

# THE RANCH VOICE

Magazine for friends and donors of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Winter 2021



Tanya proudly displays a self portrait she painted in summer art class at the Ranch.



[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)  
1.800.344.0957

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- A Cranky Young Man?, p. 3
- Turning Fear into Hope, p. 5
- Rev. Tegtmeier: Revisiting a Legacy, p. 14
- Connecting Kids to their Culture, p. 26
- A Leap of Faith, p. 28
- "The Kids Need Us," p. 35

# Message from the President/CEO

## Faith and Expertise: Pillars of Sustainable Excellence



Joy Ryan, President/CEO,  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

### Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Locations

Minot  
6301 19th Ave. NW  
P.O. Box 5007  
Minot, ND 58702

Fargo  
7151 15th St. S.  
Fargo, ND 58104

Bismarck  
1227 N. 35th St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501

**Main Switchboard:**  
1-800-593-3098

**Foundation:**  
1-800-344-0957

DakotaRanch.org

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is built upon faith; and God is the hero in all we accomplish.

On each of our campuses, we provide Chapel and Spiritual Life groups for the kids. Our Spiritual Life staff includes a full-time Chaplain and two full-time Deaconesses; as well as a Vicar, Deaconess, and Pastor we share with a supportive congregation. Every child at the Ranch has the opportunity to hear the Gospel and learn about Christ's love for them.

At the same time, we use the most progressive, cutting-edge, scientific expertise available for treating psychiatric and mental illness in children and adolescents.

Our Medical Director is a Board-Certified Psychiatrist who is also just completing his Board Certification in Lifestyle Medicine. We employ Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, and Mental Health Therapists. Our Superintendent of Dakota Memorial School (our on-campus school) completed Neuroscience Academy Training in Applied Neuroscience and Brain Health; and shares that with our education staff so they can incorporate the latest findings in neuroscience and brain health into their teaching.

We take this intersection of faith and science very seriously—as the children who come to the Ranch have endured trauma that not only affects their brain functioning and thought processes, but destroys hope.

Without the hope found in Christ, our kids have no reason to heal. Without the impact of science, hope can flounder.

“Aaron,” one of our Ranch kids, came to the United States as an orphan adoptee from Southeast Asia. His earliest life was not documented, but it was obviously very hard. The people who adopted him were excited to finally have a son. However, Aaron was not at all what they expected. He was angry, explosive, unwilling to be loved, and had many very serious, undisclosed physical health issues. They were not equipped for all he brought into the home with him. More family trauma followed for Aaron. Social services got involved, he was moved to foster care, and was in and out of medical hospitalizations—all of this on top of his behavioral health challenges. Imagine for a moment the layers of Aaron's pain—unknowable traumas of his infant years, physical illness, rejection by his “forever family,” and life in a family and country where he looked and sounded different than everyone else. Overwhelming.

Aaron came to the Ranch twice. Initially, as a medically fragile child, he needed lots of nursing care, and frequent doctor and hospital visits. Ranch medical staff worked hand in glove with his primary care doctors to ensure all his care was complementary. The direct care and therapeutic staff worked with him on trauma issues and impulse control. Aaron was still too angry to pray, so staff prayed for him. In spite of it all, Aaron excelled at school, maintaining a 4.0 in his high school classes. With new coping skills, he went back to live with his foster family... and our prayers continued.

He came back to the Ranch about six months later. The foster family was exhausted. Because of the layers of his issues, he was still struggling.

The services and prayers continued.

When a new gastroenterology specialist was found to treat Aaron's physical health issues and he was relieved of chronic pain, he invested himself in treatment at the Ranch like never before. He began to understand his behaviors and ability to make choices. He began to believe, to have hope that he really was the remarkable person God created him to be.

And then, a new adoptive family stepped forward. They had adopted another international child with physical health needs. They were ready to challenge a really smart child. They understood trauma. They had prayed. Their eyes were wide open. And Aaron, finally, went home.

Which takes us back to the faith and science critical to Aaron's healing.

Stanford neurobiologist, William Newsome, is a world-class scientist and a church-going Christian who leads the Stanford Neurosciences Institute. He believes science and faith can and do work together.

In an article in Stanford News, Newsome said, "When I speak to religious communities of students at colleges or other events, I always tell them that your faith should be informed by science. It should not be replaced by science. Science can't bear that weight," Newsome said. "It can't give you the things you need from faith or a well-reasoned philosophy."

Faith and Expertise—pillars of Sustainable Excellence at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Please pray for our kids and staff.

In His love,



## Our Kids

### A Cranky, Young Man?

When asked how he got to Dakota Memorial School (DMS), the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Mason set the tone with his ever-present sense of humor, "Well, it's a bit of a story so make sure you have your crumpets and tea."

Mason said he and his family moved to Stanley, ND, just before he started seventh grade. "Seventh grade went fine. In eighth grade, things started going downhill. And finally, in my first semester of my ninth-grade year, that's when things really hit the fan."

Mason was uncomfortable in the large classes and when he started to panic, he sometimes just walked out. He was always on high alert and couldn't focus on the teacher or his

studies. One day, Mason showed up at his mom's work after running away from school. That's when his parents and the school knew something had to change.

Dakota Memorial School was 50 miles from Stanley—requiring a lot of time on the road for Mason, especially in the winter. But the Stanley High School Principal and Mason's parents decided it was the best option to give Mason the very best chance at success.

"The first few months were difficult, to say the least," Mason said.

DMS Principal, Tina DeGree, agreed. "When Mason started there were so many things he wanted to control, and he just couldn't. He wanted to control

his thinking. He wanted to control his actions. We needed to meet Mason where he was at in the moment. We found things Mason loved, like history and social studies, and immersed him in the things he felt comfortable with."

That support from the administration and staff at DMS, combined with a supportive family and sending school principal, helped to create an environment where Mason could thrive.

"It was a big plus that Mason had a supportive family," DeGree said. "Whenever we reached out to his mom, she was always available. He had people at home who were willing to work with us and to give him the support and consistency he needed."

# Our Kids

As Mason settled in and started doing well in school, it became clear he wanted to be a leader. DeGree said she started giving him extra responsibilities to nurture his desire to lead. He picked the word of the week and put it up on the calendar, and he chose inspiring quotes for the bulletin board. By his senior year, Mason was on the student council and was a teacher's assistant in one of the social studies classrooms.

"As I slowly started to feel more comfortable, I actually developed a reputation around the place as being, as I like to say, the cuddly Teddy Bear. If you need comfort, I'm the guy to go to," Mason said.

Mason said the teachers at DMS were fantastic. "I grew really attached to my teachers. One of the teachers, Ms. Jones, was basically my school mom. We shared a love of history. I don't remember exactly how our bond formed, but we were just really close. And Mrs. Erz—I called her 'cranky old lady' and she called me 'cranky young man'."

He also gives credit to the paras for making a huge impact on him, particularly his para, Tiffany. "Tiffany is one of the big reasons I was able to succeed so much at DMS. She was just really nice and had a very calm and welcoming demeanor. It's hard to pinpoint exactly, but there were so

many things about her that just really worked with me."

Mason continued his high school studies at DMS, graduating in 2020. Because it was a COVID year, DMS held individual mid-summer

DeGree said he also stays in touch with teachers and staff at DMS.

In closing, Mason said, "I want people to know Dakota Memorial School is a place where there are people you can trust. If things seem



**Mason found people he could trust at Dakota Memorial School.**

graduation parties in the park. "We were outside in this little tent and the wind was really blowing," Mason said. "When I got out of the car all these teachers started driving by honking their horns. It was very sweet."

"Would I have graduated from high school without the Ranch? I think it's 50-50. But one thing is for sure, I wasn't going to stay in regular school much longer. I was just a wreck."

Now, 18 months after he graduated, Mason is doing well. He has a job and has maintained a lasting friendship with one of his DMS classmates.

bleak, like when a problem seems so ginormous you don't think anyone can fix it, it's best to trust the people there. They will do their darndest to help you."

We take great care to guard the privacy of our children. The pictures you see of Ranch children are only used with the permission of the children themselves and the written permission of their guardians.



Changing Lives at  
Dakota Memorial  
School

We can probably all agree that going to school is important. In addition to reading, writing, and arithmetic, students learn how to make friends, work together, think critically, set goals, and solve problems. School gives kids a community—a place to belong—and it shows them a world full of opportunities and promise.

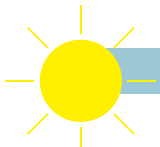
“But, for many of the children

at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, school has been a source of frustration and failure,” said Marcia Bartok, Superintendent/Vice President Education. “They’ve been bullied, ignored, and humiliated. They’ve failed classes, failed to make friends, and failed to learn.”

“So, when they walk into Dakota Memorial School (DMS), they are burdened with fear—fear that the

frustration and failure has followed them.”

DMS’s unique, therapeutic educational environment gives kids an opportunity to experience school in a new way. Our educators work with students to turn their fears into new academic and study skills, new social and emotional skills, new strategies to manage inappropriate behaviors, and new ways to feel and experience school success.



Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch with campuses in Minot, Bismarck, and Fargo, ND, educates two groups of kids. The first group of students are in residential treatment at the Ranch. They live on campus and in addition to school, they receive around-the-clock care. Residential kids stay at the Ranch an average of 6-9 months, and in most cases, return to their home school when they complete treatment.

The second group of kids are in the Day Program. Students in the Day Program live at home and come to DMS during the day. And while they come and go just like they would in any other school, day students receive supportive services during the day that help them be successful. Some of our day students stay with us awhile and then return to their home school. Others stay, sometimes until graduation.

Our principals, deans of students, and coordinators of student services share their thoughts about what makes DMS a special place where fear turns into hope.

## Tina DeGree: Creating moments

### Principal and Director of Education, Minot

Leading with empathy and knowing each person has their own unique story guides Tina in her work with kids at the Ranch.

“Everyone’s childhood is different and filled with highs and lows,” Tina said. “Moving from place to place, not feeling the stability that comes from a healthy home environment,

or stressors from life they cannot control, are things many of our kids come in knowing really well. Life can become a series of ‘what-if’ and ‘if only’—if only this didn’t happen, my life would be better.”

Tina believes our kids are looking for compassion, modeling, and an assurance we will be there through the anger, sadness, joy, and laughter. Our job is to show them how facing, rather than avoiding, their pain, anger, or sadness, is part of the process of healing and finding value



Tina DeGree leads with empathy and takes the time to build a relationship with every child.

in themselves as human beings.

Tina said she had some amazing mentors in her life—mentors that led her to a career in education and emotional/behavioral health at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Tina is Principal/Director of Education of Dakota Memorial School, Minot. In her position, she does a lot of paperwork, planning, and supporting staff so they can

provide the best education possible for our complex kids. Providing the supports to teachers and staff means developing professional relationships and being there through the celebrations and the frustrations.

“My reason for staying at the Ranch is because our mission is centered on Christ,” Tina said. “And what did Christ do? He built relationships with the people He loved. His love was for everyone. You don’t just pay attention to the needs of some kids—you love and care for them all.”

Loving every child, and having a relationship with every child, takes time. But it’s time Tina is more than willing to commit.

“Our kids bring their lives to school. And they are here because they need help improving their lives,” Tina said.

People sometimes ask Tina if she can take away the triggers—the smells, sounds, and situations that remind a child of their trauma. Even though removing the triggers is a logical step to help a child get through the day, Tina knows it’s not best for their long-term success. At the same time, Tina said we are careful

to not overwhelm them with too much too fast.

“We focus on the child and what they need today, tomorrow, and down the road,” Tina said. “We focus on one small part of healing, celebrate when they master a new skill, and then work on building another small skill. As we make decisions about a child’s treatment, we are mindful and present, always

looking for guidance from other members of their team.”

“We can’t remove all the struggles, because those things will still be there when they leave us,” Tina said. “We surround them with the support they need to work through them. For instance, if working with others is a trigger for a child, we’re not going to tell them they never have to work with anyone again. That’s why we are here—so we can help them work through the things that cause distress.”

Tina believes staff training is one of the keys to creating an environment that works for the unique population of kids at Dakota Memorial School. As Director of Education, she helps coordinate professional development for school staff on all three campuses.

“Our teachers are very open to learning how they can better help the kids we serve. We provide special training for staff so they not only understand the effects of trauma, but know how to help kids who are working through it,” Tina said. “Kids do well here because our highly trained staff help them feel good about themselves, even while they are struggling behaviorally, academically, and mentally.”

Tina’s boils her teaching philosophy down to a saying she has hanging on her wall, “Perhaps this is the moment for which you have been created.”

“We need to do our best every moment, because you never know if this is the moment that will make the difference for a child,” Tina said. “If we’re not at the top of our game, we might miss the moment. And that’s not fair to the kids we serve.”

*Tina DeGree lives on a farm near Minot with her husband and their youngest daughter. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from the University of Mary, Bismarck, ND, and her master’s degree in Elementary Education (with concentrations in reading and emotional disorders) from Minot State University, Minot, ND. In addition to her many years of teaching, Tina holds Elementary, Middle, and High School Principal and Superintendent Credentials, as given out by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction.*

## Scott Ottmar: Always learning

**Coordinator of Student Services, Bismarck**

Scott Ottmar has been working with at-risk students since his first teaching job at an alternative school in New Ulm, MN. Since coming to Dakota Memorial School, Bismarck, two years ago, Scott has used his 24 years of experience to not only support the students, but to mentor his colleagues.

