

THE RANCH VOICE

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

Spring 2020



Wyatt and his teacher, Andrew Meier, work on an uncooperative leaf blower in small engine repair class.



www.DakotaRanch.org
1.800.344.0957

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Message from the President/CEO



Joy Ryan, right, is pictured here with former Ranch resident, Emily Von Hagen. Emily spoke at the February donor appreciation luncheons in Arizona.

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“You’re a stranger and I don’t trust you!”

Dearest Friends,

Last month I was in our Minot Campus Dining Room for lunch with the kids. One of our littlest boys on campus, he’s only 11, invited me to join him, his teacher, and another young boy at their table. It is always fun to be invited!

The boy who invited me shook my hand and then promptly told me he was having a rough day. He had just gotten a haircut, and someone at school hadn’t been too enthusiastic about it. His teacher told him a story about a “perm gone bad” in her earlier days and we quickly moved onto talking about my granddaughter’s similar haircut, the Minnesota Vikings and

his favorite player, Stefon Diggs, and all the other important world issues. He gave me his extra packet of ketchup when he saw I was running out.

The other little boy, who I had not met before, was very quiet through all this. He didn’t want to shake my hand, did not share his name, did not join in the conversation. He kept an eye on me through side glances while he ate the bun to his pizza burger first, and then moved on to the burger itself.

The talkative child asked the quiet child, “Should I tell her your name?” and received a negative head shake in return.

As I was finishing up, he decided to talk. He looked me right in the eyes, and with his child’s voice said, “I don’t know you. You’re a stranger to me. I don’t trust you, because I don’t know you.”

My first reaction was to say that it is my job to keep all the children here safe. But then I caught myself.

“You know,” I told him. “That’s fair. I’m glad you said that. Makes sense to me!”

In another place and time, his declaration would perhaps not be the “right” thing to say. But I have been celebrating inside ever since it happened. This little boy was a punching bag for the adults around him. He survived and endured trauma resulting in emotional damage that brought him to the Ranch.

Now, that little boy, who had had no say and no voice in what happened to him, was able to look me in the eye and say, “Nope, you don’t get to hurt me.”

He has much more healing to do, but what a fantastic start!

Thank you for helping our kids find their courage and strength.

In His love,

Ranch Voice was nearly ready for the printer when COVID-19 started making a huge impact on our daily lives. While we have made many changes to the way we provide our services and care for children and staff over the past weeks, the articles in this issue continue to represent our work and our kids. The ways we connect with children, staff, and families may have changed, but the ultimate mission remains the same—to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

Keeping kids safe during the COVID-19 pandemic

By Joy Ryan, President/CEO

We are in uncharted territory.

Although we are likely to start sentences with “It’s kind of like” or “I remember when,” the reality is that the COVID-19/Coronavirus pandemic is a new reality for the entire world.

Here at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, we, like everyone else, are navigating one day, and sometimes one minute, at a time.

Our first priority is the safety and security of the vulnerable children who come here for healing. We are also very concerned about managing the situation well for our tremendous staff. And, of course as responsible “employer citizens” we want to do well for our community. As part and parcel, we are all learning new language... “self-quarantine,” “social-distancing,” and the like.

We will continue to provide all services expected from the Ranch during this time. COVID-19 did not wipe out the trauma or pain that our children are suffering. In fact, in some cases the changes in schedule and activities exacerbate the anxiety and fear our kids live with every day. Most of the world is on edge about this virus. Imagine you are a child, with little control over what happened in the past, and now this—which no one can control, enters your world. It is so unfair to add this to their plates.

Our job is to provide them with all the safety and reassurances we can. We will continue their treatment, their therapy, their clean environment, and provide answers to all the questions they may have. Our Leadership Team is meeting daily to adjust plans and operations.

We are over-communicating. We are suspending travel and all group activities. We are not allowing visitors on campus. We are wiping down work surfaces and anything anyone touches.

We are, quite simply, helping at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ. Even with COVID-19.

Your prayers and continued support are critical at this strange time. Stay well.

Character in Crisis

Clint Pumphrey, a manuscripts curator at Utah State University, wrote a 2011 essay about Tom Brokaw’s book, *The Greatest Generation*. His words are relevant to today. In his essay, Pumphrey writes,

“Tom Brokaw argues that the World War II generation’s perseverance through difficult times is a testament to their extraordinary character. Their remarkable actions, during times of war and peace, ultimately made the United States a better place in which to live.

“Born and raised in a tumultuous era marked by war and economic depression, Brokaw asserts, these men and women developed values of ‘personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith.’

“Brokaw credits the Greatest Generation with much of the freedom and affluence that Americans enjoy today. ‘They have given the succeeding generations the opportunity to accumulate great economic wealth, political muscle, and the freedom from foreign oppression to make whatever choices they like,’ he writes.”

Despite these achievements, however, Brokaw believes that the Greatest Generation remains remarkably humble about what they’ve done.”

As we navigate this global pandemic, we pray that when it is defeated, we too can look back humbly.

That future generations will see that we behaved with “personal responsibility, duty, honor, and faith,” and that we provided an example they can look to for inspiration.

-Reprinted from *HowStuffWorks.com*.

The Ups and Downs of Recovery

Laura finds sobriety, success, and spirituality

Laura Price was born in New York to parents who were, according to Laura, “really into drugs. My Dad started stealing from people at work, so he ended up getting arrested.”

When Laura’s dad went to jail, her mother moved the family to North Dakota where they lived with Laura’s grandma. Her mom moved out shortly after arriving in North Dakota, so Laura and her sister shuffled back and forth between their mom and grandma.

When Laura was four, her mom got pregnant and they were all excited for a new baby in their lives. But it wasn’t to be...at nine days old, Laura’s baby sister died on the operating table when they were trying to fix a hole in her heart. Laura’s mom moved away shortly after her baby died, leaving Laura and her sister with their grandma.

“My grandma is a really cool lady,” Laura said. “She took care of me for the longest time and even after all I’ve put her through, she is still there for me and loves me unconditionally.”

Still, it was hard for Laura to not have her parents in her life. “I had a good childhood with my grandma, but I got bullied in school a lot for only having a grandma. Everyone would ask, ‘Why don’t you have a Mom and Dad?’ And I didn’t know what to say, because I didn’t know why I couldn’t live with them. Now I know it’s because my mom was really into drugs, but then I didn’t know.”

In junior high, Laura got involved in partying. “When I started

drinking, I thought it was all fun and games. I would sleep all day and party all night. I’d go to school, go to work, sleep until 10 p.m., and then sneak out of the house and go party. I’d sneak back in before my Grandma got up, and then I’d do it all over again.”

Laura drank to fit in and to stop the pain of depression and anxiety, but it quickly got out of hand; and she now realizes the depression and anxiety increased the more she drank.

“It wasn’t fun and games anymore. I was drinking heavily and couldn’t stop. I was always so sad. On weekends I slept all day. I had panic attacks and would get into “moods,” as my grandma calls them, and when I’m in a mood, there’s no talking to me.”

When Laura’s grandmother could no longer handle Laura’s moods, defiance, lies, and drinking, she contacted Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Laura knew she needed help, but she wasn’t ready to go to the Ranch.

“I kept telling myself I just wouldn’t go. That my grandma couldn’t make me,” Laura said.

The weekend before she was supposed to go to the Ranch, Laura was in a car accident and tore her liver.

“I thought it was perfect,” she said. “I was in the hospital so I couldn’t go to the Ranch. While I was there, I talked to my old best friend and she convinced me to go. ‘Laura,’ she said. ‘You need to go. See it as bettering yourself and helping yourself.’ I decided to try it out so when they discharged me from the hospital, my grandma took me right to the Ranch.”



Teacher Suzanne Erz (left) saw a spark in Laura (right) and wouldn’t let her forget it.

For Laura, being at the Ranch was terrifying. “I was really, really scared and homesick. I cried a lot for the first couple days and just wanted to go home. I didn’t think anyone could help me and I was so depressed and down,” Laura said.

Laura’s case manager at the Ranch’s Bismarck campus, Katie Boucher, said Laura was in a lot of pain when she came to the Ranch.

“She was making unsafe choices in relationships and struggled to find a peer group that supported a healthy lifestyle,” Boucher said. “She didn’t have coping strategies to manage her emotions, which led to suicidal thoughts and attempts. She was very defiant towards her grandmother’s rules and expectations.”

Laura says now that everyone at the Ranch tried to make her feel at home. “They were so nice and encouraging. I was refusing treatment at the beginning because I didn’t think it would help. Once I got to know everyone, I started listening to them. I started going to therapy and Amber [Nelson] really helped me. We did family therapy with my grandma and I was in a good place. I learned a lot at the Bismarck Ranch.”

After just a few months, Laura went home, but it wasn’t long before she was spending time with her old friends and drinking again. The next step was to move her from her grandmother’s home to foster care.

“While I was at that first foster home, my depression really kicked in and I was going to commit suicide,” Laura said. “My foster mom caught me, they sent me to the hospital, and from there I went back to the Ranch in Minot.”

Suzanne Erz, one of Laura’s teachers in Minot, said she was a quiet young lady when she arrived in Minot. “She had many somatic complaints to avoid school and her work. She often blamed others for her lack of effort and incomplete homework. But I saw moments when she engaged in class and offered great insight.”

Erz noticed Laura’s sparks of insight and used these to encourage her when she was having negative self-thoughts.

“Laura began to gain confidence and she wanted to correct the errors of her ways,” Erz said. “She can slip back to not wanting to be accountable, but she reverts away from that mindset quickly. She has become more accountable for her actions and has a huge caring heart. Laura wants to be a nurse and I know she has the abilities and the heart to do so. I can’t wait to attend her nursing graduation!”

At the same time as she was progressing in school, Laura was working through the Ranch’s drug and alcohol treatment program.

“I did the whole recovery program, all the letters. For each letter of “RECOVERY” there are things you do and things you write down,” Laura said. “I started looking at my life and it just made me think, ‘Why am I doing this? Why am I doing this to myself and to my family?’ I wasn’t just hurting myself. I was hurting my family also. The Minot recovery program really helped me.”

When Laura moved back home after ten months, she continued to attend Dakota Memorial School, the Ranch’s on-campus school. But she still had a difficult time adjusting.

“I had so much structure at the Ranch and I didn’t know how to handle myself. My grandma and I got into a fight and when I walked off, she called the cops. I refused arrest, and then I spent a night in the Juvenile Detention Center before moving into a foster home.”

Now 17, Laura has been sober for over a year, about the length of time she has lived with her current foster family.

“They are just the best family I could ask for. They treat me like I’m their own and it’s like I’ve lived here my whole life,” Laura said. “They can be strict, but they need to be to keep me in line. They are the best and we have so much fun together.”

Laura also keeps in touch with her grandmother and sister and says she and her sister are closer than ever. “When I was drinking, we weren’t close. But since I’ve been at the Ranch, we are close again. It feels like it’s back to old times when we were little.”

Laura will graduate from Dakota Memorial School in May and plans to go to nursing school. “I was telling Mrs. Erz, one of my main supports here at Dakota Memorial School, that I thought I might want to be a nurse. She had me talk to [Principal] Degree and they got me into some online nursing courses through the North Dakota Center for Distance Learning. I would never have had that opportunity at my old school.”

This semester, Laura is taking a dual credit Anatomy and Physiology course for which she’ll earn both high school and college credits. She is also taking a medical terminology class.

Laura doesn’t have a perfect life. She talks to her dad only occasionally and isn’t allowed contact with her mother because of her drug use. But she knows she is in a better place and attributes much of her success to the Ranch. (Cont. on p. 5)

“Without the Ranch I’d probably be in Juvie, running away, drinking, drugs. I’d have probably gotten into hard drugs and who knows where I’d be right now.”

Laura said, “When I was drinking, I planned to drop out of high school at age 16. I didn’t think there was any way I would graduate. I just didn’t have that mindset. Now I’m not only going to graduate, but I’m filling out forms to get into college.”

