

THE RANCH VOICE

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

Winter 2024



A young resident discovers peace and calm through the art of embroidery.



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BOYS AND GIRLS
RANCH

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Finding Faith: A story of rediscovery, p. 3
- The power of presence, p. 6
- From troubled teen to thriving adult, p. 14
- Fred E. Lietz Mission Project award, p. 28
- The shield of indifference, p. 29
- Breaking ground on Zurcher Cottage, p. 36



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A great push and pull

When my husband and I started a family, our household went from orderly and predictable to a little chaotic. When they were born, each of our children had their own schedules. They couldn't tell us what they needed, so the expectations were unclear. Our lives became unpredictable and sometimes a little scary. I can't guess the number of times I tiptoed into the baby's room to ensure they were breathing.

Going to work was something of a refuge because there, everything was clear and structured. I experienced a profound internal struggle as I grappled with the push and pull of wanting to be with my children while craving the comforting predictability of my professional life.

In some ways, 14-year-old Justin is experiencing a similar push and pull. He came to the Ranch six months ago after being hospitalized for a serious suicide attempt, one of several over the past 18 months. Justin's dad lives in another state and has no role in his life. Justin has lived with a loving aunt and uncle since his mother's passing three years ago, but depression, anxiety, trauma, and being bullied at school have taken their toll on him. He, and his aunt and uncle, needed help.

After about a week of being really angry he was at the Ranch, something clicked for Justin. He started sharing his thoughts with his therapist and his primary staff. He started to work hard in treatment, in group therapy, in wellness, and in school. He attended Spiritual Life groups and Chapel and served on the Student Council. Slowly, he worked his way through treatment to where he had healed enough to set a date to go home.

Then, in just one week, ten days before he was to go home, Justin broke a window in a meeting room after a family therapy session. He tried to hit a peer in school. He used a pencil eraser to rub his skin until it was raw.

Just like me after having a baby, Justin has a great push and pull inside of him. That's not unusual. The Ranch is a place of healing. We work hard to keep schedules, provide meals, set boundaries, be reliable and consistent. That's what these young trauma survivors need, a place of dependability to heal.

Sometimes, as much as children want to be done with care at the Ranch, they also want to hang on to the security of being here. Like Justin, they sometimes unconsciously derail their plan to go home. Even with all they've learned, it is scary to go back "out there," where the rules are not as clear and not everyone follows them.

We will walk with Justin as he finds his way back. Our AfterCare Specialist, who has been part of Justin's team since he came to the Ranch, will work with him and his family to wrap him in the community care he will continue to need. Our Education Transition Specialist will meet with his home school and help them understand Justin's learning and sensory needs. If needed, our clinic, Dakota Family Services, will continue to provide counseling and family therapy.

My husband and I figured out how to be joyful parents. Because of your incredible generosity and the remarkable people who find their life's work at the Ranch, Justin and his family will "succeed in the name of Christ."

Please keep our children and staff in your prayers. You are in ours.

In His love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joy".

Finding Faith

A story of rediscovery

Faith's parents divorced when she was young, and her stepfather, the man she called "Dad," died of a heart attack when she was 10 years old. As she and her mom both grieved, their relationship deteriorated.

"Me and my mom didn't really get along and would get into lots of arguments and disagreements," Faith said.

Faith, now 14, was having suicidal thoughts and said school was especially difficult.

"I struggled a lot with going to school and keeping up on my grades. I was also being bullied and didn't think anyone cared about me," she said. "Before I went to the Ranch, my family and my friends were really worried about me. I needed professional help because I was starting to really go downhill."

At the Ranch, Faith felt safe and with the help of her Ranch therapist, Devin, case manager, Ashton, and many others, she started slowly understanding just how many people cared about her.

"It took me awhile to get it through my head," Faith said. "I liked the Ranch a lot. It was a good change of scenery, and it helped me. I have better confidence and self-esteem, and I am definitely better at coping with things."

Faith learned and practiced breathing exercises, and about halfway into her stay, she started writing poetry and stories to help

her cope with her emotions without hurting herself.

"I always used to journal and write stories," Faith said, "but I stopped for a while before the Ranch. It also helped me to be around people who were struggling with some of the same things. It's different, but a good different, than being with people who didn't understand and didn't know what was going on."

Faith also rediscovered her faith in God while at the Ranch.

"I'd been to church, and every now and then I would pray, but it's hard to think of that when you're struggling," she said. "At the Ranch, I tried to open myself up to that. I went every single time we had chapel or spiritual life group, and towards the end of my stay I started going to chapel early to help set up."

Faith had a few last words for Ranch donors.

"It is definitely worth your time and effort and money. It is a place



At the Ranch, Faith started to believe people cared about her.

where you have professionals around you 24/7, and it really helps," she said. "And you still get to go outside and do fun stuff. It's not like the Ranch is keeping you from doing normal human things!"

"People at the Ranch made me feel like I was at home, and I knew they were there to help. I will definitely look back on this and be like, 'Wow, I didn't think I was going to make it this far.' I am very thankful for the Ranch staff and everything that went on there."

Frequently Asked Questions

What is co-regulation and why is it so important?



By Shyla Furcht, Onboarding Coordinator, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

“Logan stormed out of the classroom, fists clenched, his face flushed with frustration. He paced back and forth down the hallway, his breathing fast and shallow, fists repeatedly flexing. Erin Grinolds, a Residential Treatment Specialist, quietly followed him into the hallway, watching his tense movements for a moment before approaching.

She leaned against the wall a few feet away, crossing her arms casually and taking slow, steady breaths, exhaling softly, but audibly, each one a gentle rhythm.

After a minute, Logan slowed his pacing, glancing at her out of the corner of his eye. She didn’t say anything, just kept breathing deeply, her calm presence steady beside him.

Finally, he stopped, his shoulders sinking slightly, and let out a heavy sigh, as if some of the tension was melting away. Erin waited for a beat, then smiled gently. “Wanna go for a walk and talk it out?” she asked in an even voice.

Logan hesitated but nodded, his breathing finally matching hers as they started down the hall together, his fists now unclenched.”

This engagement between Erin and Logan warmed my heart and is a great example of how we teach kids to co-regulate, the process by which we manage our emotions, behaviors, or physiological states with the help of another person. This concept is rooted in human development, as infants and children rely on their parents to help them manage stress, emotions, and basic needs. From the moment we are born, we depend on others to help us regulate our emotions. Over time, through consistent and attuned interactions, we develop the ability to self-regulate.

During infancy and childhood, co-regulation is essential because young children lack the capacity to manage strong emotions or stress on their own. Parents and other caregivers play a vital role in soothing, guiding, and modeling emotional responses, which helps the child gradually learn how to self-regulate. This process is critical for healthy emotional and psychological development, forming the foundation for social and emotional skills later in life.

The impact of trauma on co-regulation

Trauma—especially in early relationships—can severely disrupt this process. Traumatic experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or significant loss, create emotional wounds that make it difficult for individuals to engage in co-regulation. Trauma can trigger intense stress responses and make it harder for people to trust others, further impairing their ability

to co-regulate. Without healing relationships, these disruptions can affect a child’s ability to manage their emotions and maintain healthy relationships throughout life.

Healing through trauma-informed care

The good news is that while trauma disrupts co-regulation, healing relationships can repair these disruptions. Trauma-informed therapy and supportive, caring relationships—like we provide at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch—are key to this healing process. With patience, consistency, and empathy, trauma survivors can learn co-regulation skills, often for the first time. Safe, attuned relationships—such as those between therapists, caregivers, and mentors—provide new experiences of trust, allowing children to slowly rebuild their capacity for emotional regulation.

The power of relationships

Kids who have lived through trauma will need lots of support. They need good teachers and good health care providers and people they call “family.” But research shows that a positive relationship with even one caring adult can have a profound impact on a young person’s life path and their brain development. This is particularly true for children who have experienced trauma. The presence of a stable, supportive figure provides the emotional safety children need to heal and grow. These trusting relationships, built on

empathy and understanding, lie at the core of the trauma-informed care provided at the Ranch.

Challenges for direct care staff: co-regulation in practice

While the benefits of co-regulation for trauma survivors are clear, the challenges for those caring for them are equally important to acknowledge. At the Ranch, co-regulation doesn't just happen in therapy sessions—all staff, especially direct care staff who provide care around the clock, are asked to remain calm and emotionally regulated, even in the most intense and stressful situations. To do this, they must continually regulate their own emotions so they can effectively co-regulate with the youth they serve.

This is not an easy task. The challenging behaviors exhibited by trauma survivors can be overwhelming, and it can be difficult for staff to maintain their own emotional equilibrium. To provide effective support, direct care staff must develop and strengthen their own emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence: a critical skill for caregivers

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and influence one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. In the context of trauma-informed care, EI is critical for managing the emotional demands placed on staff and ensuring they can provide a safe, supportive

environment for the youth in their care.

The Ranch has adopted the EQ2 model from the Lionheart Foundation framework, giving all Ranch employees a deeper, more holistic approach to emotional intelligence, emphasizing the importance of both self-regulation and the ability to respond to others' emotional needs. This integrates emotional awareness, empathy, and resilience, all of which are essential skills for direct care staff working with trauma survivors. Throughout the six-session EQ2 training, staff explore their own triggers, thoughts, feelings, and experiences in life to ensure they respond to residents with empathy rather than reacting to the behavior.

The importance of emotional intelligence for staff well-being

For direct care staff, emotional intelligence is not just about improving their ability to co-regulate with the youth they serve—it's also about protecting their own well-being. Dealing with intense emotional situations day in and day out can lead to burnout if caregivers do not have the tools to manage their own emotions effectively. By developing EI, staff can better cope with stress, maintain their emotional health, and continue to provide the compassionate care that is essential to trauma recovery.

The ripple effect

Co-regulation is a fundamental

process that helps individuals, especially trauma survivors, manage their emotions with the support of others. It is at the heart of trauma-informed care, where healing relationships foster trust, emotional growth, and resilience.

The emotional demands on direct care staff are significant, making emotional intelligence a critical skill for both the well-being of the youth and the caregivers themselves. Through continuous development of EI and supportive frameworks like EQ2, staff can navigate the challenges of trauma care while fostering healing and positive growth for the youth they serve.

Each EQ2 session ends with a seed thought, a focused idea of a concept that serves as the starting point for deeper reflection. The purpose of a seed thought is to plant an idea in the mind that can grow and develop through careful thought or spiritual practice, much like a seed planted in the ground grows into something larger and more substantial.

To replicate this, I leave you with one of these seed thoughts written in the EQ2 handbook, "By helping youth heal, you start a ripple effect that touches the lives of people for years to come—people you may never see, but whose lives will be forever changed by your work."

As a Ranch donor, you join our staff in starting that ripple effect. The lives of people you may never see are forever changed by your support.

THE POWER OF PRESENCE

Integrating healing into daily life



Unlike outpatient therapy, which involves scheduled visits with a therapist in the office, residential therapy at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch immerses children in a therapeutic environment, where therapy and recovery are a part of daily life.