“We have a strong teaching core,” Scott said. “Our teachers are strong and hungry to make a difference in kids’ lives. You can see it in the way they plan, in how they talk to their students, and in how they interact with each other. We all learn so much from each other.”

Scott also works closely with the students. He likes to know them each personally so he can help them find and

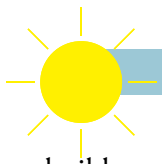
## High Quality Education for all Students

While Dakota Memorial School (DMS) educates students who have experienced little school success, the robust curriculum meets the research-based performance standards of COGNIA, the largest education improvement organization in the world. COGNIA recently awarded DMS with district-wide accreditation at the highest level.

DMS is also the only private school named in the North Dakota Century code. Credits transfer smoothly between DMS and public schools, making it possible for students at DMS to recover credits and get back on track for graduation.



Scott Ottmar helps Ranch kids find and build upon their unique strengths.



build upon their unique strengths.

“I can read about their background in the file, but I want the whole picture,” Scott said. “Are they going to laugh at my jokes? How do they interact with adults? Do they need to work on social skills? One of the things we do really well here is to build relationships with the students so we can sit down and have a conversation when we need to.”

Scott said education is often the last thing on the minds of DMS students.

“They have so many other things going on in their lives and with their mental health,” Scott said. “Our goal is to get them back on track so they can transition back to their home school with a smile, a good heart, empathy, caring, and compassion.”

When students leave DMS, Scott works with them to make the transition successful, sometimes transitioning a class or two at a time.

“Maybe they’ll go to public school in the morning and come here in the afternoon,” Scott said. “If that goes well for a few weeks, maybe we add another class or two, and so on. It’s nice to have the flexibility so we don’t push them out the door to sink or swim. The students appreciate it, and I think the other schools appreciate it too. We always think about what it’s like for the students, but that transition is a big change for the school too. Getting them back little by little is sometimes the best option.”

Scott’s favorite moments are when he sees the light go on for students—when they say, “Okay. Now I get it!”

“Those stories don’t happen every day, but they keep me going,” Scott said. “You keep teaching, and you

keep doing your thing, and you believe that even if you’re not getting the reaction you want, that doesn’t mean they’re not listening or paying attention. Sometimes students will come to me years later to thank me for something I said or did.”

Scott has a long history in education, but he is aware he doesn’t know everything.

“I have worked with at-risk students a long time, and have a special understanding of these kids, but I am always growing and learning,” Scott said. “I thought I had been through just about everything in education, and then this last year with COVID made me realize I hadn’t.”

“We’ve got to think outside the box, 20 miles outside the box, to give these kids what they need.”

*Scott Ottmar has been an educator for 24 years—teaching in schools in both Minnesota and Wisconsin before moving his family back to his hometown of Bismarck. He earned a bachelor’s degree in English Language Arts from Minnesota State University Moorhead, and a master’s degree in Experiential Education from Minnesota State University, Mankato.*

## Shayla Leinen: Bringing hope

Principal, Fargo

Shayla Leinen spends every day working with what she says are the “coolest, most complex, big-hearted kids in the area.”

“We work with kids who

have been through immense trauma,” Shayla said. “They may have learning difficulties to overcome. Or anxiety so severe they can’t get out of the house. Some haven’t been going to school. Others have difficult home situations. Our learners have a lot of different challenges that impede learning.”

“Still, I’m in awe of them every day. Like when a student hasn’t been to school in a year, and they take their first step into our building. Or the day student who makes a 100-mile round trip to school every single day. Or the kid who says, ‘I’m bad at school, and I hate it,’ and they keep coming until they realize they can ‘do school.’”

Shayla started working at the Ranch 22 years ago as a Youth Care Worker in the Ranch’s residential treatment program. Since then, she has been a Case Manager, Day Program Coordinator, and now Principal. The Ranch has become her second home



Shayla Leinen sees every day as a chance for her students to make a fresh start.



and she can't see herself anywhere else.

"This might sound cheesy," Shayla said. "But I'm all in. I believe, to my core, that what we do at the Ranch helps children and families succeed in the name of Christ."

When asked what makes Dakota Memorial School special, Shayla said the obvious differences are the class sizes, teacher-student ratio, and balanced learning environments (classrooms designed with special lighting and furniture options used to create learning spaces suited to each child). But she believes the real difference is the level of expertise of Ranch and DMS staff—expertise in providing trauma-sensitive care.

"As everyone in education becomes aware of the impact of trauma, more and more schools are implementing trauma-sensitive strategies," Shayla said. "But we are cutting edge. We study the latest research and put into practice what we learn about how trauma affects the brain," Shayla said. "We adapt and make changes when necessary. I have a Maya Angelou quote on my wall that says, 'Do the best you can until you know better. When you know better, do better.' That is what we do at the Ranch. We are constantly learning more, stepping outside the box, and doing better for kids."

Shayla said DMS is successful in educating kids with psychiatric and behavioral challenges because everyone has the same mindset—students and staff learn together, make mistakes together, and move forward together.

"I try to cultivate a culture where it's OK to make mistakes," Shayla said. "Every day is a fresh day, and we get to reset and restart. That

doesn't mean we forget what happens, but that we have a chance to repair the harm and move on. We don't need to rehash it a hundred times over and over."

Shayla's overarching intention is to bring hope to the kids and families served at DMS.

"Too often, people have told our kids and their families they were going to get another chance and then didn't follow through. We need to show in our actions and our words that we want them here and we want them to be successful."

*Shayla Leinen and her husband have two kids in high school, and they spend much of their time at extracurricular activities. She grew up in Breckenridge, MN, and earned her bachelor's degree in Social Work from Minnesota State University Moorhead. She is working on a Certificate in School Management and Leadership (CSML) through the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

## Sherry Wagner: Loving kids

### Dean of Students/Transition Coordinator, Minot

Sherry Wagner doesn't hesitate to talk about her Christian faith with the kids at Dakota Memorial School.

"I love that when someone is hurting in our school, we can pray for them and come together in Christ. We openly talk about the most important person in our life, Christ," Sherry said. "I think it's very



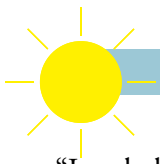
**Sherry Wagner gives every student her full attention and love.**

important for our kids to know the Lord is there and He is always going to be there. I love that we start each day worshipping God."

Sherry sees every child at DMS as a child of God and treasures the time she spends with them.

"These kids are my inspiration," she said. "I respect them for just getting up in the morning and putting one foot in front of the other. It is so heartwarming to see that even though they've been through the ringer, they still have it in them to care for someone else. I witness them doing little acts of kindness every day."

One day, Sherry came to work to find a note from a student on her desk. The note said, "Dear Mrs. Wagner. You may not know it, but thanks to you I am being more successful in school. You are one of the kindest, patient, understanding, and helpful people in my life. Thank you very much."



“I truly love these kids,” Sherry said. “We are put on this earth to love others; therefore, I’m going to do my best to meet their needs. And they pay it back to me tenfold.”

When Sherry walks past a refocus room, (where we sit with kids when they are struggling), she doesn’t ask them what happened, or what they did, or why they did it. Her first question is, “What do you need?”

“I want to know what I need to get them or do for them so they can get out of the emotional space they are in and back to where they can learn,” Sherry said. “If that means spending a whole day with a child so they can get through the day, or taking them outside for a walk, or whatever, that’s what I do.”

While her role as Dean of Students involves supporting the students and staff while they are at DMS, Sherry’s role as Transition Coordinator involves supporting the kids, parents, and school district as students transfer from DMS to another school. She creates transition portfolios that contain a wealth of information for the child’s next school, including testing results, a transcript and learning inventory, grades, the coping skills and classroom techniques that worked for the student, and comments from their teachers. She also attends transition meetings and manages the process, so parents don’t have to worry they’ve missed something.

“Ultimately, it’s all about the kids,” Sherry said. “My goal for each of these kids is for them to take what we give them, and go out after graduation and achieve their goals—to be someone the community can respect,” Sherry said.

*Sherry Wagner has always worked*

*with kids. Before joining the Ranch six years ago, she worked at Job Corps and managed a multi-site childcare center. Sherry earned a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education and a master’s degree in Management, both from Minot State University, Minot, ND.*

## Mallory Halvorson: Celebrating little victories

### Principal, Bismarck

When Mallory Halvorson gives tours of the school on the Ranch’s Bismarck campus, she says, “You’ve heard of one-room schoolhouses? Well, we are a one hallway schoolhouse.”

The size of the school is precisely what makes it a place of success for kids at the Ranch. With fewer kids, Mallory and her staff have time to be more involved in each child’s education.

“A lot of our kids struggled being in a school with a thousand plus kids,” Mallory said. “The many groups of people and variety of personalities are too much for them. When you see behaviors in kids, it’s usually because they are trying to overcompensate for feeling like they don’t know what they are doing.”

“Those behaviors may diminish if we show them some success and build the social, emotional, and academic skills they are lacking.”

While Dakota Memorial School has a low teacher to student ratio, Mallory is quick to point out

that none of that matters without teachers who are fully committed to working with students who have undergone significant trauma.

“We will never understand the trauma a student is going through,” Mallory said. “But we can know it’s there and that it’s very much affecting their life and how they go about their day.”

Because every child’s trauma or circumstance is unique, Mallory defines success differently for every child at DMS.



**For Mallory Halvorson, it’s the little victories that measure our kids’ success.**

“I might look back at a student’s Individual Education Plan (IEP) and see they were not in class 40% of the day. But after being with us four months, they are in class every single day with their peers. Or they might have had outbursts and behaviors in class and didn’t get along with the other students. And now they are sitting next to each other and

working on group projects,” Mallory said.

“For me, success isn’t measured by grades. It’s the little victories, like a kid being in school every day this week or staying awake in class.”

As principal, Mallory strives to give teachers and students what they need to find those little victories they can celebrate.

“I can’t imagine doing anything else,” Mallory said. “I love coming to work. I work with a great group of people. We’re all working towards the same cause. I know there will be days that are tough, but at the end of the day, if one kid had something to celebrate, then that’s enough for me.”

*With a background in teaching and special education, Mallory Halvorson is passionate about bringing her very best self to work every day. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND, and a master’s degree in Special Education from Minot State University, Minot, ND. She will complete her principal credential through Minnesota State University Moorhead later this month.*

## Gail Lundy: Creating connections

### Day Program Coordinator, Minot

When Gail Lundy meets with parents who might have a child coming to Dakota Memorial School, she can often see the exhaustion in their eyes.

“By the time kids enroll with us, the whole family has been through a lot,” Gail said. “DMS only becomes



**Gail Lundy helps students and their families connect to the community services they need to be successful.**

an educational option after the child’s home school district has exhausted all of its resources, and that’s how it should be. But, by this point, some parents are exhausted. I know parents who haven’t been able to work because they were always getting calls from the school or being asked to pick their child up from school.”

“If we can find a way to help their child succeed in school, often for the first time, it decreases the stress level within the family,” Gail said.

Gail helps families get the support they need by connecting them to services such as occupational therapy, medication management, therapy, food banks, etc.

She has one student who is trying to get a Social Security card, so she is helping him get the verifications he needs. If a family is struggling to find food, she gives them grocery store gift cards that were donated. When

COVID hit, Gail and the DMS team traveled hundreds of miles to student’s homes, delivering school lunches, school gift baskets, and little gifts for the students.

“We wanted our kids to know that even though they weren’t coming to the school building, we were still there for them—we were still connected,” Gail said.

Gail tells of one student with whom she has built a strong relationship.

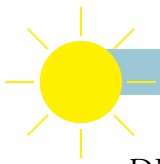
“When he came to us, he was a fourth grader,” Gail said. “At times he struggled to keep his emotions in check. This young man is now on the Honor Roll and Student Council, was Student

of the Quarter, and is very active with our school store. He enjoyed representing DMS on a special Thanksgiving Service project at a local soup kitchen. His mom and I have talked about how happy and proud we are with his progress. We are both going to be so emotional at his graduation.”

This young man, a senior in high school, has been at DMS since 4th grade, but not all students stay at DMS until they graduate.

DMS is a transition school, so at every meeting with the child’s family and school, the team talks about transitioning the student back to public school.

“They get a little anxious because for the first time their child is experiencing success at school,” Gail said. “The young man I mentioned came from a school district that supported the decision for him to



stay at DMS because they could see it was the best educational environment for him.”

Other students learn the skills they need here to successfully transition back to public school.

“The school districts really care for these kids and are vested in them,” Gail said.

She believes one big difference between public schools and DMS is that while public schools make accommodations for kids on Individual Education Plans (IEPs), DMS has many of these accommodations in place naturally.

“DMS is more than a school,” Gail said. “We have the small classroom settings and balanced learning environments, and we provide mindful breaks. With all the kids having these opportunities, none of them feel different and singled out. I truly believe this gives kids a sense of belonging,” Gail said.

While every student is different, the paperwork Gail reviews when a child is enrolled most often focuses on their struggles—attendance or behavior issues, grades, mental health concerns, and more. Gail looks past the paperwork to see the students as their true selves.

“They are really great kids, and we won’t give up on them,” Gail said. “I love the compassion and kindness we have here at the school. We have the mindset that each day is a new day, and we support each child the best we can.”

