



Herd the News? ...from Wings of Hope Ranch

Fall 2011



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* IMPORTANT: Registration information and flyer for the Second Annual "Blazin' Trails for Hope" Treasure Hunt, BBQ dinner, silent auction and concert! P. 3

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NOTE: Our business address, and ranch location are different places!

A Sweet Love Affair by Martha Durnett

One glance at 11-year old Will and you will see a special spark in this handsome and friendly young man's eyes, a spark that defies his condition which can cause social debilitation much of the time. Will was diagnosed recently with Asperger's Syndrome, believed to be a form of Autism which carries with it symptoms such as ADHD, OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), and sometimes severe social anxiety. In His perfect way, God has turned these "disorders" into perfect order with a special gift and interest in arthropods, and a special relationship with a jewelry artisan who creates jewelry pieces that Will designs.

We came to know Will at Wings of Hope Ranch last season when he joined us as a new student in the program. After his first visit to the ranch, Will equipped himself with new cowboy boots, a curry comb for grooming, and lots of carrots and apples to feed the horses. (Daisy Mae smells them from far

away!) As his mother, Betsy Maddox, explains, "we started this journey as an experiment, having never been around horses, and it has ended with a love affair with horses." The attention that Will gives to his program horse, Angel, is a testament to this love affair. He speaks softly to Angel as he grooms her and gently combs every knot out of her mane in preparation for his riding time. The eye contact between Angel and Will speaks of their affection for one another, and how God in His great love of His children uses a horse and human relationship to heal an anxious heart. "In a world where Will battles severe anxiety and constant confusion, Wings of Hope has provided him a safe haven, loving and patient staff, and the lessons of God's love for him. Will has found a connection with a place where the animals and people are kind and accepting and not so difficult to read", says his Mom. We are equally blessed at Wings of Hope

by Will's sweet sparkle of the eye and related joy that pours out of him. A match made in heaven by God's perfect grace.



WILL AND ANGEL

Will's family is donating a piece of jewelry to the silent auction to be held at our fundraiser on October 15. Will designed the necklace with a jeweler named Ismael Galarza. It is a butterfly with puzzle piece wings to represent autism awareness. It is sterling silver and retails for \$70. In September, you can visit our website to get a preview of all silent auction items.



The Community that Cares....

Over the last 6 months, we have had so many different groups of children and adults donate their time, talents and gifts to our ministry... just to name a few.... Girl scout troop 404, an individual family and Randolph-Macon College Equestrian Club came out on the rainiest, most miserable day in April and helped us repair numerous issues

around the barn, including dragging limbs to a burn pile, replacing fence posts and so much more! We were appreciative AND impressed! CALVARY CHRISTIAN CHURCH made us a brand new picnic table at their VBS this summer. We will get a lot of great use out of this during our group devotional times!



RMC Girls



Picnic table

The LMS Horse Lovers Club had a bake sale this spring and donated all the proceeds to the ranch! JARED CANTRELL makes & sells special lemonades at the farmers market each Saturday at his family farm stand (Trails End Farm) & donates a portion of his proceeds to the ranch!



JARED

UPDATE ON THE HERD

WINGS: Wings was officially re-homed this summer. Wings has been with us since 2009 and has served in so many amazing circumstances. We can recall at least three life changing moments that Wings was used by the Lord to bring healing or inspiration to a child at the ranch. Sadly, she had been exhibiting severe stress on all our program days for the last couple seasons. It seems that the sheer number of adult volunteers and different children tacking her up and riding her brought her great stress and worry. After much prayer, vet checks, & agonizing, we decided to seek a new home for Wings. As He always does, He provided a fantastic home for Wings. She is now in Petersburg with a new owner that is able to give her the environment she needs to be able to relax & just be a one owner pony. Here is a picture of her at her new place with her new "love interest" Cherokee".



