

*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.*

NOVEMBER 2021

My sentiments, exactly....

“We the willing, led by the unknowing, have been doing so much, with so little, for so long, that we are now qualified to do anything with nothing.” – Author Unknown

This is a poem by an unknown author and for me, it hits home much of the time. I first heard it from Don Peffer (missionary serving at the ranch) but I tweaked it a little bit. When Matt & I felt the call to start this ranch, God asked us, “Are you willing?” **not** “Do you have enough time?” **not** “Do you have enough money?” **not** “Do you have enough experience?” **not** “Do you have enough knowledge?” If he had asked us any of those questions, the answers would have been an unequivocal, “No.” We were willing, and still are. Most of the time, we are the unknowing leading our volunteers in a blind search for how to help these kids because each child is different with his/her own history and set of needs. A lot of the time, Matt will tell you that he is the unknowing when it comes to projects around the ranch (he’s a jack of all trades, a master of none but somehow, he gets it done.) There is a lot of information on the internet to help but never a definitive answer for your particular situation. God’s word gives us much guidance but the hands on stuff like day to day work and repairs is something we have to figure out. We incorporated the ranch in January of 2011 and I remember those first years when we truly had little and even more recent years when we were living “paycheck to paycheck” in donations, so to speak. But there was that fire in our bellies, that passion to change the world for the glory of God, and He always provided just enough. Well, it’s been ten years folks, 10 years! I don’t know where they all went? It seems like a blink. In those ten years God has brought us through times of fear, exhaustion, frustration but always in the end, joy and healing. This ranch is an example of what happens when you don’t have money, time, experience....didly squat....and you step out in faith and say Yes Lord, I am willing. We are undeserving and have watched God perform one miracle after another and now closing on our 10th year of operation, 7th year of mentoring and 5th year of service in conjunction with Beaver County Juvenile Services. WOW, just wow. Never, ever, did we dream this big. We had a vision of a few acres, maybe 10 or so with a barn. We put God in this little shoe box. We forgot what has been said and is so true of our God,

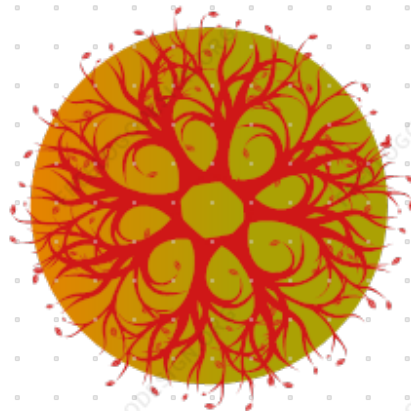
“Now to him who is able to **do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think**, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” *Ephesians 3:20-21*

Our first year of mentoring, we served twelve children (ironic when I look back and think, there were 12 disciples) and this year, we have touched the lives of 500 + children. We have heard the countless stories of pain and suffering, seen the tears and felt the love, hope, joy and restored faith in humanity. We had hoped to see the changes in the kids but didn't expect it because frankly, we had never done anything like this before and didn't have a clue. God pointed us in the directions we were to go and we went. He brought people into our lives to help guide us. The rest was simply, Him. Him present in the midst of the child, mentor, horse mix. Really, we are proof that ANYONE can do it, as long as it's what God wants. As I have said a hundred times, "We're just a bunch of broken people using broken animals working with broken kids and God makes it work to heal all involved." Who or what else can do that? Seriously?! Thank you, Lord!

So with that behind us, we are looking ahead to what God has planned and we are praying about starting another program. The Resilient Program. This will be an after-school program that was in the planning stages, before Covid-19 hit. We put it on the back burner but as of late, my heart is burdened for the kids that are in the most need in our community. I feel like Jonah. I've been avoiding this "beast" of a project. I'm afraid this beast will eat up my life. I use the words beast and eat up because the word consume doesn't convey the fear I have Ha-ha. My mind keeps telling me, "You don't have any more time to give." "You don't have enough help." "You definitely don't have the funds." "You've never done this kind of program before." Sound familiar? When we started this ranch, we were in uncharted territory. Now I know how much time, money and experience it all takes and it's scary because this program will be operational between September through May. It will be triple the funding, triple the time, triple everything! I believed the lies implanted in my head, by Satan himself, I'm sure. But this summer's theme for our Beaver County Juvenile Services Summer Program was Truth and Lies. I spent nine weeks teaching kids about the lies that Satan tells us and how if we believe those lies, it keeps us in bondage. Well, the Holy Spirit is pulling back the veil and I can hear him now, "Look back at what God has done already you knucklehead! Duh!" Does it sound ridiculous to say, it's only when we look back that we can see the way forward? I will share more about the Resilient Program in the months to come. Please just PRAY for us. We need wisdom, we need finances and we need God to put people in our lives that are "on fire" for God's will with regard to this program. Our projected goal is to be able to start this program September 2022. Thank you!