*Gail Lundy has a bachelor’s degree in Social Work from Minot State University. After coming to the Ranch to coordinate a one-year grant program, she became case manager in Thatcher Cottage, and then moved*

*into her current position, Day Program Coordinator. When she’s not at work, Gail likes to walk, redecorate her house, travel, spend time with friends and family, and play with her puppy, Archie B.*

## John Campbell: Cultivating capital

**Coordinator of Student Services,  
Fargo**

John Campbell had his own struggles in high school, which helps him relate to the students at Dakota Memorial School.

“My parents both had careers in education and education was important to them. I wanted to do well but I didn’t learn like most kids, so it was hard,” John said.

He made his way through school with a little extra support, went into business, and years later started working with children who had cognitive and behavior challenges.

“I was a paraprofessional in a school and was asked to do an inclusion class, which meant getting kids in the general part of the school together with kids in special education. They learned together, asked each other questions, and learned about each other’s challenges,” John said. “I found a passion for being an advocate in education and eventually found my way to the Ranch.”

At the Ranch, John jumped right into learning about trauma, the brain, and how trauma impacts learning. The things he learned, along with

his own school experiences, led to an understanding of the many factors that can get in the way of learning.

“With our kids there are often a few things that need to be taken care of before they can get into the executive functioning part of the brain,” John said. “For instance, some of our day students come to school hungry. Maybe they don’t have any food at home or anyone there to cook for them. Whatever the reason, you can’t learn when you are hungry. Serving healthy meals, including breakfast and snacks throughout the day, is huge for recharging young minds.”

John works hard to meet the basic needs of his students so they can focus on learning. He calls it “cultivating capital,” and is especially focused on the DMS Day Students, who often don’t have anyone else to advocate for them.

“By capital, I mean things they are



**John Campbell believes building a child’s support network will help them find success now and in the future.**

# The Power of Connection

lacking—which might be dental or medical care, therapy, occupational therapy, medication management, or supportive adults,” John said. “And, of course, education-wise, finding out where they are at in school, what they’ve done well, where they’d like to improve, and what we can do to help them make those improvements.”

John said he starts his day planning, scheduling paras in the classrooms, and making sure the teachers have what they need.

“Then I sometimes giggle a little about the plan, because it never works out exactly the way I lay it out!” John said.

Before the students get to school, DMS staff meet in the hallway to pray over the kids and the day. Then it’s on to breakfast with the kids followed by morning chapel. As for the rest of John’s day—he goes where he is needed.

“I spend most of my day listening to kids,” John said. “I hope my actions show them that people at the Ranch love and care for them. I’m here to invest in the kids who are with us right now. And I work with people who believe the same thing. Together, we make a difference—sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly—because we focus on God, our mission, and our core beliefs.”

*John Campbell likes to golf, fish, and spend time with his wife and their two adult children. He is a Mental Health First Aid trainer, a Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® trainer, and he works with people in addiction recovery as a Certified Peer Support Specialist. John earned a two-year certificate in Developmental Disabilities from Minot State University.*

For several years, Dakota Memorial School has been creating a program that gives students opportunities to learn important social skills, build relationships with their teachers and peers, and obtain the knowledge and skills they need to transition back to public school or adulthood.

The program, now called “CONNECT,” has evolved as we’ve learned more about neuroscience and the power of connection. CONNECT is now a 30-minute period using research-based curriculum focused on three pillars—social emotional learning, executive functioning, and transitions.

One of the goals of CONNECT is to help students feel more connected to their school and their teachers so they are more likely to attend class, enjoy school, and perform well academically.

Students are assigned a CONNECT teacher; and spend 30 minutes each day in their CONNECT classroom. The teachers are assigned 5-8 students, giving them time to work through the curriculum and attend to the specific needs of each child.

Examples of CONNECT lessons and activities include:

## Social Emotional Learning

1. Using active listening
2. Cultivating curiosity and grit
3. Focusing and prioritizing
4. Creating first impressions

## Executive Functioning

1. Defeating your “beasts”
2. Handling negative feelings
3. Scheduling your time
4. Flexibility

## Transitions

1. Managing a budget
2. The importance of saving
3. High school graduation requirements
4. Applying for an apartment
5. Finding a job

“As educators, we understand that learning increases as healthy relationships develop in classrooms; both between students and educators, and students and peers,” said Marcia Bartok, Superintendent, Dakota Memorial School. “CONNECT is intentionally designed to incorporate neuroscience-identified strategies into our trauma-sensitive classrooms, enhancing connections and building skills students need to live meaningful lives.”

Mallory Halvorson, Principal at DMS, Bismarck, has seen the impact of CONNECT on her students.

“The kids all know their CONNECT teacher is someone they can go to if they are having a bad day, someone they can have those tough conversations with,” Mallory said, “Building it into their day so it’s routine and intentional has been incredible.”

## Revisiting a Legacy

Last summer, Rev. Victor Tegtmeier, along with his son and daughter, drove onto the Minot campus of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Rev. Tegtmeier's wife had recently passed away, and he was taking their two children on a cross-country tour of the places they had lived and served.

Chaplain Rick Jones, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, who gave the Tegtmeiers a tour, quickly found out that Rev. Tegtmeier was one of the first chaplains at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. From 1962-1966, Rev. Tegtmeier had a joint call as the pastor at St. Peter Lutheran Church, in Sawyer, ND, and Chaplain at Dakota Boys Ranch.

"At that time, Dakota Boys Ranch was a place for boys who had gotten into trouble," Rev. Tegtmeier said. "They were placed there by social workers or judges. In some cases, it was a place where boys got a second or last chance."

"It was kind of like a big family. We were trying to provide boys with a place where they could experience something positive. The boys were expected to take on responsibilities, show respect, and learn about consequences and rewards for their behaviors."

While he only spent one day a week at the Ranch, Rev. Tegtmeier spent a lot of time listening, and reassuring the boys that they were loved by God.

Rev. Tegtmeier said many of the boys had little to no religious background and they were often reluctant to participate in chapel and Bible Studies. He spent a lot of

time working one-one-one with the boys to show them the importance of God's Word.

"They were hearing things they'd never heard before," Rev. Tegtmeier said. "It was rewarding to talk to these boys who didn't even have a concept of who Jesus was. It was rewarding to be involved in trying to help young boys find a new way of life."

Rev. Tegtmeier remembers one young boy who had been living on the street, eating out of garbage cans, before he came to the Ranch. When he came to the Ranch, he got to see what a family could be like.

"As we got closer and closer to Christmas," Rev. Tegtmeier said, "Michael\* started acting out in different ways. We couldn't figure out what was going on. But then he burned his Bible and that really got our attention! We found out he didn't want to go home

for Christmas because he knew the situation wouldn't be good. He thought if he got into enough trouble, he'd get out of having to go home."

Michael didn't have to go home that Christmas, Rev. Tegtmeier said, not because he burned his Bible, but because his home situation was not conducive for a young boy.

Rev. Tegtmeier's time at the Ranch

prepared him to work in social ministry. Early in his career he served as Chaplain at the Grafton State School, and at the end of his career as Chaplain at Bethesda Lutheran Home in Watertown, WI. Before leaving North Dakota, he also served on the North Dakota Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod board and Chaired the Synod's Social Ministry committee.

Wherever he lived and served, Rev. Tegtmeier stayed connected to the Ranch, first as a board member and then as a donor. He has been amazed at the changes he has seen over the years.

"The Ranch developed into a proactive therapeutic kind of program. They are now serving boys and girls who talk about how they've been helped. And in the process, they learned about their Savior, Jesus. There is no other program like this in the country."

After giving Rev. Tegtmeier and his children a tour, Chaplain Rick Jones, Dakota

Boys and Girls Ranch, said, "I was thrilled to show Rev. Tegtmeier what his efforts and dedication helped to build. He seemed very pleased at how far we've come and how purposefully and effectively we have learned to always approach our work with mercy and compassion. It was a beautiful experience."

*\*Name changed to protect confidentiality.*



Rev. Victor Tegtmeier

## Understanding Intelligence



**Dr. Megan Spencer, Clinical Psychologist**

### *What does IQ mean?*

Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is an overall representation of four separate cognitive components including verbal comprehension and abilities, perceptual reasoning abilities, working memory, and processing speed. In short, it is everything we have been able to learn through formal education, our environment, and from day-to-day interactions and experiences. Intelligence when measured relative to age, is thought to remain fairly stable over time.

### *Can trauma impact IQ?*

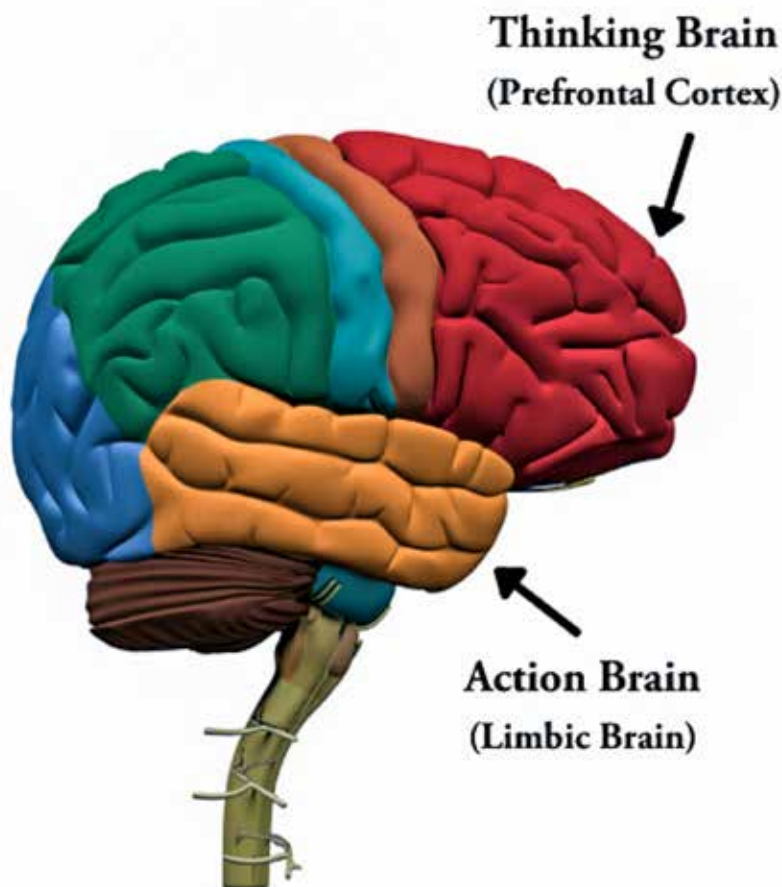
Trauma can affect overall intelligence. Threats or trauma experiences activate the “action brain” (the limbic system) which sets off a strong chemical reaction in the body, sending the body and

brain into survival mode. A significant release of adrenaline, cortisol, and other neurochemicals makes sure they get away from the threat in any way possible. Because most of the blood flow is going to the limbic system, the “thinking brain” (prefrontal cortex) shuts down. Over time and/or with repeated traumas, repeated activation of the limbic system and chemicals disrupt the “normal” brain processes needed to expand neural connections and improve our thinking brains. Trauma disrupts a person’s ability to process information, as well as their working memory abilities. Simply, trauma disrupts the brain’s ability to learn and remember, because it is working so hard to protect and survive.

### *The Ranch doesn’t serve the Developmentally Disabled population. Why not?*

Developmental Disabilities (DD) are life-long disabilities that affect physical and/or intellectual functioning. Children and adults with DD are impaired in one of four realms—physical, learning, language, or behavior. Lower IQ is one element of the challenges faced by someone with developmental disabilities. Children with DD need specialized support and training, from a broad variety of professionals, to maximize community and family inclusion, independence, and self-sufficiency.

Although Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch has a similar range of professionals as those that work with DD populations, our expertise is with children and adolescents who have mental health, psychiatric, and behavioral issues, but present with different challenges than those served within the DD community. While we are well-equipped to serve their mental health needs, treatment cannot be effective for children with DD if they do not also receive specific services to address their Developmental Disabilities.



# Celebrations

## Shoeboxes of joy

Ranch kids participated in another year of Operation Christmas Child. This year, our Minot kids collected enough wonderful items from Ranch employees to fill 87 shoeboxes—our shoeboxes full of gifts will bless children around the world this Christmas.



The kids prayed over the 87 packed shoeboxes before sending them off.

## Quilting with love

Members of the Northside Quilters in Fargo, ND, have been making quilts for charity since they began meeting somewhere around 1979. For the last decade, they've been donating some of their beautiful quilts to Ranch kids. This delightful group of quilters chose the Ranch because they want to see Ranch kids succeed. "If we can play a small part in that, we're reaching our goal," said Wilma Jean McDonald, one of the Northside Quilters.



The Northside Quilters from left to right: Muriel Hinman, Redgie Bohnet, Wilma Jean McDonald, Joyce Pettinger, and Ginger Mitchell

## Author of "The Reward" visits Fargo campus

Author Diane Larson stopped at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Fargo, on her recent book tour. Larson, a North Dakota Senator and Ranch Board Member, wrote the book, "The Reward," a children's book about the boy mentioned in the Gospels as having given Jesus the bread and fish he used to feed 5,000 men, women, and children. While on campus, Larson, along with her husband, Greg; Representative Kim Koppelman and his wife, Torrey; and Emily Hagen, the book illustrator; toured the campus and spent some time with Ranch resident, Amber.