Being at the Ranch has also impacted Laura’s faith.

“I didn’t really believe in anything. Then when I was drinking, I was sure there was no way there could be a God because why would God want someone to go through all this stuff. When I came to the Ranch in Minot I started going to chapel and it was amazing. Pastor Rick...you can talk to him whenever you want and ask him any questions. I’ve started going to church with my grandma again and I believe in God.”

“My life has turned around so much,” Laura said. “I feel so much better about myself and am so much more confident.”

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.

Shining hope and light on addiction treatment



By **Connie Rod, Addiction Counselor**

Providing addiction treatment at a facility like Dakota Boys and Girls

Ranch is a unique experience. We treat children who have their own addiction issues and also work with children from homes where addiction is present.

Part of my work is to break down the stigma of addiction. Messages about drug use permeate our society, resulting in prejudice, avoidance, rejection and discrimination against children and families affected by addiction. Working with children and their families gives me the opportunity to shine hope and light into an area that is largely dark and scary for them.

Almost always, addiction comes with mental health issues, so it is vital we treat our residents holistically. I see this every day with my team—we work harmoniously to ensure we are working with residents on every aspect of their lives so we can arm them with the tools they need to be successful.

I’ve personally seen the devastating effects of addiction in my own family. This is the driving force for me to wrap my mind and heart around our residents and help them understand they are not alone—that they can fight and win this battle.

One of the best things is when a child finally recognizes their worth and knows there is hope.

Vocational Education Through the Years



By **Gene Kaseman, CEO Emeritus, Retired**

In the 1960’s, Dakota Boys Ranch faced

some serious education issues. At that time, the Ranch’s education program consisted of two elementary teachers, one full time and one part time. Consequently, the Ranch was basically dependent on the public schools for educating the boys living at the Ranch. Many of the boys had special education needs and most had difficulty functioning in the public school setting due to backgrounds of neglect.

In order to alleviate the situation, the Ranch Board of Directors voted to start a Vocational Agriculture Education Program at the Ranch. The plan was for boys who could not function in public school to start at the Ranch school part-time or full-time, and then transition back to public school.

Such a program would capitalize on the rural setting and make use of the facilities, equipment, and programs already in place.

When I applied for the Vocational Education position at the Ranch, I had recently opened a new Vocational Agriculture Program in

Northeastern North Dakota. While there I had used a curriculum from the North Dakota State Department of Vocational Education that integrated the vocational programs into academics. For example, if the vocational students were doing a construction project, then the math they needed to complete the project was a part of their academic math course.

I was hired for the new Ranch position and brought with me the curriculum and my knowledge of putting it into practice.

As we developed the Ranch education program, we took advantage of the many types of workers it took to run the facility to give students a taste of the “real world of work.” This included curriculum and work experience in food service, buildings and grounds, horticulture, equipment operation, and more. We also made use of off-campus, community employment opportunities.

Sometimes these placements took an unexpected turn. One of our students was working at the local zoo and he forgot to close an important gate, which resulted in zoo staff and police rounding up several escaped and roaming Bison!

In the early days, the program had a definite rural feel to it. Students raised, harvested, and sold 20 acres of sweet corn; tended to 800

beehives; and raised cattle as Future Farmers of America projects.

The Ranch vocational program became very successful, growing in staff and facility size. In the late 70’s and early 80’s, the State of North Dakota developed a specialized Vocational Education Program and implemented it statewide. The Ranch played an important role in getting this program off the ground and helped to develop some of the curriculum.

At this time, the Ranch Vocational Agriculture Program transitioned to a Vocational Special Needs Program. While the program has changed significantly—in the children it serves and the ways in which we



In the early days of Vocational Education at the Ranch, the boys had a “real” Ranch experience raising cattle.

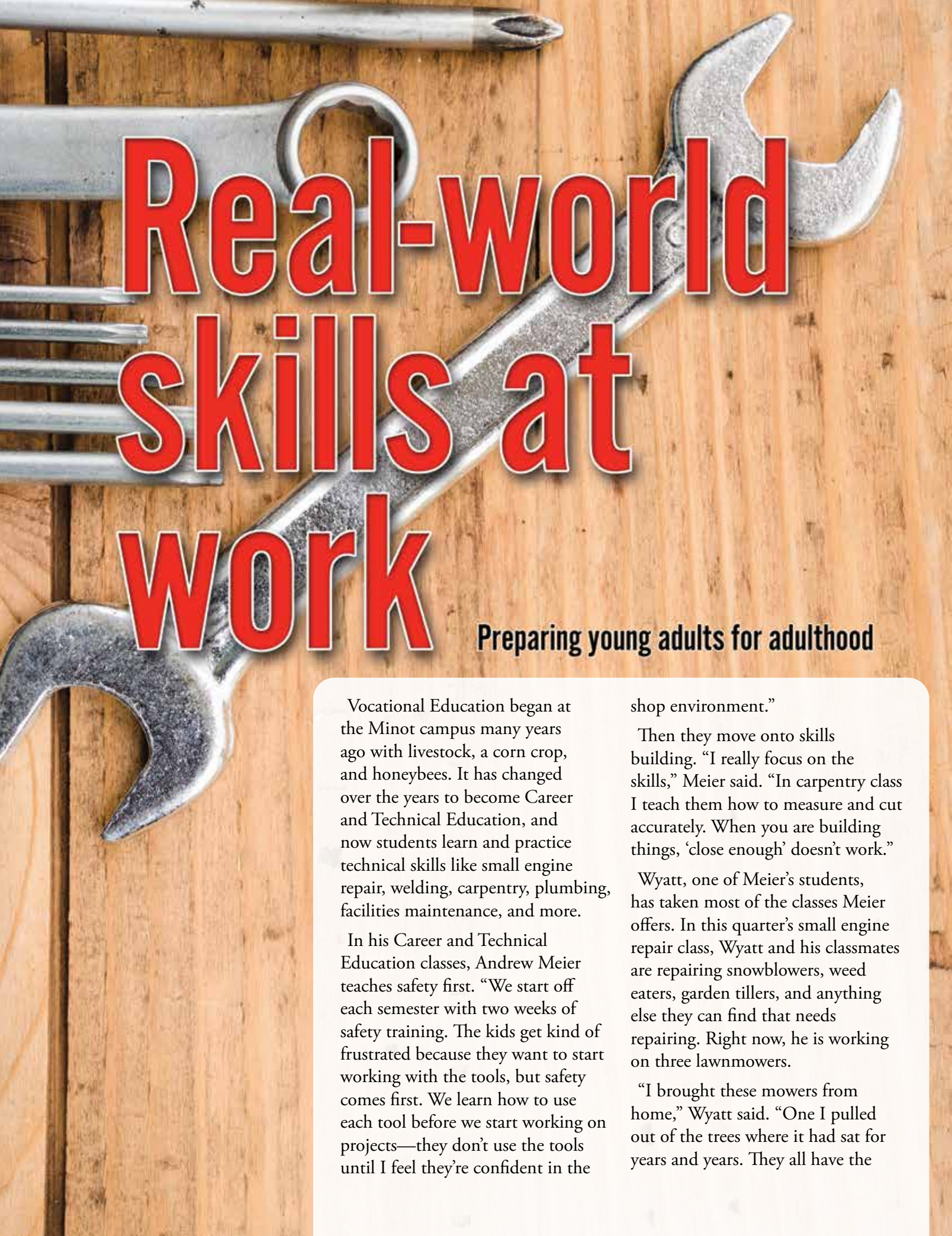
teach quality vocational skills—it continues to prepare Ranch children for adulthood.

The core of this successful vocational program was and is its ability to change along with our

residents. For instance, when the Ranch started admitting girls and became Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, the vocational program became co-ed. Another change related to type of children coming to the Ranch—they became less delinquent and more in need of special education and treatment for emotional issues. It adapted to serve a younger population, and to the ever-changing technology in the world and the workplace. Who could have imagined you would have to be an electrician to fix a car’s motor!

Ranch staff are the ultimate reason for the program’s success. Throughout the life of the program, staff have kept the interests and needs of the students front and center and have adapted the curriculum to the changing needs of the children and the workplace.

I may be somewhat biased, but I can attest to this program’s success. I often see and talk to former residents and students of this program—some of whom I taught. They are starting families, raising families, or like me, are now grandparents! They are active in their church and community. They are concerned about the welfare of others and are what you would describe as good citizens. Thanks to the successful education experience they had at the Ranch, these former students have jobs. They can support their families, help others in need, and remain self-sufficient. To me this defines the end result, the final outcome, the mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.



Real-world skills at work

Preparing young adults for adulthood

Vocational Education began at the Minot campus many years ago with livestock, a corn crop, and honeybees. It has changed over the years to become Career and Technical Education, and now students learn and practice technical skills like small engine repair, welding, carpentry, plumbing, facilities maintenance, and more.

In his Career and Technical Education classes, Andrew Meier teaches safety first. “We start off each semester with two weeks of safety training. The kids get kind of frustrated because they want to start working with the tools, but safety comes first. We learn how to use each tool before we start working on projects—they don’t use the tools until I feel they’re confident in the

shop environment.”

Then they move onto skills building. “I really focus on the skills,” Meier said. “In carpentry class I teach them how to measure and cut accurately. When you are building things, ‘close enough’ doesn’t work.”

Wyatt, one of Meier’s students, has taken most of the classes Meier offers. In this quarter’s small engine repair class, Wyatt and his classmates are repairing snowblowers, weed eaters, garden tillers, and anything else they can find that needs repairing. Right now, he is working on three lawnmowers.

“I brought these mowers from home,” Wyatt said. “One I pulled out of the trees where it had sat for years and years. They all have the

same engine so I'm pulling parts from each to make one that works."

Wyatt has discovered he loves to analyze and fix things. "The nice part about this class is that you get to diagnose things," he said. "Sometimes we think we've got it and then it starts smoking or banging and you start all over. Think logically and you get things fixed."

In addition to the technical skills he has learned and practiced at the Ranch, Wyatt has learned many other things he'll take with him to his first job when he graduates in May.

"I'm learning how to work with others and how to communicate. I'm not the greatest at explaining things, but I can show you how to do something," Wyatt said. "That's one of the great things about shop class. We get to learn how to fix things, learn how to explain it, and show others how to do it."

Meier encourages students to work together. "When a student asks me a question, I won't answer immediately. I'll say, 'Wyatt, show him what to do.' There is a lot of collaboration and giving students the opportunity to work together."

"The kids don't come out of here with a certificate or a license in any one thing," Meier said. But most of them have never handled tools at all. Their competence level soars after they are here."

Wyatt took Meier's carpentry class

and said the highlight of the class was punching a hole in the wall. "We frame and sheetrock a wall, then punch a hole in it that we have to repair. It's a lot harder than it looks to patch a hole. I can patch it, but I can't make it look pretty!"

and not worth anything. Much of what we do is build kid's confidence. Some of them might not become one hundred percent proficient in an area, but we are planting seeds."

Another hands-on experience the Ranch provides is gardening.



Learning how to safely use power tools is a part of every vocational education class.

In one class, students learn how to plumb a bathroom. When they are done with the plumbing, they place the toilet, sink, and cabinet. The project culminates with a ceremonial flush of the toilet, an exciting moment for students learning just how much they can accomplish if they set their minds to it.

Todd Fjeldahl, who has taught at the Ranch for 25 years, also teaches classes in the shop and he sees it as much more than just teaching skills. "So many of our kids have low self-esteem issues and feel belittled

All three campuses teach kids about planting, maintaining, and harvesting through hands-on participation. Gardening is foreign to many of our kids who have grown up moving from place to place and living in unstable environments. While they may never make a career out of it, watching things grow and seeing how you can nurture something from tiny seed to food on your plate brings joy to some Ranch kids.

For careers we are unable to re-create or simulate, the Ranch uses

The Virtual Job Shadow, an online interactive program that connects academics to real life through interactive job shadowing featuring real people in real careers.