Resilient

A Youth Enrichment Program



re•sil•i•ent rĭ-zĭl'yənt

- *adj.*
Capable of returning to an original shape or position, as after having been compressed. *synonym:* **flexible.**
- *adj.*
Able to recover readily, as from misfortune.
- **Having resilience; inclined to leap or spring back; leaping or springing back; rebounding.**



What's up Dock?

Thanks to Ross Brandenburg, we have a new dock! Ross will tell you he's just an old railroad guy, he doesn't know anything but boy does he have a gift for carpentry type work and he will always give God the glory!

We also have a Blue Heron that is enjoying Ross's handy work. He likes to hang out at the end of the dock because lunch is easy pickins!

For the Love of Bri

From time to time, the kids that have been affected by our ranch stop back to say, "Hi!" or send occasional text messages with updates. Earlier this year, in spring, I had seen some posts on Facebook from one such young man that came to our ranch over 5 years ago. It was obvious that he was going through a bad time but realized that he made serious mistakes. Things could have been worse but he knew he had to change. Seeing his openly repentant heart was good. I messaged him just to see how he was doing and we talked for a bit. Every summer, this same young man wanted to help stack hay. It is a chore that I really do not like. It didn't bother me so much 10 years ago, but at 52, stacking hay is for the birds! And yet there are people out there that just love to do this, it's nostalgic (Cory St. Esprit!!!!), it reminds them of their childhood. Crazy but true. Storing up hay for a full year inevitably winds up being on the hottest days of summer and it's not just a couple hundred bales, it's 3,000 + bales over the course of several days. The hay wagons never seem to end, and as hot as it is outside, it's 15 degrees hotter up in top of the haystack. We have a large exhaust fan at the top of the hay mow, to draw out the hot air. Even with that exhaust fan on, the air is thick and seems hard to come by especially with chaff flying around. This is why I appreciate every single hay stacking volunteer!

When we spoke, I reminded this young man that hay season was coming up and he said, "I'll be there." I'll call this young man, Jason, because as another volunteer put it, "He looks like country singer Jason Aldean." I didn't have a clue so when the volunteer pulled up a photo of Jason Aldean, I realized this young man really did resemble him. Jason it is. This summer, Jason had been working construction full time, installing metal roofs on really hot days. He was working hard on a variety of jobs, trying to learn as much as he could because he wanted to start his own business in remodeling and landscaping.

Even though he put in long, full days, at his job Jason still came to the ranch afterwards and stacked hay for hours. This, I appreciated more than this young man would ever know. Along with every other volunteer that came every day until all the hay was stacked so I had to do very little. My job was to make sure we had water & Gatorade iced in coolers and ordered pizza!

Jason was sixteen when he came to RYYR the first time. He was required to do community service for getting into fights in school and my husband mentored him for a short time. I think it is easy to pass judgment on people when a third party tells you someone's history. Your perception of them can be easily twisted. So, I try to make it a point not to ask why they are there for community services. We usually just get to work and sometimes the kid will feel comfortable enough to share. This is one time that (if I had asked) it may have helped me understand him more but it would not have changed the way I treated him or how I cared about him. What I knew of him was what I saw, which was, that he was a hard worker, never said no to anything I asked him to do and he never complained, he just did it. We joked a lot on the surface but I knew he had a lot of stuff brewing under the surface.

Five years later, during this interview is when I find out why he was fighting with kids in school. When Jason was about 11, a relative of the family, dropped off her 1-year-old baby and never came back for her. Eventually this little girl, we'll call her Brianna was adopted by Jason's Mom and became his little sister. Five years later, the birth mother came back to reclaim her but Jason's Mom would not allow that to happen. The birth mother had since had a second daughter and according to Jason, this second child had a lot of issues and Jason's Mom was not about to let that happen to Brianna.