Pictured left to right: Rep. Kim Koppelman, Emily Hagen, Amber, Sen. Diane Larson



## Memories for a lifetime

This summer, the kids on the Minot campus took a trip to Triangle Y Camp. The kids went horseback riding (they had learned to ride at the Ranch), made arts and crafts, climbed the alpine tower, and kayaked! They loved playing in the mud pits, and one young man said, "I haven't had this much fun in years!"



## Knitted with love

Elda Hamann, a Ranch friend from Trinity Lutheran Church in Ortonville, MN, lovingly made 30 hand-knitted hats for kids at the Ranch. These beautiful hats will keep our kids' heads (and hearts) warm all winter long.



## Fishy adventures

The Wildlife Club in Minot went fishing at Rice Lake. They caught and cooked one nice fish; and closed the evening with a spectacular sunset.



Wildlife Club introduces Ranch kids to the positive impact nature can have on their lives.

## Love from our communities



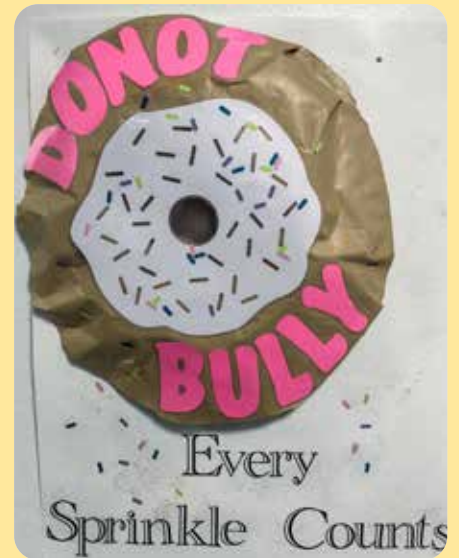
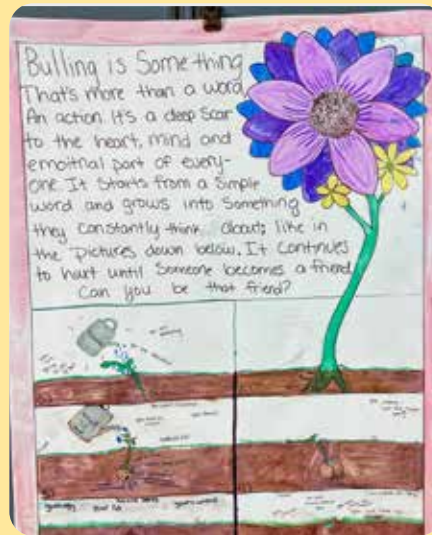
As part of their #BMCcares program, Bismarck Motor Company gifted the Ranch \$1,000 to support our children's healing.

# Celebrations

## Bee kind. Everyone has a story.

At the Ranch, bullying prevention is a big deal. Every day, we take a stand against intentional, repeated, and degrading meanness to create a safer and more encouraging world for our amazing kids. On World Day of Bullying Prevention (October 4th), kids and staff across our campuses in Minot, Fargo, and Bismarck, and thrift stores across the state of North Dakota, looked like bumblebees in their matching shirts, with a message to “Bee Kind. Everyone has a story.”

Throughout the month of October (National Bullying Prevention Month), kids and staff talked about bullying, how damaging it can be, and how we can prevent it. In Minot, kids lined the hallways of Dakota Memorial School with posters and poems, reminding themselves and others to Bee Kind. In Bismarck, students talked about being kind to themselves and others, and signed a pledge to end bullying. On the Fargo campus, kids and staff heard from Fargo Police Officer Dave Carlson. Officer Carlson told his story about being in treatment at the Ranch, and the things he learned along his journey.

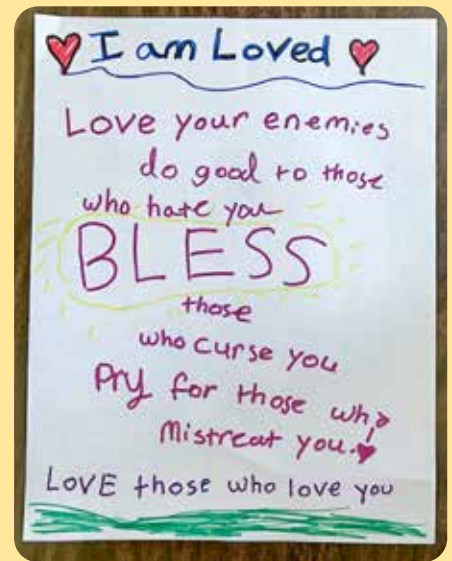
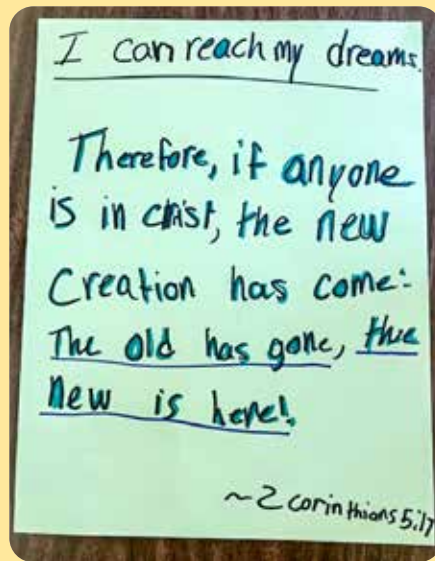
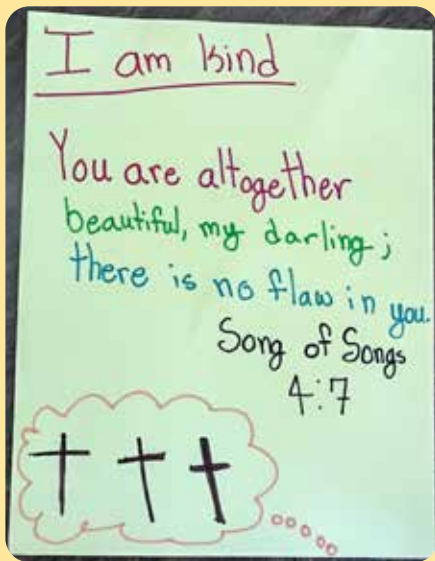


The hallways of Dakota Memorial School—Minot are filled with bullying prevention posters and messages.

Thrift Store staff across the state participated in World Day of Bullying Prevention by wearing their “Bee Kind” shirts on October 4th.



Bismarck kids and staff left encouraging messages for each other and signed a bullying prevention pledge.



During Spiritual Life Groups, kids finished the sentence “I am...” with a word describing themselves. They finished them off with a true statement from the Bible of what God says about them and their value to Him.



Kids and staff across the Fargo campus did their part on World Day of Bullying Prevention, reminding everyone they encountered to “Bee Kind!”



Officer David Carlson, a former Ranch resident, is shown here with Christian Kjelland, Wellness Coordinator. Officer Carlson talked with kids and staff about the impact bullying had in his own life.



# Celebrations

## Buzzing about honey!

Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN, recently hosted a Honey Sunday for the Ranch. The coordinator of the event, Gwen Dahl, dressed up to promote the event at each service!



For decades, congregations have held Honey Sundays to support the work of the Ranch.

## Sharing hope

Tin Man Ministries, a faith-based nonprofit ministry in Rhode Island, sent some pretty amazing Hope Notes to our kids! Their encouraging words lifted the spirits of our kids.



To send a Hope Note to one of our kids, scan here:



## Safety first!

The National Youth Project Using Minibikes (NYPUM) Program is a kid-favorite on our Minot and Bismarck campuses, teaching our kids responsibility and building their confidence. After completing several hours of training on operating minibikes, as well as proper safety, residents ride their bikes on the on-campus trails.



Minot NYPUM Program Coordinator, Todd Fjeldahl, taught riders how to safely lift the bike off the ground if they tipped over, as well as how to use the kickstands.

Our Bismarck kids are off to the races! NYPUM helps our kids develop positive relationships with peers and staff.



## A servant's heart

Our Ranch campuses in Minot and Fargo hosted two Servant Teams this summer. Servant Teams, a program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, give high school students the opportunity to serve the Church and the world. In addition to providing hands-on projects for Servant Team volunteers, our Spiritual Life team holds daily chapel and study for volunteers, and gives them a chance to interact with our kids through shared activities.



Members of the Servant Team from Messiah Lutheran Church in Mounds View, MN, helped clean at the Warehouse and Thrift Store and beautified the campus.



A Servant Team from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Merrill, WI, assisted Facilities staff with landscaping projects on campus.



## Trauma-sensitive learning



Marcia Bartok, VP Education and Superintendent of Dakota Memorial School District

Marcia Bartok, VP Education, and Tina DeGree, Director of Education, presented at the Trauma-Informed School Conference in St. Charles, MO. In their session titled, “Culture Journey to Trauma-Sensitive Learning Environments,” Bartok and DeGree shared ways educational leaders can transform the culture of their schools to a trauma-sensitive environment.



They highlighted the Ranch culture and how trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive is more than a catchy phrase, but a different way of working with students. Bartok and DeGree encouraged attendees to have a trauma-sensitive focus for each decision they make regarding students and worked with them to create a toolkit of strategies and resources they can take back to their own schools.

Marcia Bartok and Tina Degree pose in front of the Conference Photo Booth.

# Celebrations

## Christmas at the Ranch

A look back at Christmas 2020



Dakota Memorial School—Minot was transformed into a Christmas Village, complete with a post office, town hall, church, bakery, reindeer nursery, and more!



Kids on the Minot campus spread Christmas cheer to a local nursing home by creating beautiful handmade cards for the residents and staff!



Check out Frosty the Snowman's baby picture!



Students at Dakota Memorial School—Fargo decked the halls of the Nutrition Center with the help of Officer Michael Bloom from the Fargo Police Department.



Kids in Bismarck decorated Dakota Memorial School with "Merry Christmas" in many languages.

## Deaconess Stephanie Wilde called to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Deaconess Stephanie Wilde was called to the Ranch in July 2021 and is serving as the Spiritual Life Coordinator on our Fargo campus. In her role, Deaconess Stephanie provides spiritual support for both kids and staff as she seeks to bring the mercy and compassion of Christ to all situations. We are excited to have her join our Ranch Family!



Deaconess Stephanie says, "I have always wanted to help people and share about Jesus Christ. I know that I am a baptized and forgiven child of God and I want to share that with others."

## A summer of fun!

Our Ranch Wellness Coordinators fill the summer with fun activities that provide a bit of “normalcy” for our kids, help them heal, and allow them to engage in the community.



The Bismarck boys took a trip to the North Dakota State Heritage Center and State Museum. The dinosaur exhibit was everyone's favorite!



Kids on our Fargo campus toured Matt's Automotive Service Center where they learned basic car care, practiced checking tire pressures, and were taught the important things to pay attention to when owning a car.



There's nothing better on a hot summer day in North Dakota than cooling off at the pool!

## National LWML grant awarded to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch received a grant from the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) to support the Deaconess Ministry portion of its Spiritual Life programming. Recognizing the need to minister directly to the hearts of the young girls and boys in their care, the Ranch started its Deaconess Ministry in 2018 with a call to LCMS Deaconess, Kelly Bristow. She complements the work of the Program and Spiritual Life staff, and this year was joined by another deaconess on the Ranch's Fargo campus.



The LWML members vote on the grants at their national convention. At this summer's convention, the Ranch's funding request received the highest number of votes.

From left: Laurie Dannewitz, Senior Development Officer; Laurie Totenhagen, President of the North Dakota District LWML; Deaconess Kelly Bristow; Rev. Rick Jones, Chaplain; Joy Ryan, President/CEO; met in Minot for the check presentation.

# Celebrations

## Fall festival



Dakota Memorial School staff and students made amazing shirts during Fall Festival! "Even though we are different, we are all part of the same deck."



The nursing department brought their A-game with life-size versions of two classics, Hungry Hungry Hippos and Operation!



## Thanksgiving all around

We have much to be grateful for at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, during the holiday season and always. From group meals and special Thanksgiving crafts to serving at soup kitchens, we find special ways for our kids to celebrate with each other and within their communities.



Below: Student Council members served at the Immanuel Baptist Church Soup Kitchen. They left with full stomachs and full hearts.

Above: Ranch Board Members served a special Thanksgiving lunch.



Left: Friendsgiving is an annual tradition on our Minot Campus where the kids from each cottage bring a dish to share and make fun memories.



Above: Ranch children, staff, and board members filled a special "Thanksgiving Tree" with leaves of thankfulness.



**"For unto you is born this day  
in the city of David a Savior,  
which is Christ the Lord."**

**- Luke 2:11**



*MERRY CHRISTMAS from all of us at*



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Connecting our Kids to their Culture and Communities



**Amber Marquardt, Director, Qualified Residential Treatment Programs, Minot**

### *What are the some of the ways the Ranch shows respect for the cultural diversity of our kids?*

Through years of work with children who have a variety of backgrounds, ethnicities, and beliefs, we have learned that providing culturally sensitive care and therapy helps our children heal.

In addition to diversity of ethnicity and religion, kids come to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch from different income levels, different family situations, and different experiences—and all of them impact how they live, speak, act, think, and feel in the world.

As we work with children and their families to create individualized care plans, we take all of these unique characteristics into account. We help kids stay connected to their families and their culture—and at the same time, do everything we can to make them feel welcome while they are with us.

Fortunately, we have many opportunities to help kids embrace their own culture and heritage.

