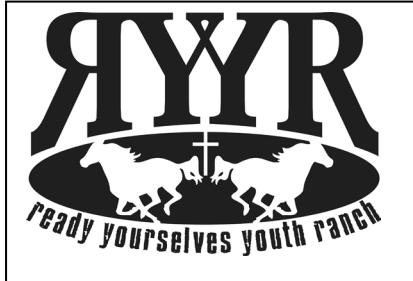


# DECEMBER 2022



**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



## MERRY CHRISTMAS!

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons." - Galatians 4:4-5

## HEADS UP!

This is a very long newsletter because the previous newsletter failed to send so we are combining the two. Our apologies for that and thanks for your patience!



## Thanks from a Mom

"I just wanted to thank RYYR for the outstanding job they do in this ministry. I am so beyond thankful for the staff and volunteers that have made it possible.

W and E look forward to spending time with their horse and their teacher. They have developed confidence in their communication and their self awareness of how they feel. I have seen so much growth in their character.



When we started with RYYR the twins were really going through a lot emotionally. Their father left and 3 of their older brothers who had filled that role had grown up and left. I had just gotten married and they had a new step dad.

Through-out their time at the ranch they have been able to enjoy consistency. The volunteers are always there and happy to see them. The horses are also consistent and happy to see them.

I believe that every one of their experiences at the ranch has helped them heal and remember the goodness of God. What a privilege to be able to ride horses, participate in a rodeo and to embrace their God who loves them so much outside the church in such a special way.

Thank you so much! You are changing lives!" - *parent testimonial*

## Mentees shared about their experience:



*My favorite thing about my horse is...*

- the bond I have with my horse
- she listens very well
- our connection
- his personality, he's very sweet
- that he's stubborn like me
- he has a good personality and is quirky
- his obsession with grass



*One thing I learned this summer is...*

- how to be patient with my horse and others
- it's not scary to ride a horse
- I've been accepted for me and I've learned how to be social with other people
- how to gain my horse's trust
- horses respond to your body language



## Parents and guardians shared the changes they've seen in their children:

- He is doing more chores and has more confidence.
- Everytime he came home from the ranch he was in a very positive mood.
- I notice they changed their attitude and the way they view life as well as embracing their confidence to another level.
- She finally was able to communicate her needs to me instead of tolerating and then acting out!

I'll end with words from a parent that encouraged me that we are keeping the focus in the right place!

We need more Christian based programs like this. In this day and age people have been thinking they can do it all by themselves. The mentors are not only showing respect for the animals and children but their love for GOD.



"Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God...Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold."

2 Corinthians 3:4-5,12

# **Even while we serve we are also served by others!**

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord... Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ...Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-5,12,27

## **CARES Volunteers:**

We have been blessed to have a group of adults with disabilities regularly helping us with barn chores so we decided to give back with some horse love! The amount of joy seen in these photos doesn't compare to the love that was felt that day. The blessings in serving are abundant! Thank you CARES group!



## **The Trellis Project groups:**

Find out more about their organization here: <https://www.thetrellisproject.co/>



Over several visits we have enjoyed working side by side with staff from the trellis project and groups they have brought to volunteer at RYYR. We are so thankful for their vision to come alongside nonprofits and businesses, making essential connections between the two to support the missions of both. Check out one group's day at the ranch here: [AGI's Purposefully Good Day at Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch](#)



## **Portage Learning employee group:**

Much was accomplished through the work of a large group of hard-working volunteers! Brush cleared to improve horse safety in the back of several paddocks, cleaning and organizing the boot room to provide easy access for kids in need, and construction of a brand new outdoor wash stall!