At 11, Jason had become severely overweight when he had to take meds to combat ADHD. His obesity was the beginning of his many battles. Kids are mean, we all know this. Jason had also suffered through throat cancer when he was a baby and at 14, his parents divorced and he blamed himself. His father began to drink heavily and became verbally and physically abusive. He then attempted suicide multiple times. When that failed, he started cutting and burning himself to relieve the guilt and pain. Then came the drugs. At about 15, Jason was charged with babysitting his little sister. They were at home; his cousin was over and they were just hanging out. Jason decided to lay down for a nap. Jason didn't have a clue that his cousin was molesting his little sister. How would anyone know? This has happened to so many girls (and boys), all over our country, all over the world, right under the noses of their mothers, fathers, siblings and family members. Somehow the story got out at school and Jason was tormented by other kids. I said previously, children are cruel but they took it to a whole new level when they blamed Jason for what happened to his sister. As I've gotten to know Jason better, I have learned how much he loves his little sister. He would do anything for her, anything to make her happy, anything to protect her. If he could, he would give her the whole world. It was no one's fault but the perpetrators. To this day, Jason carries this guilt with him. Until Jason can embrace this truth, he will not be able to remove this millstone hanging around his neck. If you've ever experienced real forgiveness, you know the impact of the release and the freedom that allows your spirit to soar. To forgive is to release the guilt, and to be set free from its bondage. Only then can the healing begin. This is my prayer for this young man.

I asked Jason why he continues to come back and re-connect with us. He could have just done his community service and be gone. He said, "At the ranch, I'm treated like family." When he was doing his community service, he didn't have transportation so I picked him up and took him home. He said, "You didn't have to do that, but you did and that helped be complete my service to do better and be better." Jason said he felt that we loved him as he was, a broken hot mess. We didn't coddle him. We came down on him when he needed it but we also encouraged him when he accomplished something well. He says the support and care we gave him made him want to be better. With our help and his older brother's (who is a believer in Christ) encouragement, Jason has come a long way. He still has a long way to go but sometimes, baby steps in the right direction is what you can manage and that's ok. God will take it the rest of the way when you're ready.

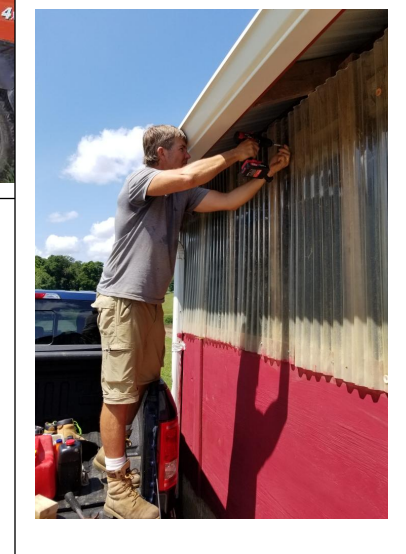
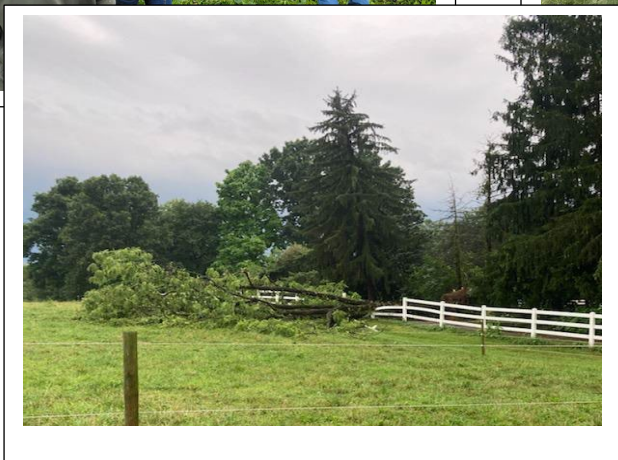
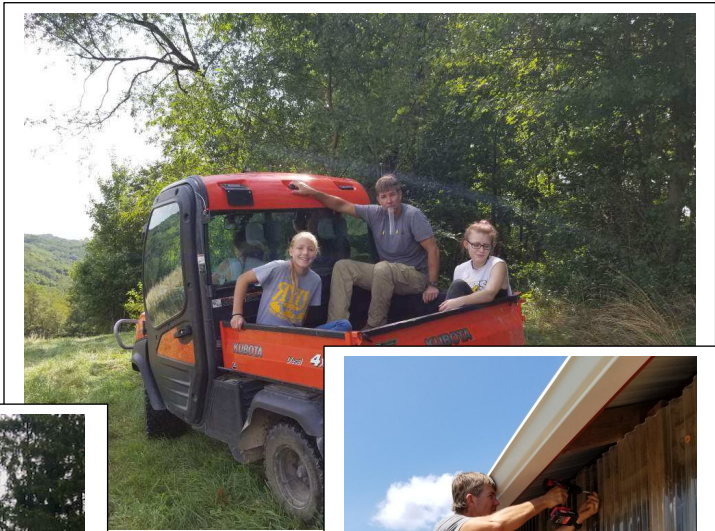
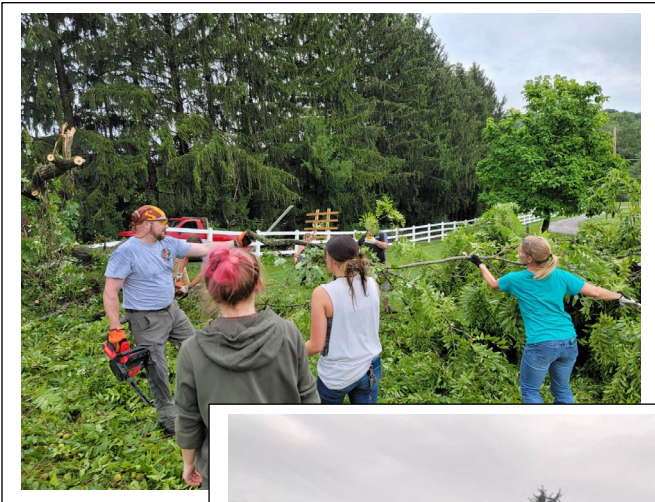
OPERATION NETWORK AND STORMY BLESSINGS

