

# THE RANCH VOICE

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

Spring 2019



Advocate for children and former Ranch resident, Elizabeth Murault, looks happily to the future while visiting with Fargo Residential Treatment Director, Tom Kopp. p. 22



**DAKOTA  
BOYS AND GIRLS  
RANCH**

[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)  
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# Message from the President/CEO



Joy Ryan  
*President/CEO*

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## Scared, Vulnerable, and Alone

Hello Dear Ranch Friends,

I stay in a lot of hotels. To be where I am needed means being away from home. And I am pretty good at being mobile.

I also try to be frugal. I want the dollars we spend at the Ranch to go to the right things. So, often I stay in clean, comfortable, older facilities. I like that, too.

On a recent trip I was getting ready for the work day. As I adjusted the water temperature in the shower, the entire faucet mechanism broke off the wall and into my hand. The water gushed out of the wall at full force—and I had no way to stop it!

First, I panicked. The kid in me came out as I thought to myself, “Oh, oh. I broke the hotel. This isn’t good. Did I turn it the wrong way? Did I pull on it too hard? Am I in trouble?”

I moved from panic to vulnerability. I couldn’t stop the water. I needed help. I had shampoo in my hair and the drain was not keeping up with the incoming water. The tub would soon be overflowing. I was scared, vulnerable, and alone. I froze.

Thankfully, the freeze only lasted a few seconds before my resilience and problem-solving skills kicked in. I got out of the tub, pulled on some clothes, wrapped my soapy hair in a towel, and called for help. The maintenance woman was there within minutes, loaded down with power tools. She shut the water off with the tub about 1 ½ inches from overflowing, replaced the mechanism quite quickly, and went on her way. As I crawled back into the shower my heart rate returned to normal and I went on with my day.

As I thought about that event, I thought about our kids at the Ranch. They come to us feeling vulnerable and alone, just like I did in the first 10 seconds as I stood there frozen with the shower handle in my hand. But, for our kids, these feelings accompany them 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I think about the 15-year-old girl who came into my office one day. With tears in her big brown eyes, she said, “I’m tired, Joy. I’m tired of worrying about what’s coming next.”

Her life, and the lives of other kids at the Ranch have been full of the unpredictable—abuse, trauma, danger, pain—and all of it is outside of their control. They think it’s all their fault somehow. They are scared, alone, and exposed; which leads them to becoming hypervigilant, anxious, and angry.

I was frozen for seconds, but when our kids are in that state every second of every day, it is hard for them to learn, trust or make good decisions. No wonder these precious children have trouble in school. Imagine what would happen if the school, the teachers, the administration, met them right there... in their fear... with presence and love and an unflagging belief in them and their ability to learn. With that understanding, could a child begin to trust, move out of the fear, and “go on with their day?”

Yes, they can. And it happens every day at Dakota Memorial School, the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. The teachers you will read about in this issue see the potential of each child. They see every child’s unique ability to learn, grow, and be their best selves. It is hard work. It isn’t the right place for every teacher. It takes compassion and commitment at a new level. But, as always, these kids are so worth it.

Thanks for reading.

In His love,  
Joy



## More Than Her Broken Past

Young woman moves from victim to survivor to advocate

**One absent mother.**

**One abusive father struggling with addiction.**

**Five stepmothers.**

**29 schools.**

**12 states.**

**Six foster homes.**

**Countless hospital and treatment facility stays.**

You'd think all of that would add up to an angry and defiant young woman. And, in many ways, you'd be right. Brooklynn is angry. She is angry people treated her the way they did, especially the very people who were supposed to love and protect her.

But, at age 15, Brooklynn—a petite young woman with long, thick hair piled haphazardly atop her head, deep set blue eyes, and a feisty attitude—is also wise beyond her years. Her wisdom and beauty shine through in her poetry—poetry that tells her story and of wisdom well-earned through a young life filled with tragedy.

Brooklynn's mom dropped her off with her father when she was three years old, and she hasn't seen her since. She spent the rest of her childhood with her dad and a revolving door of stepmothers. Her dad started abusing her when she was five.

"It lasted until I was 12.

Through each mom, through each state, through each house. It didn't change. But I didn't tell anybody because he was my dad. I didn't want

to lose the only person I'd ever had."

At age 12, Brooklynn was fed up. She was so angry one night after her father was done beating her that she crawled out her window and told the neighbors.



Brooklynn (left) finds her voice through poetry, with the help of her teacher, Ms. Novacek.

Unfortunately, happily-ever-after didn't start there. While she did escape the abuse, Brooklynn wasn't

able to take down the wall she'd built to protect herself from the outside world. If anyone got too close, she lashed out in anger.

"I was the smart kid in school, but I was never a well-behaved kid," Brooklynn said. "I could never make any friends because I was just so angry. I was just angry, and angry, and angry, so I lashed out and pushed people away."

Since the day she crawled out of the window, Brooklynn has lived in several foster homes, tried to kill herself at least twice, and has moved back and forth between treatment

facilities. Through it all, she has hung onto her anger.

"Anger is a starting emotion," Brooklynn said. "When I get angry, it starts other emotions. I get angry and I feel the depression. I start asking 'Why?' 'Why did this happen to me?' 'Why did somebody do that to me?' And then in the end I feel numb because the emotions are so overpowering. All you can do is put up the wall to keep them out."

Something changed when Brooklynn came to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. She has started to take

the wall down, brick by brick.

It's difficult to pinpoint an exact moment that changed the trajectory of Brooklynn's life. Instead it's all the small things Brooklynn experienced at the Ranch that showed her she deserved to be loved.

"I think I finally realized what I deserve. I'm not a victim, I'm a survivor. I continue to thrive every day and I have something to live for," she said. "The people here surround me and support me. I don't have to worry, 'How am I going to get my next meal?' 'How am I going to keep myself safe?' 'Are they going to hit me?' 'Are they going to rape me?' I don't have to worry about any of that now and it feels so amazing."

Brooklynn credits some of the changes in her attitude to Madison Novacek, her English teacher at Dakota Memorial School (the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch). In Ms. Novacek, Brooklynn found not only a talent and love for writing, but a person who believed in her.

"Ms. Novacek is just an amazing, amazing person. I wouldn't be able to write the things I do without her. She started it all. She chose me to enter my work into the Scholastic competition. That made me feel on top of the world. Like, somebody could see that kind of potential in me—that's crazy!"

Brooklynn doesn't have it all figured out, and she still gets angry. She lives her life for today, and for the next day. "Because if you live for more past that, it gets too hard. If I think past tomorrow, I start worrying about it."

But, during her time at the Ranch, Brooklynn has started to think beyond tomorrow. She is now living with a new foster family, and hopes

she can stay there until she graduates from high school.

"There are just so many amazing qualities about my foster parents. I keep seeing these amazing things and I'm just waiting for something to pop up, but it's not happening. I'm just so grateful for them."

As we visited, Brooklynn was about to leave Dakota Memorial School to go to a local public school. She was looking forward to getting involved in speech and debate; and working more on her art and writing.

She is also starting to believe she could go to college. She wants to learn how to use her art and writing skills to reach children growing up in similar situations.

"I want to get my story out there," Brooklynn said. "I want other people to read it and know it's OK to be helpless, that it is OK to not be OK. I want other people to see it and be able to speak up for themselves. I want to use my artwork to advocate for people experiencing abuse."

Brooklynn also wants Ranch donors and staff to know how they have impacted her life.

"Their donations have supported me with my lifelong happiness. Their money built this place, and has provided the people who are forever going to leave an impact on my life. I want you all to know you are making an impact. Whether you're behind the scenes or in the front row, whether you're silent or not—you are making an impact."

To the Fargo Youth Home, the teachers at DMS, her foster family, and the donors who support the Ranch, Brooklynn says, "Please do not give up, because we need you."

## Inspired Words

As Brooklynn moved on from her time at the Ranch and at Dakota Memorial School, she wrote this poem for her English teacher, Ms. Novacek. "Ms. Novacek just always tries," Brooklynn said. "She never gives up on us. No matter if we are in a bad mood, crabby mood, sad mood, nothing. She doesn't give up."

### This Won't Be Goodbye

by Brooklynn

To the one that taught me  
it was okay to be  
Young, Wild, and Free.  
I was filled with fear,  
Constantly wishing to be  
left alone.  
You showed me that I  
deserved a throne,  
Never to be shut out in the  
dark again  
I built my own crown  
with the words made of  
wildflowers filled with  
thorns  
To show I would never let  
another person take my  
words.  
You had started a wildfire in  
me that burned brighter  
Than any warning flares for  
the people around me.  
I shall forever prosper,  
and you will forever be the  
start.  
So, no this is not goodbye,  
Every time I write a poem I  
will think of you by my side  
cheering me on.

# Understanding Our Kids

## Teaching Kids Alternatives to Aggression



**Meryl Willert, PhD,  
Clinical Psychologist  
Dakota Boys and Girls  
Ranch**

On a purely cause and effect level, the aggression of Ranch children usually stems from some combination of poor emotional regulation and impulsivity. Many of the children we treat have mood disorders and experience intense periods of depression, anger, or irritability. These moods cause their level of emotional arousal to be abnormally low or high.

When they are depressed and irritable, they have a low tolerance for stress, and are highly reactive. When in an escalated state, they are prone to impulsivity and aggression. So basically, whether depressed or angry, they act out because they are quick to become emotional and don't have the skills to control themselves.

A deeper understanding of how a child developed a lack of regulation and extreme impulsivity creates more opportunity to be effective in treatment. At the Ranch, we do this by asking, "What happened to this child," rather than "What is wrong with this child?"

To regulate or control our emotional systems takes a set of effective skills. Children with histories of abuse or neglect haven't had the opportunity to develop those skills. Many children who

come to the Ranch have not been taught healthy ways to cope. Even worse, they have been physically, emotionally, or sexually mistreated. This leads to even more emotional turmoil. The adults in a hurtful home environment may model only aggressive or harmful behaviors, so children don't have a chance to learn helpful skills. In sum, for many of our most aggressive kids, the lack of healthy emotional environments has left them without "socially positive" tools.

