jim said with a twinkle in his eyes, "That was the sexiest thing ever!"

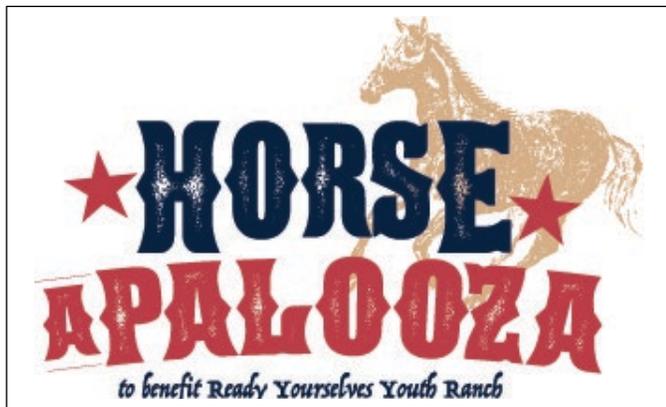
In the end, Jim made a choice. The choice was to be bitter or better because of his experiences and he chose better. And with a Christ centered life, he wants to help kids in crisis. He's said that so many

people had taken time to pour into his life that kept him from going the "other way" that he now wants to do the same for others.

## DON'T FORGET!

You can support us by ordering clothing items from our online store. Any items ordered will be created once the covid 19 work ban is lifted.

[ryyr2020apparel.itemorder.com](http://ryyr2020apparel.itemorder.com)



**CANCELLED  
DUE TO  
COVID-10!!!**

Our annual golf-outing is tentatively planned for June 20th  
Please see pgs 6 & 7 for information!

Please continue to pray for our ministry; and as always,  
Everyone is welcomed to come out and visit our ranch  
just call or text us at 412-585-0383 for a Barn Tour appointment.

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!



8th Annual  
**RYYR**  
**GOLF**  
*Outing*  
 to benefit Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch



**JUNE 20, 2020**

**PONDEROSA GOLF COURSE • 9:00 AM SHOTGUN START**

2728 STATE ROUTE 168, HOOKSTOWN, PA

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



**\$80 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.



Event  
 Schedule

**8:00 am - 8:45 am**

Registration and warm-up

**9:00 am**

Shotgun Start  
 Beverages provided on the course

**2:30 pm**

Refreshments and cash bar

**3:00 pm**

Dinner, prizes and Chinese auction

**Register by June 10, 2020 at [ryyr.org](http://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 or Jason at 724-742-9887.



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**GOLF**  
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**REGISTRATION**

Registration deadline June 10, 2020

For more information, please call  
 Matt at 724-321-5034 or Jason at 724-742-9887.



**CONTACT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION**

- Individual Player      \$ 80 each
- Dinner Only                \$ 50 each
- Tee/Green Sponsor      \$ 125 each
- I'm sorry I am unable to attend, but wish to make a donation

**List each of the golfers in your foursome:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Tear Here

REGISTER ONLINE AT: [RYYR.ORG](http://RYYR.ORG) OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/RYYR.OFFICIAL](https://facebook.com/RYYR.OFFICIAL)

**MAIL CHECK AND THIS FORM TO:** Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch  
 115 Meehan Lane, New Brighton, PA 15066