Dr. Hannah Baczynski, Clinical Psychologist and Therapy Manager at the Ranch, likes to call it “therapy in the wild.”

“In addition to individual, group, and family therapy sessions,” Dr. Baczynski said, “we can seamlessly weave therapeutic lessons into our kids’ daily lives. If a child refuses to come to their therapy session, we can go sit with them in their room. If we are playing a game, we can model and teach social skills and how to deal with frustration. We are with them all day, so we can see them trying out new coping skills and reinforce them with praise and rewards.”

These daily interactions help therapists build relationships with the kids more quickly than if they were seeing them once a week or once every two weeks.

Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist and Medical Director at the Ranch, said residential therapy also makes it possible for therapists to understand the child’s daily experiences and to tailor interventions accordingly.

“In a setting like the Ranch, our therapists see the full picture,” Dr. Martinsen said. “They get input from the school, from residential staff, from me, from the case manager, and from the family, so they have intimate knowledge of how the child is functioning day to day. That is very different than seeing them once a week and only knowing what they tell you.”

A collaborative approach to mental health

At the Ranch, a team of mental health professionals combine their unique skills and insights to provide comprehensive care for children and their families.

A **Psychiatrist** is a licensed medical doctor who diagnoses and treats mental health conditions. Psychiatrists can prescribe medication and recommend therapy, behavioral interventions, lifestyle changes, and other treatments.

A **Clinical Psychologist** is a trained mental health professional who specializes in evaluating and treating people experiencing psychological distress. They can conduct psychological assessments, diagnose mental health conditions, and provide individual and group therapy.

Therapists are licensed mental health professionals trained to help people deal with issues that affect their emotional well-being. They are trained in a variety of therapy modalities to help their patients improve their emotional, cognitive, and social skills, ease symptoms of mental illness, and learn essential coping skills. Therapists also provide family therapy designed to improve relationships among family members.

Before attending medical school, Dr. Martinsen worked with both children and adults as a clinical therapist, which gives him a perspective unique to most psychiatrists.

“I am intimately aware of what medication can and can’t do,” he said. “Medication and therapy work hand in hand. For instance, we generally think of depression and anxiety as things that should respond to medication. But if a person is in an invalidating environment or they’ve been traumatized, there are things medication can’t do. With many issues, especially those related to trauma, medication can ease the symptoms, but it’s really therapy that provides the most benefit in the long

run.”

“On the other hand,” Dr. Martinsen continued, “if someone has ADHD or bipolar disorder, medication is the primary treatment intervention with psychotherapy enhancing its effectiveness by helping the patient develop skills to manage their condition, like getting enough sleep and managing distress.”

Drs. Martinsen and Baczynski agree that therapy is a cornerstone of effective treatment, and that therapists working in residential environments like the Ranch have a unique opportunity to create lasting change. In the pages that follow, you will meet some of the therapists who work at the Ranch.

Listener

Aisha Santiago De La Villa, LAPC, Therapist Minot, ND

Aisha Santiago De La Villa became interested in mental health while volunteering at a Puerto Rican nonprofit that worked with adults struggling with substance use.

“[Through my volunteer work], I had a lot of conversations with people about their struggles and mental health. I kind of fell in love with how the brain works,” Aisha said.

Although she intended to become an architect, Aisha decided to explore psychology after her career aptitude test results showed equal scores in both fields.

After high school, Aisha attended the University of Puerto Rico and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in social sciences with criminal justice, and a minor in forensic psychology. When she moved to Minot four years ago, she started working as a Residential Treatment Specialist at the Ranch while working on a master’s degree in clinical counseling from the University of Mary, Bismarck, ND. She left the Ranch to complete her counseling internship and returned a year later as a therapist.

As a therapist, Aisha offers individual and family therapy. She also collaborates with each child’s



treatment team to coordinate care, inform the team about difficult topics the child is working on in therapy, and create and manage the child’s safety plan.

“If a kiddo is struggling,” Aisha said, “we all come to the table to talk about what we’ve tried, what’s working or not working, and what we can do differently to help the child be successful.”

The therapists also join shift change meetings where they and the rest of the treatment team communicate with the Residential Treatment Specialists (RTS). During these meetings, Aisha explains any updates to safety plans and informs the RTSs about therapy developments that might impact the child’s behavior in the cottage. Simultaneously, the RTSs provide feedback to the team, sharing any ongoing concerns or issues the child is experiencing.

When asked to talk about a child at the Ranch that stands out, Aisha couldn’t choose just one.

“Every kid I’ve worked with has impacted me in a way,” she said. “There is something special about every child that I cherish and will always remember. Our kids are very loving. They are intelligent in their own way, and they all bring a lot of positive things to the Ranch.”

Aisha is humbled by the kids every day.

“When we graduate as therapists,

we often have what I call the hero complex. ‘I’m going to save the world.’ I’m going to save these kiddos.’ I’m going to get them through trauma treatment, and we are going to do great things’,” Aisha said. “Then one of them will say, ‘No, you need to leave me alone, ma’am.’”

Aisha has learned that the kids have been through a lot and that it is normal for them to distrust her.

“When they come here, they don’t know me. I’m a new person in their life and they don’t trust me,” she said. “I have to gain their trust so they can move forward. I can extend my hand as much as I want, but they have to be ready to grab it. I can tell them how no one who has ever completed trauma treatment has felt worse afterwards, but I must wait until they are ready. That is the most difficult part for me.”

One of the ways Aisha connects with the kids is by adjusting the setting.

“If they don’t like to be in the office, we might go for a walk on the nature trail,” she said. “If they like playing basketball, I’ll play basketball with them, even though I suck at it. Listening to them, paying attention to their interests, and adjusting the therapy setting, if needed, works wonders.”

Aisha has been surprised by the environment at the Ranch, and how different it is from other places she has worked.

“It’s very positive and welcoming. If you’re not doing something right, someone tells you and you just fix it. It’s okay to be wrong,” she said. “We are all out to help not just the kids,

but each other.”

When she’s not at work, Aisha likes to read and spend time with her family, which includes her husband, their two-year-old son, her mom, and two siblings.

Helper
Rebecca McCarty,
LMSW,
Therapist
Minot, ND

Becca has always been a natural helper, starting with her family and friends as a child and continuing into adulthood.

“Being able to help people on their healing journey is what inspired me to become a therapist,” she said.

While Becca has primarily worked with adults throughout her social work career, she has been pleasantly surprised by her ability to connect with adolescents in a meaningful way. She particularly values the chance to positively influence their lives.

“When you work with adolescents and help them get on the right path, their adulthood is going to be much better,” Becca explained. “Adults are sometimes set in their ways, making it harder for them to embrace positive changes.”

In addition to offering individual and family therapy and coordinating care with the treatment team, Becca and Kaylyn, a Ranch case manager, launched a group therapy program called Structured Psychotherapy for

Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS).

SPARCS is an evidence-based group therapy program created by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network to help kids who have faced a lot of stress or trauma. It teaches them important skills to handle their

emotions, solve problems, and build strong relationships. The goal is to help adolescents feel more confident and resilient, so they can lead healthier, happier lives.

“At the start and end of each SPARCS session, we do an SOS,”

Becca said. “This involves slowing down, grounding ourselves in the present, and discussing our distress levels. After that, we have a group discussion and an activity. Last week, we practiced mindful bubble blowing. We blew bubbles and asked questions like, ‘What size are the bubbles?’ ‘Where did they land?’ ‘Did you feel calm while blowing the bubbles?’”

Becca believes individual therapy starts with building rapport and trust. She starts the trust-building process by meeting each child where they are at and engaging them by playing a therapeutic card game or some type of icebreaker.

“It’s sometimes a little harder to engage boys because they have that stereotypical perspective of men and boys not showing their emotions,” Becca said. “But once they are

engaged with therapy it takes off from there. I’m very honored to be walking that path with them.”

Becca primarily uses cognitive behavioral therapy and dialectical behavior therapy to help kids at the Ranch heal and grow. That is followed by trauma therapy.

“A lot of the kids at the Ranch have an extensive trauma history. At some point, we must focus on that past trauma because it is the main reason why the kids are having what I call ‘big behaviors.’ They may not have any guidance in their lives or somebody to talk to about the bad things that happened to them,” Becca said. “While we are helping them stay in the present, we also need to be okay diving into the past.”

Becca tells kids they will have troubles with boundaries, anger, and relationships until they work through what happened to them.

“They have to focus on what happened to them to get them to this point, and where those big behaviors are coming from. We help them weed out the shame, blame, and guilt for those things so they can move forward and have a good future,” Becca said. “Sometimes the most important thing I do is show the kids I believe that what they are telling me about their past is true. Many of them have never had that. Their pain and experiences have often been dismissed.”

One young woman that sticks in Becca’s mind came to the Ranch with a very angry, very hard, persona. She pushed people away and was resistant to connecting with anyone.



“She didn’t want to cry in front of others, so when she cried, she isolated herself in her room,” Becca said. “The day she felt safe enough to cry in a session with me was a big day.”

About 90 days into treatment, the young woman told Becca she was ready to dive into her trauma.

“We dug deep and she was all in,” Becca said. “When she left the Ranch, she went to Job Corps to finish high school, and she excelled. She is one of my big success stories.”

Becca started her post-secondary education at Bismarck State College before moving to Minot State University to finish her bachelor’s degree in psychology and criminal justice. She earned her master’s degree in social work from Widener University, Chester, PA.

“In 2017 when I started grad school, Widener was one of the few grad schools that focused on trauma-informed practices,” Becca said. “They had an extensive and intensive trauma certificate program that I completed.”

Becca has dealt with her own trauma in the year since her husband passed away. She said her work at the Ranch gave her the structure and routine she needed to move forward.

“Providing therapy for these kids, seeing them heal and walk the path they need to be on—that is healing for me,” Becca said.

Becca has three children, ages seven to 14. She loves to cook, bake, listen to music, and occasionally sing.

Healer **Taylor Roddie,** **MSW,** **Therapist** **Fargo, ND**

After graduating with a degree in psychology from Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), Taylor Roddie worked in county social services, first as a case manager and then in child protection. She quickly realized she wanted to be a healer rather than removing kids from their homes.

She returned to MSUM for her master’s degree and learned about the Ranch when Lucas Mitzel, a therapist at Dakota Family Services, the Ranch’s outpatient clinic, spoke in one of her classes.

“That’s when I knew the Ranch was the place for me,” Taylor said.

She applied for and received an internship at the Ranch and is now working full-time.

“I love that I can be a safe place for the kids. They may not have anyone else, but they know they have me. I will support them. I will be there if they need to cry or ask advice,” Taylor said. “They also know I will challenge them and hold them accountable because I want them to be successful.”

Taylor said a lot of places talk about being a family, but at the Ranch, it’s true.

“We have each other’s backs. We are honest with each other. Not a day goes by that I don’t feel supported



by my co-workers,” Taylor said. “The kids see it too. They see us getting along and that makes them more comfortable with us. We’re also really motivated and that helps motivate the kids.”