In August, we had a small networking group called "Operation Network" volunteer some time for projects on a Saturday. Ironically, a storm arose at the ranch on the Friday evening before they came. It was late and I had no idea the damage. I knew trees were down all around our township and across major roads. We knew we had some damage on premises but it was dark and we had no idea what to expect the following morning. I prayed for safety for the animals and sent an email out for help. The next morning, we had a slew of volunteers that brought their work gloves, chainsaws and pruning shears. Fortunately, we only had about 6

trees of a variety of sizes come down and a couple pieces of siding from our arena. The storm could have been much worse. First thing in the morning, the crew went to work.

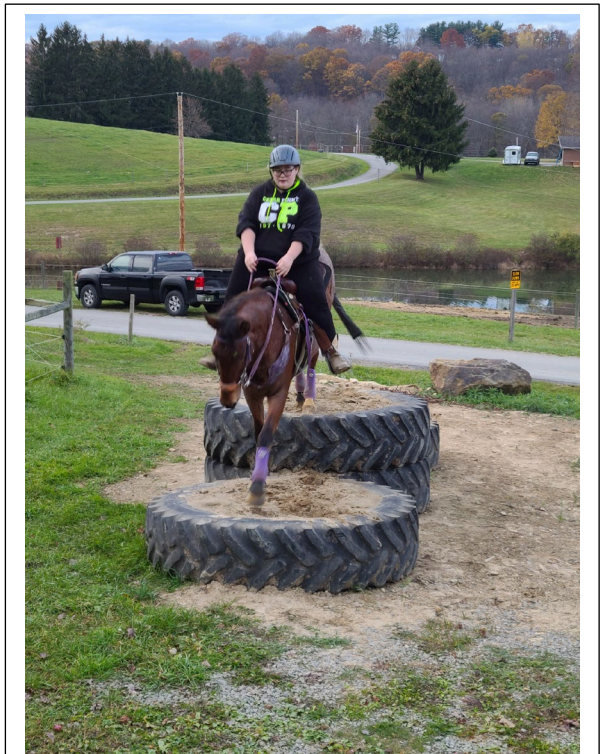


What amazing people showed up! The largest tree was a black walnut tree that belonged to our next-door neighbor, Greg. It fell across his fence, into one of our grazing pastures. Greg only had 1 person to help so the group that showed up became a blessing to our neighbor as well. Greg did express his immense gratitude for the help. The danger about black walnut is that it is poisonous to horses. Poisonous to eat but even if they step on it. So, when this tree fell onto our property, it fell into a horse pasture and spread all its walnuts, branches and leaves far and wide! It was a tedious job but the volunteers picked up every single walnut, branch and leaf! I wish to extend an extra special thank you to Megan & Jonathan England of Northway Church Beaver Campus. They showed up with chainsaw ready to go with Megan 8 months pregnant! Gotta love that kinda spunk! Unfortunately, she knew her limitations and helped with icing down coolers and running to the store for needed items. But still a blessing!





This trenchwork was the base for this
Tire Step Obstacle



Silliness at the Farm



Do you has Cheetos?

