

*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.*

**MAY 2022**

Ummmm.....This is NOT my horse



Kristy adopted one of our horses, Dream, a while back. Dream is now enjoying her retirement life as a pasture pet at a small boarding facility that Kristy has affectionately renamed “Dreams Sanctuary.” She also happens to have one of our mini horses, Zeba. As horses come and go at her small barn, there was a need for a companion horse here and there so we were happy to let Kristy foster Zeba. Over the recent few years, Zeba developed a bit of chronic cough living at our facility. We had the vet look at her several times, tried medicine and soaking her hay in water but had yet to find a way to eliminate the cough, however, with the change of location, her cough seems to have almost completely disappeared. How does someone get to a point in life that they want to have a 1,000 lb animal as a pet?

Kristy had always loved horses but it was summer camp that did it. Her home life was full of turmoil because her Dad struggled with mental illness which created a lot of drama and unwanted attention. At the age of 9, her parents sent her to her first summer camp. Being so young, it was but camp was where her love for horses was nurtured. The camp had stables and Kristy volunteered to get up early every morning to help feed and care for them. Because she had no structure in her home life, this daily care of the horses really helped Kristy feel the benefits of waking up with a purpose and schedule. About the 4<sup>th</sup> year back to summer camp, she was sent to camp for a full four weeks. She couldn’t wait to be with the horses again. Upon entering her assigned horse’s stall, she was taken back by what she saw. Her horse was skinny and covered in bite and kick marks. In typical selfish teenage girl fashion, instead of seeing the inside of the horse with compassion, she saw what an unattractive horse she was because of her scars. Confused, she thought to herself, this can’t be my horse and immediately walked out of the stall and declared, “This is NOT my horse.” The counselor in

charge of the horses explained to her that the camp rented these horses and they could try to return it and get another horse, but until then, Kristy could try to use this horse. The horse's name was Hot Shot. She was not a fancy horse, just a simple chestnut with a white blaze on her face. Time came to saddle Hot Shot. This was the moment when her steel teenage heart was pierced by compassion and love. When Kristy went to place the saddle on Hot Shot, all the signs were visible. Much like humans, horses show similar signs of fear, Hot Shot's eyes were wide revealing the white parts, her head was up high and on maximum alert, her body twisted to get away and then the muscles began shaking violently. Even with a 30+ year gap since this occurred, Kristy still cried as she recounted the story to me. She put the saddle back down and ached inside with the realization that this horse must have been abused to create such fear. No, this horse wasn't going back. Kristy could identify with Hot Shot. They both shared an internal pain from a broken life. Kristy was determined she was going to befriend this horse and show it a different life. A life of peace and love. That summer, the horse counselor spent extra time with Kristy, to teach her how to work gently with Hot Shot. Kristy spent her money to buy Hot Shot extra feed to fatten her up a bit. She was desperate to keep working with Hot Shot and care for her. She asked her mom (actually it was more like begging, repeatedly) if they could buy Hot Shot. Her mom hesitated on the



thought of ANY horse as she herself was kicked in the head by a horse which caused all her teeth to fall out, just two weeks before her wedding. It took A LOT of convincing, but Kristy's mom let her keep Hot Shot. At the end of summer, they moved Hot Shot to a boarding barn near home. Thus Kristy's love of horses became ingrained in her.

Horses were an important part of Kristy's life but it was not always possible to keep them. Important enough that this would be a requirement for any serious relationship. When she met her husband to be, she asked him, "Do you like horses?" His grandfather had them and he was familiar with horses so his answer was, "Yes." Thirteen years later, her husband, with the help of Kristy's riding instructor, cooked up a scheme to get Kristy a horse of her own. This horse was to be a Christmas gift. But when this horse walked off the trailer, it was skin and bones, covered in rain rot. This was not the horse they had pictured. The trainer and Kristy's husband were both shocked at the

condition of this horse. The trainer said they should return it but Kristy's husband said, "No. Kristy has enough time and love for this horse." Nikon was his name, and Kristy loved on him for five wonderful years but his previous life of starvation caught up with him and he died.