Taylor loves learning the many treatment modalities, and then seeing them work.

“You hear it. You read it. And then once you’re doing it, you see it work. When kids receive trauma treatment, their PTSD scores go down an average of 30 points, to below the threshold of even having PTSD as a diagnosis,” Taylor said. “I was doing prolonged exposure therapy with a resident and watched his SUDS score, a tool used to measure the intensity of distress or discomfort, go from 85 to a five. It’s amazing to see those results.”

Taylor likens trauma treatment to fixing broken bones. If you break a bone and don’t get treatment, it heals incorrectly, hurts, and impacts your daily life.

“Then one day you decide to go to the doctor, and they say they have to rebreak it. It’s going to hurt, but that’s short term. In the long run it’s going to quit hurting,” Taylor said. “It’s just like trauma treatment. You’re going to feel all those feelings again during treatment, but that’s short term. Then you’re going to learn how to plug in all the things you’ve learned and not have to deal

with it every day.”

Taylor said the best thing about providing therapy in a residential treatment environment is seeing the kids every day.

“I see them in the dining room. I go into the cottage and see them. Even if it’s just five or 10 minutes, the face-to-face connection grows the bond and rapport between us,” Taylor said. “They also get to see me interact with other staff, residents, and their parents outside of our sessions. They are constantly being shown examples of appropriate ways to interact with other people.”

Taylor loves the kids at the Ranch and thinks they get a bad rap from people who have their own opinions or stereotypes of the kids who come here.

“I wish people could see what a joy they are. If you get to know who they are and recognize what they’ve been through, you see how resilient they are. They are still going. They are still doing life and getting over really hard stuff,” Taylor said. “They are not bad kids at all. They might make poor decisions, but we all do that sometimes.”

The hardest part of the job for Taylor is witnessing a child’s pain.

“When a kid is suicidal and self-harming, it’s hard to see the pain they are going through. You want to take it from them, but you can’t. Instead, you have to figure out to help them overcome or manage it,” she said.

Taylor grew up in Prior Lake, MN, and is a huge family person. “My mom and dad, aunties, cousins, and grandparents mean a lot to me.”

She has two dogs she loves to show off, enjoys being at the lake, and is a runner. Taylor is proud of her Native American heritage and is teaching herself how to bead.

Connector
Devin Ternes,
LAPC,
Therapist
Bismarck, ND

Devin Ternes started college as an engineering major, but after spending hours at a desk doing math assignments, he realized it wasn’t for him, even though he was good at it.

“I liked math and the sciences, but I longed for some sort of human connection,” Devin said.

He switched his major and went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in psychology and master’s degree in counseling, both at the University of Mary, Bismarck, ND.

His first connection to the Ranch was through a counseling internship.

“When it came time to find an internship, I wanted to find a place where I could learn a lot and be challenged,” Devin said. “I had never worked with kids before coming to the Ranch, so it was definitely a challenge.”

When he completed his internship, he was offered a full-time position as a Ranch therapist.

When most people think of therapy, they think of spending an hour with a therapist in their office. Devin said residential therapy can

look very different than what people might expect.

“For some of my kids, talk therapy is their go-to and they can express themselves very well. They can talk through their behavior or mental health struggles,”

Devin said. “Other kiddos really have a difficult time expressing themselves so it might look like play therapy. You don’t think kids ages 12 to 17 would participate in play therapy, but a lot of our kiddos, that is where they are at.”

Devin has used sand tray therapy, “draw your family” assessments, and many other therapy techniques to meet kids where they are at.

“It’s anything from what you might expect to some of the more subtle forms of therapy where we are putting our kids in environments where they can express themselves and figure out a path forward. What they give us is what we work with,” Devin said. “I’ve had therapy sessions in the gym where we play basketball or badminton and just talk about things because that is where they feel the most comfortable.”

While a typical therapy session is an hour, Devin sometimes has several 15 minutes sessions with a child every week.



“We call it therapeutic dosing,” he said. “Therapy can be an endurance thing. Some kids don’t do well sitting in an office for an hour, or even playing a game for an hour. If 15 minutes is all they have for me, that’s what I do.”

Devin has been surprised and relieved to see the abilities, creativity, and resourcefulness of the kids.

“They might not have had the resources or learned the skills they need to keep themselves safe or be able to interact with others in a healthy way,” Devin said, “but they have the ability. I haven’t met a kid at the Ranch who isn’t resourceful, who isn’t creative, who isn’t intelligent. And that gives me hope that they can choose to make their future different than their past.”

One of the things Devin loves about his work at the Ranch is the collaboration between therapists, case managers, nurses, and everyone else on the child’s treatment team.

“One of the first kids I worked with was a really great kid. He had come to us with a lot of trauma and lot of things to work through,” Devin said.

When the treatment team met, Devin would bring to the table the things they were talking about in therapy, like his trauma and his relationship with his biological parents. Nursing would bring up his struggles with hygiene and eating balanced meals. The case managers would talk about his mood in the cottage and the trouble he had interacting with the other residents.

“We looked at all of these things and then shared the data with our

psychiatrist, so he had something to work with when it came to medication management. That one kid had all these things going on at the same time,” Devin said. “I needed all of those perspectives to help him work through his trauma.”

While there are many forms of trauma treatment, Devin said they all begin with learning and practicing coping skills.

“Trauma treatment is hard,” he said. “These kids are dealing with internalized experiences they’ve had in the past that affect their lives in a detrimental way. As we dig into that, we unearth feelings and emotions that are hard to deal with.”

Starting with coping skills gives the kids the tools they need to deal with the feelings and emotions that might be triggered during trauma treatment.

“Every trauma treatment modality involves some element of exposure and walking with them through the events they’ve experienced. Our job is to desensitize them to those triggers,” Devin said. “They won’t forget their trauma, but they can gain power over those memories, so they stop affecting them the same way.”

Devin likens the kids at the Ranch to ants who can carry several times their weight.

“Our job is to take some of that weight away by connecting them with their built-in support people, encouraging them, validating how they feel, and letting them know how much we believe in them,” he said.

In addition to individual therapy,

Devin and other Ranch therapists provide family therapy, an important part of the treatment process.

“Kids don’t exist in a bubble. I’ve had several families make some pretty big leaps in acknowledging their kids’ struggles and understanding them a bit better,” Devin said. “Working with the family can help create a home environment that is more comfortable to live in, so conflict doesn’t further weigh them down.”

In his free time, Devin has a laundry list of things he enjoys—cooking, playing video games, spending time outdoors and with friends, building things in his garage, and hanging out with his family.



Leader

**Amber Nelson, LPCC, LMAC,
Therapist/Therapy Lead
Bismarck, ND**

In high school, Amber aspired to become a doctor, but she shifted her focus to psychology after realizing her discomfort with blood and bodily fluids might be a problem!

“I took some psychology courses in high school, and they intrigued me,” Amber said. “Then someone did a presentation on addiction counseling in one of my undergraduate classes and it clicked. That’s when I knew what I wanted to do.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Dickinson State University, Amber moved to Bismarck, ND, to complete a master’s degree in Addiction Counseling. She came to the Ranch after interning at the Youth Correctional Center and West Central Human Service Center.

“I enjoyed the residential environment and working with adolescents,” Amber said. “The addiction counseling job at the Ranch happened to be open so I put in an application and got the job.”

Children qualify for treatment at the Ranch because of primary psychiatric diagnoses. Often, the children also have addiction issues so Amber’s dual licensure in addiction counseling and clinical counseling make her well-suited for the position.

“Some of our kids have experimented with vaping, drinking, or smoking marijuana, and others have a formal chemical dependency diagnosis,” Amber said. “Both need to be considered in treatment and safety plans. For instance, if they use drugs or alcohol on a home visit, do we need to medically clear or detox them upon return? Are there things we can put in place after discharge, like support groups or positive mentors, to protect them from relapse?”

While therapy sessions focus on many of the same things as they do in a traditional mental health session, chemical dependency issues add another layer of factors to consider.

“We consider how trauma impacts their usage patterns and how can we decrease their vulnerability for relapse,” Amber said. “We work with them on ways to cope with cravings, resist peer pressure, and re-engage with friends and activities they have fallen out of due to their substance use.”

When appropriate, Amber and her Ranch colleagues incorporate community support groups into treatment, like AA, NA, and Al-Anon. Several Ranch residents have also been involved in Runners Against Destructive Decisions (RADD), a local running group in Bismarck.

As a therapy lead on the Ranch’s Bismarck campus, Amber guides and directs the clinical team as well as keeps the rest of the staff informed about each child’s progress in therapy.

“I take the lead in working with staff surrounding what is going on with each resident,” Amber said. “This is how their diagnosis and what is going on in therapy might impact their behavior in the cottage and at school. That way things aren’t so siloed, and we are all working together to keep things moving in the same direction.”

Amber likes the Ranch’s focus on providing trauma-informed care.

“It is easy to look at a child’s behavior and ask, ‘What is wrong

with you? Why are you so naughty?’ That is what a lot of our kids have experienced before coming to the Ranch,” Amber said. “They are told they are naughty and that they need to just act their age. When they come here, we try to figure out the purpose behind their behavior and help them find ways to cope in healthier ways.”

She also loves the kids and can’t imagine taking any other career path.

“They are so fun. You just never know what you are going to get from them,” Amber said. “Some of the kids are sassy and some are sarcastic. Their personalities are great, and they are fun to hang out with. Yes, they have behaviors, but in between those times, they are just kids who have had some really tough experiences. The fact that they can go through these terrible things and come out and do great things amazes me.”

Outside of work, Amber likes reading, yoga, traveling, and the outdoors. She and her husband live in Bismarck.

Transforming lives

The Ranch’s dedicated therapists play a crucial role in transforming children’s and family’s lives. Through a combination of individualized and collaborative care, proven therapeutic techniques, and a deep commitment to understanding each child, they equip them with the skills they need for a brighter future.

From troubled teen to corrections officer

Hannah Keller, a Correctional Officer at the Southwest Multi-County Correction Center in Dickinson, ND, is a much different person than the angry 13-year-old who arrived at the Ranch 11 years ago.

“I had a lot of aggression that I had no control over,” Hannah said. “I would go from zero to a hundred and anything could make me mad and go off on my family. I could flip on a dime over the food being cooked wrong.”

Hannah’s family did everything they could to help her. She had been diagnosed with ADHD and was prescribed many different medications, but none of them worked. They took her to a therapist and when that wasn’t helping, her therapist recommended they consider residential treatment at the Ranch.

At the Ranch, Hannah made significant progress with her emotions and behaviors, in school, and in growing her Christian faith, but it didn’t start out well.

“I refused to eat or participate in treatment, because those were the only things I had control over,” Hannah said.

When Ranch staff continued to be kind and caring, despite her behaviors, Hannah realized it wasn’t so bad, and she started going to therapy.

“I had some testing done and when those results came back, we found out that I was autistic and bipolar,” she said. “I got put on the proper

medications and I think those helped as well as learning new coping skills.”