It starts with our staff—which is also very diverse. We have developed a culture of learning where we learn from one another and embrace each other's values and beliefs. We show our kids, by example, that people of all genders, ethnicities, and appearances can positively influence the world and deserve to be respected. We teach them to embrace their own culture and heritage, and to experience and appreciate the culture and heritage of others, by bringing in outside speakers and taking them to off-campus events. For instance:

- We attend Native American Heritage Month events every year in both Fargo and Minot. At these events, our kids learn about Native American culture through film, crafts, song, and speakers.
- We invite speakers to campus who talk about their culture and teach kids some of their traditional activities. For instance, one speaker talked about Norwegian culture. Another taught the kids Native American beading.
- Some of our kids have attended Powwows, and in some cases, danced in them. One of our kids won the Men's Fancy Dance.
- Our kids have many opportunities to volunteer at animal shelters, food pantries, homeless shelters, and more. These experiences help our kids understand the culture and needs of the community. The most beautiful part about volunteering with our kids is seeing their pride—they've often been on the receiving end and being able to give themselves helps

them understand their value and worth.

- In addition to our own Chapel services and Spiritual Life activities, which are based in the Lutheran tradition, we make arrangements for our kids to attend a church of their domination off-campus. Over the years, many staff members have volunteered to bring kids to these services to help them continue to be connected to Christ and their church.
- This year we attended Juneteenth celebrations in the community, and each year we celebrate Black History month at Dakota Memorial School—teaching through the lens of the contributions African Americans have made to society, culture, and everyday life.
- We made snacks and cookies for military serving overseas.

By creating a culturally rich environment, we foster inclusion, create multicultural awareness, and help our kids succeed and thrive in a diverse world. Most importantly, we give them a sense of belonging and show them they have value in the world and in Christ.

**Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up-to-date on Ranch happenings and stories.**



[facebook.com/dakotaranch1952](https://facebook.com/dakotaranch1952)



[Instagram.com/dbgr52](https://Instagram.com/dbgr52)

# Ways to Give

Thanks to gifts from our generous donors, the Ranch helps the most troubled, complicated, and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care. If you would like to provide hope and healing for a child at the Ranch, you can give several different ways.

## Give Now

You can give now to meet the needs of our precious children in one of two ways. Give online at [DakotaRanch.org/donate](https://DakotaRanch.org/donate), or mail a check to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, PO Box 5007, Minot, ND 58702.

## Memorials and Honorariums

When you make a donation in memory or in honor of a loved one, they will live on through programs that provide much-needed care for the hurting children who come to the Ranch. You can make your donation in one of the following ways:

### Online at [DakotaRanch.org](https://DakotaRanch.org):

Select Memorial/Honorarium when completing the donation form.

**Phone:** Call 1-800-344-0957.

## Planned and Estate Gifts

Naming Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch as a beneficiary in your will is one way to leave a legacy that serves God's Kingdom. But, it's not the only way. Other legacy giving options include Charitable Gift Annuities, naming the Ranch as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets or a life insurance policy, leaving real estate to the Ranch, and more. To learn more, contact one of our Development Officers at 1-800-344-0957. Or, visit our legacy giving website at [DakotaRanch.org/legacy](https://DakotaRanch.org/legacy) for tools and information you can use to maximize your philanthropic goals.

## Tree of Life

You can honor or remember a loved one by purchasing a leaf, acorn, or rock on one of our Trees of Life. For a Tree of Life order form, go to [DakotaRanch.org](https://DakotaRanch.org) and choose "Many Ways to Give" from the dropdown menu. Or call 1-800-344-0957—we can send you an order form or take your information over the phone.

## Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

If you are a Thrivent Financial member, you may have Thrivent Choice Dollars® available to direct to your favorite enrolled charity. Directing Choice Dollars® to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch helps us teach Christian values to the amazing children of the Ranch—values that aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them be successful in their treatment.

## Amazon Smile

If you shop online at Amazon.com, AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way to support the Ranch every time you shop, at no extra cost to you. Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select "Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch" as your charity.

## MONTHLY GIVING MATTERS

### Change a child's life through your faithful, monthly support!

Make your giving an even greater blessing when you join the Ranch as a *Honeycomb Partner*.

With each monthly gift, you'll share HEALING and HOPE with boys and girls who have endured unspeakable pain, crushing academic failure, abandonment, and abuse. But most important, you'll give them the chance to meet Jesus and know His love and forgiveness.

It's easy to join. Just visit [DakotaRanch.org](https://DakotaRanch.org)/**MonthlySupport** or call 1-800-344-0957.



## A Leap of Faith

No matter how difficult things are at home, driving away from the Ranch without your child is not easy.

“It was scary taking that leap of faith. We didn’t know what to expect, and as we drove away, my mom heart was just sad and apprehensive,” said Meridith, mother of former Ranch resident, Blaise.

Blaise, one of four children, had been diagnosed with ADHD and high functioning autism. As an elementary school principal, Meridith made sure he got lots

of support over the years, but it was getting harder and harder for Blaise to function in the family and at school.

“I was just angry all the time,” Blaise said. “I couldn’t find a way to deal with my anger, so I started punching holes in the walls and slamming my door.”

Meridith said they were struggling to deal with the conflict and fighting. “There were a lot of things going on and we just couldn’t get to where we needed to be. It was scary because you just never knew what might happen next. Every interaction was tense and loud and hurtful and negative. We were to the point where we were barely functioning as a family. I would lay awake at night and wonder how it would ever get better and if we were going to make it as a family.”

Blaise’s parents knew about the

Ranch but didn’t know if it was the answer. “Blaise wasn’t doing what you might think was typical—like juvenile delinquency, running away, or not going to school,” Meridith said.

Blaise’s counselor, who used to work at the Ranch, helped calm his parents’ fears, explained what treatment would look like, and assured them they could be involved in every step of Blaise’s treatment.

So, in July, right before his junior year, Blaise’s parents brought him to the Ranch.

While it was still hard, Meridith started trusting the

Ranch team right away. “Even after just that first meeting with Blaise’s treatment team, I felt calm and confident and knew he was going to be taken care of.”

As is typical, Blaise continued to struggle at the Ranch. But the Ranch team kept Meridith in the loop and continued to show how much they cared. “They were a part of our team and wanted what was best for our child,” Meridith said. “You could tell this was more than a job for them. Even when they’d call when Blaise had a bad day, they were so caring.”

Family therapy was an important part of Blaise’s treatment.

Meridith said, “Even with COVID and the long distance, we were able to do family therapy while Blaise was at the Ranch. He was able to express to his therapist, Sara Vetter, what was

hard about dealing with home stuff. And we were able to talk about it from our perspective as parents and say, ‘Well, this is what we are seeing.’ With Sara’s guidance, we came to a better understanding as to what Blaise was thinking and how he perceived our actions. She helped us communicate our thoughts and expectations better.”

Blaise worked hard to make changes too. He started to take responsibility for his feelings and actions and recognized how they impacted the people around him.

He said he learned a lot in Occupational Therapy that helped him identify cues that he was getting angry. He also learned skills he could use to calm himself down so he could make better choices and not have a blow-up.

A month after he arrived, Blaise started attending the Ranch’s on-campus school. The tools he was learning in therapy and OT helped him at school.



**While at the Ranch, Blaise learned how to focus so he could learn. He was proud to show off his Honor Roll certificate—his first ever appearance on the Honor Roll!**



In a synchronized swimming skit put on by the Ranch's summer theater class, Blaise's role was to blow bubbles and toss beach balls and pool noodles around.

"I picked up a lot of skills at the Ranch...learning to pay attention, be in the present, just focusing on what things are going on around me instead of getting distracted by other students. Before I went to the Ranch, I didn't really care about doing my homework or passing classes, but this year I'm passing, I have high grades, and it's going really well," Blaise said.

Now that Blaise is home, and completing his senior year in his home school, Meredith said he is doing well at home and at school. He likes going

to school, is getting good grades, and is planning to attend college next year to pursue a computer or cyber-security degree.

"I'm not going to say it's perfect," Meredith said, "but it's a thousand times better. We all communicate so much better. I honestly don't know where we would be without the Ranch, because that seems to have given us all a reset—just that breather we needed to build our skills so we could all come back together and function as a family."

## Direct your 2021 Thrivent Choice Dollars®



Each year, children come to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch for help. Most of these precious kids have endured unspeakable pain, crushing academic failure, abandonment, and abuse. Very few know about God's love for them or the incredible value He places on their lives.

All Thrivent Choice Dollars® directed to the Ranch go to our Spiritual Life Program. This program is transformational, pointing children to faith in Christ, our true source of hope. You can impact young lives in a significant way by directing your Choice Dollars® to Ranch. Collectively, these dollars will provide immeasurable blessings and great hope for boys and girls who are truly hurting.

If you are an eligible Thrivent member with Choice Dollars®, please go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](https://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice), login, and choose Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. To direct your Choice Dollars® over the phone, call 1-800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

## Students Learn Valuable 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Skills

In the last quarter of the 20-21 school year, Principal Tina DeGree asked the teachers if they saw any gaps in the curriculum at Dakota Memorial School, Minot. And, if they did see gaps, to present ideas that would fill those gaps.

Teachers Josh Hvidsten and Daniel Fagerlund presented a proposal for a new Leadership class, and it was added to this fall's curriculum. The Leadership class gives kids the chance to learn and practice real-life skills by finding projects that fill a need in the community.

Also last spring, students on the Minot campus produced a variety of products (planters, signs, flowers, vegetables, etc.) to sell in the parking lot of our Minot thrift store at the GROW Day Garden Sale.

Those efforts garnered \$4,400 in income that needed to be distributed.

Enter the Leadership class and Hvidsten's vision to teach kids how to develop processes and do collaborative decision making. The GROW Day project and the Leadership class were a perfect match.

GROW Day funds were designated for special projects on the Minot campus, so the students invited Ranch employees to submit grant proposals that made the case for something they needed in

scoring rubric focused on three criteria: touches the most lives; frequency of use; and need vs. want. For each of those criteria, students individually read through each grant to determine if the project met the criteria; and gave each an unbiased score of 2 for yes, or 1 for no. After they tabulated the results of the unbiased rating, the group reviewed and discussed the top seven grants, now taking into account their personal opinions.

As they reflected on the granting process, the students talked about really enjoying the collaboration. One student said, "I've never been part of a major project, so it was a new experience." Another student said, "[The whole process] made us exercise our communication skills, and our ability to collaborate as a group."

The granting process provided the students with some interesting insights. As they reviewed

and discussed the top seven grants, as determined by the rubric, they were surprised to find that none of them had an emotional attachment to a proposal to purchase a bun slicer for the kitchen—even though it had the highest score.

As they presented their process and decisions to Joy Ryan, President/CEO, and Sheila Miller, VP Finance,



The students made handmade checks and distributed them in person to each of the grant recipients. Kristine Mackovic, Minot Thrift Store Warehouse Manager, accepted the grant on behalf of her team.

their department. In the email invitation sent to all Minot Ranch employees, the students provided a list of questions to answer in the application, and a copy of the rubric they would use to guide their decisions.

The students created the rubric after learning about conscious and unconscious bias. Their non-biased

# Endowment Giving

Endowments provide ongoing operating funds and welcome sources of revenue for nonprofits; and because the assets of the endowment are invested permanently to generate annual income for the organization, they give donors a way to create a legacy. Endowments can be established at any legally qualified foundation, including the Dakota Boys and Ranch Foundation. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation endowments are typically set up to distribute 5% of a three-year rolling average of the market value of the endowment. Those funds are used to support the work of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Endowments can be designated for a specific purpose or support the ongoing expenses of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation has several already established endowments designated to support the Horse Program, Education, College Scholarships for Former Residents, specific campuses, and more.

Or, you can establish a Named Endowment with a gift of \$25,000 or more. Those can be in your own name, or in honor or memory of someone of your choice—and can be designated to support annual operations or a specific aspect of our work to help at-risk kids and their families succeed in the name of Christ. Many donors choose to contribute to an endowment during their lifetime, with a final gift through their estate.

**For more information, call  
1-800-344-0957**

Joy asked the students why the kitchen project wasn't chosen when they gave it the highest score on the rubric. One student said, "What do they need a bun slicer for? They can use a knife!"

With 15 grant proposals, totaling over \$10,000, and only \$4,400 to give out, the students had some tough decisions to make. When all was said and done, they funded (in part or full) five projects.

Nursing Department

Sensory items

Wellness Program

New bikes

Wildlife Club

Underwater camera

Thrift Store Warehouse

Shelving

Entrepreneurship Class

Stop Shop items

The final step in the project was to inform the applicants of their decisions. The students made oversized checks for each of the recipients and delivered them in person so they could share in the excitement. They also thought it was important to inform the applicants who didn't receive funding, which they did through a thoughtfully crafted email.

The students in this leadership class will take the decision-making, teamwork, and presentation skills they learned with them as they become valuable members of their communities—participating on work teams, communicating at work and at home, serving on community boards and committees, and so much more.



Members of the Minot Nursing Department were excited to accept a grant to purchase sensory items kids can use to calm themselves while in the nurse's office for medical checks.

## A Real-life Love Story



Lee and Bev Radke

Lee and Bev Radke say their Christian faith inspires them to give.

They learned about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch from good friends and neighbors, Arlene and Gilbert Grienke, and are thrilled to support a Christian ministry.

“[Ranch] kids need someone who loves them. And they also get the knowledge of Christ, which they probably aren’t getting in their home,” Bev said. “That is so important.”