When children lack these healthy tools and positive role models, simply moving them to a "safe" environment, like Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, is usually not enough to change deeply developed emotions and related behaviors. The child will continue with the behaviors they have learned.

The emotional systems of kids who have lived through trauma have been re-wired, so they are constantly in an extreme arousal state—extremely low (depressed) or extremely high (elevated), and they have poor controls.

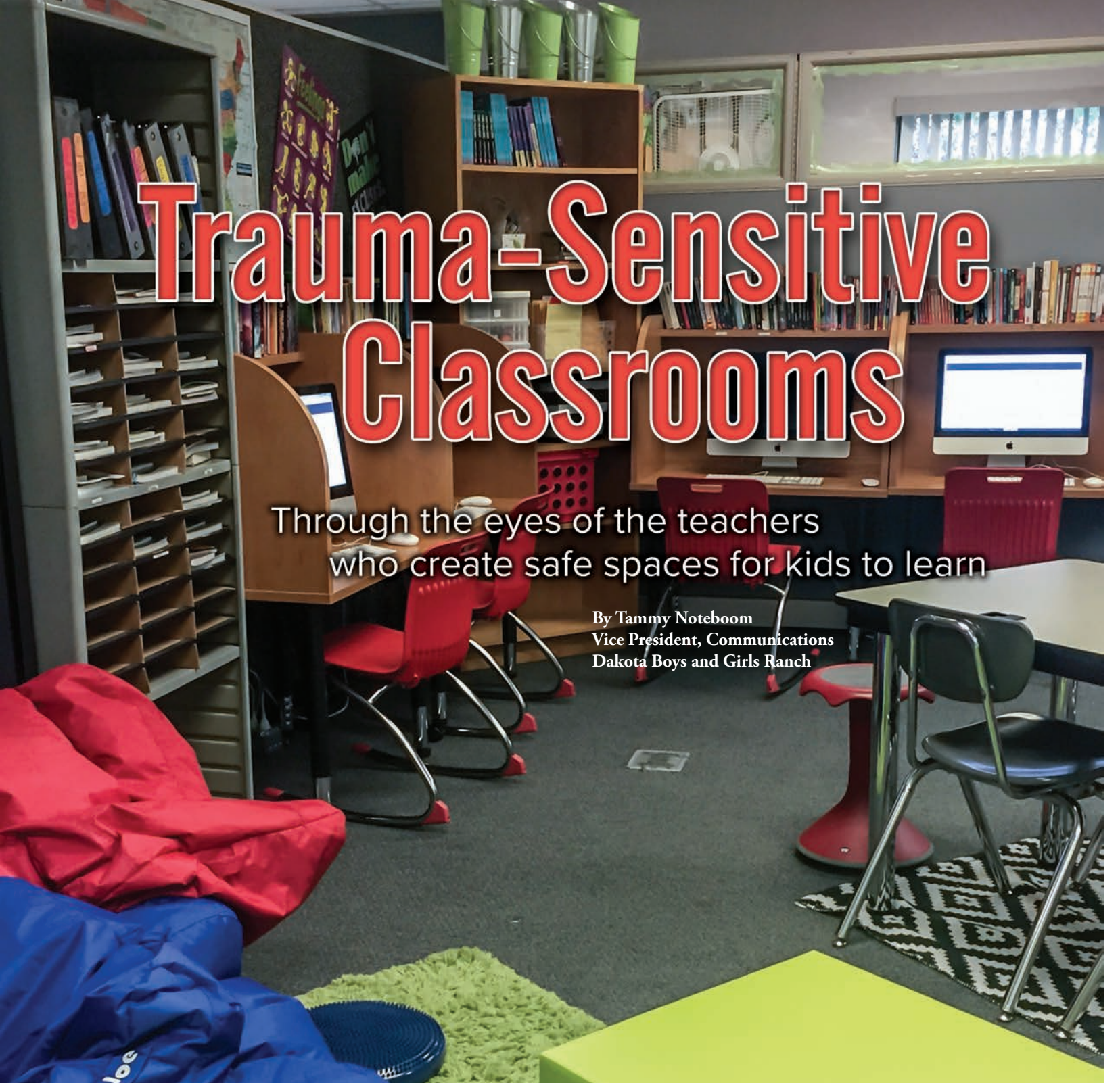
Their emotional systems operate with high intensity, causing them to act out without thinking much. By "acting out" feelings through aggressive behavior, children discharge the overflow of emotional energy, giving them a sense of relief and control. The result is that they avoid processing the emotions rationally. The fact that the environment is "safe" is simply not enough to stop their defense mechanism of "acting out" aggressively.

Another puzzling situation that occurs at the Ranch is when kids are aggressive toward staff or people who have treated them well. This likely happens because of conflicting thoughts and feelings; and that same build-up of internal emotional tension. When children are neglected or abused early in life, they often develop a strange mixture of positive and negative thoughts and feelings toward their perpetrator(s). They later generalize these thoughts and feelings and project them toward other adults. The positive feelings toward an abuser are hard to understand, but oftentimes, the abuse has been sprinkled with random pleasurable experiences (e.g., birthday presents, special trips or outings, etc.).

This history and experience teaches children that even if people are treating you well, it will not last—they will mistreat you eventually. Put a different way, many of our kids haven't developed a basic sense of trust. They expect that trouble or difficulties are "just around the corner," and spend their lives waiting for it. Pushing others away with their behaviors is their attempt to stay safe.

The aim of treatment is to significantly restructure our kids' negative thoughts, expectancies, and feelings. Through evidence-based work, high clinical expertise, and dependable, loving presence, we help children build a sense of trust in people and the world. With trust, they can learn to regulate their emotions and develop healthy relationships with others.





# Trauma-Sensitive Classrooms

Through the eyes of the teachers who create safe spaces for kids to learn

By Tammy Noteboom  
Vice President, Communications  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

We've been talking about trauma-informed care and trauma-sensitive classrooms for a long time at the Ranch. But, for me at least, it's been difficult to grasp what exactly that means, and how to explain it. When I interviewed the teachers featured in this article, I saw very clearly that trauma-sensitivity is much more

than talk and some cool furniture. Dakota Memorial School (DMS) teachers are trauma sensitive from the tops of their heads to the very tips of their toes.

They can all talk in broad terms about what trauma-sensitivity means, but they also have example after example of how it plays out in

their work with kids every single day. Breathing breaks, sensory breaks, natural lighting and lamps, multiple work spaces and the freedom for kids to choose, a focus on safe classrooms and relationships—these are all ways DMS teachers acknowledge and accept our kids for who they are and where they come from. Then they



give kids space, are there when they need to talk, and ultimately, teach them how to learn.

Andrew Meier, shop teacher at DMS, Minot, talked about the kids we work with being complex and amazing. After spending time visiting with eight of our teachers, I am confident the teachers are pretty amazing too. I would gladly go back in time to my junior and senior high years to take classes from every single one of them.



**Dustin Sailer**  
Math teacher, Athlete,  
Summer missionary

*“Our kids haven’t had the support they needed to succeed, so many of them are behind their peers. They have been told their whole lives they are doing things wrong and that they are failures. At Dakota Memorial School, we teach them it’s OK to fail and encourage them to keep trying. When they have a bad day, we don’t hold it against them. There are consequences, but with a little grain of salt and some grace.*”

*“Some coaches are player’s coaches. I am a student’s teacher. I believe in relationships and building those bonds of respect between teacher and student. When kids trust you, it doesn’t matter what you throw at them. They*

*will follow you and live up to the expectations you have of them.*”

*“Most of our kids are behind their peers. My expectation is that they learn what they need to progress. I expect them to push themselves to their limit. Once they do that they start buying into the system that has disregarded them for so many years. It doesn’t matter what level they are at—once they take ownership of what they are learning, and start to enjoy learning, they are set up for success.*”

*“People sometimes think of the Ranch as where the bad kids go. It’s not even close to that. They are just trying to become normal and to learn the skills most of us learn around the dinner table, like how to make small talk, how to be polite, how to treat other people. And, sometimes we have to teach kids how to regulate their emotions so they can get through the day without punching a wall. But it’s not their fault. It’s what they learned, or didn’t learn, from the adults in their lives. You’d expect those adults to know better but they were in the same situation and didn’t know better either. We are breaking the cycle of their environment.”*

Dustin taught math for 11 years in a small North Dakota school before joining the Ranch in 2018, where he teaches math on the Bismarck campus. He didn’t grow up wanting to be a teacher, but it was calling him and he was good at it. He earned a bachelor’s degree in education and a master’s degree in teaching from Minot State University. When he isn’t working, Dustin goes to the gym, plays basketball, and recently joined the Bismarck Curling Club with his wife, Courtney.

Last summer, Dustin and Courtney traveled to Levos, Greece, a small island near Turkey. They volunteered for Lighthouse, a private

organization that watches the waters and takes in refugees trying to flee persecuted countries like Turkey and Iran. Volunteers scan and patrol the water for people in dinghies, then provide those who make it across the water with dry clothes, food, water, and shelter. They will be in Levos again this summer for three weeks.



**Suzanne Erz**  
Scientist, Encourager,  
Critter-owner

*“The kids’ faces when they have those AHA moments is what keeps me going. You see them take baby steps and then they start thinking, ‘Oh, look what I just created! I can do this. I can be somebody.’ You can see when something clicks—they hold their head up a little higher as they leave class. It’s an honor to know I helped them become aware of that feeling of success. Most of our kids have never had the idea in their heads they could be something or somebody.*”

*“I think of one of my boys who has been demeaned all his life. He struggles with writing and learning, and that became what people focused on. He was the kid who couldn’t write. When we [the teachers at Dakota Memorial School] gave him the opportunity to verbalize information, he had the knowledge and knew the material. He*

*just learned in a different way and couldn't show us what he had learned through traditional testing methods.*

*"It's been awesome to watch him grow. This semester he came into my class and wanted to write on his own—he wanted to show me how much he had improved in the year since he last had me as a teacher. The other day I tried to get him to use the voice texts on his computer to put together a presentation for the class.*

*He wouldn't use it, and said, 'No, I want to spell this on my own. It might take me a little longer, but I know the more I do it, the better I'll get. I remember you telling me when I was younger to take my time and practice... that I'll get there. And, look at where I'm at right now.'"*

*The great thing about science is that it's not about doing it right the first time. I want kids to understand that science isn't all about proving themselves right, but about proving themselves wrong. We learn the most from the experiments that don't work. I tell kids, 'OK, that didn't work. So, let's try another thing.'"*

Suzanne worked as a respiratory therapist for many years before returning to school to pursue her teaching degree — then 13 years ago, starting at the Ranch. While the classes she teaches change over the years to meet the credit needs of the students, they are all science related: biology, life science, anatomy and physiology, ecology, botany, STEM, and earth science. Suzanne recently completed her master's degree in Education at Minot State University.