A lifetime of moving around didn't always allow Kristy to have a horse. Kristy owned a store in Texas called Red Horse Boutique in Texas. After moving for her husband's job she had to once again give up a "horse". She opened another successful shop here in Pennsylvania, but when Covid hit, she had to close it. As felt by everyone in America and all around the world, being separated and closed in was creating a lot of mental health issues. Kristy and her daughters were no exception. They were struggling with depression and anxiety. Fortunate for Kristy, they were living next door to some neighbors who had a couple of horses in a small barn. Because the neighbors were elderly and because of her love of horses, Kristy began helping at their barn. Soon a spot opened up and Kristy found us seeking a forever home for Dream. Kristy feels blessed to be with Dream every day. Being around the horses helped both her and her daughter through some dark Covid days. Dream has a low-key personality (for a mare) but is very communicative and calls out to Kristy when she sees her. Dream snorts a lot and is very verbal. Caring for the horses pushes Kristy to physically get outside. There are so many creature comforts that keep us inside our homes that we can easily become lazy. We forget to get out and connect with God's creation. Being around the horses, means "being present" in the moment. If your head is somewhere else, you can get hurt as horses are large animals so you really have to be alert. Kristy describes her daily life at the barn, "like a dance." While caring for the horses in their stalls, you learn how to move fluidly around the horses and the horses do the same with you. "In the stall, it's as if you're in a relationship with someone else but you're non-intrusive. You communicate with your body language, not words." Because our daily lives are so full of noise and chaos, there is such peace in the physical labor at the barn, caring for animals. Kristy loves to sit in the field and watch the horses at sunset. "They inspire me every day to be a better human. It's awesome to watch them run to the barn. There is something so magical, just you and the horses. Horses have a way of "being with you" that his hard to describe. They don't beg and bug you, so when they do acknowledge you, it is without judgement, they just simply want to be with you." Given the choice to be anywhere else, they chose you. Unless you've felt that bond with a horse, it's really hard to describe. But once you've experienced that sweet spot, you'll never forget it.

I am so grateful for all of our adopters. Thank you for your gracious heart and opening your homes to care for these amazing creatures!

**DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR FUNDRAISERS!**



# Golf Outing June 18<sup>th</sup> and Purse Bingo July 9<sup>th</sup> “To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven;” -Ecclesiastes 3:1



Right now, it's time for us to say good-bye to one of our most faithful and steadfast volunteers, Carol Retsch. You wouldn't know it (because the woman is a power house) but Carol is in her sixties and can work circles around most teenagers. There have been days when all her help has called off and Carol cared for all the horses (18) by herself, stalls and all.

Carol has volunteered for barn chores, day camps and a variety of other ranch activities for several years but is now stepping back to make time to be with and help family going through tough times. We have volunteers that come and go for short periods of time but it's faithful, long-term volunteers like Carol that make it possible to hold this ministry together. It's hard to think about cleaning stalls as ministry but without people to do the work, the horses would not be healthy to use and we would not have time for the kids.

So, THANK YOU Carol!

*“I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice and do good while they live;” -Ecclesiastes 3:12*

## You're Stupid.....Part 2

Last newsletter 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 (click on the March 2022 newsletter):

<https://www.ryyr.org/news>

I mentioned how our relationship started with my appearance at a court hearing. That court hearing was to work out custody for her infant son. It was a month after that, that she sent me a text that she was pregnant. She was devastated. She was trying to manage raising an infant, working part-time and finish high school. We had some back-and-forth conversations about what this would mean for her future. Many people had encouraged her to have an abortion to which she adamantly refused. No matter how hard this was going to be, she committed herself to this new life.

It took several weeks to adjust to the idea and the changes that would come. Natalie made several doctor appointments that she struggled to keep because she did not have rides. Her Dad suggested she take the bus; however, it was the coldest part of winter, 25 degrees during the day and she would have to take her infant son with her. It was much too cold. When she shared her struggle, I told her I could drive her if she gave me enough notice. So, I took her to a couple appointments, then to an early ultra sound because of an uncertain conception date. Natalie said she just felt that this pregnancy was different and was really concerned. “I just know something is wrong.” I told her she was crazy and to relax.