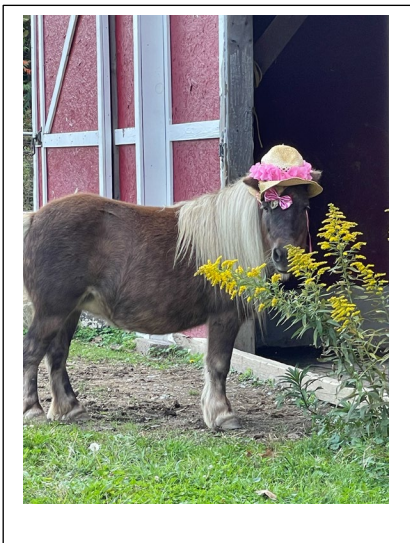
If you know the barn cats, you know
To never, ever leave your lunch
Unattended with Clover around!
She has been seen taking off with whole
Sandwiches!

SERIOUSLY TYLER?



Tyler is on stall rest for a leg injury. We created outside rehab areas so he can be outside during recovery and not stuck in his barn stall 24/7. Savanah was at the ranch one morning and looked over to find Tyler stretching and twisting himself to his limits to get one little sprig of grass outside of the gate panel! As you all know, our horses are not underfed but Tyler takes eating to a whole new level!

THANK YOU FOR THE WELL WISHES!



I had recently been sick and want to say thank you for all the well wishes, prayers, text messages and cards.

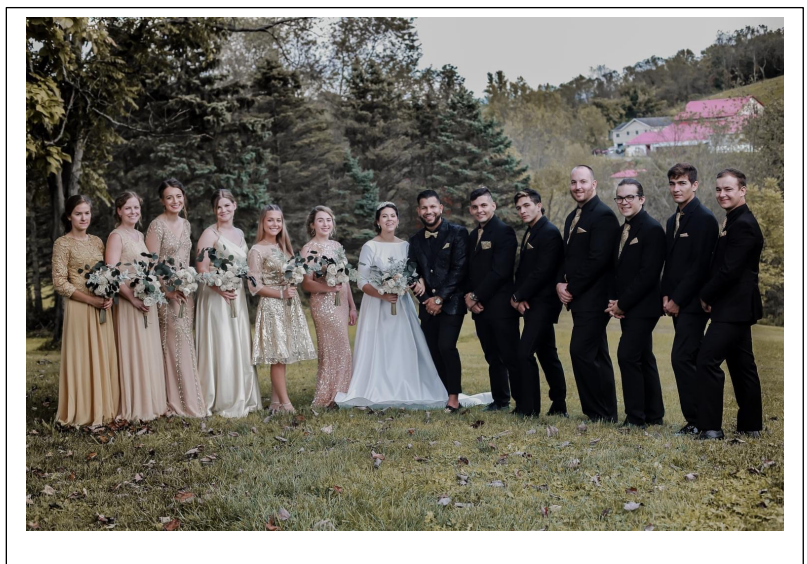
Especially, to those who brought meals, tissues, broth, etc. You really don't know love until you're not healthy and the people who surround you go out of their way to do anything for you. I am so blessed to be surrounded by people such as these! I praise God for each one of you!

I had to share this photo from Sharon Jockel. Sharon adopted one of our mini horses (Latte) and send me this photo that made me laugh. You would not believe the number of accessories that Sharon has for this one little mini! Hats, scarf sets, hair bows, blankets and on and on! It's too funny.

WHAT A JOYOUS MONTH FOR TWO WEDDINGS!



Ranch Manager Rebecca Shaw was married to Joshua Kennedy on a glorious sunny day at the top of the hill on the ranch.



My daughter Michaela Barkley married Cristian Jaramillo right in our yard. We feared rain for the outside ceremony but God cleared out the rain and even provided a rainbow!

CAN YOU HELP WITH THIS CANOE?

We received the kind donation of 2 canoes. However, one needs re-finished. If you think you can help please text or call me 724-713-1653 – Micheline. Thank you!



STILL NEED BARN CHORE VOLUNTEERS!

If you have 2 hours once a week, we surely could use your help! We still have many days and times open for feeding and caring of the horses, twice a day, every day of the week. Please share our need with others, you never know who will have time to help! Thank you!

SEE PART TWO OF THIS NEWSLETTER FOR AN UPDATE FOR FUNDRAISERS!

DON'T FORGET OUR WISH LISTS:

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

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

Don't forget to select us as your Amazon Smile beneficiary!

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND PRAYERS – please don't stop!