“Kids all want to learn, they want to be challenged, and they want to belong,” Fjeldahl said. “They want to have a piece of what you’re doing in class and show you they can be successful, even if they don’t admit it at the time. They all want to improve and feel worthy.”

Over the years, Fjeldahl has visited with adults who were once in his classes at the Ranch. “I run into these adults who tell me they use some of the stuff they learned in shop in their jobs. A couple of my students ended up in the oil industry and the safety training came in handy. One young man told me he worked for an oil field safety company and he showed me his business card. That was real rewarding for him, and for me too. I’m so proud of them.”

Putting new skills to work

Ranch teachers and staff also teach job hunting and interviewing skills; and in some cases, help kids get jobs. Some start with on-campus jobs—working in the kitchen, foundation office, or facilities—then move onto jobs in the community.

The Fargo Youth Home’s unique location, in a residential area just blocks away from many businesses,



Students enjoy throwing sparks as they practice their welding skills.

makes it very convenient for kids to have part-time jobs.

“Of course, they must be in the right space emotionally, and have all the appropriate permissions, but when that’s all taken care of, we help them with the process of finding a job,” said Tom Kopp, Residential Treatment Director in Fargo.

Kopp said they start by asking the kids some questions. What businesses in the community hire kids your age? How would you get there if you got the job? Do you pick up an application or apply online?

“We don’t answer those questions or do the legwork for them,” Kopp said. “We

want them to do it themselves because that’s all a part of being independent.”

When they have the applications or are ready to apply online, Youth Home staff help them complete and submit their applications. They also conduct mock interviews.

“They’ll start in the kitchen and come knock on the office door,” Kopp said. “Tammy Moreno will be there to open the door and shake their hand. Then she brings them into her office and asks them typical interview questions.”

When they are done with the mock interview, Moreno, Case Manager at the Fargo Youth Home who does much of the independent living training,



In science class, students put their new knowledge about gardening and plant development to work in the greenhouses.

talks to them about what they could have done better. If they had a weak handshake, she'll point that out and tell them why it's important to have a strong handshake. Then they will practice. If some of their answers were questionable, they'll talk about ways to show themselves in a positive light while still being truthful.

Paving the way for success

Everything we do at the Ranch is about helping children and their families succeed. While the initial focus of a child's time at the Ranch is learning to manage their emotions and behaviors, it is vital to their future to also teach skills they can use throughout the rest of their lives—to make a living or to create a hobby.

"We want kids to turn 18 with the skills and experiences they need to be successful," said Kopp.

Scan here (or type in this link, <https://bit.ly/2V41LQR>) to see Wyatt working in the shop and hear him talking about the lawnmowers he is repairing.



Herdina Academy

Last summer, one of the young men living at the Fargo Youth Home showed an interest in the construction trades, so Youth Home staff encouraged him to apply for Herdina Construction Trades Camp.

The camp was started over 20 years ago to give young people a way to experience what the trades can offer as well-paying, fulfilling careers.

"For over two decades, we've experienced a workforce shortage and a mentality in schools encouraging students to attend four-year college," said Aaron Kochmann, Kochman

Brothers Homes, Inc., and chair of the Herdina Advisory Committee. "Herdina highlights everything our industry has to offer for students who like to work with their hands and to create something from nothing."

The young man's application indicated his interest in building and remodeling homes. He had completed some woodworking classes, and enjoyed working with his hands.

"Through the two-week camp, he was able to get safety training, jobsite experience, and engage with volunteers in the trades including framers, electricians, and plumbers

to see what their jobs are really like," Kochmann said. "I think it showed him the many possibilities a career in the trades can offer."

Dave Gravidahl, one of the volunteer camp instructors who worked with our resident said, "He was all ears and willing to try everything from tear-down to insulation to roofing. As long as he had a task to do he would do everything we asked. A lot of



things seemed to be firsts for him and he made connections from those experiences to other hands-on activities he had done with his dad and grandpa in the past. He always talked in a positive way about what he had accomplished each work day so I think he grew throughout the session."

The camp is sponsored by Home Builders Association of F-M, Homes Builders Care of F-M Foundation, Minnesota State Community and Technical College-Moorhead, and Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program.

Arizona donors celebrate Valentine's Day with the Ranch

The Arizona luncheons are an amazing time for the Ranch donor family to make connections and to learn how their support transforms children's lives. In Feb. 2020, over 200 donors met in Arizona for the Ranch's Annual Donor Recognition Luncheons. Everyone received a Valentine's Day card made by a Ranch child and heard an incredible story of hope and healing from Emily, a former Ranch resident.



Former Ranch resident, Emily, shares her story of hope.

Noisy change offering

Every month, Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fargo has a noisy change offering—where they donate their spare change to a local charity. In late 2019, they donated one of their noisy change offerings to the kids at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch—so they could purchase Christmas gifts for the special people in their lives.

One young boy bought a small shiny pink doll for each of his three younger sisters, “because I don’t know if and when I will see them again but when I do, I want to surprise them with the best present ever!”

Thank you, Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church for helping our kids experience the joy of giving.



North Dakota LWML supports the Christian ministry of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League North Dakota District helped underwrite Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Spiritual Life Program during the 2018-2020 biennium. The Spiritual Life Program, the heart of the Ranch's services to children, is coordinated and overseen by Chaplain Rick Jones, an ordained minister of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Christian values children learn at the Ranch aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them to be successful in their treatment.

Children at the Ranch attend Chapel and Spiritual Life Groups and meet individually with an on-campus member of our Spiritual Life Team. They are also invited to minister to others by working with the elderly, attending Bible camp, volunteering for the community during special events, and more.

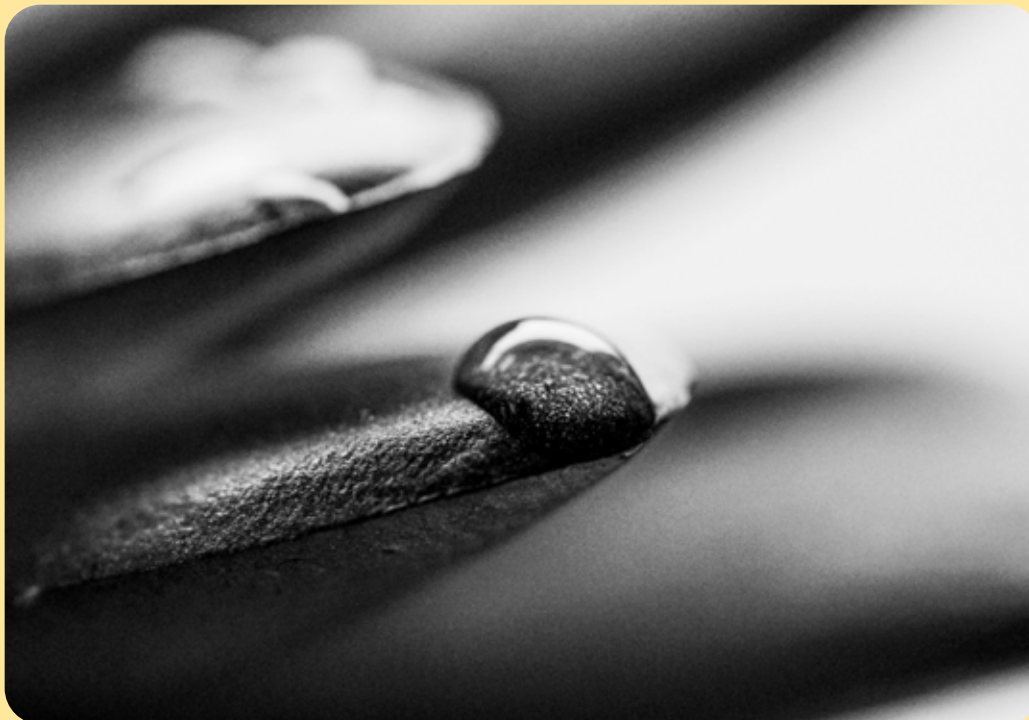
We are grateful to the women of the LWML for their support of our ministry and belief in our mission.

Student wins local and national awards for his photo

Photograph and writing by Dakota Memorial School student

“What I was going for in this photo is a close-up presentation of a leaf with a water droplet on it. I like macro photography over other photography because macro gives a different perspective. I don't know what it is about this photograph that makes it so calming and captivating to the eye for me.

“I chose to take this picture for an assignment using a macro lens while using leading lines. I received a Silver Key Award at the Art and Writing Scholastic, a national competition, and my work was displayed at the Plains Art Museum. I won Best in Photography with a \$100 award at Minnesota State University for this same photograph. It felt good to win. I was surprised because I have never won anything. I am glad I submitted my work. I only submitted my photograph because of a peer. She told me it was good and that felt amazing to hear. “



Close-up perspective changes look of simple waterdrop.

Celebrations

One Hundred Days

On the one hundredth day of school, Dakota Memorial School students celebrated with a contest to see who could make the most words using the letters in the words, “one hundred.” The winning student created 64 words! Students also created self-portraits of what they might look like at 100 years old using cotton balls, fabric scraps, and imagination.



Safety First

When Diana Frazer, Shelbina, MO, donated to the Ranch in memory of her father, Everett “Harp” Scott, she was thrilled to hear how the dollars would be used. Teachers of the Ranch’s Career and Technical Education classes purchased new workbenches to provide larger and safer work surfaces for students to learn newly acquired skills; and engine lifts students can use to lift and secure heavy machinery and engines.

Diana said, “This is perfect because Dad, as a press operator and machinist, was a stickler for safety.”

Giving students additional workspace and lifts significantly increases safety. The benches give



Donors provide tools that help Ranch kids learn practical skills.

the instructor space to assist students and reduce accidental injuries caused by kids leaning or moving into other workspaces. The lifts prevent injuries that can result from lifting heavy objects; and from falling objects not

securely attached.

Everett died in Feb. 2019 and the work benches purchased in his name will provide a safe space for Ranch students to acquire new skills for many years!

New Bikes in Bismarck

When Wellness Coordinator, Tal Pollert, told Jim Vetter the Ranch's bikes were worn out and he needed new bikes for the kids, Vetter, Vice President of Community and Partner Relations, found several Bismarck donors willing to pitch in. Thanks to Tal, Jim, the Bismarck Christian Women's Club, several anonymous donors, and Larson's Cyclery, the kids in Bismarck have eight new bicycles!

Lance Larson, owner of Larson's Cyclery sold the 2019 Kona Lana'I bikes to the Ranch at cost and assembled them himself at no charge.

The kids will make good use of the new bikes, riding them on campus during free time, on scheduled rides with staff on local bike paths in the neighborhood and community,

and on special outings to places like the Lake Harmon Recreational Trail. The updated tire size, suspension, and frame shape will help the bikes withstand the trails and heavy use by our kids.

Tal Pollert, Wellness Coordinator on the Ranch's Bismarck campus, says, "Biking is an excellent cardiovascular physical activity where our kids can

burn off energy, get some fresh air, and get out into the community or nature. It is also a good distraction from life's daily stressors."

With regular care and maintenance, we expect Ranch kids to be using them to burn off energy and stress for quite some time—the old ones lasted 15 years!



Safety first with new helmets and bikes for our kids.

Kids share their talents

Talent Shows are a tradition at Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, with the students all trying to make people laugh, smile, and beam with pride. The evening's entertainment included

chin puppets telling jokes, choreographed dancing, Native American Pow Wow dancing, drawings/coloring, Kung Fu panda dancing, and a chicken nugget eating contest.



Kids love exploring their artistic and silly sides at Ranch talent shows.

White as Snow

“Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow...”
-Isaiah 1:18.

At a recent Ranch Life event, a twice monthly Saturday morning event for our kids, Deaconess Kelly Jacob led the kids in making snowflakes. They went all out by making 3D snowflakes, appropriate for a state where snow covers the ground for a good half of the year.