Every child at the Ranch is assigned a “primary” Residential Treatment Specialist—someone who takes them on one-on-one outings off campus and to whom they can go to when they are struggling. Hannah’s primary, Amanda, is still at the Ranch and was recently promoted to Director of Residential Services.

“Amanda gave me a journal. I would write down things I was

and saying, ‘Hey, this is how I’m feeling. What can I do to improve it?’”

Hannah started requesting to go to therapy more often and learned that talking with her therapist, Sara Vetter, was more beneficial than holding it all inside. She also spent valuable time in the greenhouse, where she could practice the new things she was learning about dealing with her anger.

“Being around plants and trying



Hannah with her supportive family. Back row from left: Gracie, Zachary, and Hannah. Front row from left: DeAnna and Michael (mom and dad).

experiencing, and at the end of the night I’d leave it on my desk,” Hannah said. “She would grab it and write a response, usually giving me some new ideas to try. I slowly started to show improvement.”

“I started to open up about how I was feeling instead of bottling it up and being like a ticking time bomb. I felt comfortable going to Amanda

to get them to grow was a learning curve. I got frustrated and had to learn how to work out that frustration,” Hannah said. “I also went to school at the Ranch and that was a situation too because I wasn’t a big academic person. I started to answer questions and participate.”

“I think the Ranch helped me

appreciate school. I went from being a C and D student to an A and B student. When I came back home, my grades stayed the same and I excelled. I learned how to say, 'Hey, I'm not understanding this. Is there a different way you can teach this to me?'"

The Ranch's Christian foundation led to Hannah reaffirming her faith during a special ceremony.

"We weren't big churchgoers," Hannah said. "But, at the Ranch, I went to church every single week. I memorized the Lord's Prayer, affirmed my faith, and got involved in all sorts of activities that involved the church. I learned that no matter what you do or how you feel, you will be forgiven. Sometimes when I'm having a hard day, I'll just be like, 'Lord, please help me with today.' Even if it's just the simplest prayer in my head, giving Him my problems can relieve my stress a little bit."

Hannah finds herself using many of

the things she learned at the Ranch in her work as a corrections officer, where she helps adults rehabilitate back into society. She said she watched Ranch staff communicate with the kids and learned how to approach topics with the inmates and to be a good listener.



Hannah reflects on her transformative journey from troubled teen to thriving adult.

"My life now is pretty amazing," Hannah said. "Working at the Correction Center is hard, but the experiences I had at the Ranch taught me how to figure out ways to deal with the high stress. I would say that I'm thriving right now. I get along great with my family, I have some really nice friends, and I love my job. I'm very proud of the person I've become and I know my family is very proud."

When asked where she thinks she would be if it weren't for her time at the Ranch, Hannah said, "Honestly, I would have to say that I'd probably be on the other side of a jail cell. I was always told I was going to be the sibling that ended up in jail. Granted, I do go to jail every day, but I'm working and on the opposite side. I never would have been able to do this job without the Ranch."

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.

MONTHLY GIVING MATTERS

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

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

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

It's easy to join. Just visit DakotaRanch.org/HoneycombPartners or call 1-800-344-0957.



An extra-special gift

By Roxanne Henke, Friend of the Ranch

“What do you want for Christmas?” Every year I’d ask my two daughters to make a gift list. Like most middle-class kids, they didn’t lack for much. Though my husband and I didn’t believe in over-indulging our kids, they often had a hard time thinking of things they wanted for Christmas.

Of course, we didn’t let them go empty-handed, there were always several gifts for each of them under our tree, but we also wanted them to be aware that there were other kids who didn’t have the fun, family Christmas’ that we did.

One year I read a story in the Ranch Voice, about a child who grew up with no gifts at Christmas. None at all. I looked at the pile of presents under our tree and tried to imagine what it would be like to have a Christmas with no tree, no gifts? It brought tears to my eyes.

On impulse, I cut that story out of the magazine and tucked it into an envelope, along with a note telling our daughters that we were making a contribution to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch in their honor, to help less fortunate kids have a better Christmas. I wrote their names on the outside of the envelope and tucked it under our tree, and then I sent a check off to the Ranch.

On Christmas Eve, I saved that envelope to be opened last. We were surrounded by our (too many) opened presents, a warm fire crackling in the fireplace, soft Christmas carols playing on the stereo, and twinkling lights on the

tree. I handed the envelope to our daughters, explaining that this was an extra-special gift for them. Our oldest daughter pulled the Ranch story from the envelope and began reading it out loud. Her voice cracked. We were all blinking back tears. In that moment we realized how fortunate we were...not only for the gifts we had, but for the love of family around us, and that we had enough to share with other children who had so much less.

That tradition continued for many years. Our daughters, now grown with families of their own, still say

that gift to the Ranch kids was one of their favorite-ever gifts.

Roxanne Henke, author of the “Coming Home to Brewster” series and a columnist for North Dakota Living Magazine, said she and her husband, Loren, choose to support the Ranch because the stories about the kids tug at their hearts.

“I read these stories in Ranch Voice and think how different their lives could be if they had a strong support system like we do in our family,” Roxanne said. “Not that we are perfect, but a family just makes such a big difference.”



DAKOTA BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH

*Arizona Donor
Appreciation Luncheon*

FRIDAY 14 FEB 2025 AT 12 P.M.

LEISURE WORLD
908 S. Power Rd. | Mesa, AZ 85206

To learn more or to register, call 701-721-2425, or
email l.cole@DakotaRanch.org, by February 7, 2025.

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

Prayers

So many of our children come to us exhausted from just fighting to survive. Often, they've lost all hope. Please pray for strength—strength for our children to face and overcome the circumstances that led them to us. Pray for them to find rest, safety, and the promise of God's abiding love. And pray for our staff. Working with our children is difficult, and Ranch staff also need your prayers for them to be accepting, respectful, kind, and strong as they work with these precious children who sometimes lash out because they are in so much pain.

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 online at DakotaRanch.org or by calling 1-800-344-0957.

Planned and Estate Gifts

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

Tree of Life

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

Celebrations

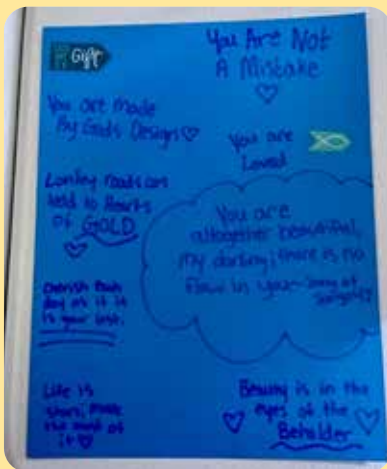
Sharing the message to “Bee Kind!”

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. At the Ranch, we're committed to creating an environment of kindness and encouragement to create a better world for our kids. Everyone has a story, and everyone deserves to be treated with kindness!

While we talk about bullying and being kind to others all year round, we spend the month of October putting a special focus on how we can prevent bullying, what bullying looks like, how it affects the people involved, and how we can be kind to others. On October 9, 2024, National Stop Bullying Day, we held a special celebration across our three campuses.



At our Minot Bee Kind celebration, special guest Dakota Chappy, a local musician and songwriter, highlighted the power of positive words through her engaging songs, stories, and illustrations.



In Spiritual Life Groups, children created “I am ____” posters, filling in the blank with an encouraging word to lift them up during a tough time. Each child's poster is hung where they can see it often, reminding them they are loved and that their lives matter.



Ranch staff proudly wore Bee Kind shirts and stickers to celebrate National Stop Bullying Day!



Dakota Chappy went home with a special quilt signed by Ranch students and staff.



In Fargo, Joy Ryan, Ranch President/CEO, talked about bullying and empathy, and invited staff and students to sign a "Bullying Prevention Contract."



Our Fargo kitchen outdid themselves by creating these special "Bee Kind" cupcakes.



Art students from Dakota Memorial School decorated the windows at our South Fargo Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Thrift Store in honor of Bullying Prevention Month.



Ranch kids created posters to remind everyone to Bee Kind!



Celebrations

Going for gold!

All three Ranch campuses held Ranch Olympics this year. Our kids showed incredible sportsmanship as they participated in relay races, kickball, volleyball tournaments, jumping contests, and more.



Ranch staff had almost as much fun as the kids getting all decked out for a Bismarck-Fargo Olympic competition.



One resident jumped high above the competition.



Ranch residents gave their all for their teams.

Minot Fire Department

Kids in Minot visited the Fire Department where they discovered that a firetruck can carry 500 gallons of water and firefighters can suit up in just 90 seconds!



Field trips combine fun and learning.

S'more summer days

Ranch staff and kids gathered to enjoy the beautiful summer weather with a delightful s'mores party!



Sharing their servant's hearts

A servant team from Messiah Lutheran Church, Lakeville, MN, assisted the Ranch Facilities team with outdoor projects, spent time with our kids, and joined Deaconess Stephanie Wilde and Rev. Rick Jones in Bible Studies and other activities.



Confirmation students from Messiah Lutheran servant team dedicated an afternoon to writing uplifting notes for the kids at the Ranch.

Servant teams provide students with the chance to serve both the Church and the world, while also learning about the Ranch ministry.



Solar ovens

Kids in Bismarck built and tested solar ovens! While it wasn't quite warm enough to make pizzas, they did make some delicious s'mores.



A trip to the past

A group of students and staff traveled to Rollag, MN, for the annual Western Minnesota Steam Threshers Reunion. The "steam meet" showcased hundreds of agricultural, industrial, and pioneer demonstrations and exhibits. Everyone enjoyed seeing, learning about, and even trying out the old machinery!



Minot power companies support new PRTF cottage

We're grateful for our friends at Verendrye Electric, CoBank, and Basin Electric who came together to present the Ranch with a check for the Zurcher Cottage campaign.



Summer fishing adventures

The Wildlife Club has been blessed with fantastic fishing weather this summer and into the fall. Paul, an advisor for the club, shared, “What began with tangled lines and lost lures turned into the thrill of watching kids master open-faced reels and realizing they could actually cast! Just when it seemed it couldn’t get any better, the fish started biting. Shrieks of excitement echoed along the riverbank. For two of our children, it was their very first time catching a fish, and they were overjoyed.”



Fishing teaches kids at the Ranch the power of patience, helps calm their bodies and minds, and instills the importance of never giving up!

On a fishing trip to the Souris River, the kids caught six walleye and two northern pikes! They also enjoyed watching several busy muskrats swimming nearby.

Minot kids go to camp!

Kids in Minot had a blast at Y Camp! Jennifer, a residential treatment specialist, said, “Seeing the kids overcome fears on the tower, riding horses, and the pond swing rope was so awesome! One youth kept saying, ‘I’m so proud of myself’ after coming down from the tower. The smiles, laughter, and joy on their faces were priceless.”



“The kids really enjoy riding. Even youth who are nervous are happy they rode!” – Residential Treatment Specialist



Many kids and staff faced their fears head-on by climbing the tower!

Our kids cherish the moments spent bonding with their four-legged friends!