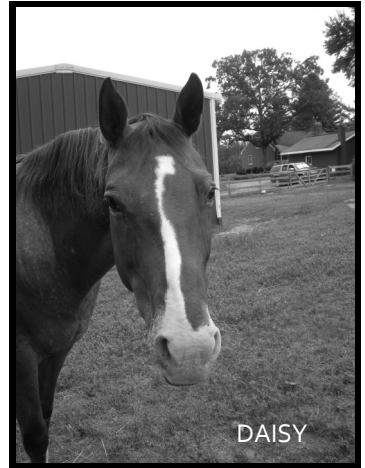
Wings and Cherokee

Ms. DAISY MAE
"Daisy" is the newest rescue horse to join our program. Daisy came to us from the United States Equine Rescue

League in early 2011. She was part of a huge rescue operation that brought over 50 horses out of a severe neglect case in 2010. Luckily, Daisy had not been at this persons home as long as some of the other horses before help came. She was not as traumatized physically and mentally as some of the other horses involved in the case....many horses did not make it.

Daisy has entertained us since day one with her funny and silly personality. When you come towards her with her daily feed, she almost does a "happy dance" complete with a squeal! She is part appaloosa, which can make her more "slow than go" at times, but for our program, we consider that a "plus!" Once we have decided that a horse will work well in our program with the children, we officially adopt them from the US Equine Rescue League. After months of training, hours in the saddle, and practice sessions with our youth leaders, we are officially adopting Daisy. We plan to use her in the fall 2011 program. When we adopt a horse, if they already have a name that is in the bible, we usually leave their name alone. In Daisy's case, "Daisy" is not in the Bible so we are looking to re-name her. We would like to choose something from the bible that illustrates her struggle, personality, gifts/strengths, or other characteristic. If you have a name to suggest, let us know! We will be considering all suggestions. Call us, or email us OR find us on FACE-

BOOK. We will make an announcement of the winning name at our 2011 Blazin" Trails of Hope Treasure Hunt on October 15th, please join us!



DAISY

Rancher Testimonial

Wings of Hope Ranch has made a major impact in my life. My aunt got custody of me when I was six years old because my biological parents weren't capable of providing for me. Just when I was feeling unloved, the people of Wings of Hope made it very clear that God loved me. They told me God was always listening and I began to pray everyday. I felt a whole lot better knowing I always had someone who would be there for me. I am very grateful for the Ranch because they helped me be the person I am today!

- Logan Richardson



Logan and Angel

Volunteer Spotlight on Kathy Mullsteff by Alison Boyd



Meet Kathy Mullsteff...one of our many treasured volunteers: As Kathy always says, "things happen for a reason!" Kathy and her husband were out to dinner with friends around the holidays. Somehow, they got to discussing the fact that she was looking for some volunteer work to keep busy now that her children were off to college. She mentioned to her dinner guests that her two favorite things were children and horses and how she was looking for something in either one of those fields. Her dinner guests eyes lit up as she shared that she had a friend who started Wings of Hope Ranch in Hanover. She explained to Kathy a little about the organization and sug-

gested she look into it. When Kathy got home, she looked us up online, sent in her volunteer application and the rest was in God's hands! Kathy has been volunteering at the ranch since March 2010 and has had a positive impact with numerous children and their families. Kathy relays the following about her experiences at the ranch... *I absolutely love volunteering at the ranch. The children, horses, other volunteers and parents are wonderful! As my husband said, if I could make money volunteering there, I would certainly leave his business and do that full-time! I don't have just one single favorite part of the ranch, unless you could call "the self reward" that I feel every time I leave, my favorite part (not to sound selfish)! My first experience with volunteering was to shadow someone else to see how the sessions were done. The first child we had together was a young girl with Autism who barely stayed 10 minutes and barely touched the horse. Since then, that child and I have worked together for three seasons. Now, when she comes, she gets so excited to see the horse and we go straight up to the ring to ride! She may not even need a side walker this fall! To have a child progress from such a starting place, to where she is now, (laughing when she is trotting, smiling practically the whole time she is riding and developing a connection with the horse) is so amazing. I worked with another child this spring who was petrified of animals, let alone a large horse. He went the entire season building up his courage to actually ride. The last session of the spring of 2011, he was up and riding and realized he actually loved it. It is truly amazing how these horses and children can have a special bond. God does work in an amazing way. The ranch has been very spiritually opening for me as well. Having my 21 year old daughter come and volunteer on one of the same days as I do has made it very special for me. For both of us to be together doing what we both love, being around children and horses, and to share the special testimonies and devotionals with the other volunteers and children is a great bond for us. We have always been very close and this has just made it that much more special for us. I love the ranch and all it does and can't wait to start up the next season. Thank you for letting me be a part of such a wonderful place.* Wings of Hope would like to add that Kathy has an amazing spirit and ability to encourage these children. I have seen her in action and am always amazed at how she is able to encourage a child far beyond what appears to be possible. With both of the children she mentions above, it appeared to me that perhaps we would not be able to get either of these children riding...ever! To Kathy, she never even perceived that as an option. God has gifted Kathy with the exact spirit needed to inspire these children to persevere and succeed. Thank you Lord, for sending us Kathy and all the other awesome volunteers who are Your hands and feet.

