

The Scoop from the Loop Haven Acres

Healing Hearts and Homes through Horses and the Love of Jesus

Humble Beginnings

By Jenifer Heath

We were just two ordinary people, a financial advisor and a registered nurse trudging through the daily grind of raising our children, serving in various ministries at our local church and striving to pay the bills just like everyone else. We weren't anything special, had no notable skills, **but God changed everything in a moment.** Our intent when we purchased this little 6 acre piece of heaven in early 2012 was to have space for our children to run, the ability to own a couple of horses for personal use and to experience a haven, a still and quiet place very close to the hustle and bustle of the city. Little did we know that God had a much greater plan, a nobler goal, a proposition that would have an eternal impact in the lives of countless children and families. **God loves to surprise us, challenge our dreams and push us beyond the limits of our comfort zone!**

Romans 4:17b

“the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.”

One would think that if you were God and were in the selection process for a couple to run such a program, you would certainly want people that had a great deal of equine experience and perhaps a degree in business or the know-how to start such a ministry. It's funny how that works. In the Bible, God often called people that weren't "qualified" to do jobs that they could only do in His power. Think about Moses, Joseph, Daniel and Gideon to name a few. **When we give ourselves to him, He empowers and equips us to do things that we could never do on our own!** It has been an amazing journey to see God use what little we had and multiply it into much for His glory. He has been all-sufficient, providing us with the resources, the volunteers, the direction, the training and most of all the grace to carry out the vision He gave us that day. It has truly been an experience of moving in the miraculous!

Now that we are in our third season of Haven Acres, I am all the more aware of the faithfulness and provision of God. I was raised by God-fearing parents that taught me to pray and instilled in me a faith to trust God at all times. We encountered many challenges as I was growing up where money was tight and we struggled to afford some of the most basic necessities, **but one thing rang true... God always provided.** It never occurred to me to question the source of our provision- God had intervened and met our need. I am sure that my mom and dad wish they could have given us a more extravagant life, a life with greater material possessions and less worry about financial things, but God knew that the trials would grow our faith, and oh how I've needed that to carry me into adulthood and the tasks God is calling us to now.

Even as I write this article, my faith is under fire and our finances are being stretched like never before. Our grant proposal for the outdoor arena has been declined. We have car repairs and medical bills, rental house repairs and no cushion of the savings we once had. I have significantly reduced my nursing hours at work in order to give full attention to my family and Haven Acres. Stepping out in faith to begin this ministry has left us more vulnerable than ever before, but I am reminded that we are to “Seek first **His** kingdom, and **all** these things will be given to you as well.” (Matt. 6:33) God is going to take care of **ALL** of these things. Over and over in the Bible we are encouraged to remember what God has done and tell it to our children so that their faith is strengthened as they see God respond to our prayers. Psalm 143:5 says, “I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.” I have determined to do just that. I am going to tell of everything God has done for us so that all of you can be encouraged and your faith may be strengthened as well.

Humble Beginnings - continued



Trust His plan and His ways. He is always faithful!

God hears your prayers and He answers. Holly, one of our mentors, brought to our attention yesterday that it is not God's will for us to strive from morning until night. He is working on our behalf even while we sleep. Be encouraged! God is working things out for you. Trust His plan and His ways. He is always faithful!

"It is vain for you to rise up early, to take rest late, to eat the bread of (anxious) toil- for He gives (blessings) to His beloved in sleep." Psalm 127:2

Musings of a Mentor

By Katy Gardner

I'm not so sure about this; it's not something I know...

Don't we all say that? I sure have. I have heard that voice in my head many times, but now there's another voice that I hear as well. It is a still, small voice that says, "Just try. I'll be right here with you. We're in this together."

Due to a recent life-changing event, I was unable to keep my horses, and it was with a very heavy heart that I had to say good-bye to Jack and Bull as they were taken to a new farm. I had spent nearly 2 years retraining Bull to be ridden after he had lost his vision. The loss I felt as I watched them leave was crushing. I prayed many a prayer for God to give me both strength and peace as I looked into the empty pasture that felt like a constant reminder of what I had lost.

