

The HAVEN ACRES HERALD

*Healing Hearts and Homes through
Horses and the Love of Jesus*

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WINTER 2019

Providential Protection

by Jenifer Heath

It was an ordinary day in December. We were outside doing the usual morning chores, cleaning stalls and feeding the horses. The horses had been in the barn because of all the rain we'd received the previous two days. We were blanketing the horses for the upcoming cold front and leading them back out to their respective paddocks. I had already haltered Savannah, a rather nervous horse, and had led her out of the barn safely. When I returned for Jetta, a beautiful but sometimes sassy mare, she was calm and patiently waiting. Since she had such a relaxed demeanor, I did not fully halter her but rather just threw the lead rope over her neck. We were in a makeshift stall that had a fencing panel across the front, so I leaned over to widen the opening so that the two of us could exit. When I did so, she must have panicked about the narrow space, so she bolted. I felt her muscles tense, preparing to push through, so I turned slightly to pull her back. Instead of heeding my light correction, she bulldozed past me, running through the insufficient opening, knocking me down and trampling me underfoot. Right outside the gate were a couple of wood pallets and a large mounting block. The frantic horse got tangled up in the

pallet and struggled to free herself. I was terrifyingly pinned underneath her and the pallet screaming, wishing that the dreadful incident would come to an end. I heard the mounting block tip over and land somewhere near my head. There I lay, envisioning the scene from a movie where a person falls from a horse while riding with a bunch of other horseback riders and tragically gets trampled by a herd of horses. Though the actual incident lasted only seconds, I felt like I continued being stepped on over and over. Finally, Jetta freed herself, dragging the wood pallet across the indoor arena with her. Miraculously, neither she nor I were badly hurt.

Ashton and Holly had been cleaning stalls and immediately came running to see if I was alright. I quickly got up, dusted myself off, and went to check on Jetta. When I saw that she was uninjured, she and I went back into the stall and exited politely and correctly as we should have the first time.

Looking back, it really was miraculous. I escaped that horrible accident with only a few bruises and a lot of soreness and stiffness from a whiplash type injury. I had no broken bones, no head injury, and no internal injuries.

As Holly and I discussed the incident later, she mentioned that when she heard me screaming, she looked over and saw me underneath Jetta, the wood pallet, and the mounting block.

“He shall cover you with
his feathers, and under
his wings you
shall take refuge...”

Psalm 91:4



Photo by: Jenifer Heath

Providential Protection - *continued*

In my mind, those things were obstacles that made the problem worse. However, as I pondered it further, I thought, "What if those obstacles were actually part of God's providential protection over me?"

Two days later, our pastor, Derrick Ross, closed the Sunday morning church service with Psalm 91:4. It declares, "He shall cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you shall take refuge..." I fought back tears as I rehearsed the scary experience but this time in light of the truth of God's Word, a vivid reminder of His overwhelming love, care, and provision for my every need. I think the Jenifer Heath translation of Psalm 91:4 would read something like this, "He shall cover you with a wood pallet, and under a mounting block you shall take refuge."

My loving Heavenly Father used those obstacles to shield me from the devastating and potentially life-threatening blow of a 1300-pound horse's hooves! But, why should that surprise me? That's the kind of all-sufficient, faithful, and ever-present God I serve! ■



Photo by: Katelyn Stuck

WE LOVE our Volunteers!

During the 2018 season, Haven Acres served more than 60 young people from our community through the mentorship program. In order to achieve this mission, more than 50 volunteers were utilized. Volunteers filled roles such as: weekly mentors, mavericks, and overseers as well as photographers, horse exercisers, and trainers. Others put roofs on structures, mended fences, and fixed our equipment while still others folded newsletters or picked manure out of paddocks and filled hay bags. No matter the role, each volunteer is vital to the success of this program! We would like to extend our immense gratitude to all of you that served at Haven Acres in 2018, showing compassion, demonstrating commitment and excellence in your specific tasks, and sharing God's love by graciously giving of your time and energy. We appreciate every one of you!

As the 2019 season rapidly approaches, we are in need of volunteers to fill a variety of roles yet again.



Photo by: Ardy Ashrafi

If you are interested, please fill out an online application at www.havenacresmn.org/get-involved. We are currently seeking volunteers to fill the following positions:

- Mentors
- Deaf Mentors
- Chore Help
- Prayer Team
- Mavericks
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Photographers

A Horse and a Prayer

By Christina Blount

My pony's name was Sparky, and we spent a lot of time together when I was a kid. He had heard all of my secrets, and as far as I know, he never told a soul. Following our family's divorce a couple of years ago, I was hoping my daughter would be able to spend time around horses, too, and have that same kind of comforting connection with animals. She wanted to learn to ride, so we started with traditional riding lessons. It was frustrating for us. She deals with short term memory retention and ADHD. In the group lesson setting, with different horses and trainers at each session, the opportunity to make connections, heal, or meet individual learning needs was lost. I was frustrated, and my daughter was growing more discouraged at each lesson. Paying for the lessons was a real sacrifice on my salary, and it was getting harder to maintain them. Finally, after a freezing February night when the indoor arena was overcrowded, the horses were uncooperative, and the lesson was a wash, I knew we needed something else. That night, on Monday, I prayed, "Lord, you know why we are doing this. If there's another solution, please show me what it is."

On Wednesday, two nights later, a friend approached me at a church event and said, "I heard of a horse program and immediately thought of your daughter." She gave me the website for Haven Acres, a rescue ministry for both kids and horses. Turns out, they emphasized the connection between the kids and the animals, and they assigned one horse and one mentor per child.

We applied and were accepted into the program this past summer. God was good to hear and answer that prayer so swiftly and so completely. Not only has Lara learned a ton of new skills, but her confidence and enthusiasm have soared. The program doesn't charge us anything, and it's run by a dedicated team of volunteers.

In her own words, Lara says, "I love to have the time with the same horse. Cowboy is my friend, and he listens to me. I like to have a mentor to work with, and we have fun together."

Did God hear my prayers that Monday night? I believe He did, and in a way that met every need we had in the matter. Trust came for me in baby steps, by experiences like this, and little by little I was able to commit more of the details of our lives to prayer and wait for an answer. There's one young cowgirl that's happy about that.

Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." ■



Photo by: Hannah Glidewell



Photo by: Hannah Glidewell

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Jeremiah 29:11

The Haven Acres registration process

The Haven Acres registration process is changing this year! This is how it will work... Parents will no longer call in to reserve a spot for their child (ren) on a specified date and time. In order to give everyone equal opportunity, please register your child (ren) online at havenacresmn.org/registration. In order to qualify, registrants must be ages 9-17 by June 3, 2019. Applications must be received by 11:59pm on April 1, 2019. We will randomly draw names (keeping families together) to award the 40 available spots in the mentorship program. We will accept an additional 8 participants into the Deaf program.

Please visit our website for more info on other programming and direct any questions to info@havenacresmn.org.

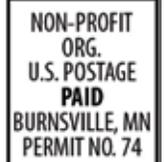


Photo by: Amy Fauske



Haven Acres

**2820 245th St E
Hampton, MN 55031**



Email: info@havenacresmn.org

Website: www.havenacresmn.org



- **May 18** – Work Day (Spring Clean-Up)
- **April 19** – Bowling for Bucks Fundraiser
- **April 1** – Participant Program Applications Due
- **April 1** – Volunteer Applications Due
- **June 3–Aug. 30** – Mentorship Sessions