Bev’s earliest recollection of giving was at Sunday School. “Mom and Dad would give us change to take to Sunday School. There were five of us kids and each of us got a coin to put in the plate. For church, Mom would fill out an envelope every Sunday and Dad would put the envelope into the offering plate.”

When she got to high school, Bev joined Walther League, the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod youth group at the time. Through Walther League, she participated in fundraisers for Lutheran children’s camps.

“My parents didn’t give great big amounts to anything in particular,” she said, “but they gave all five of us an education and we are very grateful. Every time one of us kids needed a check for college, Dad would have to take a load of hogs to market. They didn’t have a lot of cash laying around.”

When Bev graduated from high school, she went to Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, IA, where she earned a degree in elementary education. She student-taught in Cherokee, IA, where she stayed and taught kindergarten for 33 years.

A few years later, Bev was the organist for a wedding. On the night of the rehearsal, she went to the hairdresser and an elderly gentleman ran into her car.

“I couldn’t drive it,” she said. “Lee was in the wedding so when the rehearsal and supper were over...”

“I took her under my arm and helped her out,” Lee continued.

Bev said that was the beginning of their romance. “I said I would never marry a farmer,” Bev said. “But that all went out the window. We just had a lot of the same interests and I just fell for him.”

Eight months later they got married and in August 2021, they celebrated 50 years of marriage.

While Bev continued to teach, Lee farmed land they purchased from his parents. In 1995, Lee was injured in a head-on collision when the driver of the other car, a 19-year-old girl, fell asleep. His injuries, along with a hereditary disease that causes weakness of the body’s connective tissues, resulted in Lee having

to quit farming.

“I’m still able to walk a ways,” Lee said. “So, I’m thankful for that. And I have a good mate who helps me.”

Since Lee and Bev do not have children, Bev’s students became her kids.

“They filled that gap in my life,” she said. “I had 1,425 kindergartners, and some of them, I also had their kids. I went through two generations of students.”

Over the years, Lee and Bev have had a lot of fun together. They both love to fish and play cards; and Bev loves music, playing piano and organ. They live by Holstein, IA, and spend winters in Arizona. They also have a large garden in Iowa that Bev says they plant, care for, and harvest together.

Lee disagrees. “She is giving me too much credit. I go out there with a golf cart. We have a little push precision planter that needs the right plates to pick up the seeds and spit them out, just like planting years ago on the farm. I make sure it’s done right. And then I boss her around.”

“And, since we don’t have children,” Bev said, “we want to give our money away.”

In addition to supporting Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, the Radke’s donate to several organizations and their church, including to a missionary in Taiwan who was one of Bev’s kindergarten students.

“We want to be remembered for spreading the Word of God all over the world,” Lee said.

They will also be remembered for their fierce love—a sentiment they have etched on their tombstone, “Together in Life. Together in Death. Together Forever.”



## A Heart for the Kids



### Don and Arlene Schumacher

While Don and Arlene Schumacher don't know exactly how they learned about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, they assume it was through their church, Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Hutchinson, MN.

They joined Our Saviors shortly after moving to Hutchinson in 1957, when Don became regional sales manager for a hybrid seed corn company.

"We were raising two young boys and times were tough," Don said. "I think at that time I was making \$125 a month. We didn't have a nickel to spend for ice cream."

As their finances improved, Don and Arlene started putting a little aside to support the Ranch, and in over thirty years of giving, they've never missed a year.

"There are a lot of good charities, but the Ranch seems to be closer to the heart of touching people," Don said.

Don was also drawn to the Ranch because he was adopted. He doesn't

know the circumstances of his adoption, just that he lived in the Lutheran Home in St. Paul, MN, and was adopted when he was two.

"I'm happy the way things went. I was adopted to a very good family. My life could have turned out very differently."

Arlene also has a heart for the kids at the Ranch. She sees their support as an extension of her volunteer work. "We had two boys

who were no trouble to raise, and we feel supporting the Ranch is an appropriate way to show our gratitude."

In addition to raising their boys, caring for their home, and in later years, working at 3M, Arlene has been a lifelong volunteer. She made hundreds of quilts to donate to charity with Our Saviors Quilting Group. She has also coordinated Honey Sunday events at her church to support the Ranch, and several years ago organized a drive at her church to purchase Christmas gifts for Ranch kids.

Don and Arlene's parents provided them great examples of being charitable. While they didn't have much when Don and Arlene were growing up, they were charitable in other ways.

"My mom and dad were very charitable in working for the church," Don said. "They didn't have a lot of money to give, but they provided labor and so forth...like

contributing a chicken or pig to help feed the pastor."

The Schumacher's take their giving very seriously and have toured all three Ranch campuses—in Minot, Bismarck, and Fargo.

"We've been able to get out there and see what's happening. We like to check things over. We like to contribute to helping these young people who need help so badly," Don said.

A few years ago, the Schumacher's set up automatic withdrawals from their IRA to go to the Ranch. They like that they don't have to think about it every month.

"Even though it's the same amount of money," Don said, "it gives the Ranch something they can depend on. We don't have to write a check every month, or risk forgetting. We set up our church contributions the same way."

In addition, Arlene directs Thrivent Choice Dollars® to the Ranch, and has spearheaded several Thrivent Action teams for the Ranch.

"Years ago, I read that the Lord said if you give, you shall receive," Don said. "We started giving more and more, and we still weren't hurting. The Lord has blessed us a lot."

They were recently blessed to celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary, and when asked if he would choose her again if had the chance to go back, Don said, "Oh, yes."

And then with a little chuckle, he continued, "I'm not sure if she'd choose me though. She'd probably want a little tune-up here and there."



# NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE A TAX-FREE GIFT WITH AN IRA Rollover



Ken and Donna Meyer

## How it Works

When Ken and Donna Meyer, Rogers, AR, married two years ago, Donna introduced Ken to tax-free giving through an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution. He then started having money from his IRA sent directly to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch every month.

“It’s a win-win situation,” Ken said. “I have to take a mandatory withdrawal from my IRA anyway and if I take it I pay taxes. If I give it to the Ranch, I don’t have to pay taxes.”

Ken learned about the Ranch many years ago when he was working as an insurance adjustor. He set up a drive-through claim service in Minot after a hailstorm and the Ranch had two vehicles with hail damage.

“The vans were always on the road so I went out to the Ranch on a Saturday. They showed me around and were so kind. I fell in love with the horses and with everything the Ranch does for children. That’s what got me started, and now an IRA Rollover is the best way for me to give.”

## Convert a Burden Into a Benefit

If you are 72 or older you are likely familiar with the IRA required minimum distribution (RMD). Each year, the IRS requires you to withdraw a certain amount from your IRA whether you need the funds or not. And you pay income tax on every distribution you take. For many IRA account holders, the taxes can be a significant and an undesirable annual burden.

## Major Gift with Minor Effort

Many people are discovering that they can make a big difference to help further our mission with an IRA rollover gift. For an added benefit consider designating our organization as a beneficiary of your IRA.

## Reduce Taxes and Increase Impact

The IRA charitable rollover provides several benefits. It allows you to transfer up to \$100,000 from your IRA directly to a nonprofit this year. You pay no taxes on the transfer and your gift counts dollar-for-dollar to support our important work. You may also count the gift against your required minimum distribution, which lowers your income and taxes this year.

## Roll Over Before the Year Does

To benefit this year, your IRA rollover gift needs to be made before Dec. 31. Call your IRA administrator now or contact us for more information on how to make the IRA Rollover work for you.

## Act Now To Save on Taxes!

This year, instead of paying more in taxes, use your IRA for a noble purpose. If you are 70½ you can roll over up to \$100,000 from your IRA to charity. You won’t be taxed on the transfer and it may count towards your required distribution. Best of all, it’s easy. Contact us or your IRA administrator to see how you can roll over into tax savings.



For more information contact us at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).

6301 19th Ave. N.W., Minot, ND 58703 • [www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)

# Our Friends

## “The Kids Need Us”

Al and Johnne Bierdeman both come from humble beginnings in rural North Dakota. Johnne grew up in Dickey, ND, where her parents both worked at the bank. Al was born and raised on a family farm near Sykeston, ND, and was one of six kids.

After graduating from high school, Johnne went to North Dakota State School of Science, Wahpeton, ND, to earn a degree in nursing. She then moved to Fargo and was an LPN at St. Luke's Hospital. Al moved to Fargo after high school, too, and found a job working construction.

According to Johnne, they met when they were both invited to a party by a mutual friend.

“My side of the story is that she was the last one there and I felt sorry for her,” Al said, the twinkle in his eye and half smile on his lips evidence of his ever-present sense of humor.

Regardless how it began, they hit it off, dated, and got married. Al was drafted into the army three months after the wedding. After serving for two years (one of them in Korea), Al came back to Fargo and worked construction. In 1982, he, along with his brother and a friend, started MinKo Construction. A few years later, Johnne joined the company as the Office Manager.

And that's where they learned about the Ranch.

Al said, “MinKo built the Fargo Youth Home, and then a few years later we built a Ranch thrift store in south Fargo. I got to know Larry Knutson, [the

Ranch Executive Director at the time], and from him I learned more about the Ranch and what they did. One day, Larry came over and asked if I would be on the board of directors. I told him I was just a construction worker and wasn't sure I belonged on the board with attorneys and everybody else. He said, ‘Well, we need you too,’ and invited Johnne and I to tour the Minot facility.”



**Al and Johnne Bierdeman have a long history of supporting Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.**

“That really opened up our eyes,” Al said. “That’s when I really got to know about the Ranch, and I fell in love with it. I joined the board and served roughly 15 years. I was Chairman of the board two or three of those years. I was nervous at first, but I enjoyed it and made some good friends.”

Johnne remembers attending one of Al’s first board meetings in Minot. “It coincided with Confirmation, so we were able to go to the service. There were three or four kids being confirmed and they had no parents or sponsors there. It just tore my heart apart. I wanted to jump up and say, ‘We will be your

sponsors. We’ll throw a party for you.’ It really inspired me and showed me that these kids really, really need us.”

Seeing the incredible needs of these kids inspired the Bierdemans to become long and loyal supporters of the Ranch. In 2014, they made a significant gift to the Red River Valley Campaign to build the Fargo residential treatment center, and the building was named in their honor,

“The Al and Johnne Bierdeman Center for Hope and Healing.”

More recently, they’ve been donating through their IRA. “We were giving a certain amount to the Ranch each year,” Al said. “When we started drawing off our IRAs, we decided to give through those because of the tax benefits.”

In addition to their regular gifts

throughout the year, Al and Johnne make a special donation at Christmas so the kids who can’t go home can go out for a Christmas meal and have a few presents to open.

Al and Johnne are both retired, and they celebrated 52 years of marriage in August 2021.

Why have they continued to give to the Ranch all these years?

Al said, “Johnne and I don’t have any children. And we just felt a need here. Our nieces and nephews are all doing well and don’t need our money. These kids need it.”

## The Patchwork Quilt



**By Laurie Wigtil,  
Development  
Officer**

*God, pick up the pieces. Put me back together again. You are my praise!*  
-Jeremiah 17:14 (MSG)

When I was a child, a lovely woman lived next door who was an avid quilt maker. Her quilts were beautiful, filled with colors and shapes in all different sizes. One of her specialties was to make quilts for graduating seniors. The pieces of fabric—saved by parents, friends, and the child—represented special moments or events in the child’s life. These little squares of fabric represented both good/happy memories and sad/poignant memories. The quilts were made, given, and accepted in love.

This makes me think of our loving God who wrapped us in His perfect quilt of love as we entered the world. Perfect in love and filled with possibilities. However, as we have found, life and evil in the world take a toll on our protective life quilts. Pieces are ripped off, sometimes violently, and lost. Each trauma leaves our kids with one less piece of God’s perfect cover of love.

When our boys and girls get to the point where their only hope is the Ranch, their quilts are in tatters and seem to only represent all the unfair, unimaginable things life has dealt them. Physical abuse, human trafficking, loss of family, loss of

identity, loss of humanity—broken and torn apart.

But all is not lost. Our mission at the Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ. And as you know, our Christ-centered residential treatment and educational center is a place where we look the most troubled, complicated, and amazing kids in the eye, walk with them, and help them become their best selves in this world and in Christ.

We could not do this without your prayers and support. Because of you, the torn pieces of each child’s life can be lovingly stitched back together to make a whole person, filled with healing and hope for the future.

Please join us in our quilting project—one that will fill the world with hope for the future, trust for others, and healing for the soul. A quilting project that will wrap our kids in God’s perfect love—regardless of what the world throws at them.

Your prayers for our kids are a source of healing and hope. Thank you for loving our children. If you have any questions about the Ranch, contact Laurie Wigtil, or any of the people shown here, at 1-800-344-0957.