Jacob referred to an image often used in Christianity that speaks of being covered in deep scarlet blood to represent our sins and the sins of the other people against us. “But,” Jacob said, “Jesus doesn’t leave us in this state. Through the sacrifice of his own body and blood, he makes us and our sins as white as snow. His forgiveness purifies and cleanses us.”

Many Ranch kids have been made to feel unclean and dirty. As they

created their 3D snowflakes, Jacob shared with them the truth that Jesus makes them pure and clean like fresh white snow.

“I suggested that every time they see snow, they remember Jesus and His incredible forgiveness and love for them,” she said.

In addition to the spiritual message of the snowflake project, Jacob challenged the kids to make something that looks difficult. “I told the kids I have limited artistic abilities and I did it,” she said, “so I was confident they could do it too. Although many of the kids struggled



Snowflakes adorn the dining center.

at first, all but one was able to focus, persevere, and create their own snowflake! They had proud moments at the end when they could decide where to hang their beautiful creations up in our dining hall.”

Managing their frustration is a common difficulty for most children at the Ranch, so any time we can get them to complete a seemingly complicated task without giving up it is a huge win.

Please pray for our kids—pray that this simple activity and all the seemingly small things we do with them each day teaches them that God’s powerful love and forgiveness makes them beautiful, clean, and as white as snow.

Because God makes us beautiful and clean, we can persevere and create beautiful things.

Feeding the Homeless

By Abigail, Dakota Memorial School Student

On Wednesday, November 20, the Dakota Memorial School Student Council went to Immanuel Baptist Church to help with the soup kitchen. A total of 10 student council members attended. Each member had a delegated task assigned to them including washing dishes, dishing up the food, or taking the meal orders. We were all excited to help out and had fun.

I took the Thanksgiving meal orders for everyone who showed up. I saw, firsthand, how happy the guests were when I brought them their meal. Many expressed how grateful they were to have such a nice warm served meal. I learned very quickly to appreciate the things I have because others aren’t as fortunate. It was amazing seeing how kind everyone was and how



Ranch kids serve others at a community Thanksgiving meal.

happy they were that we were helping them. I’m glad I had this opportunity.

Enjoying the Great Outdoors

Wildlife Club advisors, Andrew Meier and Paul Krueger, took a group of Ranch kids ice fishing in early February. They set their portable ice houses up on Rice Lake, about 25 miles south of the Ranch's Minot campus. Meier said it was a beautiful night to be on the lake.

"The night sky was beautiful," Meier said. "We shut our headlights off, and before we unloaded our equipment and sleds, we stared in amazement at the stars. The kids even had a chance to hear the haunting yelps of coyotes howling in the cold night air."

After pulling the sleds onto the lake, finding their spot, and setting up the portable ice houses, the kids went to work drilling holes, setting up their poles, and waiting for the fish. They caught one northern, shared lots of fish stories, and then enjoyed a hotdog dinner and treats prepared by Ranch kitchen staff.



Off to the Races

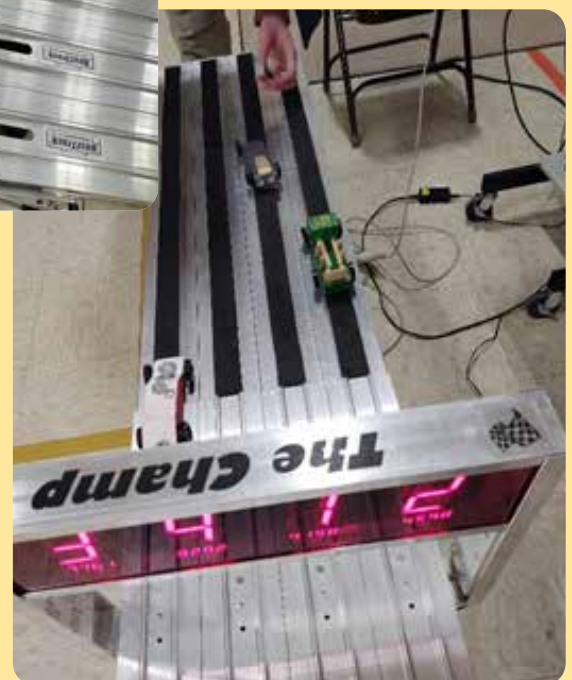
Excited students bounced into the Dakota Memorial School, Minot, gymnasium for the 2020 Pine Derby competition. They'd been hard at work for weeks turning a block of wood, four plastic tires and four nails into beautiful creations for the race. The idea for the derby, borrowed from the Boys Scouts of America's long tradition of Pinewood Derby races, not only gives students a chance to work with their peers and teachers to build cars that go fast or look good. It gives them a chance to compete, something many of them haven't been able to do because they didn't have the family resources or stability necessary to participate in extra-curricular activities.



Students learned teamwork, collaboration, problem solving, and creativity as they built their Pine Derby cars and put them to the test.

The kid or team with the fastest car probably knows who they are, but the rest of us were focused on helping our kids build lasting and shared memories.

Paul Stroklund,
Minot State University,
brought his official track
and guided the races.



Understanding Our Kids

Read with me...a story of hope

By Jessica White-Villegas, Program Manager, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, Minot

People sometimes ask me, “Do kids at the Ranch read?” Usually, the question is asked by someone who themselves loves books. I think what they are really asking is, “Do Ranch kids have the chance, through reading, to go to a place in their minds that allows their pain to cease, even for a moment?”

Reading means so much more to our kids than you’d expect. I have heard them say, “I love to read more than anything else,” Of course, the answer is different for every child at the Ranch. But for one young girl, who I’ll call Special K, reading became her coping skill, her greatest pleasure, and the catalyst for something much bigger.

Special K has this ability to pull on all your heart strings at once. She is gentle and soft-spoken and has a little girl innocence that belies the traumas she’s lived. In addition, she has tremendous outbursts when she is scared or threatened and uses furious anger to protect herself and keep people away. One day, I could hear K was upset and I came out of my office to help. By that time she had been with us a few months, but still didn’t trust anyone. That day she allowed me to sit quietly with her.

At that moment, I would have tried anything, but something nudged me to say, “K, would it help if you had something to read?” She looked at me and nodded her head in agreement.

I said, “I have some books a friend of the Ranch sent to us. Do you want to go through them with me?”

That was the beginning.

As we sorted through the donated books, K and I decided to set up our own little library, right in Butt Cottage, K’s Ranch “home.” We cleared a shelf in my office, and she drew a sign that said simply, “White Library.” (White is my last name!) K and I were happy with the ratted and tattered books we had. Sorting and shelving gave us a time to be silent and to build a foundation of trust. The time it took to sift through the collection gave K time to calm down and reflect. And then, when all the books were in their place, she would dive into the wonder that only a good book brings.

K is a voracious reader and went through the books we had very quickly. I emailed Mission

Advancement Officer Kris Ryan to see how we could get more books to add to the shelf. Kris moved quickly and started an Amazon Wish List, and a social media effort to tell people of our need, not only in Butt Cottage, but to stock the shelves of libraries all over our three campuses.

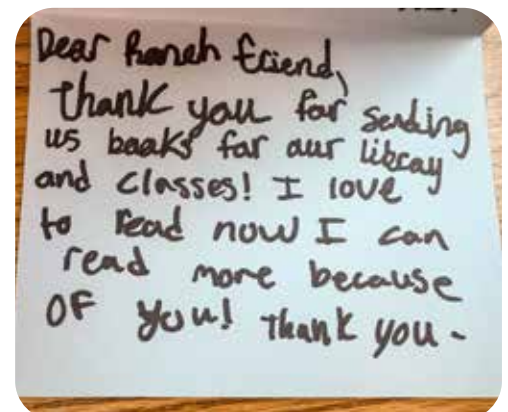
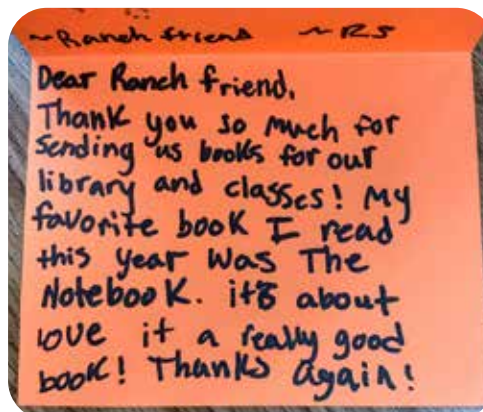
Lovers of books and of children came through in a big way—donating nearly 500 brand new books appropriate for our elementary, middle school, and high school students. This

was an idea that came from a broken place... “from the mouths of babies!” [Psalms 8:2] and we have seen the outpouring of generosity from ALL over the country! Special K turned reading into a healthy way to displace her anger. Donors made that possible for so many more children.

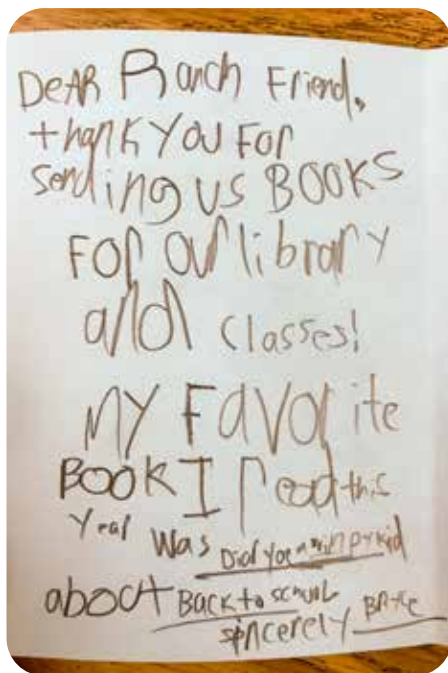
Though it may seem simple, books



Books from donors open a young girls heart to healing.



can cause a shift in the universe for our kids. The simple act of having a book can make a world of difference for a child in chaos. Giving our kids access to books allows them to see the world from a different lens. Children don't come to the Ranch because they've received too many hugs. They come here as broken souls in young bodies. God places them in our hands so we can nurture their broken souls. Sometimes, something as simple as a book to hold can begin a child's healing.



I can't say THANK YOU enough to each kind soul who gave of their time and money so we could build our libraries.

This Book Drive meant the world to me, staff, 'K,' and the other children who will calm and expand their minds between the covers of those books.

The Power of Poetry

The North Dakota Poet Laureate, Dr. Larry Woiwode, held a writing workshop for Ranch residents in Bismarck and Minot last fall. Students wrote about a variety of topics, and many shared their written pieces with the group. Dr. Woiwode encouraged the students to use writing to release their thoughts and help them overcome struggles.

"I've learned that one of the first steps on the route to recovery of soundness of mind and social outlook is to get a portion of the internal trouble you're carrying down on paper. Then it can be examined and often exorcised," Dr. Woiwode said.



Poet Laureate Dr. Larry Woiwode encourages Ranch children to express themselves through poetry.

"I was especially impressed with the poetry of two American Indian students, one in Bismarck and one in Minot, who read finished poems with artful rhymes, written on the spot, that expressed their inner state with great effect. It was a blessing to be able to serve your students."

Dr. Woiwode, a native North Dakotan, is an internationally acclaimed author of novels, memoirs, poetry, essays, and short stories. Of his several books, six have been selected as "Notable Book of the Year" by the New York Times Book Review. His work has appeared in the Atlantic, GQ, Harpers, The New Yorker, Paris Review, etc., and is included in four volumes of Best American Short Stories. Dr. Woiwode is Writer in Residence at University of Jamestown where he teaches creative writing and literature courses.

Avoiding hurt by not accepting love

Aliyah's journey to acceptance

Aliyah Beyer didn't need help. Yes, severe anxiety and depression made her life hard. So hard she couldn't get out of bed some days. But still—she could handle it on her own.

She was used to taking care of things herself. And she was used to being alone, despite growing up in an adoptive family with ten children.

For as long as she can remember, Aliyah has wanted nothing more than to fit in and belong.