“There's no heartbeat.” was the response from the ultrasound technician. That was a gut punch. I was shocked, I had no words. When I asked her, “Are you ok?” She was very composed when she said, “Yeah.” It wasn't until she came to the waiting room (where I waited while she talked to the technician) that she burst into tears. She was angry, hurting and overwhelmed. I could not say enough to ease her hurt, all I could do was be there for her. To make matters worse, the doctor was concerned about the effects of a non-viable baby on Natalie's body, so she would have to have the baby medically removed. So, the following week, I sat with her through it. Again, feeling useless but just being there for her.

Did you know that even Jesus needed someone to just be there with him? Matthew 26:37-38 says, “He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”

This is how my relationship with Natalie began. With some very painful, intimate life experiences. After helping Natalie get her driver's permit, I made it a point to give Natalie driving lessons two times per week.

#### Week One:

It was really quiet in the car. Neither of us had said any words for quite a few minutes. Then, **Natalie:** "I've always been afraid that I would spend my whole life in jail."

**Me:** "Why would you think that?"

**Natalie:** "It's just my life. I made bad decisions. I was mad a lot. Then I had the baby and I knew that if I did those things, they would take him away from me."

It broke my heart to know that because she grew up in a broken home which created many of her behavior problems that led her to receiving fines and probation. On the other hand, I would have never met her if she had not been on probation. This is how some of the kids end up at our ranch program. Natalie has a 1-year old boy, we'll call him David. So adorable and easy going, is this toddler. Having him has been hard for her but he's changed her life. Natalie is a good mom. While she was trying to complete the 9-week ranch program, she called one morning and said that she couldn't come because she didn't have a babysitter (not one she could trust) for David. We told her the next time this happens, just bring him. We had many hands that were able to help take care of him while she did what she needed to do. Next time she came, he came with her. I think I held David for most of the day. He was so happy go lucky and it helped nurture the emptiness of the loss of my first grandchild several years prior.

#### Week Two:

Because Natalie is 19 and not 16, she is not required to wait the full six months to take the drivers test. **Natalie:** "I'm gonna need the full six months to learn how to drive. I'll never pass the test."

**Me:** "Its like anything else, you will get better with practice."

**Natalie:** "I suck at driving. I don't seem to be getting better."

**Me:** "You just started. You've only driven 3 other times. There's a lot going on around you and in your head when you are first learning to drive. Give it some time, you will become more comfortable and things will become almost automatic."

**Natalie:** "I was at my Dad's house the other day for a birthday party."

**Me:** "Oh yeah. How did it go?"

**Natalie:** "He and his girlfriend knew I had my permit and that I was learning to drive. My Dad's girlfriend said to everyone, "Natalie's got her drivers permit, looks like she's the only one getting her act together."

**Me:** "How did that make you feel?"

**Natalie:** "REALLY good."

She had a huge grin on her face. She said she never really gets those kinds of comments. She went on to explain that she is the middle of 5 children. The oldest is 28, next is 23, she is 19, next one is 18 and the youngest is 14. Four kids in her family are eligible to get a driver's license, yet will be the first one to have a driver's license. That just blew me away. For most people reading this, I can't make you understand how pivotal all these seemingly small moments are. This young lady is at a Y in the road of her life. Left to just figure it out, she would likely choose the easy road and repeat the perpetual cycle of dependency. But with some guidance and encouragement she is choosing the road that is harder because she sees that her goals ARE attainable. After I had dropped her off at home, I started my drive home with a full heart.

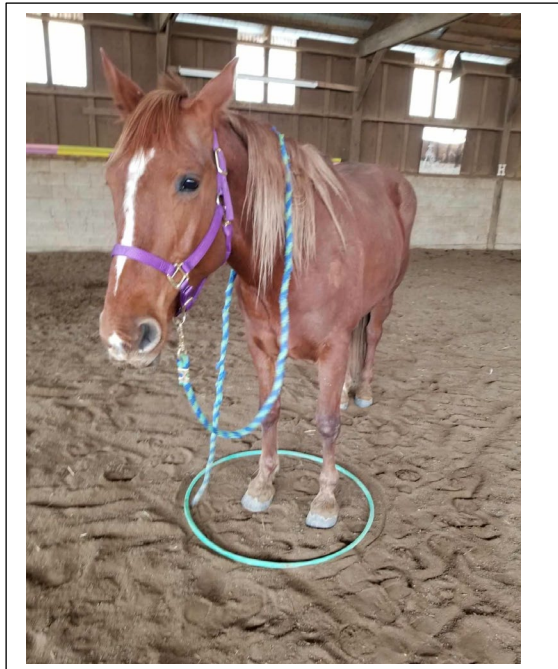
Today, Natalie said to me, "I'm gonna be so nervous taking this driver's test. I'm gonna fail." I told her, "If you keep saying you're gonna fail, then you WILL fail, so stop saying it." To my surprise, her response, "I guess I should pray about it." Natalie's driver's test is May 20<sup>th</sup>, please pray that she will have a peace inside her. A peace that only comes from God, so that she will know it came from Him.