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Aune**  
Development  
Officer



**Lisa  
Cole**  
Mission  
Advancement  
Officer



**Anne  
Compere**  
Director  
of Mission  
Advancement



**Laurie  
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Krueger**  
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Development  
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**Linda  
Medhus**  
Senior  
Development  
Officer



**Tim  
Unsinn**  
Senior  
Development  
Officer



**Denise  
Watson**  
Senior  
Development  
Officer

## Foundation and Corporate Donations

**ND Department of Human Services; Staff Training (all campuses);**  
\$30,000

**Elmer and Kaya Berg Foundation; Fargo Campus Beautification;**  
\$1,000

**Kiwanis Club of Fargo; Fargo Campus Beautification;**  
\$2,000

**Sertoma Club of Minot; Cornelsen Cottage Furniture;**  
\$2,000

**BNSF Railway Foundation; Seegers Cottage Security/Cameras (Minot);**  
\$2,000

**Mercy Box; DMS Bismarck School Supplies**

**LCMS; Bismarck Gardening Program;**  
\$1,000

**School Sisters of Notre Dame; Bikes for Fargo Girls;**  
\$1,000

**BCBSND Caring Foundation; Mental Health First Aid Community Education; Dakota Family Services (all locations);**  
\$10,000

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Tammy Noteboom,  
Vice President, Communications

# Memorials/Honorariums

Unless otherwise designated, donations you make in memory or in honor of your loved ones will be used to help build and maintain chapel facilities on all Ranch campuses. Your gift to the Ranch will live on through the children at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch who learn about Jesus' unending love. For more information about making memorial and honorarium gifts to the Ranch, contact the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).

## Memorials

July 1, 2021 - October 31, 2021

AICH, MICAH

Sandra Aich

ALT, ABIGAIL

Donna Iszler

ALVERSON, CHARLIE

Shelia Gerry

ALWIN, REX

Betsy Alwin

ANDERSEN, JUDY

Richard Gust

ANDERSON, RYAN T.

Donald & Vivian Anderson

ANDERSON MILLS, MARY

Elda Kastner

ATKINSON, MELVIN

Maynard & Ardella Krause

BACH, URSULA

Gilda Karu

BAILEY, BRADLEY

Bernadine Oberc

BATEMAN, JEANETTE "SHORTY"

Millie Buelgen

Irene Heid

Keith & Roberta Hoesel

Wilbert & Delores Kunz

Marvin & Laverne Schulz

BAUER, ROBERT

Mr. Jeff Givens

BAUMANN, DIANE

Larry & Joyce Baumann

Glenn & JoAnn Bladow

Doris Gabbert & Family

Jim & Becky Maners

Di Ann Milbrandt

Don & Crystal Schroeder

Rev. Timothy Steenbock & Family

Darlene Steinmetz & Family

BEARCE, SHIRLEY

Steve & Renee Ginther

BECHTEL, SIDNEY

Carol Urbach

BECKER, PATRICIA V.

Chris & Jean Hansen

BERKLEY, JOHN W.

Irene Berkley

BETTERMAN, DELORES

Wyandeta Timm

BIERDEMAN, JAMES

Al & Johnne Bierdeman

Roger & Lisa Cole

Dale & Laurie Dannewitz

Joy Ryan

BOEKELHEIDE, DEAN

Merle & DeLoris Heidenreich

BRECKENFELDER, MARGA

Beth Knudson

BREWARD, JOHN C.

Gloria Breward

BUCKMAN, LESTER & CAROLINE

Austin & Sarah Buckman

BURTMAN, JERALD

Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

BUSSLER, ELAINE

Ilene Bussler

CAMPBELL, JOAN F.

Arnold & Joyce Roorda

CARLSON, RUTH

Glenn & Cathi Heuchert

COLBY, JACK

Jean M. Lindvig

COLE, NADINE

Carol Grieger

COOK, CAROL

Patsy Moerke

CORNELSEN, DAVID

Eileen Cornelsen

DALE, CLIFF

Nolan & Eileen Bode

DANKE, GORDON

Darleen Klemp

DANIELSON, GERRY

Joel Erickson

DE GREE, COURTNEY

Kevin & Tina DeGree

DESMOND, ROBERT

Susan Mysliwicz

DICK, MILLIE

Lawrence & Violet Dethlefsen

Janna Diggs

Marilyn Frank

James Valley Grain

Bob & Karen Huether

Armand & Dawn Johnson

Philip & Gwen Martin

Eric & Kari Natvig

Walt & Janet Spiese

Christopher & Sara Stenaas

DOAN, DARLENE

Darleen Klemp

DUNSMOOR, SUSIE

Joel Erickson

EDWARDS, JERROD

Charlotte Price

EDWARDSON, ELLEN "JENSINE"

Wayne & Carol Norby

EHLERS, NORMA

Norma Ehlers's Family

ELKINS, DOUG

Little BB Club - Class of "56"

ERICKSON, SHARON

Joel Erickson

ERNST, LEONARD

Eugene & Vivian Ernst

EVENSON, JAMES "JIM"

Doris Jensen  
Clarice Mosolf

FERDON, DANIEL

Richard & Myrna Thorsell

FERGUSON, JOY

Patti Mihelich

FINNESGARD, JEANETTE

Orvin Finnesgard

FISCHER, JAMES & ELAINE

Florence Wiest

FLADLAND, PAUL

Sandra Morken

FREEMAN, POLLY

Ron & Janis Bakke

FUST, RAYMOND JOHN

Marilyn Frank

GALSTER, JOHN

John & Patricia Sebastian

GEISZLER, GUS & ELEANOR

Florence Wiest

GERHART, LAMBERT & LORENE

Owen & Judy Randle

GERHARTER, GORDON

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Ellingson

GERMEROOTH, RALPH

Robert & Deann Davidson

GLIENKE, ERNEST "ERNIE"

Caroline Letzring

GLOVIER, ELIZABETH

David Glovier

GOLDADE, JOSEPH

Linda Thomas

GOTVASLEE, OLIVIA

Linda Thomas

GUST, RUTH

Richard Gust

HARSHBERGER, IONE

Helen Albrightson

Rod & Marlene Albrightson

HAUCK, EDWARD

Dave & Sharon Miller

HAUGEN, MILTON

Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

HAWORTH, NANCY

Daniel Duckworth

HAYER, HARRY

Mrs. June B. Hayer

HEALY, SHEILA

Richard & Cathryn Flyger

HEDAHL, GORDEN

Linda Thomas

HEIDENREICH, LOREN

Merle & DeLoris Heidenreich

HELFRICH, JOHN

Clarissa Wald

HELMERS, ARLENE

David & Sharon Miller

HESTERMANN, LORIS DEAN  
"BUD"

Rob & Sara Brull

Robert & Sylvia Dunker

Bruce Focke

Fort Hays State University

Foundation

Angie Green

Carol Hestermann

David & Deanne Hestermann

Chuck & Lea Holste

Harlan & Ruth Holste

Jerry & Barb Holste

Otis & Clarice Howard

Larry Kogl

Brian & Rhonda Laufer

Steven & Beverly Long

Richard & Judy Michel

Dave & Patricia Nicolaus

Rudy & Wilma Niermeir

Harvey & Sandra Pakkebieer

Doug & Marla Reinert

Louis & Elizabeth Sabatka

Roger & Lynda Snodgrass

Michelle Stevens

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation

Ray & Rosa Trail

Blanche Vap

Marc & Sylvia Walker

Martin & Jane Waterman

Ernest Wicke

Wayne Wicke

Mark & Brenda Wolters

Scott & Kayla Wombacher

HESTERMAN, LORIS DEAN "BUD"  
& BETTY

Thomas & Judith McGuire

Dean Murphy

HILDEBRANDT, GLENN

Curtis & Elaine Bening

HOFFMAN, DR. MARV

Douglas Hoffman

HOLSING, HILDA

Irma Fuerstenau

HOLTE, DALE

Joe & Gloria Grossman

HOOVER, MELVIN

Don & Carrie Folkert

HUBER, KATHLEEN

Donald & Caroline Maurer

HUBERTY, BEATRICE

Diane Heagle

HUFT, RICHARD

Jack Huft

IVERSON, ORVILLE

Darrel Iverson

JAEGER, TINA M.

Charles & Helen M. Foss-Bohm

JELLEBERG, VERDINE

Rod & Marlene Albrightson

JENSON, DYLAN

Nancy Stevenson

JOHNSON, REV. JUSTIN E.

Lorina Zuern

JOHNSON, MARLENE

Evelyn Schwagler

JOHNSON, RICHARD

Ronald & Rita St. Croix

JORDAN, JOSEPH "JOE"

Audrey Jordan

Family of Joseph Jordan

KEIL, NORVAL LEE

Phyllis Hobbs

KELLER, DORAINE PODOLL

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

# Memorials/Honorariums

KELZER, GERTRUDE

Ilene Bussler

KERNS, ABRAHAM ZAPPONE

Karl & Marion Kerns

KIENITZ, JOYCE

Anita L. Petersen

KLEIN, LARRY

Linda Thomas

KLUSMAN, ROGER

Millie Bueligen

Delores Maier

KNELL, ALVIN

Lorina Zuern

KNOLL, GARY E.

Mary Heins

Paul & Denis Koring

KNUDSVIG, BERNICE

Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

KOEHLER, LUTHER

Rodger & Marilyn Fischer

KOTALIK, DOROTHY

Henry & Ora Meyer

KUNZ, KATIE

Irene Heid

Keith & Roberta Hoesel

Mrs. Kerry Horton

Wilbert & Delores Kunz

Delores Maier

LAFRENTZ, CHERYL

Shelia Gerry

LANGER, PAUL

Sharon Langer Rowe

LARSON, HERZELL & MARGARET

Phil Lovchik

LATIMER, DR. LOWELL

Dr. Wayne & Mary Jane Sanstead

LEMMERMAN, REV. WALTER

Tom & Suzanne Hough

LESNER, HAROLD

Arlin & Harriet Buchholz

LEVANG, CURT

Mrs. LaMae Pettit

LINK, ERNA

Tom & Debra Link

MACKEY, RONALD

Amanda Lindseth

MATHWICH, TYREL

Linda Hill

Kenneth Mathwich

MAU, ERNIE

Kenton & Zona Schmidt

MC LAUGHLIN, ROSS

Robert & Marguretta Yaeger

MC NICHOLS, JEAN

Violet Podenski

Lelia Mae Schardin

MEDENWALDT, JANICE

Walter Baumann

MEYER, DOUGLAS & ELLA

Wilhelm Meyer

MILLER, TIMOTHY J.

Virginia Miller

MOGARD, RUBY

John & Patricia Sebastian

NEBEL, INGRID A.

Ronald & Sharon Brinker

Susan Goris

Sandra Fischer

Mr. Charles Gieseke

Phil Kershner

Marquette HS World Language Dept.

Timothy Prahlow

Mary Schneider

Annette Sonntag

NELSON, MARILYN

Bruce & Pam Smith

NELSON, PEARL

Adrian & Colleen Fitchner

NEUMILLER, GENE

Arlys Torgerson

NORD, SELMA

Chris & Jean Hansen

OAS, GORDON "GORDY"

Shane & Anna Oas

OLSON, RONALD

Gil & Kathy Beaman

ONSTOTT, EDD

Sue Hylland

OPP, INGRAM

Wilbert & Delores Kunz

Evelyn Schwagler

OTT, CARL W.

American Welding Society

Ted Andersen

Beth Castillo

Caesar Ricci Family

Dale & Laurie Dannewitz

Louise Fowler

Gretchen Fuller

Scott Heeter

Bert & Lois Jablinski

Gary Jablinski

Janice Porter

Norman & Anita Werner

Todd Williams

PAULSON, GARY

Donald & Ellen Croy

Beverly Danielson

Dennis & Deanna Weyer

PARENTS, RISCHE-WIESEHAN

Henry & Marian Rische

PARKYN, JEAN

Bob & Jackie Kluender

PELLMAN, HAROLD (HARRY)

Marilyn Frank

PHILLIPS, GORDON

Violet Wyum

PIERCE, ELYZABETH

Marisa Knudson

PUPPE, RODNEY

Clarice Mosolf

QUAM, STANLEY

Dolores Simdorn

RADDYSCH, TERRY

Roger & Lisa Cole

Dale & Laurie Dannewitz

Joy Ryan

RALL, REV. E. EUGENE "GENE"

Family & Friends of Eugene "Gene"

Rall



REINHOLTZ, JOAN

Ryan & Rachel Marben

REINKE, ROBERT "BOB"

Bruce & Pam Smith

ROMSOS, HAZEL

Richard Gust

ROSSOW, REV. E.J.

Irene Berkley

RUNNINGEN, DARYL

Anita Petersen

SAMSON RN, RUTH ANN

Violetta Markert

SAND, EDNA

Esther Dalager

SCHARICH, SCOTT

Robert & Grace Swanson

SCHATKIN, SIDNEY B.