"I've never known where I fit. I don't know my biological dad and I was removed from my biological mom's home before I turned one."

Aliyah was part of an open adoption, so she saw her birth mom occasionally, but her birth mom's struggles with addiction made her an unreliable source of support.

"She was never there when I was struggling or needed her," Aliyah said. "She only showed up when she wanted to be proud of something I did."

Aliyah says she was adopted into a great family, but she didn't feel like she belonged there either. "The drama and fighting with my birth mom made it difficult," she said.

Learning to accept help

Aliyah came to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at age 17, after spending time in several other treatment facilities. She knew the Ranch was her last chance to get her life figured out before she became an adult, but she didn't want to be there. She was certain no one liked her and couldn't figure out what they could do to help

her that hadn't already been tried.

That was before she met her therapist, Christy Wilkie.

"I've been to lots of therapists and no one has helped me as much as Christy. She is amazing," Aliyah said. "Until I met Christy, I never asked for help. And if you would have offered it, I'd have said I could do it myself."

At the Ranch, Aliyah learned from Christy and other staff she did need help; and by accepting it, she could make her life better. She also learned she pushed people away so they couldn't hurt her.

When Christy first met her, Aliyah was angry and had very low self-esteem. "Aliyah had a difficult time accepting she was deserving of love of any kind," Christy said. "She tried pretty ferociously to push people away."

Aliyah's moods were up and down, and she often directed the hurt she carried around towards herself or the people in her life who loved her. This created difficult relationships with her parents and siblings.

"Aliyah found herself in relatively superficial relationships because it took away the potential to be left by

someone again," Christy said. "She tried to avoid hurt by not accepting love."

Aliyah said Christy patiently taught her how to name and control her emotions, how to accept and love herself, and how to accept help when it was offered.

A path of acceptance

When Aliyah finally realized she was worthy of love and that she could control her thoughts and emotions and become the person she wanted to be, there was no stopping her. From

that point on, she worked hard to repair the conflict in her family relationships.

"Watching Aliyah build positive relationships with her family and friends has been absolutely heartwarming," Christy said. "She struggled so much to accept love, care, and concern from people, so seeing the changes is nothing short of amazing."

Aliyah said acceptance is the most important thing she learned at the Ranch. "I learned to accept myself, accept my situation, and accept that I needed help."

Christy agreed, and is confident Aliyah will continue her path of acceptance. "Aliyah is goal-directed, kind, caring, and motivated to



Artistic and bold, Aliyah fills her life with people (and cats) who build her up.

continue to better herself and her life. Her self-esteem has skyrocketed. She has found things she enjoys and is good at. She is a wildly talented writer and singer, and she continues to look for positive outlets for her emotions and talents.”

One of Aliyah’s positive outlets is music, and she learned much about music at the Ranch. Spiritual Life Specialist Jay Schaefer and Wellness Coordinator Christian Kjelland introduced Aliyah to music with positive messages.

“I still listen to the music they shared with me. I was surprised it was so similar to what I already liked.”

Jay was also a spiritual mentor for Aliyah.

“Jay is a great Christian role model. He talked about the Lord and was there when I had questions. He taught us how to play instruments and so many other things. Jay is charismatic and kind and helped me figure out a lot of things while I was at the Ranch.”

Taking care of herself

Aliyah is now 19 years old and no longer at the Ranch, but she continues to work hard on herself. She sees Christy occasionally to touch base and make sure she is on the right track. She’s also playful about make-up, hair, and all the things a 19-year-old woman should enjoy. She even showed me how her magnetic fake eyelashes work, noting “Isn’t that cool?”

Christy said Aliyah has the skills, insight, talent, and support to do amazing things, but she couldn’t see it in herself. Now she is using those skills to closely monitor her mental health and do what she needs to do to take of herself.

“Aliyah has grown into a lovely young woman who continues to manage her mental health needs by talking about them,” Christy said. “She seeks to understand her emotions rather than project them onto other people and mask her hurt and insecurity with anger. We could all learn a lot from her.”

To meet her need for connection, Aliyah continues to fill her life with people who build her up. At the same time, she is learning she is complete and whole on her own.

“I thought I had to be in a relationship to be happy but now I know that’s not true,” Aliyah said. “I’ve been searching all my life for another person to complete me. But I don’t need someone else to complete me. If I’m meant to be in a relationship, it will happen. If not, that’s okay too.”

Aliyah isn’t sure where she would be without the Ranch. “If I didn’t come to the Ranch, I don’t think I would have learned so much about myself or how to control my emotions. I probably would have eventually figured it out, but it might have been too late.”

She wants Ranch donors to know they are contributing to a good cause.

“This is a good place for kids who need help. Because of the donors, the Ranch is a comfortable and safe place to heal,” Aliyah said.

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.

Invite a Ranch speaker to your congregation

You can share your passion for Ranch kids with your congregation or organization by inviting someone from the Ranch to speak at your meeting, event, church service, or Bible Study.

We are available to speak to your group, and would love to tell you

more about the Ranch and the amazing children we serve. Hear real stories of kids who are at the Ranch now, and kids who have moved on to become successful adults.

Contact the Ranch at 1-800-344-0957 to request a speaker. We will do everything we can to accommodate your request.

Having a Ranch speaker allows you to provide hope and healing for even more children, as you help us reach more people with our children’s stories and needs.



A man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a patterned tie, and a dark shirt, is playing an acoustic guitar on a stage. He is looking slightly to his right with a pleasant expression. In the background, there are blue and black balloons on the left and a graduation cap on a stand to the right. The text 'He writes the songs' is overlaid in large, orange, outlined letters on the left side of the image.

He writes the songs

Dr. Monte Selby presented at a recent Principal's Conference and after his talk a principal stopped to tell him about one of his students. This student, who we'll call Thomas, attended Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, when Selby was visiting to write songs with Ranch kids.

Thomas wrote a song with Selby called "Not Mine," and his principal said it made such an impact on Thomas, he still talks about it two years later.

The chorus goes like this:

"You can't do this. You can't do that.

You won't amount to anything boy, and that's a fact.

So I'll prove them wrong. I'll show them it's a lie.

'Cause those are only their words. Not mine."

(Watch music video of Thomas' entire song at

<https://youtu.be/LVEWywCO4XM>.)

Scan me



Thomas' principal said, "That kid is going to graduate this spring, against all odds. I'm coming out of my skin I'm so pumped about this!"

Thanks to the generous donors who make it possible, Selby, an educator, singer, and Grammy-award winning songwriter, spends several days writing songs with Ranch kids each year. He connects with students on a personal level, engages them in authentic musical experiences, and inspires them to pursue their own artistic expression. Most importantly, he listens to the kids' stories and helps them turn memories and hopes into songs.

Although Selby claims nothing about his current career path has been intentional, his background as a teacher and school administrator, combined with a love for music, prepared him perfectly to write and perform with kids.

Selby grew up in a tiny town in northwest Oklahoma. His dad was a school superintendent and his mom a K-12 music teacher. Selby said everyone in his family was musical. Selby learned how to play guitar early on and wrote his first song when he was nine. They didn't put on family concerts or any formal performances, but wherever they went it was just assumed one of them would provide the entertainment.

When it came time for college, Selby followed in his parent's footsteps and went into teaching.

"When I started teaching, songs were just popping out of me," Selby said. "Sometimes during student programs, I would throw in an original song."

Word got out and principals and superintendents started inviting him to kick off school events with a few songs. His education career snowballed from there and by the time Selby had earned his master's degree and worked as a principal, he

now Vice President of Education at the Ranch, met him at a middle school conference. Bartok invited him to Williston, where she was principal at the time. When she came to the Ranch in 2013, she called Selby to ask what he thought about writing with the kids at the Ranch. Up until then, he'd primarily written songs with groups of kids. Marcia said it would be different at the Ranch and asked



While the Selby kids are all musical, they are rarely in the same place at the same time. In a rare opportunity to be altogether for Monte and Michelle's daughter's graduation, they gave a family concert called "Coming Home."

was presenting at regional, national, and international conferences about making a difference for middle school kids. Eventually he went back to school for his doctorate in School Administration and spent nine years as a professor of school leadership at Emporia University in Emporia, Kansas.

Throughout this time, Selby wrote songs. "I wrote songs for myself. Then I started writing songs about kids, and then with kids a bit. Somewhere around the year 2000, schools started inviting me to write songs with their kids."

Selby came to North Dakota for the first time in 2006 after Marcia Bartok,

if he'd be willing to write one-on-one with the residents.

Not one to back down from a challenge, Selby made the trek to Fargo, ND, and the kids captured his heart.

"I'm bewildered by the honesty of the kids. One time I was at the Ranch in Minot and one of the boys says to me, 'I need to write a song about my little brother dying on a 4-wheeler.' We finished the song and he asked if we could play it for one of his teachers. She just stared at me and said, 'This little guy told you something he hasn't told anyone here—he wouldn't talk about it.' Just wide-open honesty."

Selby says he has learned a lot from

his ongoing work at the Ranch, much of it from the kids. “Knowing them has opened up my world as far as knowing what kids deal with. I see a lot of kids who wouldn’t have a chance without the Ranch. I’ve been all over the country and there is nothing like the Ranch anywhere else.”



Monte Selby, right, with his wife, Michelle, and four of their five children. While two of his kids accompanied him on one trip to the Ranch, he usually comes alone, because “you almost always invite me in the middle of the winter when it’s 47 below!”

The last time Selby was at the Ranch in Minot, he wrote 27 songs with kids in just over a week. He was scheduled to stay a week, but in the middle of the trip realized he couldn’t write with all the kids who wanted to write a song. He asked if he could stay a few more days so they would all have the chance. The kids shared their thoughts about the experience:

“I wrote a song for the first time. I never thought I could do that. I’m only fourteen. Just think what I’ll do next!”

“Monte helped me realize I’m not weird. What I’m feeling is normal. Writing it down helped me make sense of things.”

“This was the best day of my life. My mom listened to my song on YouTube and she loved it! She said it was the best present I’ve ever given her.”

When Selby gave the closing concert, he performed all 27 songs, plus one extra he wrote to his wife, Michelle, about the kids and his experience at the Ranch, that left the entire crowd in tears. Selby’s words and music illustrate his love for Ranch kids and his passion for helping them heal using the power of music.

PERFECT

*Good night Michelle. I’ve had a change of plans
To write a few more songs. Here, in the promise land.*

*It’s been amazing. I wish you could meet
all these kids. Just so you could see*

That I see beautiful in each and every one.

I see everything they might become.

I hear their melodies and chosen words

Their favorite songs and painful hurts

And how they’re different, scared and brave

And the one way I think they’re all the same

Perfect.

Goodnight Michelle. I’ve still got 16 songs to go

What’s my favorite song. It’s the one that I just wrote

I wrote it with kid who has a plan

Thinking ‘bout the future here in the promise land

Where I see beautiful in each and every one.

I see everything they might become.

I hear their melodies and chosen words

Their favorite songs and painful hurts

And how they’re different, scared and brave

And the one way I think they’re all the same

Just Perfect.

© 2019, Dr. Monte Selby

Hope Notes

Hope Notes have been a staple for Ranch kids for years. People all around the nation write to our kids—some are matched up with a particular child, others write generic notes and ask us to pass them onto a child who needs a little extra encouragement. Several Hope Notes Pen Pals sent Thanksgiving cards to our kids in 2019.

