

Photo by Amy Fauske

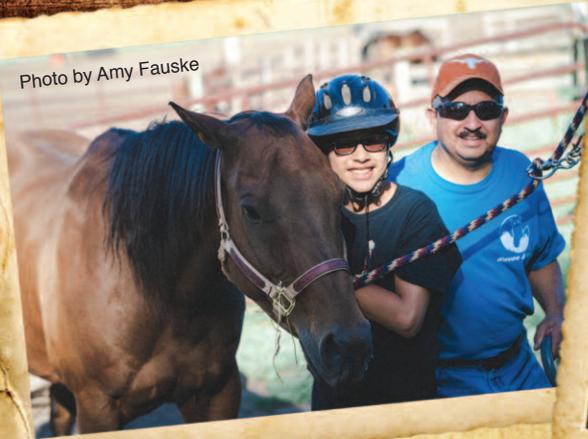


Photo by Hannah Mountain

Take Heart By Jenifer Heath

One of the hardest aspects of running a youth ranch ministry is losing equine partners year after year. Since the inception of Haven Acres in 2013, we have had to put down about 15 horses. That's an average of two per year! The main reason is that we take in older horses, horses with injuries, or horses that have medical problems. It's true that Haven Acres is a "soft place for them to land" in their final days or years, but **that doesn't make it any easier for us to say "goodbye."**

This year alone we lost both Ransom and Joe to severe colic. Neither could be prevented. Occasionally horses develop lipomas that wrap around the intestines causing the intestines to die, and you don't know about them until it's too late. Ransom had just been donated to Haven Acres a few months earlier, so we never even got the chance to pair him with kids. Joe, however, had spent three years with us, willingly serving kids and volunteers that were beginners even though he had more training than all of us combined. Many people **LOVED working with Joe.** Tears flowed!

It is heartbreaking to lose an amazing gelding like Joe or Fix or Cowboy or Araby! And now we are facing that magnitude of loss once again.

Anyone who works with horses realizes that it is rare to find a horse that is perfect in almost every way. Jac is that kind of a horse! He has served Haven Acres for four years, and he is our go-to gelding! Jac developed heaves, horsey asthma, from a pneumonia he got several years back. When his wonderful owner discovered he could no longer participate in competitions as he had in the past, she lovingly donated him to Haven Acres. He has been a true blessing. Innumerable kids and volunteers at the ranch have been impacted by Jac's kind and gentle nature. Some horses are "bombproof" as they would say, but they may be too lazy for an inexperienced child or adult to get them to do much of anything. Jac seems to understand that his job is to help build confidence and teach beginners how to do ground work and ride. He is patient, responsive, and willing even if the rider is timid or gives him the wrong cues. He just seems to know what he is supposed to do.

continued on back side

“NOT ONE OF ALL THE LORD’S GOOD PROMISES TO ISRAEL FAILED; EVERY ONE WAS FULFILLED.” – Joshua 21:45



This fall when Jac was out to pasture with his friends, he injured his left hind leg. Apparently as he was aging, his tendons were weakening. He partially tore a tendon in his leg that left him in a lot of pain and very lame. Despite strict stall rest, medications, and special shoes, he has not been able to fully recover, and the prognosis is not good that he will actually heal well enough to ever be ridden again or even to just be in pasture without pain. We once again find ourselves facing a tough decision!

Losing a horse like Jac would feel like a punch in the gut. He is a part of our Haven Acres family and is worth his weight in gold. A replacement would be very difficult to find for a reasonable price. **Yet we know that our God will provide once again because He has ALWAYS been faithful to us!**

This year has been full of unexpected and unprecedented change and uncertainty. I’m sure for many of you it has felt like a punch in the gut with disappointment, loss, and frustration. **Thankfully, we have Jesus as our sure foundation, a hope in time of trouble.** Though we do not know what lies ahead, we need not have fear or dread. Our Heavenly Father remains true to His Word and His promises, and He never fails. Take heart today! He won’t let you down!

UPDATE:

Since Jac has made notable progress in his recovery, we have opted to try a laser treatment program for the next several weeks. It should help reduce scar tissue and aid in healing the tendon in his leg. After he has received several treatments, the vet will perform another ultrasound and determine whether or not it would benefit Jac to continue this therapy.

Please pray for Jac’s healing, for the Haven Acres’ staff, volunteers, and horses, as well as for the kids and families that we serve. Also, as you do your year-end giving, please consider making a tax deductible contribution to Haven Acres. Every dollar makes a difference! Thank you!



Haven Acres

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BOWLING FOR BUCKS UPDATE

Ten bowlers played 3 games, got 57 sponsors, and raised over \$7,000! It was a fun night of fellowship, pizza, and bowling. We are so grateful for the bowlers who were brave enough to ask family and friends for support and for the donors who generously gave to support the Haven Acres ministry!



2020 Bowling for Bucks event!