Vacation Bible School

At the end of each summer, kids at the Ranch join in Vacation Bible School. Each day, residents learn a new lesson about how different superheroes relate to the needs we see fulfilled in Christ. The week is packed with fun activities, crafts, games, and challenges!



Kids discussed “the struggle within” and engaged in “breath painting,” where they painted an upstroke while inhaling and a downstroke while exhaling. Deaconess Kelly noted, “It is very calming and can be a great coping skill!” Many residents painted waves or mountains, transforming them into beautiful landscapes.



Kids explored the concept of Redemption through an art activity called “trash to treasure,” transforming discarded art supplies into beautiful new creations.



Kids teamed up to play minute-to-win-it games and learned that Jesus is our Hero.

Thrifty Halloween preparations

Student council members brought the fall and Halloween spirit to our Minot Thrift Store by painting the windows with beautiful designs.



Christmas at the Ranch 2023

Books, books, books

Dakota Memorial School received some amazing books from the Christmas Book Drive at Barnes & Noble, Minot, ND. Library Media Specialist, Carla Luehe, said, "We appreciate the kindness and generosity of the community. There were 216 books purchased and gifted to us! We are excited to add so many new books to our library, and we will also be able to gift books to our students and residents!"



Reading is a favorite pastime for many kids at the Ranch, so community projects like this are extra appreciated!

Gifts for all

Christmas is a special time at the Ranch, and we try to make it a positive and lasting memory for our kids. Kids in Fargo had a Christmas celebration filled with singing, hot chocolate, sweet treats, and gifts picked out just for them, thanks to our amazing Ranch Friends.



Ranch residents took turns opening gifts and celebrated each special item with their peers.

Christmas Giving Tree

Cornerstone Presbyterian Church, Minot, ND, hosted a Giving Tree to purchase gifts for Day Program students at Dakota Memorial School.



Fargo Christmas Shop

The Fargo Culture Club set up a Christmas store for kids to “shop” for gifts for their family members. Items were donated by Ranch staff or purchased using donated gift cards. Children were able to choose a gift for each of their family members, and Ranch staff were on hand to help wrap their gifts.



Items for the kids to choose from included hats, gloves, quilts, toys, candy, jewelry, books, body wash, and so much more!



Ranch staff had almost as much fun as the kids wrapping these special Christmas presents.

Sharing the joy of Christmas

Residents packed shoeboxes with toys, hygiene items, and other goodies for Operation Christmas Child. The kids packed 71 boxes to share with children who otherwise wouldn't be receiving a Christmas gift. Rev. Rick Jones, Chaplain, said, “The extent of empathy and compassion this event brings out in our youth is humbling and inspiring.”



In addition to items donated by Ranch staff, kids shopped for special items to include in the shoeboxes.

MAFB gifts

Jaden Johnson, Security at Minot Air Force Base, shared a little Christmas joy by dropping off a bundle of Christmas presents for our kids.



Packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child is an annual tradition at the Ranch.

Creating holiday memories

We held our annual tree lighting ceremony before heading up to the dining room for the Christmas Banquet. The 2023 banquet included a delicious meal, fun games, and special visit from Santa!



These holiday traditions give kids at the Ranch happy holiday memories.

Sweet treat construction

Kids at Dakota Memorial School had a gingerbread house contest! The dining center was filled with laughter and smiles as kids constructed and decorated their sweet homes.



Many of the kids enjoyed snacking on the sweet decorations as they built their gingerbread houses.

The reason for the season

Kids and staff in Minot attended “The Reason,” a Christmas tour that featured a mixture of music, prayer, and outreach to celebrate Christmas and spread the Gospel in North Dakota.



Dedicating Hope Chapel

On Friday, August 16, 2024, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch celebrated the completion of Hope Chapel, a dedicated space for children on the Ranch's Bismarck campus to receive emotional and spiritual care. Over 140 donors, board members, staff, and children attended the dedication service, led by Chaplain Rick Jones, the Ranch's Vice President of Spiritual Life. Special blessings were given by LCMS District President, Rev. Arie Bertsch, and other clergy.

The Ranch broke ground on Hope Chapel on August 24, 2023, after completing a three-year fundraising campaign in just 13 months. Thanks to generous donors, the chapel was completed debt-free, ensuring that ongoing support from Ranch donors underwrites services for kids.

Hope Chapel is a healing space where children and staff at the Ranch can pray, find peace, and learn of God's unconditional love.



Stacy Askvig (third from right) with her family at the dedication of Hope Chapel.



Ranch friends traveled from near and far to attend the dedication of Hope Chapel.



Chaplain Rick Jones led the dedication service, and was joined by several other clergy of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

The focal point of the new chapel is the 15.5-foot-high, "Heaven's Steps," stained glass designed, created, and donated by artist and Ranch friend, Stacy Askvig.



Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch receives Fred E. Lietz Mission Project award

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) presented its prestigious Annual Awards at the 2024 LCEF Annual Meeting, held in November. The awards honor individuals and ministries within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) who exemplify outstanding dedication, service, and leadership in sharing the Gospel and expanding ministry efforts.

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch received the Fred E. Lietz Mission Project Award for its Christ-centered work serving children and their families through residential treatment, outpatient services, and education. The press release sent by LCEF after the event read, “Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch provides trauma-informed care, psychiatric therapy, and a robust spiritual life program, helping children recognize their value as gifts from God. Through its personalized approach, the Ranch transforms young lives, enabling them to overcome adversity and realize their full potential.”

“The exceptional people who work at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch pour their skills, talents, and



Joy Ryan, President/CEO, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, accepts the Fred E. Lietz Mission Project Award from Joe Russo (left), Chief Growth Officer, Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF), and Rev. Bart Day (right), President/CEO, LCEF.

hearts into the healing of the young trauma survivors we serve,” said Ranch CEO/President Joy Ryan. “This is an exceptional honor. We are grateful and I think each and every

Rancher should be exceedingly proud. These folks work each day to make the world a better place, and their efforts deserve to be applauded and celebrated!”

The shield of indifference



By Becca McCarty, LMSW, Minot Therapy Lead, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

When I first met Audra*, she showed very little emotion, self-isolated from her classmates and other residents, and was slow to engage in therapy. Her emotional detachment and indifference, often called “The Shield of Indifference” by behavioral and mental health experts, are common defense mechanisms for children who have endured trauma.

Understanding the “Shield of Indifference”

The Shield of Indifference originates from trauma. Trauma can lead to overwhelming emotions that feel unmanageable. To protect themselves, children might adopt indifference as a coping mechanism. By putting on a shield of indifference, children numb their feelings to avoid the pain of potential hurt, rejection, or disappointment.

This defense can affect relationships, making it difficult for children to connect with others. They often seem distant or apathetic and struggle to express vulnerability. They might disengage

in conversations, lack enthusiasm, or avoid new experiences, which can reinforce their isolation and hinder their personal growth.

The more children rely on this shield, the more entrenched it becomes, making it more and more difficult for them to connect with others, heal, and experience joy. This creates a self-perpetuating cycle of emotional distance from family, classmates, and others.

Breaking down the shield

When a child is in treatment at the Ranch, our therapists start by helping them recognize the presence of indifference and understand that it stems from past experiences. Acknowledging their feelings, or lack of feelings, as valid is the first step in helping them break down the shield that prevents them from engaging with the world and people around them.

As we build a relationship with a child, we create a safe place for them to express their feelings without judgement. Therapy techniques like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) or trauma-informed care can be particularly effective in helping children process their trauma and gradually dismantle the shield of indifference.

Encouraging a child to take small steps towards vulnerability can help. Sharing their thoughts or feelings in a low-stakes situation (like in a therapy session) can

foster connection and reduce the fear associated with emotional vulnerability. Once kids practice vulnerability in therapy, we help them find ways to practice it in school, with their peers, and with their families. We also help children learn to recognize and articulate their emotions. This can empower them to move beyond indifference and to engage more fully with their experiences.

Once Audra and I developed a therapeutic relationship, she was able to practice being vulnerable and learn healthy coping skills. As she learned and practiced these skills, she started to use them more and more outside of therapy—leading to more positive relationships with her peers and more engagement with her family. Eventually, Audra successfully completed treatment at the Ranch and went back home with her family.

Time and patience

The Shield of Indifference is a complex but understandable response to trauma. By fostering awareness, support, and healing, we help children lower their shields and engage more fully with themselves and the world around them. It’s a journey that takes time and patience, but it can lead to deeper connections and a more fulfilling life.

New legs on rickety stools



Ora and Henry Meyer

“I’ve been having conversations with God since I was six or seven years old. Regardless of what was going on in my life, I had almost daily conversations. I was so rebellious, yet God was never far from me.”

—Ora Henry

Ora and Henry Meyer, Coeur d’Alene, ID, both grew up in North Dakota, so they’ve always known about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. It wasn’t until they received a mailer in the late 70s or early 80s that they started regularly donating.

“When I saw the letter was from Larry Knutson [long-time Ranch President], I just knew I had to support the Ranch,” Ora said. “He was such a help to me in my life.”

Ora came from a large and chaotic family—she was one of 14 children, her mom had untreated paranoid schizophrenia, and her parents fought constantly.

Her tumultuous home life took its toll and when she was 12, she went to live at Villa Nazareth, a children’s home in Fargo, ND. From there she moved to Grand Forks, ND, to live with a foster family and was assigned to a counselor, who happened to be Larry Knutson.

“I was still pretty troubled,” she said. “I remember Larry as a very

nice, dedicated man. A lot of people helped me along the way, but he was one that stood out. I never forgot him,” she said.

Ora likes to use the analogy of a three-legged stool to describe how Larry helped her, and how the Ranch helps kids today.

“I was on this really rickety stool,” Ora said. “Larry helped me balance the stool. He gave me techniques to stop and take control of the moment so I could balance. And then other people built on top of that and pretty soon, I had brand new legs under that stool.”

Through her support, Ora is helping “put new legs on the rickety stools” of the children who come to the Ranch for care and treatment.

“I had so many people pushing me along the way and believing in me,” Ora said. “I got to the point where I started believing in myself—that I could do things and accomplish things and be a better person. I saw a different way of life that I enjoyed more than partying.”

Henry had his own story. His mother died in childbirth, and he was raised on a farm near Mount Carmel, ND, by his aunt and uncle, who he calls Mom and Dad.

Ora and Henry can relate to the struggles of the children at the Ranch. They both had people in their lives who believed in them and made them feel valuable and important and want children

at the Ranch to have the same positive reinforcements they had. They also appreciate the Ranch's Christ-centered focus.

While they both grew up in North Dakota, they met and fell in love on the west coast. Henry was settled into a job in Seattle, WA, when Ora moved there to live with her sister. They met through a mutual friend and Ora said as soon as she saw him, a little voice in her head said, "That is the man you're going to marry."

They married several months later and lived in Seattle for five years before moving back to Henry's family farm.

"We had a good life there," Ora said. "It was a good experience for our kids to grow up on the farm. We don't regret that, but the pay wasn't very good."

Eleven years later, Henry's dad's health started failing and he didn't want to sell them the farm.