Right now, Suzanne is working with her students on the student-led GROW Garden Sale. Her middle school and high school students are raising tomatoes, onions, and hot peppers; and her elementary students

are growing cilantro. They plan to team up with other classes and teachers in early May to make salsa from the produce they've grown. They are also growing vegetable and flower plants and making flower arrangements—which will all be available at the sale.

Suzanne and her husband, Doug, have three grown children. They enjoy camping, boating, playing cards and board games, and taking care of their five critters—two dogs named Skecherz and Jazmyn; two geckos named Macchiato and Vibrato, and a frog named Lily.



## **Shea Durham** **Scientist, Coach, Father**

*"When I heard about this job and learned more about Dakota Memorial School, it really called to me. Then I got here and have been surprised at how much I've been impacted by the kids. I think I'm a better father. I know I'm a better teacher, and I don't think that has as much to do with my education as it does the kids.*

*"The students have surprised me by their abilities. Every one of them is really, really good at something. In science there is a big trend towards experiential learning. You teach kids a scientific method for solving problems*

*and then you give them a problem. As they work towards a solution, they document their steps through a scientific inquiry process. Our kids are often surprised by what they can do without someone directing them step by step.*

*"I leave at the end of each day wanting to come back the next day. I love connecting with kids who don't have many connections, building relationships with kids who haven't had someone in their life who trusts them, and saying 'hi' to a kid who doesn't have anyone else who greets them every day. We're all a part of that process. We provide a safe place for kids who have rarely felt safe.*

*"And yet, I call out students when they are wrong, in a non-judgmental way. They know when they are wrong, and that's how they will learn. If we don't tell them they are wrong, they won't learn what's right. Not just in school work, but in behaviors. I think [this honesty] creates an environment where kids can be OK with failure.*

*"So many kids are afraid to do the work. They fail because they don't do the work, but they don't do any work because they are afraid they'll fail. They tell themselves if they don't do the work, everyone will think that's why they failed. If they hand in the work and it's wrong, there's something about their worth that goes down.*

*"One of the hardest parts of my job is saying goodbye to the kids, but that is our goal. Every kid that can go back to their home school should have that opportunity. There is a community and environment out there that is important for kids to experience."*

Shea grew up in Seattle, played a semester of soccer at Seattle University, and then transferred to Jamestown College where he earned a degree in biochemistry. He was



working in a lab in Jamestown when he started thinking about teaching. When he learned about the science teacher opening at Dakota Memorial School, Fargo, he applied and got the job.

About the same time, he started on his graduate degree. He graduated from North Dakota State University in December 2018 with a master's degree in Education. In addition to teaching, Shea coaches youth soccer and is Director of Coaching Education for a soccer club in Fargo. He also likes to golf, hunt, fish, ride bike, and spend time at the lake with his family.

Shea and his wife, Kari, have a daughter who is nearly two, and two dogs.



**Madison Novacek**  
English teacher,  
Adventurer, Learner

*"I think kids in this type of school get labeled as these mean, scary kids. That's certainly what I thought before starting here. I thought they were going to eat me alive. It surprised me how open they are, how loving they are, and how willing they are to share and invite you in.*

*"The biggest obstacle for our kids is*

*the weight they carry that they're not worthy enough or smart enough. They totally are and then some. And they learn so much here in such a short time.*

*"We have a girl here now who will soon be going back to public school. She speaks her mind no matter who is in the room. She is so fearless, but she also sticks up for those around her no matter who they are, what they look like, or why they are here. It's crazy to see the difference in her from when she first came to now. We did a poetry unit and she really got into writing poetry. We did a talent show and she was so open and honest and vulnerable. Her willingness to share made a lot of other kids feel less alone.*

*"We are about to study Julius Caesar. He gets stabbed a lot and it's pretty gory, but we are going to do it. I want to be sensitive to their past experiences and trauma, without censoring anything. We have to keep an eye on that because our kids have been through a lot, but they are also more resilient than we sometimes give them credit for. While we want to be aware of their past, we don't want to withhold important experiences or knowledge for them in the process. We can teach the same curriculum they would learn in the public school in a way that's more accommodating and sensitive to their past and triggers.*

*"One of the most important things I've learned at DMS is to apologize to the kids when I make a mistake. I had very few teachers who did that for me, so I thought I had to be this perfect teacher. I've learned to say things like, 'I'm sorry I said that and upset you. If you're willing to forgive me and move on, I'd love to do that.'"*

Madi started working at Dakota Memorial School as a part-time reading tutor through Fargo Public Schools. She fell in love with the

school, but didn't want to get her heart set on staying because DMS already had an English teacher. When the English teacher moved to a Special Education position the next year, Madi got the job of teaching middle school through sophomore English.

Madi graduated from North Dakota State University with a bachelor's degree in English Education after student teaching in Ireland for a semester. This winter she took up cross-country skiing in an attempt to "conquer winter, instead of wishing it away."

She likes to travel, read, learn new things, hike, and spend time with her family and her dog.



**Mary Ann Delzer**  
Teacher of everything,  
World traveler, Grandma

*"What gets in the way of our kids' learning? Fear, feeling unsafe, and difficulty paying attention. They also have a lot of self-esteem issues, and I hear them say, 'I can't,' a lot. They lack confidence, maybe because they've been knocked down a few too many times.*

*"I focus on getting to know my students one-on-one and tell them, 'If you are willing to try, I'll help you*

*through it.' After they get started I back away more and more over time. They discover they can do it and that builds their self-esteem.*

*"I like to create a calm environment in the classroom. I turn off the bright fluorescent lights and use natural light and a lamp to light the room. Sometimes I put some soft music on in the background, and I encourage students to sit somewhere that makes them feel safe and able to focus. They can find a quiet corner somewhere—whether it's sitting in the corner, at a study carrel, under the table, or at a desk. That's cool with me as long as they're working. Sometimes we just stop and take a breath. It helps. The kids know I care about them, and that God cares about them.*

*"Being in a Christian facility is a blessing. Every morning we say a prayer, and sometimes kids will stay after school to pray about things that are private. I can't tell you how many times I've told my students that God has a plan and purpose for their lives. They are here for a reason. A lot of kids out there are struggling, but not all of them have the chance to learn coping skills and be supported by so many people who care about their success.*

*"I believe we all have a purpose in life that is God-given. Right now, this is my mission. We don't need to be in third world countries to be missionaries.*

*"What I absolutely love is when I'm out in the community and all of a sudden I hear someone yelling, 'Mrs. Delzer!' They come running across the store to give me a big hug and tell me their successes and their struggles. That's when I feel like I really have made an impact in this world after all."*

Mary Ann was working at Bismarck Public Schools when her husband

encouraged her to pursue her teaching degree. She graduated from the University of Mary in Bismarck with a degree in Education the same year her older daughter graduated from Moorhead State University (now Minnesota State University Moorhead).

She had been working at Bismarck Public Schools before going back to college, and returned there when she graduated. One day a former co-worker called to tell her about a job opening at Dakota Memorial School that seemed perfect for her. She applied and got the job.

Mary Ann has worn many different hats in her 17 years at the Ranch—including substitute teacher's aide and librarian. One year Bismarck didn't have a principal so she served as lead teacher. She now teaches computer applications, life skills, PE, science, health and art to primarily middle school students; and works with Mrs. Erz in Minot and Mr. Durham in Fargo to teach upper level science classes to Bismarck students through video conferencing.

Mary Ann and her husband, Greg, like to travel and have visited several countries. Two years ago they took a fantastic trip to Israel, "just to walk where Jesus walked, and see the whole history of the Bible."

Mary Ann and Greg see their grandchildren nearly every day. They also care for her mother-in-law and her husband's aunt who live on their own but don't drive. Mary Ann and Greg take them shopping, to church, to doctor's appointments, and out for coffee.

In her spare time, Mary Ann enjoys yoga and meditation, walking, and doing crossword and jigsaw puzzles.



**Josh Hvidsten**  
**Science teacher, Father,**  
**Philosopher**

*"My ultimate goal is to help kids discover good things about themselves. It's not as much about the curriculum as it is about getting them to a place where they want to learn. You can't pour knowledge into a kid's brain without them allowing it in.*

*"My teaching philosophy is built off of Maslow's Pyramid. When I see a kid struggling, I think, 'Are they fed?' 'Did they get a good night's sleep,' 'Do they need water?' 'Do they feel safe?' You have to take care of their physical and safety needs before they are able to move up the pyramid.*

*"Every child needs to love and be loved, to feel like they are making a contribution, and to feel a sense of belonging. If one of those three needs aren't met, they are going to have huge obstacles to learning. These kids have had bad classroom experiences in the past. Maybe they were caught up in their own trauma, but for whatever reason, they have a bad taste in their mouth when it comes to school. I don't want to be a teacher-centered classroom where it's all lecture and notes on the board. I want to put the ball in their court, so I do a slow, gradual release of responsibility as they are ready.*



*I think this gives them a different classroom experience that allows them to appreciate school and learning on a different level.*

*“When I think of children who made an impact on me, I immediately think of a kid who walked into my classroom projecting this really tough-guy persona. One of the first things I said to him was, ‘I can see through your mask, man. We take that off around these parts.’ He looked a little surprised, and asked, ‘What do you mean?’*

*“I can see your heart and you’re not mean,” I told him. ‘You don’t have to be tough here. I think you’ve got a kind soul. We just met, but that’s what I see.’*

*“I had hit the nail on the head. He had his moments, but he opened his heart and his mind while he was here. At the same time, he’s the type of kid who kept you at a safe distance and you didn’t really know if you made an impact.*