It seems that this young lady has been through so much (especially in the short time I have known her.) But I see how far she has come from the darkness into the light of hope. I feel like she has this itty-bitty flame inside her and I need to fan it and give it fuel before it goes out. This kind of positive change is what we hope for but don't often see. I have to keep reminding myself that it's not the volume of harvest but the number of seeds you sew! I thank God for the wisdom, words and guidance he gives us for each child and situation.



Check our website wish list or our Amazon wish list, just click the links below:  
[https://smile.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/18OCQA2RZXKG8/ref=nav\\_wishlist\\_lists\\_2?\\_encoding=UTF8&pe=wishlist](https://smile.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/18OCQA2RZXKG8/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_2?_encoding=UTF8&pe=wishlist)

Our Website Wish list: [Supplies Needed — Ready Yourselfes Youth Ranch \(ryyr.org\)](http://Supplies Needed — Ready Yourselfes Youth Ranch (ryyr.org))



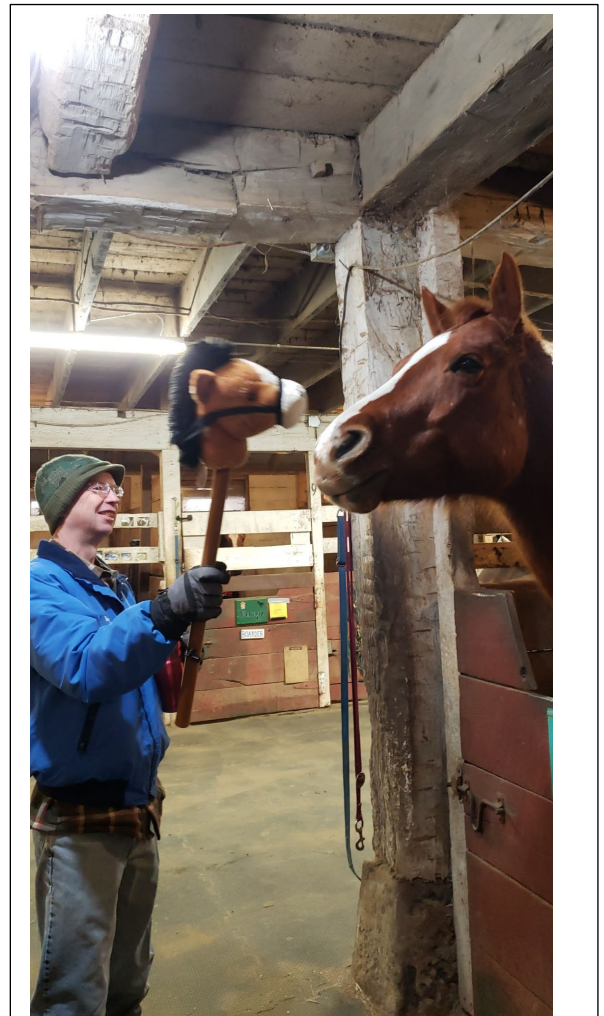
**It's training Season!**



**It's also MUD season!**



**It's time to sunbathe!**



**Who is this IMPOSTOR?!**





10th Annual  
**RYYR**  
**GOLF**  
*Outing*  
 to benefit Ready Yourselves Youth Ranch



**JUNE 18, 2022**

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

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



**\$85 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

**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

**Register by June 10, 2022 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.



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# DESIGNER PURSE



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1:00 pm - 5:00 pm • Doors Open at Noon

Chinese Auction • Basket Auction • 50/50 Raffle

**\$40** Includes 10 bingo cards  
& light lunch

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