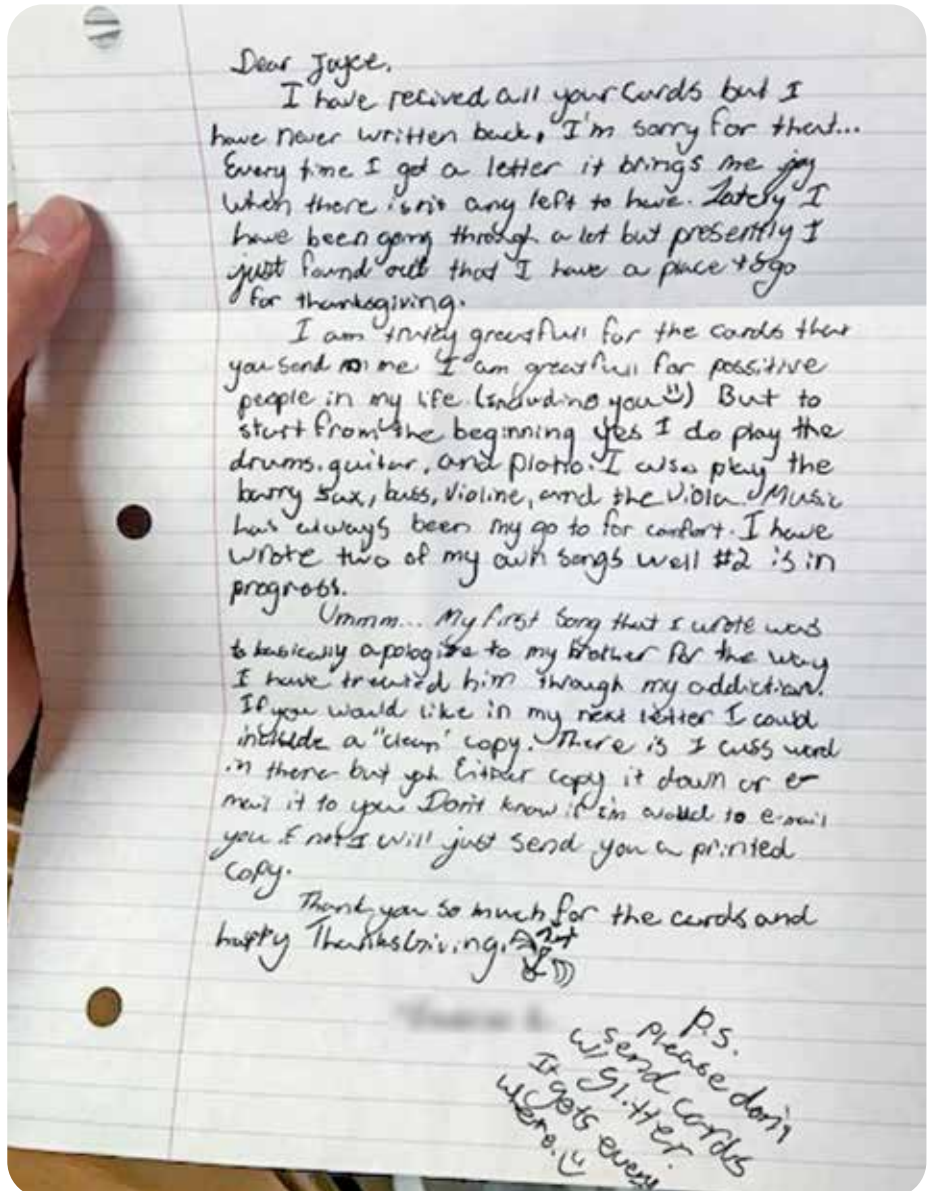
You can be a Hope Notes Pen Pal in one of two ways.

Send a letter through the mail to Deaconess Kelly Jacob, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, P.O. Box 5007, Minot, ND 58702; or send an electronic Hope Note at <https://www.dakotaranch.org/ways-to-give/hope-notes-2> (or use the QR code below).



Right: Ranch resident writes to his Hope Notes Pen Pal.

Below: Just a few of the Thanksgiving sentiments our Hope Notes Pen Pals shared with Ranch kids.



Show Me the Honey

Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and healing to the bones.” Proverbs 16:24

At the Ranch, honey is a symbol of God’s enduring love and presence in the lives of the children who come through our doors. Each year we purchase honey from local bee farmers, and process and bottle it in our honey barn. Ranch kids help us box the honey and we send it to everyone who donated to the Ranch that year. At the end of 2019, we sent thousands of bottles of honey to donors all around the country. This year, we asked our donors to #ShowMeTheHoney—here are just a few places where Ranch honey made an appearance.

If you need recipe ideas for your Ranch honey, try whipping up a batch of Toasted Almond Granola, submitted by Connie Olhausen, Hartley, IA. Connie says it’s foolproof, as long as you remember to stir the mixture after five minutes in the oven. (She wants everyone to know she adapted the recipe from a Martha Stewart recipe.)



Eldon Lamprecht
Oakdale, MN



Elaine Eggold
Topeka, KS

Toasted Almond Granola

(Makes 8 cups)

4 C old-fashioned oats

1 C slivered raw almonds

½ C whole raw almonds

½ C pecans or walnuts

½ C sweetened shredded coconut

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

½ tsp. salt

3 T butter

¼ C vegetable oil

¼ C Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch honey

½ C brown sugar

1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

Line one large or two small baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside. Coat inside of large roaster with butter.

Whisk together oats, nuts, coconut, cinnamon, and salt and dump into roaster.

In a medium saucepan, melt butter, oil, honey, and brown sugar until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture begins to boil. Add vanilla extract and stir until well incorporated. Pour the warm mixture over the oat and nut mixture and toss with a wooden spoon. Make sure all the oats and nuts are moistened by the melted mixture.

Bake for five minutes in oven preheated to 325 degrees. Stir. Put back into oven for 20-25 minutes. Remove from oven and spread mixture out on the baking sheets to cool. Store in airtight container for up to two weeks.

You can also freeze the granola and pull it out of the freezer as you need it.



Diane Vetter
Hamilton, MT



Luther and Annie Harthun
Madison County, VA

A Call to Mercy

By Rev. Rick Jones, Chaplain, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch



Since I became the Chaplain at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch in 2012, I've been asked a lot of questions about our ministry,

often by other church workers. They are curious about what ministry looks like with the at-risk children we serve at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Like most of them, I started seminary assuming I'd be called to pastor churches.

Up until now I've not put much thought into my answers, except to say that God called me to work with the kids and staff at the Ranch; and until I hear differently, I am honored and blessed to serve the Ranch and the amazing children who come through our doors.

I took some time this week to think more deeply about the questions.

What does a Call to an institution look like?

An Institutional Call is just like any other call into ministry except the congregation rotates based on the current clients. I offer pastoral care and ministry to our residents during their stay at the Ranch. I also offer ongoing ministry, support, and care to our staff. I provide weekly chapel services, groups that function like Bible Study or Sunday School, one-

on-one ministry, and any number of other services a typical Pastor or Priest might offer.

So, you work at camp?

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is not a camp. It is a residential treatment center for at-risk youth. We provide residential psychiatric and education services, as well as outpatient counseling, all year round. In my role as the Chaplain, I help children and families impacted by abuse, neglect, trauma, and behavioral health difficulties find hope and healing in the unconditional and unwavering love of Christ.

Wouldn't you rather be at a church?

I don't think so. I am called to serve the children and families of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, and that is what I do. I work to bring the forgiveness of Jesus to those who need a second chance. I show youth who have been treated as unlovable, the cherished and honorable place they have in God's family. I want our kids to know that, despite their circumstances, they are beloved children of God.

Is that a hard Call to have?

I don't know that it is more difficult than any other, but it is mine and I try to fulfill it faithfully and joyfully for the sake of those God has given me to serve.

I am blessed to serve incredible children and families who have been through unimaginable hardships.

I am with children on the worst days of their lives, as they have been victims of unthinkable pain and trauma. And in the midst of their pain, I show them a God who loves them so deeply He sent His own Son to experience the same depth of pain and trauma they have been through. I show them Jesus: their savior, who out of love for them, was willingly beaten, willingly harassed and shamed, willingly tortured and killed. He willingly gave everything he could, to give them a new life, an eternal life free from the trauma, pain, and brokenness they have been through in this one. I am blessed to show them the mercy of God's love in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Chaplain Rick's Favorite Verse

5 Trust in the LORD
with all your heart,
and do not
lean on your own
understanding.

6 In all your ways
acknowledge him,
and he will direct
your paths.

-Proverbs 3:5-6

The Loneliness Epidemic

According to researchers from the University of California, children and adults worldwide are experiencing an epidemic of loneliness. Their research, published March 2020 in *JAMA Psychiatry*, concludes that loneliness can be as damaging as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Kids at the Ranch are no exception, and in fact, may be more susceptible to loneliness.

Researchers define loneliness as the distress a person feels when there is a discrepancy between the social connections they perceive and the social connections they desire. In other words, people who are lonely often crave human contact but find it difficult to form connections with other people.

Loneliness can be detrimental to mental and physical health. People who self-identify as lonely have a greater risk of mental health problems and suicide. On the flip side, people who have strong social connections are happier, and experience lower incidences of dementia and heart disease.

Vivek Murthy, former U.S. Surgeon General and author of “Together,” (to be available in late April, 2020) said the number of people struggling with loneliness in the United States is greater than the number of adults who have diabetes and the number of people who smoke.

According to the Amazon description of Murthy’s new book, “Loneliness is the underpinning to the current crisis in mental wellness and is responsible for the upsurge in suicide, the opioid epidemic, the overuse of psych meds, the over-diagnosing and pathologizing

of emotional and psychological struggle.”

So, why is loneliness increasing when technology gives people so many new ways to connect? Rakesh and Saurina Jain, co-authors of “WILD 5 Wellness Ancient Practices for Modern Times,” attribute much of the rise in loneliness to what they call “pseudo-connectedness.”

Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist and Medical Director, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, said, “Pseudo-connectedness describes the superficial connection of texting, social media, and hallway pleasantries we sometimes fool ourselves into thinking is the same as genuine interpersonal closeness.”

Martinsen thinks of pseudo-connectedness as the junk food of human relationships.

“These types of connection are momentarily fulfilling but lack real ‘nutrition,’” he said. “Social media doesn’t have the substance of face-to-face shared goals, face-to-face intimacy, and laughter.”

Increased risk for Ranch kids

Martinsen said kids at the Ranch are even more vulnerable to loneliness.

“Most Ranch kids have moved a lot. They lack social skills. And, a lot of times they experienced domestic violence in their homes,” Martinsen said. “If you think your dad is going to get mad and bust up the dishes, you don’t invite your friends over.”

Ranch kids also are more apt to live in foster homes or treatment facilities—living situations not conducive to spending time with

friends outside of school. They are also more vulnerable to the damaging effects of bullying.

“Going through adolescence is miserable,” Martinsen said. “Every one of us has had the experience of being bullied in adolescence. It’s our vulnerable kids who are cut to the core by those things. Kids said mean things to me, and I just got angry back. If you are the autistic, anxious, or depressed kid and someone laughs at you, you are devastated. If you’re the kid in 7th grade who doesn’t have friends and you experience even “normal” bullying, you’re left with that dangling feeling of humiliation.”

While kids are at the Ranch, they learn and practice real connectedness in many ways.

“We take kids to running club where they all have the shared goal of running a mile,” Martinsen said. “We involve them in faith-based discussions and activities—a shared experience that connects them to each other and to God.”

Volunteering is another way to build connection through shared experiences. At the Ranch, kids have the opportunity to volunteer in a variety of ways—they visit nursing homes, pack Operation Christmas Child boxes, send letters to military veterans, and more.

“To combat loneliness, we all need a variety of connections,” Martinsen said. “You want to connect with a classmate, with a teacher you admire, with the elderly person for whom it matters you showed up that week and played Bingo with them.”

Coping with Loneliness During Social Distancing

As the coronavirus spreads and people are encouraged to avoid non-essential interactions and stay home, social isolation can take a toll. Cope with loneliness during these unprecedented times by trying out some of these ideas shared by Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist and Medical Director at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, and in a recent article at psychologytoday.com.

Schedule regular contact by phone or video.

While virtual communication may not be as satisfying as in-person contact, it's better than no contact at all. Instead of cancelling social events, try holding them online using Facetime, Zoom, Skype or another of the readily available video chatting applications. When the Ranch limited visitors to campus, and then banned them completely, staff started arranging extra phone and video visits for kids so they could stay connected to their families—connections that are even more important during times of fear and uncertainty.