Girl Scouts Helping Out!

The Girl Scout Junior Troops 404 chose "helping animals" in Hanover County as their Girl Scout Bronze Award service project, which required 20 hours of service. Wings of Hope Ranch is one of the agencies the girls chose to help. They participated in a work day at the ranch, clearing brush from the field and moving it into a burn pile. They looked for horse treat recipes

online, shopped for ingredients, then baked and delivered them. Girls also made craft items, cards, and friendship bracelets for the participants in the Ranch's program. Most girls put in 3-6 hours of their service project time with Wings of Hope. Other agencies serviced with this project were BARK and the Hanover Humane Society. Troop 490 also contributed in similar ways, re-

painting our sign and making other items that were so helpful to us! Wings of Hope Ranch is so grateful for all the girls donations and hard work. The horses especially loved the home made treats they made! What touched us the most though was the inspiring key chains and friendship bracelets that the girl scouts made for the children that attend the ranch. These items really



Emma & Kaila of Troop 490

made the kids feel special! It moved them that there were other kids out there in the community thinking about them, that wanted to know that they were loved! *If you have a group that would like to visit, call or email us!*



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Thanks to a generous grant from the Deep Run High School Marathon Dance, we were able to fix up the barn this summer! We are also able to purchase a round pen for horse training purposes!

Youth Leaders in Action

Previously, to volunteer at Wings of Hope Ranch you had to be over 18. This policy served us well for the first 5 years in existence as we learned more about how to safely minister to the children and horses in our community. In January 2011, we changed that policy to include a new program called "Youth Leaders". The goal and vision had three parts. First, to allow more 13 to 18 year olds, interested in volunteering, the opportunity to get involved. Second, to help youth already participating in the program as clients to graduate to a more advanced "mentor/assistant" type position to other, younger clients and the adults and horses they were paired with.

Third, to open up more spots/serve more children, by moving existing clients in to the mentor role and bringing in teens from the outside that could be trained to work with a child. This new program has worked out even better than we could have expected! After the inaugural season of Spring 2011, the Youth Leaders have far exceeded our expectations! The younger ones (13—16) have proved to be tremendous assistants and helpers during sessions while the older Youth Leaders (16—18 year olds) have put in hours of barn work and horse time this summer to prepare to work with children in the fall sessions. We are excited to see this program grow and blossom! If you are interested in becoming a Youth Leader, Barn Helper or Adult Volunteer, you can find all the information and application on our site!

HELP WANTED: Would you like to be a guest devotions leader this fall? Or can you organize a weekly craft? Call Us!

A big shout out of THANKS to all of our volunteers from the Spring Season and Summer 2011:

Youth leaders: Bobby Kenney, Thad Allenbaugh, Savannah Stewart, Katie Alford, Autumn Hayes, Rebekah Barker, Megan Feichtel, Alexis Tew, Emma Nero, Logan Richardson, Hailey McGrain, Lily Elias, Anna Nott and Megan Ford. **Barn Workers:** Jane Yancey, Dawn McGrain, Diane Pace, Tia Cochran, Alison Boyd and Jennie Hynson. **Adult Volunteers:** Darwin Nott, Meredith Morton, Kathy Mulsteff, Sharron Wilen, Cindy Colon, Diane Pace, Martha Durnett, Linda Walter, Cory Fitchett, Alison Boyd, Cathy Booth, Joyce Foster, and Tia Cochran. **Web Designer:** Debbie Spencer

We could not have done it without you...God has blessed us through you!