"He said it was too tough and it would be too hard for us to make it," Ora said. "He wanted a different life for us, so we decided it was time to make some future life plans."

Henry called the foreman he'd worked for in Seattle and asked if he had any openings. He didn't, but said he'd call as soon as he had something. Two weeks later, Henry had his old job back and they were hustling to tie things up at the farm for the move back to Seattle.

In Seattle, Ora had a few

part-time bookkeeping jobs before landing at Smith Tractor Equipment as bookkeeper and office manager.

"In high school, working was an escape. No matter where I worked, I tried to do my best. At Smith I kept moving up and the next thing you know, I was promoted to Purchase Manager for construction equipment, the first woman in the nation to hold that position at the dealership level," Ora said. "I didn't graduate from high school, but I took the additional classes I needed to be more successful at work."

After seven years at Smith, Ora went to Boeing where she traveled to various U.S. and international locations as a Supply Chain Subject Matter Expert until her retirement in 2017.

In retirement, Ora and Henry moved to Coeur d'Alene, where they are just 30 minutes away from two of their children, and six of their grandchildren. Another son lives five hours away and their other daughter lives with her family in South Carolina.

For fun, they spend time by the lake, get together with family, attend community events, and socialize with friends and members of their church.

"It's important to me that the Ranch is faith-based, because without faith you don't have hope," Ora said.

Zurcher Cottage Campaign

Ora and Henry recently made a gift to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Zurcher Cottage campaign. Zurcher Cottage will replace the 50-year-old cottages that provide shelter for the children with the highest needs on the Ranch's Minot campus.

The new cottage will provide a safe, comfortable healing and living space for up to 16 children. As of November 18, 2024, supporters of the Ranch have donated \$7,547,225 towards the \$8.5 million goal.

If you are interested in joining Ora and Henry, and hundreds of others across the country who care deeply about children at the Ranch, let us know.

Call 1-800-344-0957 to be connected with someone from our Mission Advancement Team.

A spirit of generosity and compassion



Cliff and
Marilyn Kraft

Cliff and Marilyn Kraft have lived their entire lives with their faces turned towards Christ and their hands and feet working for Him.

The Ranch mission captured Cliff and Marilyn's hearts when they learned about the ministry through a speaker at their church, and for 28 years the Ranch has been a grateful recipient of their

commitment to Christ's work on earth.

"The Ranch is a Christian organization, which is important to us. The Lord has blessed us and it's a good way for us to give back," Cliff said.

Their early years

Marilyn grew up in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, where her parents were active members of the church. Marilyn's dad was a painter who specialized in painting things high off the ground.

"My dad's claim to fame was painting three Budweiser silos," Marilyn said. "On the center silo, he painted a bottle that was 70 feet high, and the other two were 40-foot-high beer cans. He had to come from the roof of the silos and use a swing stage to get down, but he wasn't afraid. He painted church steeples and all sorts of things. My mother was a great homemaker, and she worked for my

dad as well."

"I had a very good childhood," Marilyn said. "I was never hungry. I never felt poor. I just felt very loved."

Cliff was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, where his parents took him to church and Sunday School and enrolled him in a parochial school.

After high school, Cliff attended Ohio State University where he graduated with a degree in horticulture. He started his career working for a horticulture company in Chicago. He said it was during his first year with the company that Marilyn "appeared on the scene." He and the owner of the company were flying to Missouri. The owner had his own plane, but he couldn't remember the name of the hotel where they were staying. Cliff's secretary told him she had a Triple A directory and would find it.

"I went to her apartment that night so she could look it up and when I walked in, I saw a picture of two girls," Cliff said. "I said, 'Who are the girls?' She told me they were her nieces and when I asked about one of them and she told me she was single, I said, 'Well, how about fixing me up?'"

At the time, Marilyn, the lovely young woman in the picture, was teaching school in Wisconsin. When she visited for the weekend a couple weeks later, her aunt Lorraine invited Cliff to lunch to meet her.

"We scheduled a date for that night, and I was to pick her up at Aunt Lorraine's second floor apartment,"

Cliff said. “I got there a bit late and when I opened the bottom door and looked up the steps, Marilyn was standing there. She says, ‘You’re late. I’m not going to go out with you.’ Then she left laughing!”

Fortunately, Marilyn came back out, they went on the date and were married six months later.

Discovering philanthropy

When asked if his parents instilled in him a spirit of giving, Cliff said, “I knew they gave to the church and they talked about how you always help people. They were very ethical and true to God, but those things weren’t discussed back then.”

Cliff said he didn’t think much about philanthropy until he and Marilyn moved to Dallas shortly after they were married.

“On our first Sunday in church we ran into a couple, Gus and Bernice Melde,” Cliff said, “and we became very good friends. We adopted two of our children when we lived in Dallas and Gus and Bernice were right there helping us raise our children.”

“Gus was one of the best role models in my life,” he said. “The way he did things was built around honesty, truth, and Christian ethics. He was very involved in church and the Lutheran Hour Ministries, so I got involved with that also.”

After eight years in Dallas, Cliff and Marilyn moved to West Chicago, IL, where Cliff managed a subsidiary office of the Pan American Seed Company. From there they moved to Pennsylvania, where they continue

to live today. They adopted their third child and became involved in their church. Cliff held about every volunteer position available—council president, Sunday School teacher and superintendent, Bible Study teacher, and member of the LCMS Eastern District Board of Directors.

He took the lessons he learned from Gus to heart and carried them into his work, especially after starting his own business, Kraft Associates, ODA Inc., that provided management and organizational consulting for small to medium-sized businesses.

“It was a continual learning process,” Cliff said. “I met a lot of different people, and a number of my clients were going off the track. There were times I sat down with them and told them they had to get themselves squared away. Not necessarily in those words, but asking them, ‘Where are you with God?’ Everything I learned from the Bible is basically about helping people. So that’s what I did.”

Cliff recalls one potential client who came into his office and said, “Hey, I need you.”

“After we sat down, I asked him to tell me about himself and his company. After listening to him, I said, ‘You need to make some changes. If you aren’t going to be honest with your employees and in what you’re doing, we can’t work together.’ He told me he had to think about it and that was that. It was a fairly large corporation, but I wasn’t willing to do away with my values, principles, and ethics.”

When Cliff “retired” 22 years ago, he became involved with Orphan Grain Train, and until very recently, managed the Mid-Atlantic branch of the Orphan Grain Train family.

“We shipped all around the world and that was very gratifying,” he said. “I retired from that in January, so now I’m retired for real. We live in an adult community which is outstanding, one of the best things we’ve done. They have all types of entertainment, gardening, and whatever you want to do. And the food is excellent. We’ve been blessed.”

Marilyn agrees, and says their lives have allowed them to support ministries they believe in.

A good life

“We’ve had a good life, and the Lord has blessed us with good kids and all the things we could possibly want or need,” Marilyn said.

While Marilyn said Cliff is the impetus behind their support for the Ranch, she is a willing and interested participant.

“The Ranch is a special place,” she said. “There are so many hurting kids these days that need help. The fact that you can help them is a real blessing for them and for their families as well.”

Cliff and Marilyn Kraft live with a spirit of generosity and compassion. Now in their 90s, they continue to support a host of ministries dear to their hearts. Through their significant contributions to the Ranch and other causes, they are changing lives.

Celebrating and thanking you!



By Dennis Aune
Senior
Development
Officer

*Thank you, thank you, 1,000 times
thank you to Dakota Boys and Girls
Ranch donors who've made 2024 a year
to celebrate!*

In 2022, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch embarked upon an ambitious goal of kicking off two capital campaigns simultaneously, to raise funds for the Western Plains Bismarck Chapel and Zurcher Cottage, a new residential treatment center on our Minot campus.

We celebrate the Bismarck Chapel – A place of hope and healing

When the Ranch's Bismarck campus was built in 2003, board and agency leaders expected it to house residents who would participate in faith communities outside of our campus. As programming evolved to meet the needs of children who had experienced significant trauma, it became clear that our young people needed to remain on campus for spiritual life programming. For 21 years, chapel and spiritual life groups were conducted in a conference room or a classroom.

Our goal was to raise \$2.4 million for the chapel in three years, but thanks to the overwhelming support of donors like you, we accomplished our goal in just 13 months. Our

donors recognized the importance of having a dedicated space for hope and healing for our children.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the chapel was held on Aug. 24, 2023, and just one year later, Aug. 16, 2024, residents, donors, friends, members of the clergy, board members, and staff participated in the chapel dedication service for Hope Chapel.

Hope Chapel is a permanent space where they can pray, both individually and together, participate in chapel services and Bible study, and be baptized. We are so grateful to you for giving our young people a place to meet, sometimes for the first time in their lives, their loving Heavenly Father.

We celebrate Zurcher Cottage – A new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility

*"I've always had a passion for the
welfare of children and young people.
No child should ever be abused.
Everything belongs to God, and the gift
to Zurcher Cottage just goes through
me."*

—Zurcher Cottage campaign donor

The Zurcher Cottage Campaign began with leadership gifts from Carol Townsend in honor of her parents, Elmer and Connie Zurcher, and her brother, Earl, and from the Julia Burke Foundation in memory of Julia. The 50-year-old cottages that house our young people on the Minot campus were not built for the children we serve today, children

who need the Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) level of care.

The new 16,100 sq. ft. psychiatric residential treatment facility will provide best-in-class care and treatment for some of our youngest residents, most between the ages of 10 and 14. The facility will give our children a safe place to live, to receive psychiatric and nursing care, and to participate in wellness activities.

We are thankful to the many donors who helped us reach 89% of our new goal of \$8.5 million (increased earlier this year due to increased construction costs), and are confident with God's love, and your continuing prayers and support, we'll complete the campaign as initially projected by the end of 2025.

To mitigate further rising construction costs, we broke ground on Zurcher Cottage in September 2024. We are committed to incurring no debt, ensuring that ongoing support from Ranch donors underwrites services for kids rather than being used to pay down debt, so we will only construct what we have funding available for.

We celebrate the goodness of your hearts and generous spirit in caring for our children.

*"Commit your work to the Lord, and
your plans will be established."*

—Proverbs 16:3

Your prayers for our kids are a source of healing and hope. If you have any questions about the Ranch, contact Dennis Aune, or any Mission Advancement team member, at 1-800-344-0957 or info@dakotaranch.org. We would love to visit with you about how you can support our mission of helping at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.



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Zurcher Cottage Update

Breaking ground on a new psychiatric facility

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch board members, representatives from the Minot Area Chamber EDC, the Ranch's executive leadership team, generous donors, and several of our kids gathered to celebrate this significant milestone and broke ground for the construction of Zurcher Cottage.

On September 5, 2024, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch held a groundbreaking for Zurcher Cottage, a new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility in Minot. Zurcher Cottage will be a place of care for the youngest and highest-needs boys and girls served at the Ranch. The event was attended by Ranch board members and staff, members of the Minot Area Chamber EDC, and Ranch friends, including lead donor, Carol Townsend, and her Goddaughter, Pam Bethke.