Reach out to colleagues, friends, old classmates, children, grandchildren, etc.

Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist and Medical Director at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, said, "If you are uncomfortable calling someone you haven't talked to in a long while, send a simple text. Tell them you are wondering how they are doing and ask if they have time for a phone call. In the connection hierarchy, Facetime is better than phone calls, which are better than texts, which are better than liking someone's social media post." Kids at the Ranch recently made cards for staff—thanking them for showing up to care for them.

Practice remote acts of kindness.

One of the best ways to alleviate loneliness is to engage in acts of kindness. Reach out to people who may be having difficulties, such as elderly neighbors or relatives. Make sure they are getting the food and medical supplies they need. Write letters to residents of a local nursing home, or to family and friends. "Letter writing is a lost art form that is slow and less immediately rewarding," Martinsen said, "but it leaves the receiver with an intimate lasting 'piece' of the sender."

Revisit old photos and memories.

Go through your photo collection and family videos. Email your favorites to others so you can reminisce together. Studies have found a direct link between nostalgia and reduced loneliness.

Listen to music and sing.

In Italy, residents across the country sang to each other from balconies to lift their spirits. Singing with others and by yourself can be therapeutic.



Pray or meditate.

Many forms of prayer and meditation involve sending positive thoughts and wishes to others. Research suggests that prayer and meditation can increase feelings of social connectedness. The Ranch's spiritual life staff continue to hold chapel services and spiritual life activities—in small groups inside the cottages.

Spend time outside.

If you aren't physically able to walk in the park or around the neighborhood, sit on your front steps and wave at people walking by. A simple smile, wave, and conversation across the front yard can make a huge dent in feelings of isolation.

Doris Slaaten—a life of giving



Doris Slaaten

At age 99, Doris Slaaten might not be moving around as quickly as she did in the past, but she shows no sign of giving up her passion for philanthropy. Doris continues to support many Minot organizations, including Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

When asked why she supports the Ranch and other charities, Doris said simply, “Because they need the help.”

Doris chose Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch as one of her favorite charities because her donations to the Ranch give her the opportunity to continue her life’s work of preparing young men and women for adulthood and the working world.

“I like to support education,” Doris said. “Many of the kids [at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch] come from broken families and they need help. We need to prepare them for the future.”

Doris was born near Charlson, a small town located 20 miles west of New Town, ND. Her dad farmed, and her mother taught school and worked in the Post Office. She has good memories of growing up in rural North Dakota with her parents and brother. Her parents provided a stable and loving home where she learned to be trustworthy and independent, traits she has carried with her throughout her life.

Doris started her long and successful career in education right after graduating from high school in

Sanish, ND. She earned a temporary teacher’s certificate and then taught high school business classes in Charlson, ND. After just one year, she went back to school and earned a regular teacher’s certificate from Minot State University.

She continued to teach business education classes in high schools in North Dakota and Montana, and in 1948 returned to school for her master’s degree in Business Education. She later earned a doctorate in vocational business from Colorado State University which prepared her to teach at the college level.

In 1957, Doris became a professor in the Business Education department at Minot State University. From 1957 through her retirement in 1984, Doris taught thousands of future high school teachers how to prepare their students for the working world. She taught typing, shorthand, parliamentary procedure, and bookkeeping—and education classes geared towards preparing future teachers to teach these classes. She is also quite proud that she could keep up with her best students by writing 140 words per minute in shorthand!

Since her retirement, Doris has directed her time, energy, and knowledge towards volunteerism, community involvement, philanthropy, and travel. Her career of working with young men and women transitioned into supporting groups throughout the community that work with children and young adults.

She also traveled the world with her friend Adelaide Johnson and other



travel partners. With Adelaide, she traveled to Norway, the Middle East, Spain, Ireland, Berlin, and more—always on the lookout for what she could learn.

Doris’ career and travels taught her much about the needs of children and young adults. While she learned independence and trustworthiness from her parents, she knows not all children have that same opportunity. Through her gifts to the Ranch and other local charities, she strives to make education and important life lessons available to all children. She also realizes children have different skills and dreams that result in them taking paths much different than hers.

“Not every young boy or girl is going to attend a four-year college,” Doris said. “We must teach them skills that prepare them to be independent and move onto the next chapter in their lives.”

Doris has supported the children at the Ranch for years, and the last two years she participated in the St. Joseph’s Community Health Foundation’s Twice Blessed Program. By providing matching dollars, Doris made it possible for the Ranch to fund two school projects. The first in 2018 was to expand the elementary school playground on the Ranch’s Minot campus. In 2019, she helped secure a Twice Blessed grant to remodel the Dakota Memorial School refocus rooms. Thanks to Doris’ support, the Ranch was able to raise the money necessary to complete both projects.

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, 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:

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 a Ranch Development Officer at 1-800-344-0957. Or, visit our legacy giving website at 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 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 at 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 and select “Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch” as your charity.

An Inheritance for my Children's Children



**By Jim Vetter, Vice President
Community and Partner Relations**

As I work in my thirty-second year at the Ranch, I have begun to think on all the things I have learned about helping children succeed in the name of Christ. God has blessed me with many wise mentors and teachers willing to share their knowledge with me, and I feel a profound sense of responsibility to start sharing what I've learned with other Ranch staff.

I've started asking myself, "What do I want to accomplish with the time I have before I retire?" That time may be 10 or 12 years away, but time goes by so quickly. In the legislative work I do in my job, that equates to five or six sessions to accomplish legislative changes best for children and families. I plan to use those years to develop policy focusing on prevention and treatment strategies best for children. And, to create tax and investment laws to help our donors find the most prudent means in directing their dollars to the care of children who most need their help.

Our children need help now and in the future. And at the Ranch, we are

hard at work.

Right now, we are working on a vision for the future—how can/should the Ranch change and evolve so we can provide for the needs of children today and tomorrow?

When I think of how I can help with this, I think of Proverbs 13:22: "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children."

What is my inheritance? What can I do so the Ranch is well-positioned to help generations of children going forward? I am confident my knowledge and experience, along with the incredible knowledge of other Ranch staff and board members, will lead to a plan—a plan that will set us on a path of meeting the needs of children for generations.

As it takes time to build personal and trusting relationships with our donor family, we know it will also take time for us to share our vision for the future of the Ranch. Creating a working plan will help us keep our goals, our vision, and our legacy front and center as we choose what to accomplish before we all retire to heaven.

So, what am I going to do with my time? I will build an inheritance for future Ranch staff so they can help the future generations of children succeed in the name of Christ.

Thank you for all the time, knowledge, and gifts you share to help the troubled, complicated, and amazing children at the Ranch!

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 or would like to schedule a tour, contact Jim Vetter, or any of the people shown here, at 1-800-344-0957 or info@dakotaranch.org



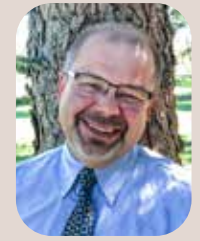
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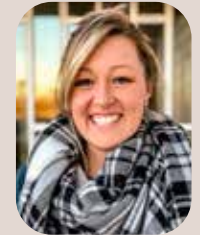
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St. Joseph's Community Health Foundation;

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\$30,000; Spiritual Life Program

Department of Public

Instruction; \$2,020; Freezer for Bismarck Nutrition Center

The Cornelsen Foundation;

\$50,000; Dakota Memorial School, Fargo Remodel

MN Power Foundation;

\$1,500; LED Lights, Bismarck

Dakota Medical Foundation;

\$4,000; Adolescent Mental Health Literacy Event

Whole Kids Foundation;

\$3,000; Bismarck Gardening Program

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Unless otherwise designated, donations you give in memory or in honor of your loved ones will be used to help build, maintain, and upkeep chapel facilities on all Ranch campuses. Your gift to the Ranch will live on through the children at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, by helping us teach them about Jesus' unending love. For more information about making memorial and honorarium gifts to the Ranch, contact Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at 1-800-344-0957 or info@DakotaRanch.org.

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George Fick

MOORE, JEAN
Bill & Joan Ferguson

MUGGLI, TERI
Lyla Helmenstein

NATHAN LARSON'S MOTHER-IN-LAW
Ethel Mae Kopischke

NELSON, GARY
Delores Maier

NELSON, LOIS
North Country Supply

NEWMAN, DONAVON
Adeline Newman

OLSON, IVONNE
Mrs. Arlys Torgerson

OVASKA, RANDY
Linda Hansen

PATSCHKOWSKI, RUTH
Helen Heubach

PENSKE, LAUREL E.
Walter & Diane Baumann

PESKEY, LEONA (my "Auntie" cousin)
Judy Olson

PETERSON, DONALD & ELSIE
Bonita Knudsvig

PETERSON, HAROLD & GLADYS
Arlo & Donna Griesbach

PETROWITZ, RITA
James & Ruth Lehfeldt

POPPEL, RUTH ANN
Dolores Simdorn

PRIEWE, ROGER
Carol Grieger

RAVENS CROFT, HESA DANDY

WES "NICK"
Elizabeth Ravenscroft

ROFFLER, MALCOLM
Gwen Roffler

ROSSOW, REV. E.J.
Philip & Sarah Lukas
Charles & Phyllis Naugle

RUDOLPH, AUGUST & MARY
Bob Rudolph

SAND, KERSTEN "KRISTI"
Lance & Lisa Mohl

SCHAEFER, BRANDON
Eleanor & Loren Sabrowsky

SCHMIDT, ALICE
Carroll G. Krantz

SCHMIDT-PARSONS, BETTY
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

SCHRUPP, ELAINE CLARA
George Fick

SCHULTZ, ELMER & JOYCE
Robert & Melody Schultz

SEIBEL, THELMA
Kevin & Penny Hoesel

SENN, REV. ARTHUR & OLGA
Sandra Ziehr

SIMONITSCH, MARY
Margaret Crummy

SMITH, ROSIE
John & Joan Hefter

SPIRO, MARTHA
Douglas & Judith Meister
Merle & Marcille Suntken

STEINKE, FRIEDA
James Baltezure
Glenn & JoAnn Bladow
Chuck & Alice Dehoff
Joan Fiechtner
John Funk
Mark & Karen Gould
Bob & Karen Huether
Wally & Vicky Huschka
Keith Jacobson
Trevor & Lisa Jacobson
Ted & Betty Johnson
Charles & Cynthia Koenig
Michael Loewen
Ralph & Melanie Mewes
Ray & Barb Mewes
John & Carolyn Motter
Milton & Grace Petersen
Gary & Cindy Rath
Linda Regan

Douglas & Cheryl Saari
Charles Schwehr
Loran & Kaye Severson
Steel County SCD
Don & Lorraine Sussex
Ralph & Cleo Thompson

STROHSCH E I N, DARLENE
LaMae Pettit

SYNSTELIEN, MARY ANN
Marilynn Johnson

SZEWCZAK, CASIMER
Jonathon and Nina Szewczak

THOMPSON, GABRIEL "GABE"
Paul & Elaine Carlson
Judith Duerre
Mr. & Mrs. Duane Jenner
Bruce & Norine Johnson
Richard Pederson
Donna Thompson