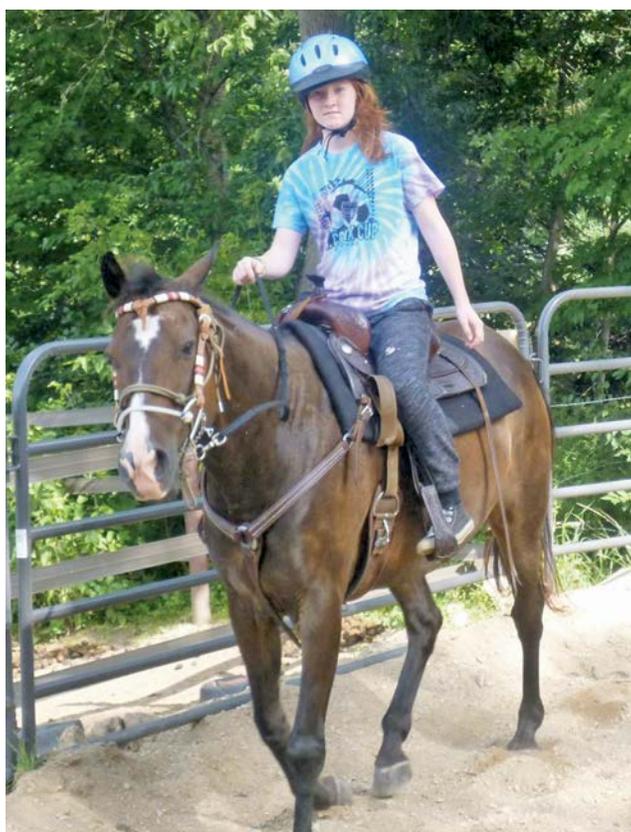
Shortly after, the pastor of my church, Life Church in Cannon Falls, had a couple speak about a program called Haven Acres that works with both rescue horses and children in need. It sounded amazing, but I had no experience working with children like that. I wished I had money to donate, but I didn't have that either. As I went to politely sneak out the back door, that voice spoke up, "Grab an application!" I wrestled in my mind, "But I don't qualify. I only know horses and dogs. I don't know how to minister to kids that are having a tough time."

Isaiah 41:13

"For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not Fear; I will help you."

Meet Noah

It is with a thankful heart we welcome Noah to our herd! He was graciously donated by Kelly when he couldn't endure long trail rides and competitive work anymore due to his arthritis. Noah is going to be a great asset to our program at Haven Acres! All of the kids already love this big, beautiful boy. He has a sweet personality and really likes to have a job. His name means "rest" and "comfort" which couldn't be more appropriate. We're so grateful that people like Kelly are willing to make the difficult choice to donate such treasures to our care, to be loved on and to give hope to kids that can use a little encouragement.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Haven Acres is excited to announce its expansion to kids that are deaf or hard of hearing. In collaboration with Minnesota Hands and Voices, we have been able to serve deaf and hard of hearing kids on a biweekly basis. It has been a real joy to watch them with eager anticipation as they learn and grow at Haven Acres. The kids have been assisting with chores, doing craft activities, participating in Bible lessons and learning to ride the horses. I want to thank all of the deaf mentors and sign interpreters that have volunteered their time to invest in the lives of these amazing kids. It is a blessing to serve alongside all of you. A special thanks also to the Nevin Husted Foundation for a \$400 grant to help pay for supplies needed to effectively run the DHH program at Haven Acres this year! Please contact us at info@havenacresmn.org if you know a child that would like to participate in this particular program.



Horse Sponsorship

Did you know that you can help care for one of our horses? Contact us today at info@havenacresmn.org for complete details. You'll receive a quarterly update on how the horse you are sponsoring is helping kids in our community.

- \$150/mo- Full sponsorship
- \$75/mo- Half sponsorship
- \$50/mo- Partial sponsorship

Fundraising and Foundations

Foundations & Grants

Haven Acres was honored to receive a \$5,000 grant from the Gannett Foundation as recommended by KARE 11 for 2015 Program Expenses. This has been a huge help as we serve the kids of the Twin Cities this summer! Thank you, Gannett Foundation!

In addition, the Nevin Husted Foundation was gracious to donate \$400 specifically toward the supplies needed for our expansion to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. We are so grateful for these who have been willing to partner with us!

Corporate Funds

The Orchard Rangers Saddle Club donated \$200 toward the purchase of a lightweight saddle.

We would also like to thank the Benevity Community Fund through Ameriprise Financial for donating \$2,000 in matching contributions this year.

Haven Acres is listed among possible recipients for matching contributions through United Way, so please keep that in mind if you are able to set that up through your employer.

When ordering online, Amazon Smile will donate a percentage of your purchase to Haven Acres as well. These are all ways to make your donated dollars go even farther!

Bowling for Bucks

Our Second Annual Bowling for Bucks Fundraiser held on May 8, 2015 was more successful than ever! With just 11 bowlers getting sponsors, we grossed \$6,938.90 that evening! Thank you to the bowlers, the sponsors and all of those that came out to support us!



Prayers Answered

- A total of 15 mentors were trained in for the 2015 season!
- We are serving between 32-36 kids weekly, which is more than double what we were able to serve in 2014
- Monies were raised for the outdoor arena. We are still waiting on permits from the City of Burnsville, but construction will begin very soon!
- A generous donation was given in honor of a relative that passed away allowing us to purchase a bobcat to help with tasks around the ranch.
- A couple of dedicated volunteers, Jeff Johnson and Marty Schommer, have kept our Haven Acre vehicles running smoothly which has saved us a great deal of expense!



Jason and Jenifer Heath
Co-Founders



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