TOP TEN WAYS YOU CAN HELP WINGS OF HOPE!

1. **Pray** for us to glorify God in our work and for the children and volunteers involved in this ministry to grow in their relationship with the Lord.
2. **Plan to attend** the Blazin' Trails of Hope Treasure Hunt on October 15th!
3. **Get a team** of 5 people together and enter the Treasure Hunt as a team! (We have small prizes for the "Best Team Costume" and "Most Spirited Team!")
4. **Donate** an item to the Silent Auction that is part of the Treasure Hunt! (Suggestions: gift cards, hand made items, services, something to promote your business etc.)
5. **Plan** to stay for the BBQ dinner, silent auction and concert after the Treasure Hunt!
6. **Volunteer** as part of our program! We are looking for adult volunteers that are "horse savvy", Youth Leaders (age 13—18), Barn Helpers, Devotional Leaders, Occasional Manual Labor, and Craft People!
7. **Take a look** at our Wish List on line at www.wingsofhoperanch.org.
8. **Donate snack items**, waters & kiddy drinks to be used during the program sessions.
9. **Sponsor a horse!** (More information on our website)
10. **Refer a child** to the ranch who is suffering in some way.

A Poem about Morning (the horse), by Quincy (a Wings of Hope Rancher)

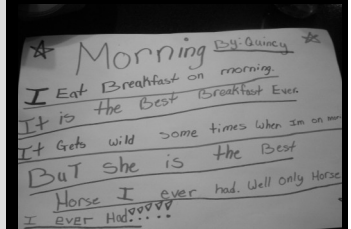
I eat breakfast on Morning.

It is the best breakfast ever.

It gets wild sometimes when I am on Morning, but she is the best horse I ever had...

Well, the only horse I ever had!!!!!!

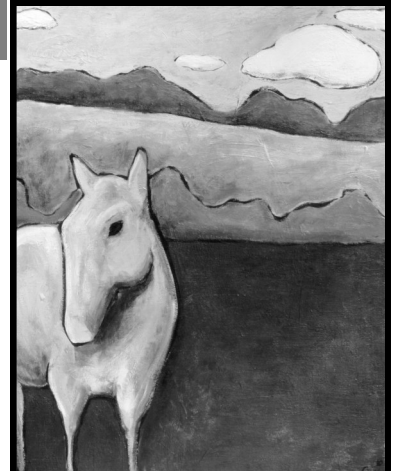
(original poem below)



Letter from a Father and Son

The following is an excerpt from a letter from a father who brought his son Cody to the ranch for an entire season before we were able to get him on the horses back! On the last day of the season, we promised Cody we would bring him a superman cape to wear if he would consider riding the horse. With Kathy Mulsteff's leading, the encouragement of the other children and volunteer Cory Fitchett, combined with the faith of the Cody's dad, the strength of the Lord and the superman cape, we all succeeded! Cody rode! Amen!

To Wings of Hope Ranch: "Please understand that our entire family cannot tell you how grateful we are that things finally worked out for all of us on our last outing at Wings of Hope. Cody was definitely happy that he got on after the fact and certainly made it sound as if he will have no trouble getting on board again in the Fall. Cody and I truly enjoy coming out there and its something that we plan to continue as long as you will have us. I also thank everyone involved in this process. I am fully aware that it took an incredible amount of patience and understanding for this to be successful. Please know that this is both sincerely appreciated, as well as something that our family will never forget." - Cody's Dad



This is a small picture of one of the fine pieces of art that has been donated to the silent auction! Come see the great items we're auctioning off Oct. 15th, Ashland Coffee & Tea