## The Table that Became a Well

When we moved the ranch to the current location in 2016, we did a lot of clean up. The hay mow (main upper floor of the barn) had almost 2 feet of loose hay and chaff from the previous tenant. When we went to clean it out, we found broken glass, old suitcases, pieces of furniture, oil cans and other trash. But we also found this 4

ft x 4 ft, butcher block table top. It was 4 inches thick of solid hardwood and heavy as can be. I thought it would make a great table, it just needed legs. So we bolted some 4 X 4 posts on and made legs. This table sits in the breezeway at the entrance to our barn. It greets every visitor and is an inviting place to sit and rest. Even though it sits under cover, it is still exposed to a lot of weather. When one of our volunteer groups came this summer to do maintenance work at the ranch, refinishing this table was on their list of things to do.

As I was leaving the ranch that day, I saw three volunteers working on the table, I stopped them and thanked them and explained that they weren't just sanding a table.

I explained that over the years, this table had become a "family center" to so many kids. It was at this table where we had many discussions about life and its difficulties. It is also where we share about Jesus. It was also the lunch table for kids of our county camp. We run a special summer program for the local county juvenile services, which includes lunch. Volunteers have generously supplied warm, delicious cooked meals. Because we have tried to be good stewards with the finances we are given, we decided to accept an offer from the United Way when they offered to provide free lunches for the kids. We never want to seem ungrateful, but the meals were mostly like school lunch style with sandwiches, fruit and milk cartons. Sometimes the meat or cheese was frozen. You could tell the atmosphere at the table had changed. Where there was animated conversation before, now the kids were mostly quiet and many skipped the trays and cold food.

When I saw the difference, I realized how important the warm, home cooked meals were. Most if not all of these kids do not sit down for dinner with their family on a regular basis. We sat down at this table once a week w/ each group of kids, like a family. We shared the meal, looked them each in the eyes and had caring conversations. At this table, they learned that there were people that cared about them. Cared enough to prepare them a home cooked meal, cared enough to ask them, "How have you been since we saw you last week?" They also saw (in the volunteer interaction w/ one another) how God calls us to treat one another with love and kindness. Tears have been shared at this table, as well as laughter and celebrated accomplishments.

It's impossible to convey to volunteers the impact of their service. How can scooping poop, scrubbing water buckets, sanding and refinishing a table help hurting kids? Every act of service from our volunteers puts a drop in a well. A well from which the kids can take what they need, whether its time with a horse, time with a mentor, an ear to bend or someone to hug them on a really bad day. I like to think of this well as a well of love and hope. Volunteers fill it and the kids draw from it.



## 10th Annual Golf Outing

Was a success and raised over \$4,000. You could not have asked for a more beautiful June day to golf!  
Thanks to all who attended and the volunteers that helped put it together!

## 2nd Annual Purse Bingo



We had a great turnout for the second year in a row! With 70-odd baskets in the Chinese auction, plus special item auctions and bingo to play, there was something for everyone to enjoy. In just one afternoon \$10,600. was given to support the kids and horses that benefit from programs at RYYR! Here's a few of our winners:



**SPECIAL THANKS TO CORY ST. ESPIRIT FOR THE  
DONATION OF THE **SUBWAY** SANDWICHES FOR THIS  
EVENT!**

# **When the Music Stopped**

*By Micheline Barkley*

.....Once again, I have to apologize for the six-month gap in communication. Many of you are probably ok with that as I too hate being inundated with emails, junk or not. Our goal is to share with you, our supporters, what is happening at the ranch, including how God is using us to affect those we serve. I never want RYYR to be about me, and that is why it is difficult for me to write this. I realize I have become the “face” of the ranch. However, many of you have noticed that you haven’t seen my face around much this year. As with most of the stories I share, there is pain and struggle but also hope and it is because of the hope that I feel compelled to share.

I am one of those people that has music in my head all the time. It could be the last song I heard playing in the grocery store that would be stuck in my head all day. I hummed a lot, while I cooked, while I folded laundry, while I worked. My niece called me Aunt Hummy. Just can’t help it. Out of nowhere, this year I became an insomniac. That is when the music stopped.