Margaret Schatkin

SCHIMMELPFENNIG, ILENE

Robert & Judith Rice

SCHNEEWIND, DON

Don & Arlene Schumacher

SCHOUSEK, NATHANIEL &

ZACHARY

Howard & Carole Schmidt

SCHROEDER, LARRY

David & Janice Oppedahl

SCHULTZ, LUCILLE

Curtis & Elaine Bening

SCHWAN, BRUCE

Tyler & Lauren Ballantyne

Don & Jean Burke

Craig Elton

Marcia Jessen

Tom & Nan Lundeen

Minot Plumbing & Heating

Judy Schwan

SHAFER, LILLIAN

Doris Jensen

Clarice Mosolf

Jackie & Dottie Nelson

Jean Peppard

Donald Schumacher

SHASKY, EUNICE

Dave, Sharon & Kim Anderson

Rod & Ruth Dunkle

Doug & Cindy Ethel

Kris & Jennifer Mikkelson

F. Francis Najafi

SHERECK, DARREL

Cynthia Shereck

SIDWELL, DON

Alan Noyes

SIEDSCHLAG, MARVIN

Trinity English Lutheran Church

SKAGER, CHARLES & RUTH

Robert & Judith Rice

SLAATEN, DORIS

JoAnn Olson

SOLINGER, THERESE

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

SPANISH DAWN (my best friend in  
the 80's)

Christy Land

SPRECHER, CONNIE

David & Janice Oppedahl

STEIN, JOHN

Jim & Judy Mittelstadt

STEINHAUER, DONALD

Sandra Steinhauer

STUEWER, DAROLD

Mark & Jane Solseng

SWEARSON, BILL & AGNES

Mr. Brad C. Hofmann

TAMMEN, HERBERT

Mrs. Ladeen Guericke

TAZ THE THERAPY HORSE

Rose Donohue

TEBERG, DORIS

Dolores Simdorn

TWIETMEYER, JOHN

William & Barbara Twietmeyer

VANDERHOEF, AIDAN

Dennis & Mitzie Nay

Shane & Anna Oas

VETTER, JAMES

Ardis Vetter

VIKER, DAVID

Jay & Joy Ryan

VIZCARRA, JOSEPH

Bob & Jackie Kluender

VOORHEES, WEBB & JOYCE

Rev. Jack L. & Joneen Richards

WAGNER, DARWIN

Ilene Bussler

WAHLUND, EDWINA

Linda Hill

WARD, ALLEN

Walter E. Baumann

WARD, DONALD

Tim Ward

WASSBERG, REV. LESLIE G.

Clayton & Zona Pearson

WEELDREYER, LEONA

Mrs. Ladeen Guericke

WEISS, GENEVIEVE

Joyce Henke

Keith & Roberta Hoesel

WEISS, JIMMY

Norma Von Osterheldt

WENZEL, VIVIAN

Rod & Marlene Albrightson

WERTH, KEN & ARLENE

Tom & Rebecca Wierschem

WIERSCHEM, JACK & BARB

Tom & Rebecca Wierschem

WIRTZ, PAUL

Dave & Sharon Miller

WOLFE, SUSAN

Terry Wolfe

YEAGER, HOWARD

Keith & Roberta Hoesel

YOUNG, ARTHUR

David & Mary Ann Young

ZABOLOTNEY, GINGER

Dennis & Marie Pozarnsky

ZURCHER, ELMER & CONNIE

Carol Townsend

# Memorials/Honorariums

## Honorariums

July 1, 2021 - October 31, 2021

50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
OF GAYLORD & MARILYN  
SCHILLING

Linda Hill

ADAM MAITLAND

Linda Rowe

ALL ABUSED CHILDREN

Janet Riley-Dalton

BABY QUINN MATUS CEASER

Kay Stoterau

BIRTH OF GENE & JANICE

POSKIN'S GRANDDAUGHTER,  
MAEVE MARIE

Abraham Moreno

BRUCE & BEV BURKETT

Gary & Kari Rath

CECILIA PODCZERWINSKI

Janet Podczerwinski

DONNA SCHMIDT'S 89TH  
BIRTHDAY

Sandy Schmidt

DOROTHY ROMEO

Bob James

DR. EDWARD MAY, DDS

Rosemary A. Thomas

ERIKA TUCKER

Sue-Anna Tucker

GAVIN MOE'S BIRTHDAY

Thomas & Donna Schneider

GENE LESSARD

Jim & Adrienne Stack

GREG CARPENTER

Larry D. Knutson

JOY RYAN

Gail Confer

Quin and Kole Seiler

LEE & LOIS SCHREIBER

Earl & Sandra Slack

LINDA HILL

Marilyn Schilling

NICHOLAS BRAUN

Theodore & Julie Novetzke

NOLAN BODE

Mark & Jessica Bode

POLICE CHIEF DARYL GREEN

Curtis Richard

POLICE CHIEF RICHARD

GLEASON

Curtis Richard

REV. DR. PAUL A. KRUEGER

Dr. & Mrs. Oleh Haluszka

Kris Ryan

Larry Sandven

Chris & Melanie Waller

REV. LEO DEITEMEYER

John & Pat Sebastian

ROG ROBERTS

Andrew & Jill Houghton

Steve & Nancy Houghton

SISTER MARGE ROSENAU, SSND  
(Her 70<sup>TH</sup> Jubilee as a professed Nun of  
the School Sisters of Notre Dame)

Kathleen O'Neill

SUE NACK

Mary Clark

TAMMY NOTEBOOM

Larry D. Knutson

THOMAS R. DECKER

ShaRell Nelson

TOBY

Clara Heinemann

WALLY KAUTZNER

James Ladd

## Arizona Donor Appreciation Luncheons are back!

You are invited to this year's Donor Appreciation Luncheons in Mesa and Sun City West. We are so excited to see you again!

**Monday, February 14, 2022**

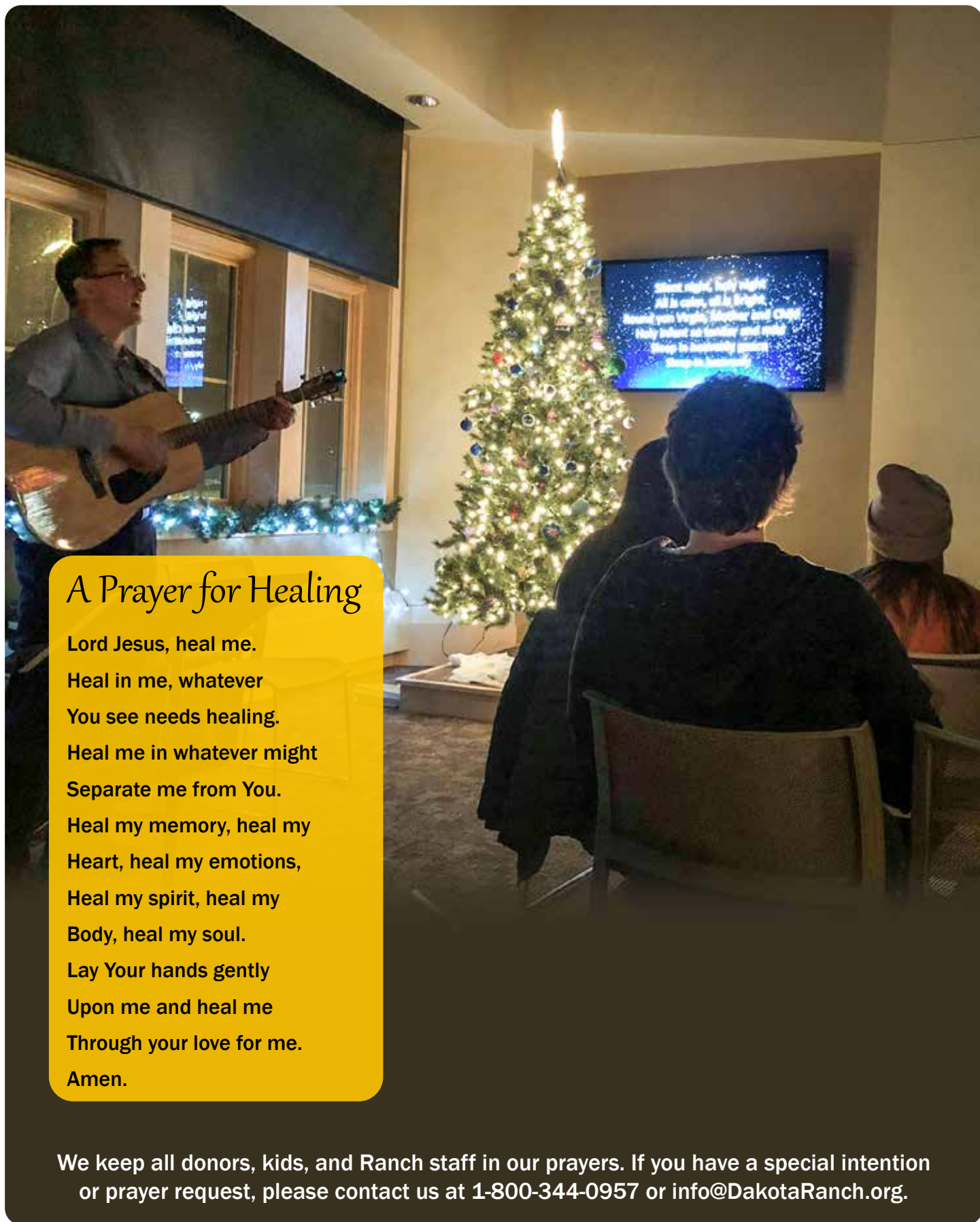
Apache Wells Country Club  
5601 E Hermosa Vista Dr., Mesa

**Tuesday, February 15, 2022**

Briarwood Country Club  
20800 N 135th Ave., Sun City West

Punch will be served at 11:30 with lunch/program to follow. Please RSVP by February 10, 2022.

For more information or to RSVP, call 701-721-2425 or email [l.cole@dakotaranch.org](mailto:l.cole@dakotaranch.org).



## A Prayer for Healing

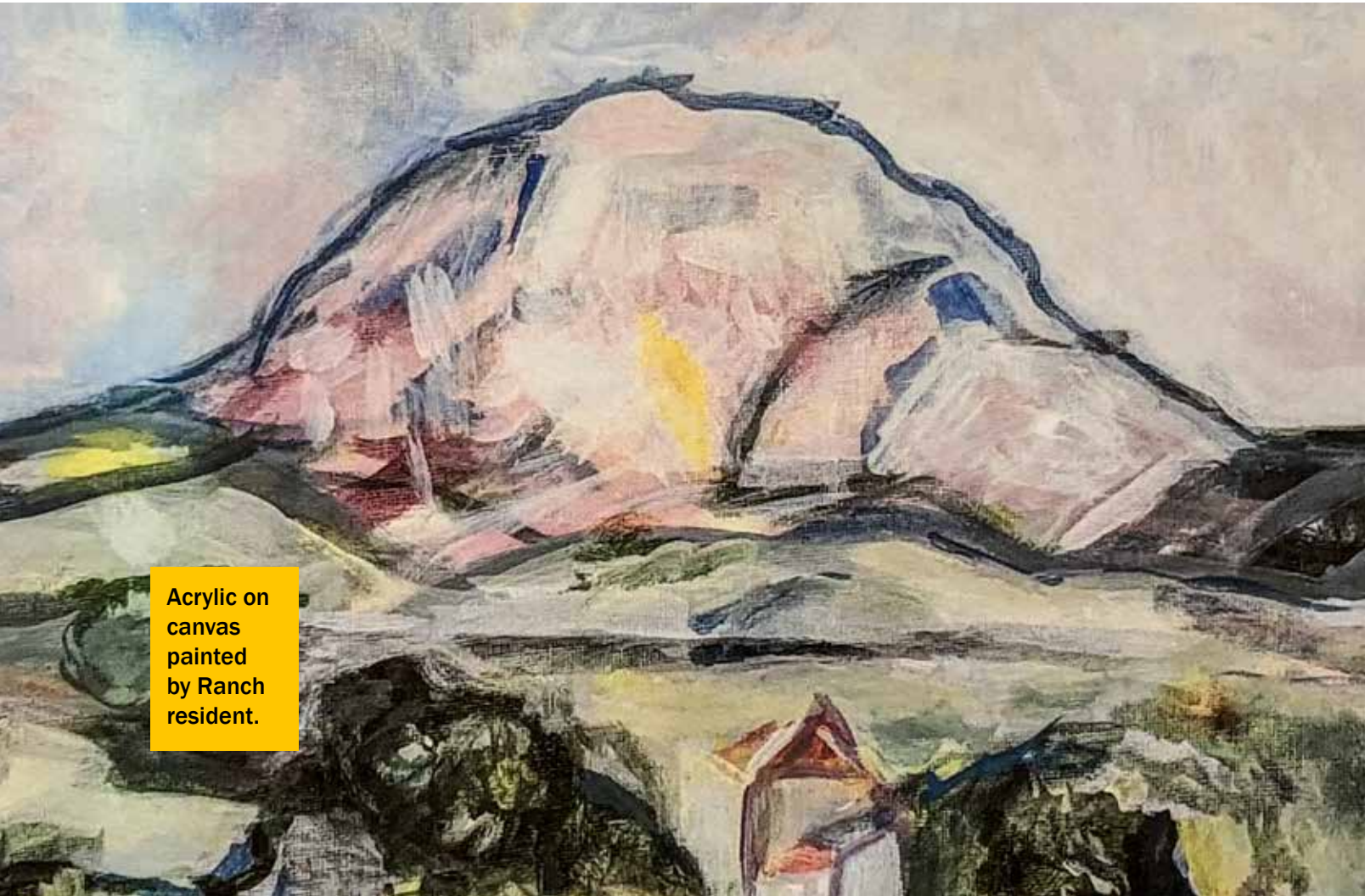
Lord Jesus, heal me.  
Heal in me, whatever  
You see needs healing.  
Heal me in whatever might  
Separate me from You.  
Heal my memory, heal my  
Heart, heal my emotions,  
Heal my spirit, heal my  
Body, heal my soul.  
Lay Your hands gently  
Upon me and heal me  
Through your love for me.  
Amen.

We keep all donors, kids, and Ranch staff in our prayers. If you have a special intention or prayer request, please contact us at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).



Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch  
P.O. Box 5007  
Minot, ND 58702-5007

Change Service Requested



Acrylic on canvas painted by Ranch resident.

The mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)

Main Switchboard: 1-800-593-3098

Foundation: 1-800-344-0957