*“A couple years after he left, I was called to the office for a phone call and it was him. ‘Hey, Mr. Hvidsten. I was just calling to say hi and see how you were doing.’*

*“I’m good,” I said, ‘How are you?’*

*“You know, I’ve made some dumb mistakes, but I’m learning from them.”*

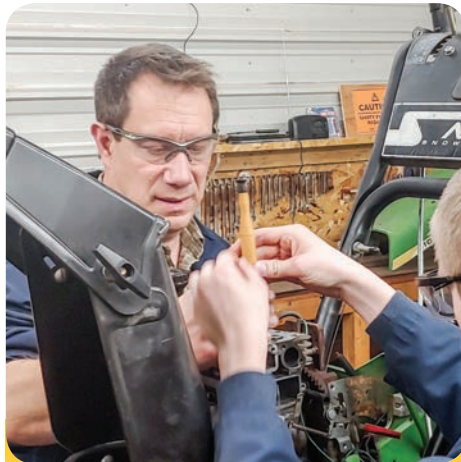
*“That conversation was fresh in my mind for a long time. That moment when they call back is when you know we’ve made an impact.”*

Josh started at the Ranch as a Youth Care Worker on the Minot campus while he was earning his degree in Biology from Minot State University (MSU). After completing his degree, he felt God’s call to be a teacher, so he re-enrolled at MSU for his teaching degree. At the same time, a science teacher position opened up at Dakota Memorial School,

Minot. He finished his degree by going to night school and taking online classes so he could accept the teaching job. Josh has been at the Ranch for a total of 10 years; two years in the cottage and eight years teaching.

He is also a certified Non-Violent Crisis Intervention trainer, a behavior management training required for all Ranch staff who work directly with the children.

Josh’s motto is “God, Family, Football,” and says football is his metaphor for fun. When he isn’t spending time with his family, he enjoys football, basketball, softball, fishing and camping. Josh and his wife live in Burlington, ND, with their two small children.



**Andrew Meier**  
**Teacher, Outdoorsman,**  
**Gardener**

*“Kids come here with such a wide range of abilities. They don’t leave my classes with any type of certification, but they do have skills and abilities that really build their confidence. When we start electrical wiring, some of the kids have trouble with their hand-eye coordination, but they overcome that. Sometimes they need to learn how to stand on a ladder and*

*keep their balance. I have one kid right now who really has trouble reading a tape measure. That’s all we are doing until he gets that down.*

*“Everything is hands-on. I don’t spend two weeks with them memorizing the parts of a carburetor, but when we’re done they are able to take it apart and clean it. Staff bring in snowblowers, engines and lawn mowers they need fixed, so we’re actually working on things people will use. Right now we are building a chicken coop, basically a shed, for a gentleman in Minot. We’re building it from the ground up, step-by-step. They had to learn how to measure, how to hold the square up to the board and make a mark, and how to pick up the saw to make a cut. They learned all the skills and are now applying them to building the shed.*

*“The highlight of our carpentry class is the kids getting to kick a hole in the wall they just drywalled. They get a little competitive about who can kick the biggest hole. Then they patch their hole.*

*“Safety is a big deal here, so if they’re not safe, we don’t do the work. But that doesn’t happen very often. It seems like this kind of work takes kids away from their stressors. I can tell when kids come in if they are upset or not. I, along with the other staff who are always with the kids while they are here, give them a chance to work or talk through it. There are girls at the Ranch who have had some really bad things happen to them. If I can be a male influence to them without being a threat, I think that is really important.*

*“I’m surprised at the things, just common cultural things, our kids are missing. For Fall Festival we brought in a bunch of pumpkins for the kids to carve. A couple kids had never carved a pumpkin. Another time we were in a van with a bunch of kids and one*

*of the boys said he'd never seen a cow. How can you live in Minot, ND, and never see a cow? As educators at Dakota Memorial School, we are doing so much more than teaching kids reading, writing, and arithmetic.*

*"We have a saying about how we work with complex and amazing kids. This is so true. I have kids who can solve a Rubix cube and play chess. They're amazing at what they are capable of doing, but they can't read a tape measure or they have trouble controlling their emotions or actions. That all has to do with trauma. We can actually see that those parts of the brain aren't working. They have the ability and the skills, but the wiring isn't there. We find a way for them to learn."*

Andrew worked at a cabinet shop before joining the Ranch Facilities team in 2010. Three years ago, he earned his Facilities Maintenance teaching license. He now teaches plumbing and electrical, carpentry, and small engine repair classes at Dakota Memorial School, Minot; and helps out with the Wildlife Club. Small class sizes allow him to give each child the special attention and instruction they need to build skills they can use their whole lives.

Andrew graduated from South Dakota State University with a degree in Wildlife and Fishery Sciences before returning to Minot. He and his wife, Sonja, have two children ages 16 and 8. He enjoys hunting, fishing, camping, and boating. He also admitted to having a bit of a gardening addiction.



### **Adrienne Keeney** Education advocate, Roadtripper, Crafter

*"I teach for a lot of reasons, but the most important is seeing kids have their lightbulb moments. I love their reactions when they start to see or understand something. I like the pace of learning where you can speed it up, or slow it down, depending on what each child needs. I am big on relationships. If you want to do anything for a student, they have to know you care. If they know you care about them, then they're usually willing to [do the work.]"*

*"Some of our kids have never had anyone to trust; or anyone who was there to protect them and watch over them. They've had a trauma that becomes the biggest thing in their life. They don't really understand the purpose of education or why they are here. It's our goal to help them see past their trauma, and to know they are more than their trauma."*

*"I worked with troubled kids in inner city Houston, so the behaviors and attitudes of Ranch kids didn't surprise me. What did surprise me was how much support kids get at the Ranch, how much one-on-one attention we give them to meet their needs. Every day is a fresh start. Regardless of what*

*happened in the past, whether it was a bad day yesterday or a bad time five minutes ago, our kids have the chance make a fresh start.*

*"The Ranch is a place for healing. It is a place for hope. I want kids to know that even if they had the worst luck at the start of their lives, they can get past it. I don't care if a kid can memorize the quadratic formula or know the names of some of the big figures in history. I want them to know that education opens their mind. Education is what helps you to think differently, and teaches you how to use logic to solve problems. Education gets you out of your own box."*

Adrienne grew up in Utah and earned her degree at Utah State University. She taught in Texas for nine years and then she and her husband, Jerry, moved to Minot in 2016 to be closer to family. She worked at Minot Public Schools before starting at Dakota Memorial School as a paraprofessional, and then a long-term sub.

She recently started a new role as the teacher in a separate classroom for students who struggle with transitions or being in the regular classroom setting. Right now she has one child all day, and two others that come in and out as needed.

Adrienne plans a big family road trip every summer. She also enjoys scrapbooking, reading, and pretty much any kind of craft. She lives with her husband and daughter in Burlington, ND, and has an adult stepson who lives in Texas.



# Celebrations

## The joy of art at every age

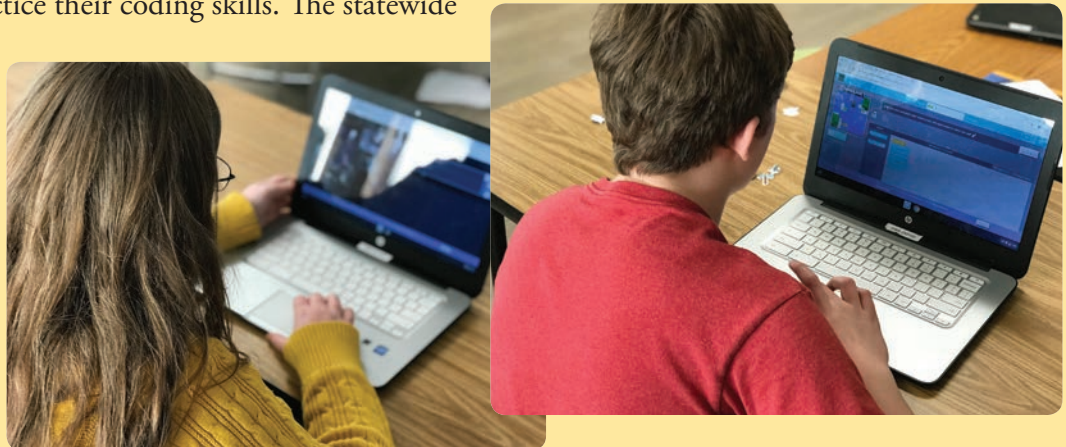
Under the guidance of Dakota Memorial School (DMS) Art Teacher, Alana Wilhelm, DMS art students in Fargo teamed up with nursing home residents from Villa Maria, in Fargo, to create beautiful works of art. As they talked and visited with residents, DMS students helped draw shapes for residents and then took turns painting with them. When a resident from the nursing home commented on one student's art skills, he responded by saying, "It wasn't just me, it was you too! We did this painting together."

What an incredible way to connect with members of the community, across generations, while creating beautiful art and even more beautiful relationships.



## Hour of code

In early December, Dakota Memorial School (DMS) students and faculty in Fargo participated in a statewide "Hour of Code." The event helps students understand they all can learn the basics of coding; and gives them a chance to build and practice their coding skills. The statewide Hour of Code event was sponsored by Microsoft. This was an awesome opportunity for our kids to build problem solving and critical thinking skills they can carry into other areas of their schoolwork and lives.



# Celebrations

## STEM success

Dakota Memorial School (DMS), the on-campus school of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, received a \$5,000 grant from American Crystal Sugar Company for the purchase of tools and equipment to integrate four new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) units into the curriculum. Thanks to their generous donation, we added units on Weather, Aquaponics and Aquaculture, Ecology-Water Quality, and Genetics to our Fargo science curriculum.