THOMPSON, LARRY
Dale & Laurie Dannewitz

TINGELSTAD, MAYNARD
Dottie & Jackie Nelson

ULBERG, SHARON
Robert & Geri Cogdill

ULMER, VERNON
Edward & Gertrude Anderson

VANDERHOEF, AIDAN
Mitzie Nay

VASEK, GERALD & GERTRUDE
Gary & Nancy Vasek

VOJNOVICH, CARESS E
Randall & Diane Roth

WALKER, EVELYN L.
Karl & Kathleen Newman

WAPLES, ELAINE
Patsy Moerke

WARD, DONALD
Tim Ward

WASEM, CHARLES G.
Carol Kleinschmidt

WEBER, LAVERNE
Keith & Roberta Hoesel

WERFELMANN, DOROTHY
James & Constance Wise

Memorials/Honorariums

WERNER, KANDI

Shelia Gerry

WILD, LILLIAN

Jay & Joy Ryan

WISCHER, MRS. ETHEL

Lyle & Becky Hangsleben

WORKIN, MICHAEL

Ella Mae Satrom

WOLF, HERMAN

Kevin & Penny Hoesel

Marian Kitzmann

Mr. & Mrs. Wilbert Kunz

Delores Maier

WRIGHTON, JOYCE

Al & Johnne Bierdeman

WYATT, MURIEL

Carol Kleinschmidt

YOUNG, IRENE

Carolyn Petik

ZAHROON, FIKE

Lisa Olson

ZAUN, MELVIN

Linda Hill

Honorariums

Nov. 20, 2019 - Feb. 14, 2020

AGNES MCMANIGLE

Teresa Lemke

Audrey Carmichael

Sharon A. Prochnow

Steve Schade

Gary & Sharon Staton

ALAN & GIL LARSON & JOHNNY

John & Inez Larson

AMY AMBUEHL

Alex Ohman

BETTY BROWN

Alex Ohman

BILL & COLLEEN LARSON

John & Inez Larson

BUD & BETTY HESTERMANN

Tom, Rick, & Dino Hestermann

CALEB & HANNAH GOODNIGHT
& FAMILY

John & Inez Larson

CAROLYN CLAYPOOLE

Thomas Claypoole

CHET & MANDY ANDERSON &
FAMILY

John & Inez Larson

CHRISTOPHER CLAYPOOLE

Thomas Claypoole

CHRISTY WILKIE

Alex Ohman

DAN & KATY KELLER

Thomas Claypoole

DR. CARL & DONNA HOLL

Michael Holl

ELLA FURMAN

Thomas Claypoole

FRED OTTEN

John & Denise Batcher

GLENDA KRUEGER

Lisa Olson

GORDON BISCHOFF

Gail Bischoff

GREG & MARCIA VASEK

Gary & Nancy Vasek

HILARY SORENSON

Alex Ohman

JANET ZINKE

Alex Ohman

JASON CLAYPOOLE

Thomas Claypoole

JEFF & KRISTI LARSON & HALEY

John & Inez Larson

JOHN & TOOTIE LARSON

Alan & Gil Larson

JOY RYAN

Alex Ohman

Quin and Kole Seiler

Rev. Bill & Gail Simmons

KEN, WILL, STEVEN, KATRINA,

NOAH, CONRAD

NICK, NATHAN, KASEY,

CHRISTINA, JOHANNES, NELS,

ANNA AND JACKY

Grandchildren of Louis & Arlene Rolf

KRIS RYAN

Alex Ohman

LINDA GRINDE

Sheena Larson

LINDA COLOMBINO

Donald and Mary Jane Colombino

LINDA MEDHUS

Alex Ohman

MARCELLA ZABEL

Mark & Connie Zabel

MARGARET STEFFEN

Calvin & Jane Steffen

MARK & JESSICA BODE

Nolan & Eileen Bode

MATT & KRISTA LARSON &
FAMILY

John & Inez Larson

MELISSA KLEIN & FAMILY

Sue Miller

MICHAEL CLAYPOOLE

Thomas Claypoole

MR. & MRS. JOHN BALLIET

Thomas Claypoole

NATH COLLINS

Mark Yost

PAUL & BECKY LARSON, FINN &
IZZY

John & Inez Larson

PETER CLAYPOOLE

Thomas Claypoole

REV. BART DAY

Thomas Helfrich

REV. DIETER E. & RUTH HAUPT

Natalie Haupt

REV. KEITH SMITH

Scott & Donna Johnson

RHONDA LIVEDALEN & FAMILY

Sue Miller

ROG & JANE ROBERTS

Nancy Houghton

RON & BARB STENSGARD &
LUKE

John & Inez Larson

SARA RUDDY

Thomas Claypoole

SHAYLA LEINEN

Alex Ohman

Prayers

SUE NACK

Mary Clark

TAMMY NOTEBOOM

Alex Ohman

THOMAS R. DECKER

ShaRell Nelson

TIM & ELIZABETH

SCHALLHORN

Thomas Claypoole

TODD & JUDY LARSON &

FAMILY

John & Inez Larson

TOM & DONNA LINNERTZ

Sonya & Sonny Fried

TOM LEE & OZ EKVIRIYAKUL

Dean R. Whitehead

VAUGHN & NANCY JONES

Thomas Claypoole

VERNON & ELIZABETH KEUNE

Laura Montgomery

WADE & JAMIE COTA & FAMILY

John & Inez Larson

WARREN & SONYA FRIED

Tom & Donna Linnertz

WES & GLADYS STORM

JoAnn Grilley

A Prayer for Healing

At every moment of our existence

You are present to us, God,

In gentle compassion.

Help us to be present to one another

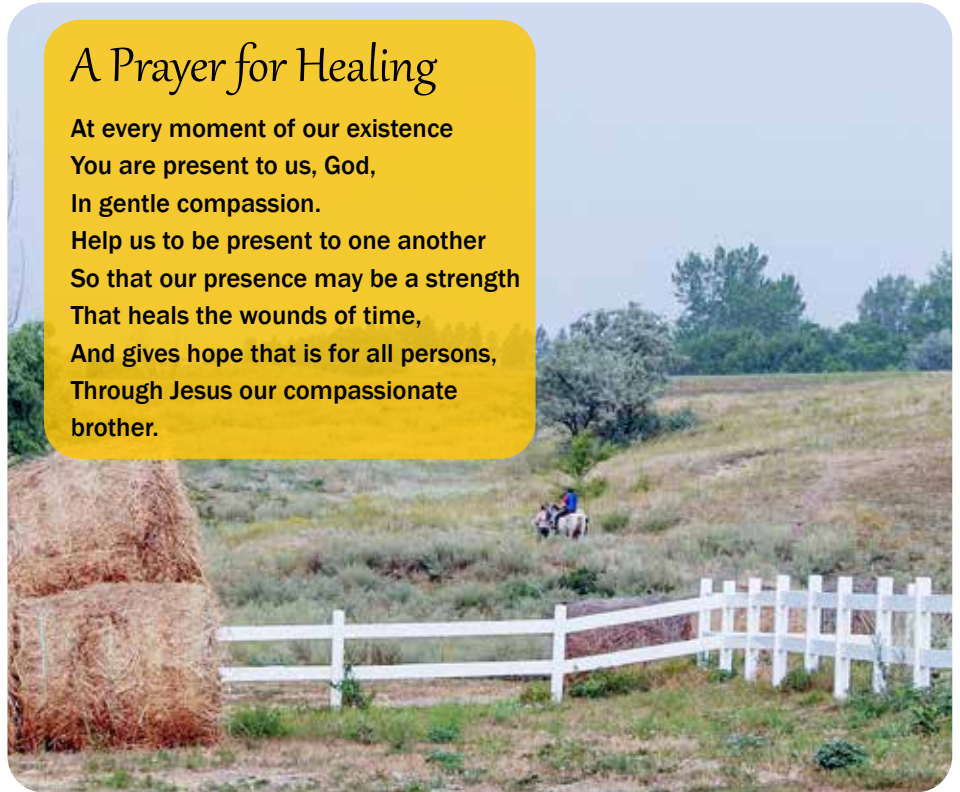
So that our presence may be a strength

That heals the wounds of time,

And gives hope that is for all persons,

Through Jesus our compassionate

brother.



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. When we receive your request, we will distribute it to our pastors and spiritual life specialists who will pray for you during chapel services on all three campuses.



**Please
help us
reach
you!**

As people move from landline telephones to mobile phones, it is getting more difficult to say “thank you” to our donors. Please call us with your phone number so we can update our files. We would love the opportunity to thank you over the phone or in person—so we can tell you real stories about our kids and make the ministry come alive.

Call 1-800-344-0957

Your Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Your Address _____

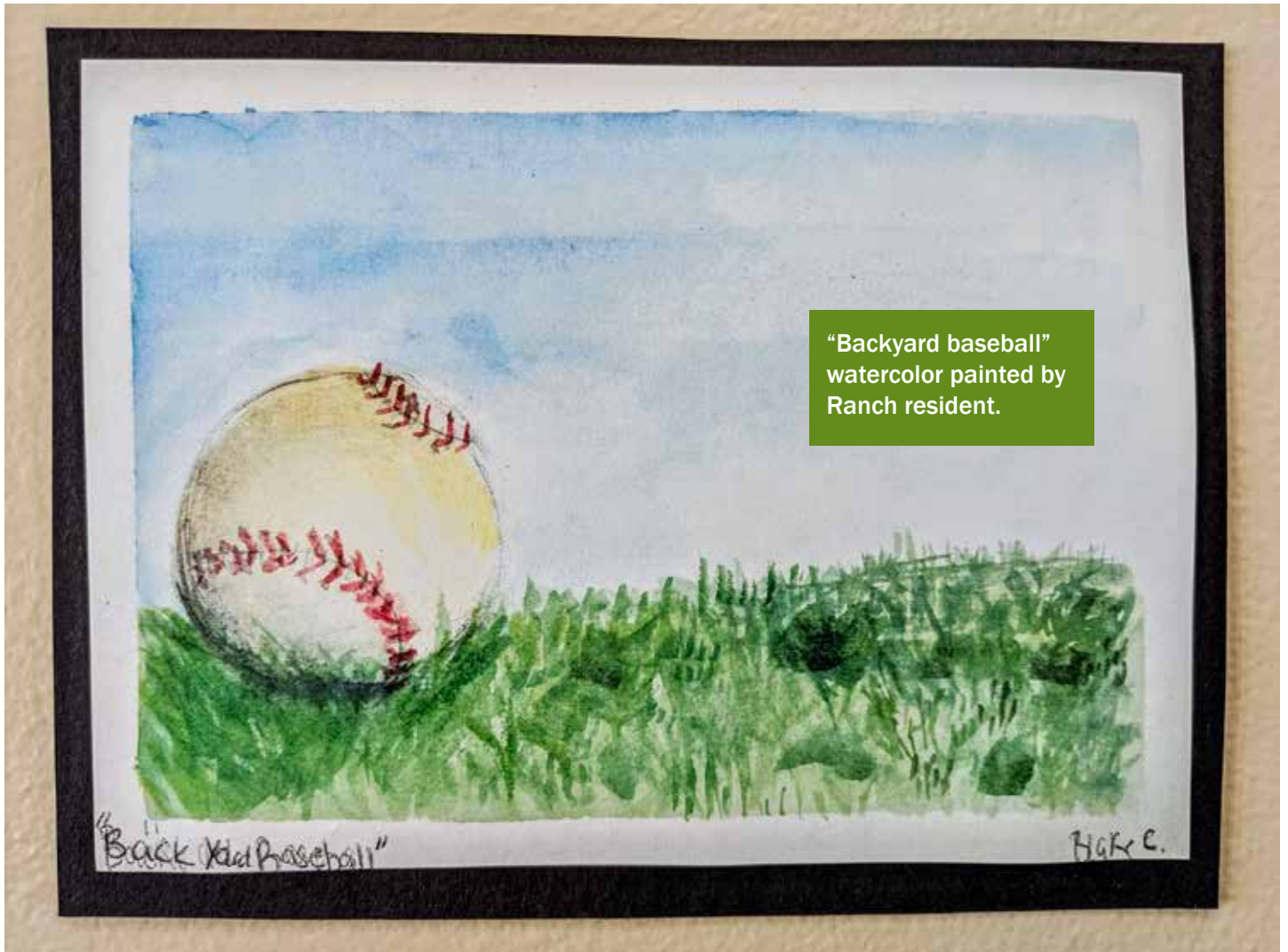
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please pray for _____



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

Change Service Requested



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

Main Switchboard: 1-800-593-3098

Foundation: 1-800-344-0957