Because my life was always so full and busy, I was exhausted and I slept long and hard. Never had trouble sleeping and all of a sudden, I wasn’t sleeping. It got really bad in June. As tired as I was, I couldn’t even nap during the day. I felt like a zombie, I could barely function. I withdrew from people, activities, responsibilities and life in general. Every day I would wake up so tired and count the hours until I had another chance to sleep again. Many days I cried and wished away my existence. I didn’t want to die, but I didn’t want to live like I was. When you don’t sleep, you’re mentally and emotionally wrecked. For the first time in eleven years, I did not serve at the ranch. No barn chores, no mentoring, nothing. My life was traveling 75 mph and then I hit a brick wall.

I tried getting help medically. Doctors don’t know what causes insomnia (nor do they try to figure out why you have it), they simply treat the symptom with a pill (or many different pills.) Pills come with many side effects, some worse than the lack of sleep. Over the counter supplements can be just as bad. In this time of serious trial, I have been pushed to the brink. I find myself questioning my faith. I begged God to heal me, to help me, to fix me. How could I serve him in this condition? Why would he leave me in a state in which I was no good to him? Why was he so silent while I was suffering? I was sad, tired, angry, frustrated and weepy all the time. I was so tired of praying and begging him and getting no response. So I stopped. I quit praying and connecting with God. Why bother, right?

But disconnecting from God made things worse. Without Him, I have no hope. Zero. In my time of trial and suffering, God showed up in ways that I didn’t expect. For starters, many people stepped up to fill the voids I left. It took a lot of people and a lot of time. I’ve learned that I will not make or break this ranch. This ranch is His and He will make it happen, every day. Apparently, he wanted me to rest. I am learning that I need to lean into God, not lean away, and my only hope is in Him.

Some days I feel like my old self. Some days are just rotten. I am not the same high energy person, on fire with passion for God. God had taught me that even though I can’t serve him right now, my value is not in serving him, my value is in being his child. I am not used to this. I am sure some day when I look back at this season in my life, I will understand why God took me out at the knees. But for now, I have good days and I have bad days and God has given me the grace to sustain me each day and that has to be enough until he heals me.

Many people have prayed for me and comforted me when I was inconsolable. Those kind words and encouragement helped me put one foot in front of the next one. Some days are still like that, just taking the next step, living one day at a time. But for now, I will remember the words that a fellow ranch lover and insomniac said to me:



*"You have been on my heart and mind since I talked with you yesterday. When I was up in the night (as always), I prayed for you. Please know that even exhausted and tired (and maybe, if you are like me, even grumpy), God is using you in ways we can't even imagine. I took these photos a couple of weeks ago on my way to the ranch. Maybe when you look at them, you can be reminded that God keeps his promises. Even though in Noah's case he had to go through a year of storms before the rainbow."*

.....and recently, I caught myself humming while I was doing dishes. God is faithful even when I am not.

## You're Stupid.....The Finale

In 2 previous newsletters I shared a story "You're Stupid" about a young lady I mentored named Natalie. If you missed it, you can read it at this link to our website <https://www.ryyr.org/news> (click on March 2022 and May 2022 newsletters)

After three months of teaching Natalie how to drive, she passed her driver's license test on May 20th! Thank you all for your prayers. and a few days later, she graduated! This young lady has been through a lot but this year, she found out that what she believed were lies. She knows she's not stupid and that she CAN do whatever she puts her mind to. She's also begun to do daily devotionals and put her trust in God.

## THANK YOU Lisa & Tank Lathom!!!

Her generous donation made possible the full purchase of a new dump trailer for RYYR! Our old one was rusting through and we rely on it for the transport of sawdust for horse bedding, hay and many other ranch projects. That's a load off our shoulders!