Zurcher Cottage is named in memory of Carol's parents, Elmer and Connie Zurcher, and her brother, Earl. Elmer was on the board and executive committee of the Ranch Board of Directors for decades.

Thanks to a \$250,000 matching grant from the Rupert Dunklau Foundation, several donors were inspired to make their largest gifts to date.

When told about the matching funds from the Dunklau Foundation, two special donors, Dick and Myrna, were encouraged by the match and promised to pray about it. They ended up making their largest gift to date to the Zurcher Cottage campaign, excited that it would be

doubled by the matching funds.

Maryllis, another loyal Ranch friend, was particularly inspired by the "dollar for dollar" matching funds from Dunklau to truly maximize her giving. She liked the idea of her gift being doubled, but also working alongside other donors to reach the \$250,000 goal. Maryllis contributed three substantial gifts to the campaign, including her largest ever donation to the Ranch, all of which were matched by the Dunklau Foundation.

Darwin and Mary, after hearing about the urgent need for a new cottage and the matching funds, made a commitment to dig deep and gave their largest gift by far to the Ranch. They felt inspired by the matched funds saying, "We would never have been able to gift that amount on our own, but we feel really good about being part of making it possible."



"The more we invest in these kids, as we are with this facility, the more we're affecting how they return to their families, how they do academically, how they do in their career, and how they raise their own children." — Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist/Medical Director, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Foundation and Corporate Gifts

Verendrye Electric, Basin Electric, and CoBank;

\$7,500; Zurcher Cottage

Oregon District LWML;

\$5,000; Minot Gym Floor

New Jersey District LWML;

\$1,150; Minot Gym Floor

Sam's Club Bismarck #4933;

\$1,000; Noise-canceling earplugs

Otter Tail Corporation Foundation;

\$4,000; Recessed Sprinklers

North Dakota Community Foundation;

\$5,000; Bismarck Fobs

Southern Illinois District LWML;

\$4,000; Minot Gym Floor

Walmart Supercenter Minot #1636;

\$1,500; Dakota Family Services Mental Health Library



Apply today to work at a Ranch treatment center or thrift store. Make a lasting impact on **AMAZING KIDS.**



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Consider Directing 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. Please consider directing your Choice Dollars® to **Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch**. The Ranch uses all Thrivent Choice® funds for our Spiritual Life Program—to teach Christian values to children who are struggling. These values aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them be successful in treatment and in life. You can make a difference in a child's life by helping us provide for the spiritual needs of our precious children!

Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice, login, and choose **Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch**. To direct Choice Dollars® over the phone, call 1-800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

Memorials/Honorariums

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

Memorials

July 1 - October 31, 2024

ALBERS, ART

LaDonna Rossow

ALBERS, HANK

LaDonna Rossow

ALBERS, ROSE

LaDonna Rossow

ALFSON, KENNY

Shelia Gerry

ALMQUIST, GORDON

Lloyd & Susan Bethke

AMANN, BLAINE "BEN"

Barbara Pingel

ANDERSON, ARLIN

Merle Heidenreich

ANDERSON, ORVETTA

Gayl Gregory

AUSTIN, WILLIAM "BILL"

Linda Thomas

AVERY, AMANDA

Mark Avery

BARKIE, DAREN "CHEWY"

Armand & Judy Barbot

BARTON, DONNA

Kelly & Sharron Brady

BAUER, ROBERT

Jeff Givens

BAUER, SHIRLEY

Rev. Erhart & Anita Bauer

Mildred Bueligen

Evelyn Schwagler

BEERMAN, DANIEL

Linda Beerman

BEETZ, DORIS

Jean Gonzales

BERG, SHIRLEY

Arlys Torgerson

BIERMANN, GLADYS

Dennis Jay Mitchell

BISCHOFF, GAIL

Lorn Wolsky

BLATHERWICK, BRUCE

Connie Blatherwick

BOETTNER, RUSSELL

Marlys Boettner

BREWARD, JOHN C.

Gloria Breward

BRITSCH, JIM

John Otten

Karen Wall

BROWN, ERIKA ELEONORE

ENGELHARDT NIEMI

Walter Baumann

BRUENJES, REV. IRVIN

Kevin & Penny Hoesel

Kerry Horton

Burnette Kunz

Penny Kunz

Evelyn Schwagler

BRUNMEIER, LAVERN

Lorina Zuern

BRUTLAG, MARLIN

Anita L. Petersen

BUCKMAN, LESTER & CONNIE

Austin & Sarah Buckman

BURTMAN, JAMES

Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

CALLIOTT, EDWARD

Linda J. Calliott

CAROW, HARLAN

Mrs. Richard Carow

CEDERBERG, MARK

Clayton & Zona Pearson

COAUETTE, RODGER

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Michael & Stacey Smith

CORNELSEN, DAVID

Eileen Cornelsen

CROSBIE, ALMA

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DARLING, HARRY

Donald & Carolyn Feldman

DENDY, KAREN

Lewis H. Dendy

DESMOND, ROBERT

Susan Mysliwicz

DESTEFANO, MARY GRACE

Debi Yeager

EASTMAN, PATRICK

Evette G. Eastman

EBELTOFT, ERIC

Jim & Judy Mittelstadt

ELLINGSON, RAYMOND

Mrs. Richard Carow

Violet Podenski

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Dianne DeJean

FATLAND, SYLVIA & JAN

Dean Fatland

FERWERDA, AVIS

Bill & Joan Ferguson

FIDDLER, NADINE

Joy Ryan

FISCHER, JIM

Chris Hansen

FISCHER, JULIA

Violet Podenski

FLOWERS, CHELSEY

Colleen Hall

FONSECA, JUAREZ FIDEL

Diane Bronniche

FRANKLIN, CATHERINE

Violet Podenski

FRINK, VIRGIL

Curtis Wittmayer

FUNKE, LAURA

Sharon Grondahl

Brenda Simkins

GIETZEN, JANICE

Robert & Judith Rice

GIGLIO, JAMES

Joseph Giglio

GOVEN, DARLENE

Orvin & Delores Ravnaas

HALVORSON, EVELYN ROSE

Denise Banks

HARRELL, SADIE & LORETTA

David Packett

HASBY, GLENN

Delores Soiseth

HASS, LOUIS A.

LuErna Sawyer

HAUGEN, MERVIN

Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

HAYER, HARRY

June Hayer

HEINTZ, ROBERTA

Marilyn Heintz

HELLMERS, BARBARA

Rev. Dwight & Cathy Hellmers

HESTERMANN, BUD & BETTY

Steven & Beverly Long

HINTZ, ELDON

Kevin & Penny Hoesel

HO, DR. STEVEN

Jasper Lai

HOBERG, GORDON

Chris Hansen

HOFF, DON

Elaine Hoff

HOLEN, MARLENE

Susan Bethke

Rosella Debele

Sharon Grondahl

HOLLMAN, WILLIS

Lorna Hollman

HORSAGER, SANDRA

Violet Podenski

HYNEK, JACOB

Carolyn Feldman

IN LOVING MEMORY OF DAVID'S

91ST BIRTHDAY, AUGUST 28TH

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JAEGER, TINA

Charles & Helen Foss-Bohm

JOHNSON, DEL RAY

Eileen Morrison

KAPP, MARSHA

Merle Heidenreich

KIEFER, NANCY

Lynda Neuman

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LANGE, ELLEN

Irene Heid

LARSON, GERALD

Aryls Torgerson

LARSON, HERZELL & MARGARET

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Gary Horton

LECHNER, PATRICIA

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Richard Gust

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Curtis & Elaine Bening

MARTENS, FRANKLIN

Donald & Carolyn Feldman

MARTINEZ, JOSEPH

Vincent Seitz & Family

MATHWICH, GARY

Linda Hill

MATTHEIS, LEONA

Marlene Buehner

MC ELWAIN, DORIS

Merle & Marcy Suntken

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Howard Clark

MELBY, ELAINE

Doug Burgum

Richard & Marlys Strege

Rosemary Thomas

MICKELSEN, MAX

Elizabeth Ravenscroft

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Richard & Cindy Aaser

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Marilyn Frank

MITCHELL, DENNIS JAY

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Barbara Rude

Aryls Torgerson

MOELLER, RUTH P.

Barbara Pingel

MOHL, IRENE

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Dolores Simdorn

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James & Ruth Lehfeltdt

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Barbara Pingel

PIERCE, ELYZABETH

Marisa Knudson

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Eugene Heckendorf

RIES, LA RAY

Bruce & Pam Smith

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Jim & Judy Mittelstadt

ROSTAD, ROBERT

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RYAN, MARY ANN

Anonymous

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Margaret Schatkin

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Carole Schmidt

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Carole Schmidt

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SCHULTZ, KATHLEEN

Marilyn Frank

SCHULZ, EVA

Dennis & Claudia Schulz

SCHULZ, LOREN

Mrs. Richard Carow

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Glenn & Melissa Grommesh

Roswell & Mary Henke

Duane & Rose Hovland

Mark & Tracie Prigge

Douglas & Kathlyn Rath

Todd Vollmers

SCHWARTZ, JOAN K.

Barbara Pingel

SCHWARTZ, MARLOW

Phyllis Harste

SHERECK, DARREL

Cynthia Shereck

SHARKEY, DONNA

Duane & Shirley Larson

SITZER, BRENT

Lou & Myrna Mitchell

SMITH, JAMES C.