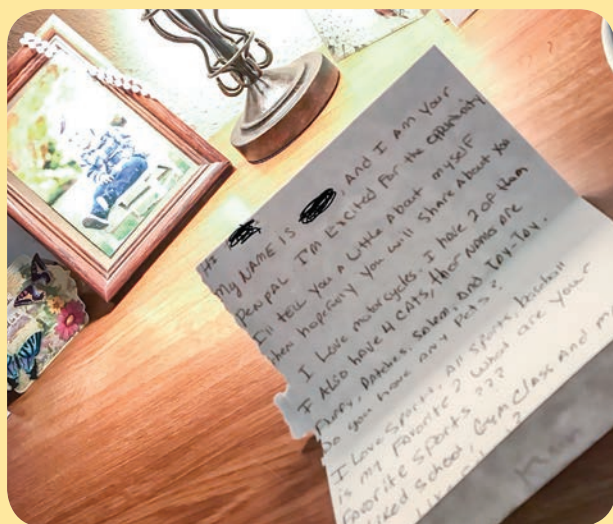
When they arrive at DMS, many of our students have had limited instruction in science, technology, engineering and math due to behaviors that kept them out of the classroom. Through small class sizes, balanced learning environments, and a variety of best-practice teaching techniques, DMS teachers keep kids in the classroom—where students can learn these very important subjects. They often learn they are quite competent, and even excel, in STEM subjects—which gives them the self-confidence they need to move forward with anticipation and success.

The funds for this project were obtained through the hard work of DMS Science Teacher Shea Durham, who applied for the American Crystal Sugar Company grant.



As Dakota Memorial Students accepted the American Crystal Sugar Company check for new STEM equipment, they shared their excitement about the new science projects the grant makes possible. Back from left: Corey Sandberg and Amy Strom, American Crystal Sugar Company; Shea Dunham, Science Teacher, and Shayla Leinen, Principal, Dakota Memorial School; Bob Drees, President, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Board of Directors. Front from left: Dakota Memorial School students MaKenna, Michael, and Blake.

## Notes of hope for Ranch residents from around the world



Having a pen pal is a great way to connect with both new people and old friends. In the technological age that we live in, written letters are becoming a lost art, but the feeling that one gets having received a handwritten letter in the mail is undeniable. At the Ranch, our Hope Notes program aims to give residents that very experience. On our three Ranch campuses, residents receive notes of encouragement and hope from people across the country and around the world! One of our Ranch residents is connected with a pen pal from Australia. What a great opportunity for our kids to connect with supportive role models around the world!

Go to [DakotaRanch.org/hopenotes](http://DakotaRanch.org/hopenotes) to send a virtual Hope Note to a Ranch child.





The kids at the Ranch created their own quilt with materials and sewing machines donated by the Trinity Lutheran Church Quilters in Algona, Iowa.

## Ranch joins NALC family

The North American Lutheran Church (NALC), the fastest-growing Lutheran church in North America, recently added Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to its list of partner ministries, and now encourage NALC congregations to provide prayer and financial support for Ranch kids. We are excited to learn more about the NALC and meet NALC members across the U.S. as we speak at congregations and attend NALC Conventions.

The NALC joins a remarkable group of other Lutheran Churches that provide financial support and prayer to advance the Ranch mission. The Ranch is a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), an Affiliated Social Ministry Organization of the Evangelical Church in America (ELCA), a Mission Partner of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), a founding member of Lutheran Services in America, and now a partner ministry of the NALC.

## 1,002 letters to Santa

Students at Dakota Memorial School (DMS) in Minot really showed love for others this holiday season as they wrote 1,002 letters for Macy’s Day of Believe. Each year, Macy’s donates \$1 to the Make-a-Wish Foundation for every letter to Santa written. This year’s Day of Believe was even more special, because Macy’s raised the donation to \$2 for every letter. Just 53 of our students raised over \$2,000 to be donated to Make-a-Wish!

Lauren Ballantyne, School Counselor at DMS, said, “I’m very proud of our kids and happy to be involved in a project that teaches our students the goodness of giving back and the feeling that you made someone’s dream come true.” What an amazing gift our kind-hearted kids were able to give this Christmas.



## Idaho school children support Ranch kids

The children of Immanuel Lutheran School in Twin Falls, Idaho, raised \$530 from their chapel offerings for the second quarter of the school year and donated it to the Ranch. Senior Development Officer Paul Krueger was there to receive the check. While there, Paul had the opportunity to speak at Sunday worship and at a Bible Study. After he spoke, the church did a “Door Offering” and raised another \$2,300 to support the work of the Ranch. What a great gift to the Ranch and to the children who are learning the joy of giving.



Idaho school children gather around Ranch Development Officer, Paul Krueger, after donating their chapel offerings to the Ranch.

# Celebrations

## Twice blessed

Shelly C. Weppeler, President, St. Joseph's Community Health Foundation (left), presented a check to Laurie Dannewitz, Development Officer, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. The SJCH Foundation awarded the Ranch a check in the amount of \$12,361.09 which included a \$5,000 grant from SJCHF and public gifts given



during the second annual Twice Blessed program to support the expansion of our elementary playground. Twice Blessed is a program of St. Joseph's Community Health Foundation designed to broaden the impact of their grants and expand community support of local projects.

## CI Sport donates end-of-year inventory to the Ranch

A huge thanks to CI Sport, who donated their end-of-year inventory to the Ranch. Because of this generous donation, every single child on all three campuses received an item or two of clothing. Because of the variety, staff were able to help each child find items they loved. Dakota Memorial School Day Students also had the opportunity to choose new clothing from the CI Sport donation. Many of our Day Students come from situations of extreme poverty. To be able to send them home with new clothing was an incredible gift.

## Nursing students give gift of play

A group of senior nursing students from Dakota College at Bottineau blessed the Ranch this holiday season with a check for \$500 to be put toward the elementary playground expansion at Dakota Memorial School, Minot. The group of students that attended the check presentation also had the opportunity to tour the school. They were so touched by their experience they decided to give an additional gift from their student nursing association.



Dakota College at Bottineau Nursing Program students made a generous gift to expand the elementary playground. Tina DeGree, Minot DMS Principal, and Joy Ryan, President/CEO, accepted the check. (left to right) Leann Hofer, Natalie Stevens, Elyssa Handlen, Tina DeGree, Kathryn Borud, Teri Thiel, and Joy Ryan.

Following the visit, nursing student Natalie Stevens, wrote, "I was a volunteer with Minot's Youth for Christ and a handful of the [kids] I worked with were students at Dakota Memorial School. One student I worked with for at least two years, and sometimes I felt as though there was no hope for her. I got one last phone call from her before she entered residential treatment. Almost a year later, she called to say she had decided to move out east with family, away from her usual bad influences, and that during her time at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior. I can't even begin to say how overjoyed I was to hear that message. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, to everyone who made it possible to save this lost girl."





## Wings of hope

Dakota Memorial School (DMS) in Fargo received a one-of-a-kind gift from a first grade class at Willow Park

Elementary School in West Fargo, ND. According to Ethan Ehlert, Willow Park Elementary School principal, the school gives every student in the building the opportunity to give back. As the most diverse school in West Fargo, with over 50% of students coming from homes where English is a second language, many Willow Park students have faced their own struggles and have been blessed by donations and gifts from others. Returning the kindness empowers children and helps them understand that they, too, have something to give.

Kelly Kopp, a Willow Creek first grade teacher (and wife of our own Tom Kopp, Director of Residential Services, Fargo), dreamed up the beautiful project and worked with her first graders to create it for the kids at the Ranch—where it proudly hangs in the Thrivent Financial Nutrition Center.

## Airmen help Ranch kids soar

During Ranch Life activities on the Minot campus, residents heard from Minot Air Force Base (MAFB) Chaplain, Rob Compere, and his wife, Anne Compere, a Ranch Development Officer. They shared words of encouragement for the kids, and also told stories about their own faith journeys. Chaplain Compere told how he was called to ministry, illustrating how God works in and through the difficulties we face in life. Anne talked about a tough time she endured—telling Ranch kids that even though we don't always understand why bad things happen, we can choose to go through them with the peace and joy that come from God. "We can rest in God's arms and trust that His plans are greater than our own," she said.

After hearing from Chaplain Rob and Anne, airmen from the MAFB 741<sup>st</sup> and 742<sup>nd</sup> Missile Squadrons played games with, cheered on, and gave high fives to Ranch students. Air men and women at the Minot Air Force Base are involved with children at the Ranch in many ways throughout the year. We are blessed by their investment in our children.



Jill Munoz, Michigan, reads every issue of Ranch Voice to her mother, Eyla Russ. Eyla has been supporting Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch for 32 years. At age 91, she continues to support Ranch kids financially and through her prayers.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram to stay up-to-date on Ranch happenings and stories.



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## From the North Dakota Plains to Scotland: Aaron's Long and Winding Road

*Last spring, Aaron Waldron responded to a Ranch social media request asking people to send Easter messages for our kids. On the form he completed, Aaron listed his address as Scotland. We were super excited to hear from someone in Scotland who cared about our kids. And, even more excited to hear Aaron had lived at the Ranch in the late 1980s. He was very grateful for the care he received and wanted to share his story in the hopes it would encourage others to seek help for their children. Here is Aaron's story.*

The Ranch changed the trajectory of Aaron Waldron's life.

"I think my life would have taken a very different path if it weren't for the Ranch," Aaron said.

Aaron came to the Ranch in the late 1980s after threatening to hit his mom. He didn't hit her, and said he hadn't planned on hitting her, but she had an abusive childhood and refused to put up with any violence in her home. He moved across the state to live with his dad, but that didn't last because he wasn't able to get along with his stepmother.

"I was an angry kid," Aaron said. "I drank a lot, and didn't want to follow their rules."

The last straw was when Aaron got into a fight with his stepmother. "I threw things around and broke a window," he said. "My dad called the police and I spent the weekend in detention."

When Aaron went in front of the court, the judge debated between sending him to the Jamestown

Hospital or Dakota Boys Ranch (now Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch). Fortunately the judge chose to send Aaron to the Ranch.

"Jamestown State Hospital was my only other option and that wouldn't have been good," Aaron said. "They wouldn't have addressed any of the issues that led me to behave in those ways. I'm not sure where I'd be without the intervention of the Ranch."

Aaron remembers very vividly the day his father dropped him off at the Ranch. "I was terrified. We drove into this strange place, and then after getting me settled, my dad drove away and left me there."

He lived in Butt Cottage for one year, with houseparents Sam and Lloyd. While Aaron was at the Ranch, he worked with therapist Bert Bailey and learned how to express his anger in more appropriate ways.