## NEW FUNDRAISER OUR FIRST ANNUAL SPORTSMAN'S BASH (next page of this newsletter)

For additional information

Email: [micheline.barkley@ryyr.org](mailto:micheline.barkley@ryyr.org) or  
Call/Text: 724-713-1653

OR go to our website and purchase through a donation via Paypal and noteate for the Bash



**Perfect  
Christmas  
gift!**

RYYR benefit

# **SPORTSMAN'S Bash**

## **MARCH 4, 2023**

**NOON - 4:30 PM • BILL'S VALHALLA**

**7420 Big Beaver Blvd., Beaver Falls, PA**

**\$50 DONATION**

**GUNS SUPPLIED BY  
GORILLA GUNS LLC**

**ONLY 333 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD!**

# THANK YOU RYYR VOLUNTEERS!

**“Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these [volunteers] from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”**

You may have heard this saying applied to postal couriers, but here at RYYR we witness this sort of dedication on a daily basis! We are greatly blessed.

## Volunteer Fun Show & Costume Parade

Our volunteers who have faithfully shown up on a weekly basis to help with ranch chores over the past year enjoyed fellowship together with a Fall Fun Show followed by a costume parade and a bonfire!



# HAY DAYS!

We work til dark! This group of teens and others stayed from 2pm-past dinner, walking our HILLY field many times.



Many hands make light work. We had volunteers, friends of friends, and neighbors turn out to help! This year we made 1797 bales of hay from our own fields and had more donated by a local family. We still buy numerous round bales, and are learning the process of maintaining haying equipment and fields!



## Out and about enjoying their retirement...



Athena and Tyler served six and nine years at RYYR and are loved by many children and volunteers! They retired this fall due to age and physical limitations.

Athena is enjoying a huge pasture and being reunited with past RYYR rescues who were adopted by the same family that is now providing Athena's retirement home!

Tyler is staying at the ranch for the time being, and enjoys time with his buddies Cisco and Calvin, and a good romp and roll in the sandy arena :)



# FEELING GENEROUS?

Check out our Amazon wish list: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1JLWVZPQHJX?ref_=wl_share)

If you live locally, some items on our Amazon wish list are cheaper when bought locally and brought to us (i.e. bleach, buckets w/ screw on lids, etc.)

**OR donate through Venmo @readyyourselvesyouthranch  
OR Paypal @ryyr2010**

## RYYR CHRISTMAS WISH LIST:

- **Horse Trailer Flooring Repairs**

Our horse trailer used for transporting program horses to fundraisers, events and equine hospital is in need of repairs. The current low quality rubber mats that protect the main floor of the trailer are crumbling under hooves. It is time that we replace the mats, investing in a high-quality product that will last RYYR forever is the goal here. After some research, WERM brand was discovered. A local trailer shop can install WERM flooring for \$2,075. If you would like to donate directly to this repair, please make a note with your donation “**Horse trailer repair**”. Thank you for your consideration.



- **2 Drawer Locking File Cabinet**

We could really use one with 2 locking drawers for our barn office!

- **9 Lives Daily Essentials Cat Food**

Our barn cats get cat food in the mornings but they hunt the mice at night. We've found that sticking to one type of cat food helps to keep the cat “barf” to a minimum. If you live locally and can pick up a bag to donate, we'd be so grateful! The brand is 9 Lives and it comes in a blue bag “Daily Essentials.”



- **Hand and Foot Warmers (also on our Amazon wish list)**

Last winter, we gave our volunteers some disposable hand and foot warmers to help them through the really cold months of January and February. Since then, they have asked if we could get more. If you live locally you can drop them off at the ranchor you can get them online and have it shipped to us via Amazon. Our volunteers would really appreciate some of these warmers!



- **Morning Chore Volunteers!**

If you are available between 8-10am in the morning and willing & able to help turnout horses and clean stalls, please contact us at 412-585-0383 or email [office@ryyr.org](mailto:office@ryyr.org).

## **Prayer & Praise Requests:**

- For RYYR leadership as we bring in new partners and people to file much-needed support roles - for the process of creating structure that enables unity of mission and vision
- For children who attended the mentor programs and day camps this summer to continue to grow in knowledge of God's love and salvation
- Thanksgiving and praise for God's provision of mentors, volunteers, and 2 part-time staff who made it possible to reach 81 children through individual & group mentoring programs plus another 113 (despite several covid-related cancellations) through day camps during 2022!!

## **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!