Kirk & Linda Maize

SMITH, LARRY

Carol Schmidt

SONNENBERG, RUBY

John & Patricia Sebastian

STROH, MINNIE

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Patricia Szewczak



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 David & Gloria Lee
 Jay & Joy Ryan
 VOGELER, HILDA
 Dolores Simdorn
 VOORHEES, WEBB & JOYCE
 Rev. Jack L. & Joneen Richards
 VOSS, LOIS
 Raymond Thieme

WAGNER, LARRY
 Bill & Joan Ferguson
 WALSTAD, DONALD "PEPPER"
 Bob & Arlene Peterson
 WEGNER, HAYLYN ELLA
 Evelyn Kluender
 WEIGAND, DANNY
 Derek Weigand
 WILLIAMS, CONNIE
 Mary Meyer
 WILSMAN, MARILYN
 Robert & Florence Natzke
 ZURCHER, ELMER & CONNIE
 Carol Townsend

Honorariums

July 1 2024 - - October 31, 2024

BEAU ORSON
 Beau Orson
 CAROLE ANN GUTZMANN'S
 90TH BIRTHDAY
 LaMae Pettit
 CASIMER "CASEY" SZEWCZAK, III
 Patricia Szewczak

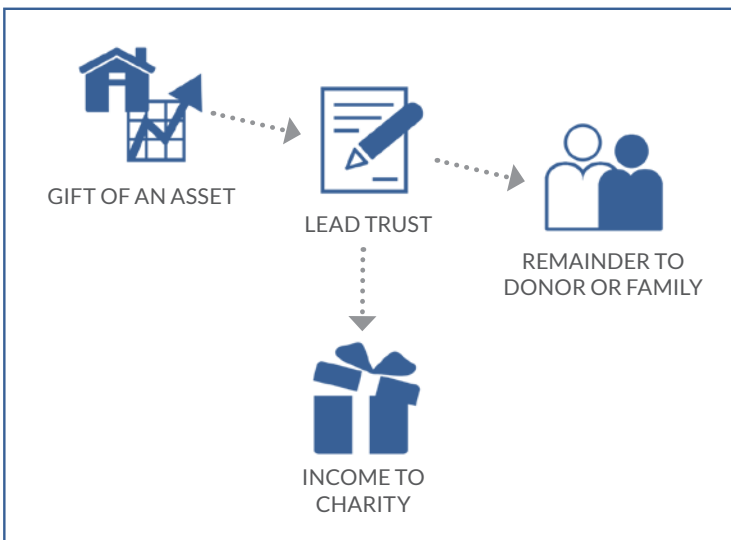
CECILIA PODCZERWINSKI
 Janet Podczerwinski
 CLYDE & CHERYL FENSTER
 FAMILY
 Clyde & Cheryl Fenster
 DOROTHY ROMEO
 Bob James
 DOROTHY BAUER
 Debra Chang
 GOD ALMIGHTY
 Ayodele Owoyele
 JOHN HOBLIN
 Mark & Jane Solseng
 JOY RYAN
 Kole & Quin Seiler
 LOGAN CAMANN
 Christina Marean
 MARK STINSON'S BIRTHDAY
 David & Carolyn Duda
 NORM RICKY
 Robert Russo
 REV. DR. PAUL A. KRUEGER
 Mr. Paul League
 WAYNE VANNETT
 Douglas Kesler



Charitable Lead Trust

How Does a Charitable Lead Trust Work?

- You transfer cash or income-producing assets to the trust.
- The trust will pay income to the Ranch based on the number of years you select.
- At the end of the trust's term, the balance of the trust's principal plus any appreciation will be transferred to your family.



Other Ways You Can Use a Charitable Lead Trust

- **Testamentary**—Some people prefer to fund the trust through their estate plans at their passing. Doing so will provide your estate with a charitable estate tax deduction.
- **Underage or Spendthrift Heirs**—If you have heirs who have not displayed the ability to appropriately manage their finances or who are underage, a charitable lead trust is a way to delay their inheritance to a future point in time.

Would you like to support the work of the causes that matter most to you while also ensuring that your children are well provided for after you are gone? Consider using a charitable lead trust (CLT) to achieve your personal, family and philanthropic goals.

How Can a Charitable Lead Trust Benefit You?

Creating a charitable lead trust can benefit you and your family in numerous ways:

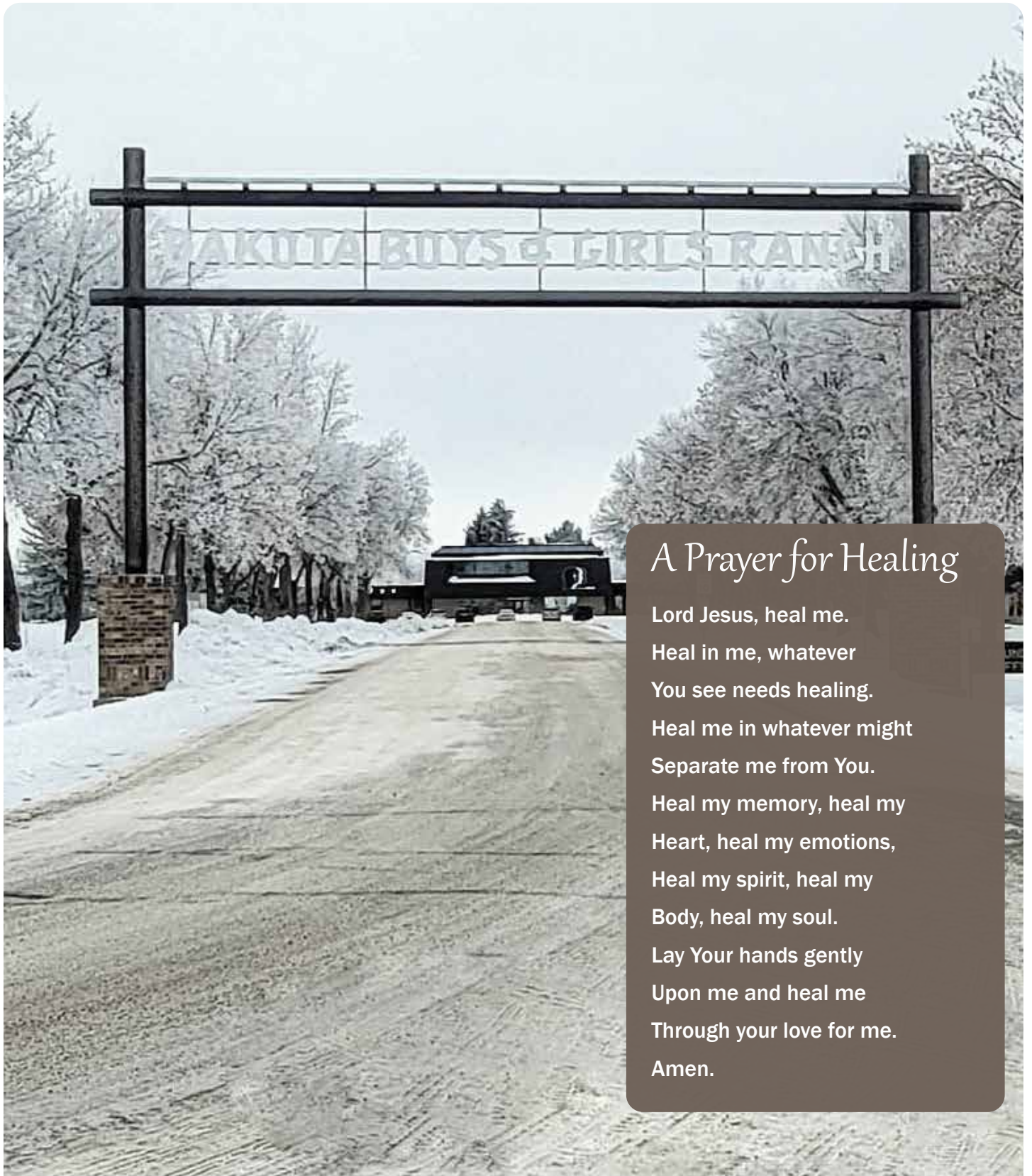
- The trust will enable you to make annual gifts to the Ranch for a number of years.
- The remaining trust assets, plus any growth, will pass to your children with little or no gift or estate taxes.
- Transferring assets to the trust can reduce the value of your taxable estate.
- By transferring income-producing assets to the trust, you can reduce your taxable income.

What Assets Can Be Used to Fund the Trust?

The best assets are those with the potential for appreciation. Any growth in the trust assets will be passed on to your children with little or no gift tax.

To learn more, contact
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at
1-800-344-0957.





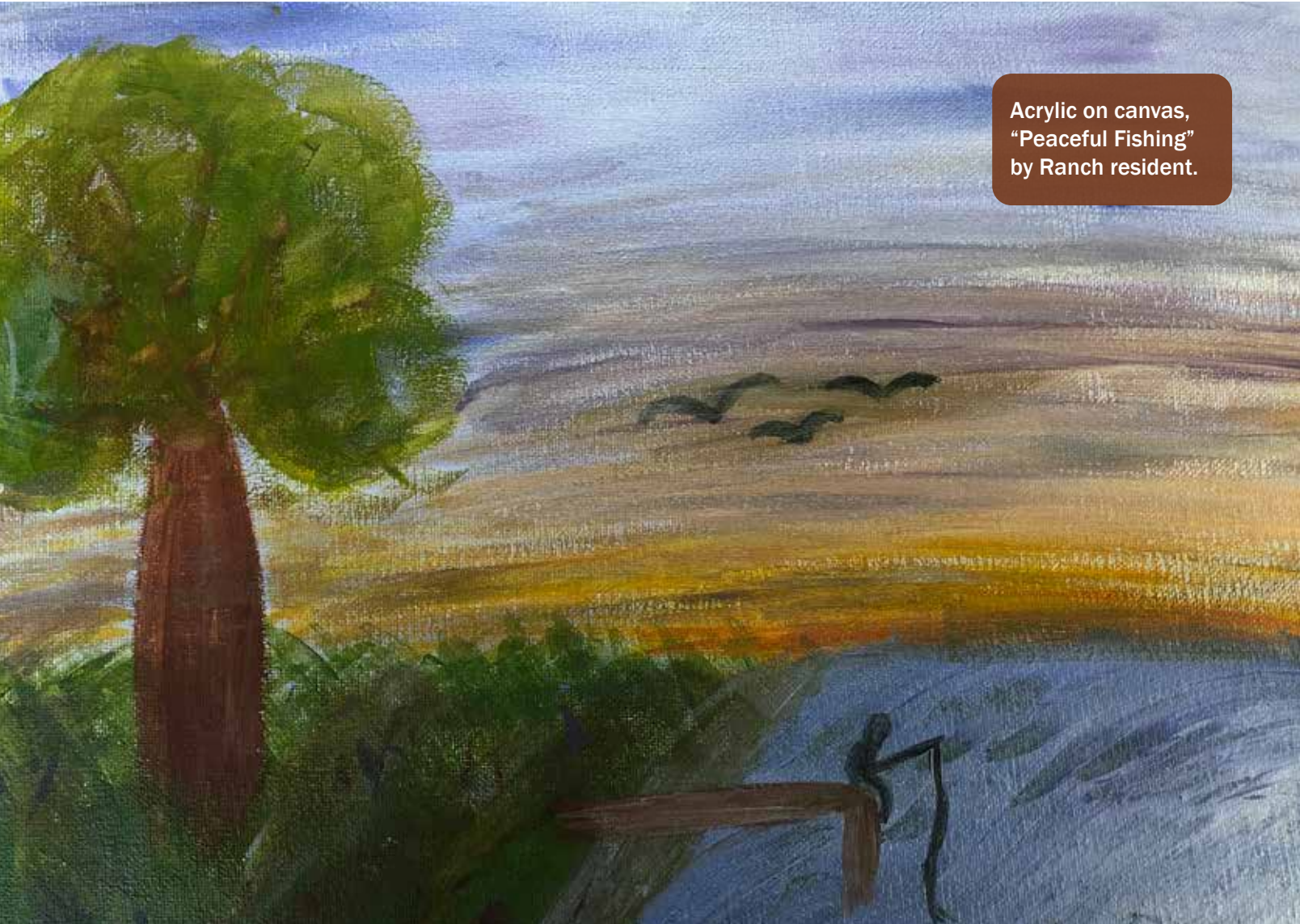
A Prayer for Healing

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

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



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



Acrylic on canvas,
"Peaceful Fishing"
by Ranch resident.

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

www.DakotaRanch.org

Main Switchboard: 1-800-593-3098

Foundation: 1-800-344-0957