"Sam, Lloyd and everyone at the Ranch was super supportive," Aaron said. "They all really cared about me and encouraged me. They met me where I was at. I was doing well in school (all of my problems were at home), so I was able to attend Minot

High School where I was involved in theater and band. I even got to go on a band trip to Chicago while I was there!"

Bailey spent a great deal of time helping Aaron understand where his anger was coming from. "He took the time to ask me leading



While at the Ranch in the 1980s, Ranch staff taught Aaron (left) healthy ways to handle his anger.

questions to help me develop my own understanding and conclusions; and was always sure not to tell me how I felt. As I look back on our time together, I feel like he was really keen on helping me to be mindful and intentional in my actions."

Bailey also taught Aaron how to assume good intent.



Aaron said, “If someone is dismissive or terse, my gut reaction is to take it personally. Most likely, that person is completely oblivious to my existence and had no intent at all. Patience, mindfulness, and giving each other the benefit of the doubt are all things Bert ultimately helped to cement for me as a young adult.”

In addition to the work he did in therapy, Aaron learned the value of hard work.

“Even though I grew up in the Midwest, I’d never been exposed to Ranch life,” Aaron said. “I rode horses and did some work around campus—and got paid! I liked to golf, so Sam and Lloyd took me golfing. It was a great atmosphere and I got the opportunity to experience things I wouldn’t have otherwise had the chance to experience.”

Aaron believes one of the most important things that happened at the Ranch was a re-introduction to God. “I had a bad taste in my mouth about religion,” he said. “My uncle showed me movies about the evils of other religions. The God I knew

was very judgmental. At the Ranch, everyone was just the opposite—accepting and non-judgmental. I left with an entirely different view of God.”

The Ranch wasn’t a magic pill that immediately turned his life around, Aaron said. He did great while he was at the Ranch, but after he left, it took him awhile to get life figured out. Actually, quite a long while.



Today, Aaron (shown here with his wife) helps young men and women as they begin their university journey.

Aaron said, “I really didn’t get my act together until I was in my mid-30s.”

After a year at the Ranch, Aaron moved to Seattle to live with his mom. He graduated from high

school there, and then bounced around from job to job. After moving to Florida where he met his wife, Aaron said some of what he learned at the Ranch started to kick in.

Aaron completed both his undergraduate and master’s degrees, and has now settled into a career he loves. He works in university financial aid offices and enjoys helping young men and women figure out how they can go to college. When we spoke last summer, Aaron was living in Scotland while his wife was getting her Ph.D. She was nearly done and they were moving back to the United States.

Aaron’s travels with his wife have taken him around the world, and his journey has been very different than he imagined at age 14. Who could have believed that 30 years later that angry young man would be in a happy marriage, living in Scotland, and following a career he loved?

While Aaron did all the hard work himself, he credits the people at the Ranch with pushing him in the right direction. Aaron’s houseparents and therapist at the Ranch gave him the tools he needed to move past the anger, so he could begin making better life decisions.

“I can’t imagine where I’d be without the Ranch,” Aaron said.

## Art is the Key

### Dakota Memorial School Students Win Art and Writing Awards

Two Dakota Memorial School students, MaKenna Z. and Abbi B., received Silver Key Awards at the Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Juried Competition. Gold and Silver Key Awards are given to the top student artists and writers across regions of the country.



MaKenna's "Healing Hands" illustrates how our healing hands can mend a broken heart.

MaKenna Z. earned a Silver Key for her acrylic painting, "Healing Hands." Her art was about healing our hearts through the help of others. "People may feel broken inside, but we can lift them up through the good works we do. The hands in the painting are mending the broken heart," MaKenna said.

Abbi B. received her award for the short story she entered into the Fantasy Writing category. Her story is about Eleanor Knight, a foundling (orphan). "Eleanor doesn't mind being an orphan, or so she pretends," Abbie said.

"She grows so sick of loneliness but shuts everyone out, even though she is dying for just a touch of love." The story chronicles Eleanor's escape to the eternal forest where she thinks she is safe, but is unknowingly being watched.

The Scholastic Art and Writing Competition is presented by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers.

The Alliance is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to identify students with exceptional artistic and literary talent and present their remarkable work to the world through the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Through the awards, students receive opportunities for recognition, exhibition, publication, and scholarships. Students across America submitted nearly 350,000 original works this year

in 29 different categories of art and writing. Past winners of this competition at the National level



Abbi proudly displays the book in which her short story is printed.

include Andy Warhol, Stephen King, and Truman Capote.

This was the first art and writing competition entered by either DMS student. MaKenna and Abbi were surrounded by Ranch staff and family as they received their awards at a reception, held March 9 at the Plains Art Museum, to recognize the North Dakota award winners.

*We take great care to guard the privacy of our children. Pictures and identifying information are only used with the permission of the children themselves and the written permission of their guardians.*



## Resilience, Courage and Success

Elizabeth Muralt is on a mission. Her mission is to share her story with children in the foster care system, and to advocate for policy change that helps foster care youth live more normal lives.

“I want kids in foster care to know they can be successful despite their circumstances. That they can turn negative experiences into positive ones,” Elizabeth said. “I couldn’t imagine a successful future because I had never seen a successful person who grew up in the foster care system. I didn’t know success was attainable for me.”

### Elizabeth’s story

Elizabeth has plenty of experience to draw from when connecting with children in the foster care system. Before entering foster care, Elizabeth and her brother were living in a home where drugs were plentiful, and abuse and neglect were commonplace. They never knew when their mom was going to come home or if there would be food on the table. Elizabeth cared for herself and her little brother, and knew more about the darker side of life than most do in our entire lives.

“We lived this on-the-run lifestyle,” she said. “I was taking care of my brother and always trying to motivate my mom. I’d say to her, ‘Do better. We love you, Mom.’ You just never knew what was going to happen from day to day.”

When Elizabeth was five and her brother, Carl, was three, they were removed from their home after a drug raid. Unfortunately, while removing them from their home

was the right thing to do in the circumstances, it did not put an end to the darkness.

“It was a whole different world,” Elizabeth said. “I was used to being

When the first foster home didn’t work out, Elizabeth and Carl moved in with another foster family who wanted to adopt them both. They did adopt Elizabeth, but



Elizabeth has restored confidence and success is in her grasp!

the mother of the house, and now I had to follow someone else’s rules. It was very scary for me. You just never knew what was going to happen, what problems you would face the next day or where you would live.”

Carl (technically her half brother), wasn’t eligible for adoption because his father was seeking custody. He eventually succeeded and Carl moved out of state to live with his father.

# Treatment

“That was another big life changer for me,” Elizabeth said. “I went from spending all my time with my brother, with him attached to my hip, to being all by myself in this home. My brother had always been a source of strength for me. He is the reason I woke up every single day and wanted to try harder. He was looking up to me. How was I supposed to be his big sister when he lived in another state?”

Elizabeth did her best to keep in touch and be a supportive big sister, but it got harder when, at age 14, her adoptive parents split up. They were unable to care for her so she was placed back into foster care. From then until she turned 18, Elizabeth was moved around a lot. From ages 5-18, she lived in seven different homes (six foster homes and one adoptive home). She also spent several months at the Fargo Youth Home, a Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch residential facility.

The moving, abuse, never having a place to call home, and separation from her brother all took their toll on Elizabeth. Before arriving at the Youth Home, she made some bad choices, and didn't allow herself to get too close to anyone.

“I carried with me all the negative things I heard in home after home,” she said. “‘You're going to be just like your mom. You're never going to make it. You're not smart enough. You can never do something like that.’ I carried that with me and it was just so much easier to fall back into that place.”

Despite that, she had friends, participated in school activities and sports, and had a job. She looked successful, but said it was all a front. Most of her friends and teachers knew nothing about her past or current circumstances, and that was how she liked it. She didn't believe in herself and was pretty sure no one else would either if they knew “the real story.”

## Angels of caring

As you often hear in stories of resilience, Elizabeth crossed paths with some adults who saw her potential and were determined to see her succeed. People at the Youth Home who believed in her, and a high school counselor who challenged her to set some goals, gave Elizabeth the courage to step up her game.

“My counselor sat me down and said, ‘Elizabeth, what are your goals? What do you want to do? Most kids right now are looking at going to college. That's not looking like an option for you if you keep it up. You can do better than this.’”

Those words were just what Elizabeth needed. “I remember sinking a million feet deep into the chair. I had always secretly wanted to go to college. I knew that's what I wanted but I was afraid to say it out loud. Part of making your dreams come true is trusting other people, making connections, and allowing them to help you share and build on that dream.”

Elizabeth knew she hadn't been doing her part. She didn't trust people, and she didn't give them the opportunity to help her. But, her counselor's words came at just the right time, and she was ready to give it a shot.

“Finally I was like, ‘You know what? I am good enough to go to college. I can do this and I'm gonna work until my last breath to make sure I can.’ Once I had that mindset, I became very hungry.”

She put her nose to the grindstone

## Invite us to speak to your congregation or organization

You can share your passion for Ranch kids with your congregation or organization by inviting someone from the Ranch to speak at your meeting, event, church service, or Bible Study. We are available to speak to your group, and would love to tell you more about the Ranch and the amazing children we serve.

Contact Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at 1-800-344-0957 to request a speaker. We will do everything we can to accommodate your request. Having a Ranch speaker allows you to provide hope and healing for even more children as we reach more people with their stories and needs.



and asked Youth Home staff to drive her to school early so she could get extra help from the teachers. She opened herself up to Youth Home staff, like Nicole and Lyndsey, who encouraged her and believed in her potential. She worked hard, asked for help when she needed it, and made the Honor Roll the next semester, for the first time ever.

But she still lived in a group home, and what she wanted more than anything was a family.

“My social worker was telling me there were no foster homes available. Yet, I was seeing other kids leave the Youth Home to live with families.”

Tom Kopp, Residential Treatment Director of the Fargo programming, and Dr. Wayne Martinsen, psychiatrist and Medical Director at the Ranch, both told Elizabeth there was no reason she couldn't live with a family. They showed her how to advocate for herself and pushed her social worker until she found Elizabeth a home.

The first placement after the Youth Home didn't work out, but the last one was with good people who supported her decisions and push her to reach for her dreams.

“Something in me knew I could trust my new foster mom,” Elizabeth said. “I shared with her my dream of going to college and she did everything she could to keep me on that track. I love that she always pushes me to take that extra step, to go that much farther. Still to this day, even though she's no longer my foster mom, to me she is always going to be Mom.”

Elizabeth was accepted into every college she applied to, and is attending college full-time. At the same time, she is constantly searching for opportunities to inspire children in the foster care system to dream big; and to help them understand that their past doesn't have to define their future.

### **Into the Future**

Elizabeth now understands her capacity for success, and is committed to being an example to other foster care youth and to giving them a voice. Last summer, she attended the National Chafee Independent Living Conference in Washington, D.C. While there, she participated in a panel presentation about how children in foster care could be involved in making decisions about their care, both as children in the system and as 18-year-olds transitioning to independent living. She, along with other panel members, also talked about what's working, what's not, and what young men and women can do to advocate for themselves and make changes to improve the foster care system.

She also serves on the North Dakota Youth Board, and was instrumental in creating a panel presentation she and other board members could present to youth currently in foster care, foster parents, and service providers across the state. The presentation focuses on keys to creating a healthy relationship between foster parents and children, and educates youth in placement about the 18+ continuing care program and educational training voucher.

When Elizabeth participates in these organizations and advocates for change, she isn't necessarily looking for big sweeping reform. Sometimes it's the little things that make the most difference. For instance, in North Dakota, it is difficult for children in foster care to get a driver's license. Elizabeth says this put her at a disadvantage. She couldn't drive herself to school... so unless she happened to live in a home or facility that would drive her, she couldn't be involved in before or after school activities. It was also hard to turn 18 without a driver's license or a car and be expected to live on her own.

“You feel stuck, like you're a prisoner of your past and it's not even necessarily your past. It's the past your parents have placed you in,” Elizabeth said. “A lot of youth get stuck there. They feel like that needs to become their reality, their future. That's not the truth. You're not everything that's around you, you're who you choose to be.”

## **May we pray for you?**

If you have a special intention or prayer request, please contact us at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org). We will pray for you during our weekly chapel service on all three campuses, and will also write your prayer in our Prayer Book. If you are ever in Minot, stop by and we'll help you find your prayer.

## Trinity Hospital Makes Christmas a Little More Jolly for Students At Dakota Memorial School, Minot

The children at Dakota Memorial School (DMS), Minot, got quite the Christmas surprise when Santa pulled up to their front doors driving an ambulance to deliver gifts and spread a little Christmas joy. When a student saw the ambulance coming out the window, he announced it to the class, exclaiming, “Santa’s in the ambulance!” Another student quickly replied, “Of course he is, he’s eaten too many Christmas cookies. He probably has type 3 diabetes!” What a fun and exciting surprise for our kids.

Thanks to staff from several of Minot’s Trinity Hospital nursing departments, all 65 of the children at Dakota Memorial School, both residents and Day Students, were blessed with presents.

According to Susann DeForest, the project coordinator and Nurse Manager for Trinity’s Emergency Room, “It was amazing to see how many people wanted to be involved. Even with over 60 children, we had more people wanting to sponsor a child than we did children.”

While opening gifts, there were many powerful moments for both

the Ranch staff and the children they serve. In the midst of tears, one student explained, “I’ve never had a Christmas gift with my name on it.”

Tina DeGree, DMS principal, shared with this student, “You see? You are loved. And you see? You are special and you’re worth every bit of the care that people give to you.”

these gifts and he was visibly upset about it, yelling, “Why are they doing this?!” A Ranch employee used this opportunity to share some encouraging words with him. She said, “Well, these are people who know that the Ranch can’t get you everything that you need, and know that you are working hard in your treatment, and they want things for

you to be better, and they give you their best because they know you’re giving your best.”

What an incredibly generous gift to our children at the Ranch. Amber Marquardt, Director of Residential Services, said she’s been at the Ranch for 13 years, and she’s never seen anything like



Children gather around Santa as he distributes gifts donated by Trinity Hospital staff.

Staff members were able to use this opportunity and many more like it as a tangible representation of all the people who care for the children at the Ranch. Another student was overwhelmed by all that was happening while opening gifts. He couldn’t understand why complete strangers would give all of

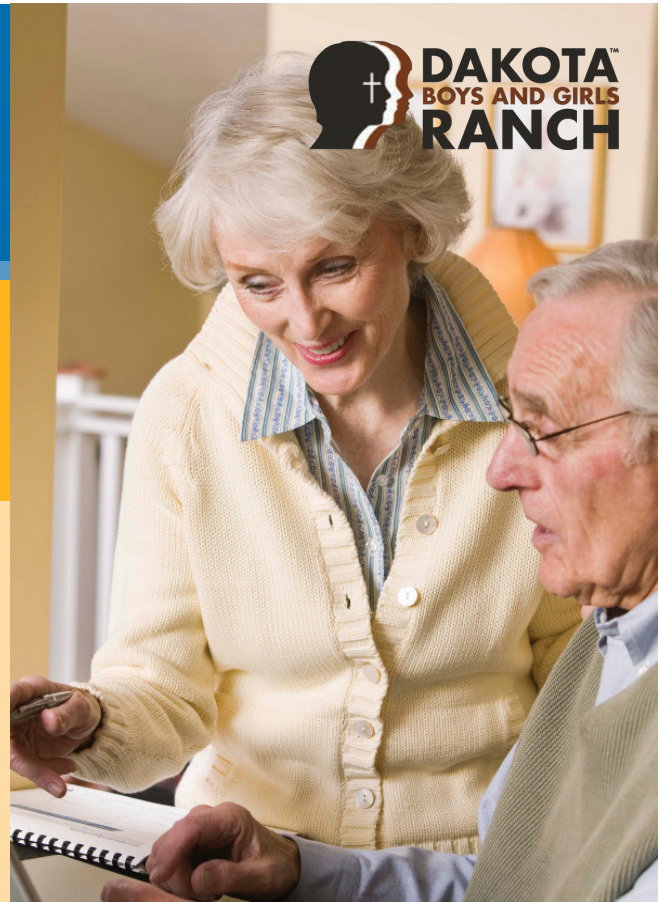
this — not only in the amount of gifts, but in the joy and the utter sense of freedom to just be kids, that the children received. “Many of the kids who come to the Ranch have never experienced love like this and it was a joyful thing to witness,” Amber said.



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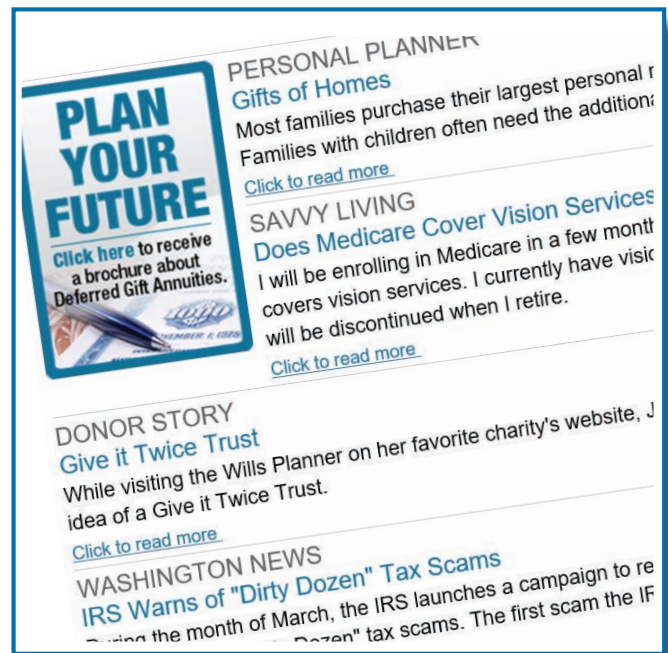
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# Friends of the Ranch

## Living Their Faith

### And championing the ministry of the Ranch



George and Eleanor  
Krueger

George and Eleanor Krueger, Monroe, MI, are well aware of the traumas many children endure. In George's 30-year career in law enforcement and Eleanor's 44 years as a school teacher, they both saw firsthand the impact abuse and neglect had on children in their community. Now that they are both retired, they continue to minister to troubled children by supporting Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch both financially and with their time.

George and Eleanor learned about the Ranch more than ten years ago. Someone from the Ranch did a presentation at a Bible class in their church and left some packets explaining more about the ministry. George picked one up, read the stories in *Ranch Voice* about some of the kids, and told Eleanor about the Ranch ministry. After contacting the Ranch to learn more, they decided the Ranch was a place they wanted to support.

When George inquired about the Ranch at that time, the thing that stood out was how the Ranch stewarded donor dollars. "I was assured that everything you donate goes strictly to the area you donate to. We want to support an agency that is going to fulfill its obligations."

George and Eleanor contributed to the expansion of the Fargo Ranch campus, and came to North Dakota for the dedication in 2016 when the

buildings were complete.

"We were impressed," George said. "It was very moving to see what the Ranch had done. It was mind-opening to go through the facilities and the classrooms. One of the students came with our group and explained what happens in each of the classrooms. Then we went to the program in the chapel and being able to see and hear the girls [sing] really stood out."

The motivation behind George and Eleanor's giving is their faith. Since their marriage in 1960, they've both been active members of Grace Lutheran Church in Monroe. "As Christians, I feel that giving is expected of us. I think the example of your faith shows you're following God's command—doing what He expects of you," George said.

At the same time, George understands why children come to the Ranch angry at God, or not believing in Him. "When you hear how they come here, they really do not have a love for God because of what's happened to them. You can understand why they feel the way they do."

The Christian foundation of the Ranch is important to the Kruegers, and they feel blessed to support a ministry that introduces children to a loving God.

"During our visit, we saw such support for the children. I think that's what it's all about—being able to meet the needs of the residents, and show them what God is doing for them through the people helping them. That's something that will stick with them forever."



# Honey—a Symbol of God’s Love and Presence

*Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and healing to the bones. Proverbs 16:24*

Honey has a long history at the Ranch. In the 60s, 70s and 80s, the Ranch owned its own bees. Kids and staff cared for the bees, and then harvested, strained, bottled and boxed the honey, before shipping it out to Ranch donors all over the country.

While the Ranch no longer owns its own bees, honey remains an important part of Ranch culture. We purchase honey from local bee farmers, and Ranch kids help box it up for donors. It has become a symbol of God’s enduring love and presence in our lives, and in the lives of the precious children who come through our doors.

In addition to sending honey to Ranch donors each year, we operate a Honey Sunday program that allows churches and organizations across the country to provide hope and healing for the children at the Ranch, AND raise funds for their group. Ranch Foundation staff send Honey Sunday organizers, like George and Eleanor Krueger, everything they need to hold and promote a Honey Sunday. The organizers collect the money, names, and addresses, and we send the honey to the home address of every person who makes a donation in exchange for a bottle of honey. We suggest a \$10 per bottle donation—with the organization keeping 30% and sending the remaining 70% to the Ranch.



If you are interested in holding a Honey Sunday in your church or organization, please call the Ranch at 1-800-344-0957.

Over the years, George has become a champion for the Ranch. Every month, he pulls a story from Ranch Voice, condenses it, and submits it for inclusion in the weekly church bulletin. He is passionate about keeping his fellow congregants aware of and committed to making a difference for kids at the Ranch.

In addition to their support of the Fargo building project, the Kruegers support the Ranch Horse and Spiritual Life programs; and provide winter coats and hats for kids through the Christmas catalog they receive from the Ranch each October. They also, along with friends Roland and Mary Webb, hold Honey Sunday events (see sidebar on right for more information) at their church. Last fall, their Honey Sunday raised \$1,129 to provide for the spiritual needs of Ranch kids.

George is not shy about his support of the kids at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, and he encourages his fellow worshippers to join him. George was talking about the Ranch at a recent Men’s Club meeting at his church, when one of the other men took all the money out of his wallet, placed it on the table, and challenged everyone to match it. They collected \$160 on the spot to support kids at the Ranch!

Through their giving and support of the Ranch, George and Eleanor not only provide hope and healing for hurting children, but they encourage others around them to do the same.

1 John 4:16 tells us “And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.”

George and Eleanor live the truth of these words.

## Blessed, Grateful, and Thankful



**By Lisa Cole,  
Development  
Officer**

When I think about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, three words come to mind—blessed, grateful and thankful. I am blessed to have been a part of the Ranch family for almost 44 years. I am grateful for Ranch staff who work one-on-one with these children each day to help them heal and find hope. And most of all, I am thankful for the wonderful donor family that prays for and supports these amazing children.

I've spent my whole career at the Ranch, so I've only known Ranch donors, but co-workers who have worked in other nonprofits tell me our donors are extra special. Which I have always secretly thought! Your passion for our ministry, your generosity, and your willingness to share our children's stories are awe-inspiring.

As I write this, I have just come from Mesa and the Donor Appreciation Luncheons we hold in Arizona each February. This year, we had over 200 people at our luncheons in Mesa and Sun City West. The highlight of this year's luncheons, as it is every year, was the former resident, Haysel, sharing her story. (You learned about Haysel in the last issue of Ranch Voice.)

The Arizona luncheons all started in the 1970's with a conversation between Larry Knutson, the head of the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation

at the time, and foundation board member, Fred Fiechtner. The Ranch had a large contingent of donors in Arizona, especially during the winter months when people migrated there from many northern states, and they were looking for a way to stay connected. The first couple of years they met in a church basement. As the event grew, they moved first to a restaurant and then to a venue with a large banquet room and ample parking.

Much of the growth can be attributed to Duane Kiefel, another board member around this time, and his wife, Luann. They held several fish fries over a two-month period every winter. They invited their friends and neighbors, as well as current Ranch donors. In addition to providing attendees with a delicious meal, the Kiefels told them about the Ranch and invited them to attend the luncheon.

Then, five years ago a group of Ranch donors who live or winter in Arizona came together to create an Arizona Steering Committee. They meet 3-4 times per year with the sole purpose of sharing the Ranch story with friends and family in Arizona. Steering Committee members spread the word about the luncheons, invite their friends and neighbors, and volunteer at the luncheons. It is a great group of people, and since I moved to Arizona full-time in 2016, I have developed lasting friendships with many of them.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the children at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Please keep our children in your prayers as you go about your days.

In the words of Brooklynn, a 15-year-old Ranch resident who is profiled on page 2, "Don't give up on us. We need you."

If you are interested in attending one of our Arizona luncheons next year, please contact me at 701-721-2425 or [l.cole@dakotaranch.org](mailto:l.cole@dakotaranch.org). I can add you to our mailing list and make sure to invite you next year.

### Foundation and Corporate Grants

#### American Crystal Sugar Company

\$5,000, STEM Supplies, Fargo

#### Rupert P. Dunklau Foundation

\$30,000, Spiritual Life

#### Great River Energy

\$600, AED Simulators, Bismarck

#### NFL Play 60

\$1,520, Dakota Memorial School—Minot

#### Otto Bremer Trust

\$135,000, Point of Sale System, Thrift Stores

#### Kiwanis Club of Fargo

\$4,000, Mattresses, Fargo



The prayers and faith of donors like you are a source of healing and hope—transforming those of us here now, and the thousands who will come after us. He blesses us so that we might be a blessing to others. Thank you for your love of our children.

If you have any questions about the Ranch, feel free to contact Lisa Cole, or any of the people shown below, at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).



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# Memorials/Honorariums

Unless otherwise designated, donations you give in memory or in honor of your loved ones will be used to help build, maintain, and upkeep chapel facilities on all Ranch campuses. Your gift to the Ranch will live on through the children at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, by helping us teach them about Jesus' unending love. For more information about making memorial and honorarium gifts to the Ranch, contact Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@DakotaRanch.org](mailto:info@DakotaRanch.org).

## Memorials

October 1, 2018 – March 13, 2019

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George W. Fick

ANDERSON, JUANITA

LaMae Pettit

ARCHER, GRANT

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Merle & Ethel Peterson

BERG, LYNN

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BERNSDORF, DARRELL

Clarice Bernsdorf

BERTSCH, KENNETH

Rosella Debele

Richard & Lucille Gust

BIERMAN, BEVERLY

Rodger & Elvera Bierman,

Bret & Sandy Bierman,

Allen & Maria Spear,

Virgil & Teri Determan,

10 grandkids,

19 great-grandkids

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Joyce & Sharon Knudsvig

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Joy Ryan

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Beverly A. Blumhagen

BOHM, DAN & DON

Hazelle DuBois

BONSNES, DR. JOAN

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BRADY, CORKY

Jane McCabe

BRANDT, DAVID

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Dolores Simdorn

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Delores Maier
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Jo Ann Meyer
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Erika Stonitsch
- KEENAGHAN, KEVIN  
Susan Helder
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Pam Smith
- KESLER, MARGIE  
Richard Gronlund
- KIDDER, ELAINE  
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- KLOCOW, IRMA F.  
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- KNUDSON, GLENN P.  
Wiley & Richie Butler
- KOEPP, CARL L.  
Dawn Reichlin
- KRAUSE, SKIP  
Dale & Laurie Dannewitz
- KUEBLER, GEORGE H.  
Esther Kuebler
- KUNZ, MARY  
Elaine Kunz  
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- LANGER, REV. PAUL  
Sharon Langer Rowe
- LARSON, HERZELL & MARGARET  
Phillip D. Lovchik
- LARSON, KEITH  
Marlys Lindgren
- LARSON, SUSAN J.  
Robert O. Anderson  
Joel Erickson
- LEE, BEVERLEE  
Lisa Cole  
Loren & Lucy Larson  
Rob & Vicki Reiner
- LEE, INGEBOG & ANDERS  
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Peter Lee
- LEHNER, PATRICIA  
Adrian & Colleen Fitchner
- LEINEN, JAMES  
Gerald & Mary Meyer
- LENNIE, ALLYN  
Joyce Henke  
Delores Maier
- LENZ, ERMA  
Robert Lenz
- LEONHARDT, ROGER  
Delores Maier
- LEPPKE, ARLENE M.  
Linda O. Hansen
- LILLIBRIDGE, CHARLES  
Karen Fjellanger
- LINDGREN, JOHN  
Marlys Lindgren
- LINDLAUF, JUDY  
Jackie & Dottie Nelson
- LIPPERT, SCOTT  
Armand & Judy Barbot
- LOFTESNES, HOWARD  
James & Sharon Kunka
- LOPEZ, ALICE  
Lester & Dianne DeJean
- LUND, BETTY MAE  
Robert L. Rostad
- MAGWIRE, DELORES & RICHARD  
Howard Magwire
- MAJALA, AUDREY  
Sharon Grondahl
- MALLINGER, GEORGE R.  
Elmer & Marilyn Frank
- MARAGOS, TED & PAUL  
Steve & Gloria Maragos
- MARTIN, MILTON C.  
Theresa Martin
- MARTIN, VERNICE  
Wilbert & Delores Kunz
- MASSETH, DON  
Lisa Fortney
- MCCULLOCH, VERYLE  
Barbara Rude
- MCFERRAN, DR. ROBERT J.  
Betty J. McFerran
- MCINTEE, RAY & MARIAN  
Geri McIntee
- MCINTIRE, MARIE  
Arvad McIntire
- MEIER, DOUGLAS  
Ellen Meier
- MELAUDER, IRENE  
Joan Fiechtner
- MEYER, DOUGLAS & ELLA  
Wilhelm Meyer
- MIELKE, RICHARD  
Donald & Carol Urbach
- MILLER, ELOISE  
Audrey Iverson
- MILLER, WILLIAM & ADELINE  
Donald & Eleanor Miller
- MOEN, ETHAN  
Judy Barbot
- MOHRMAN, RUTH  
Don & Arlene Schumacher  
John & Diane Swanson
- MOLTHAN, EVILENA  
Melva Smith
- MOLTZEN, LEROY  
Millie Bueligen  
Delores Maier  
Evelyn Schwagler
- MUSCH, MARTH  
Linda Hill
- MUTH, JOYCE  
Kimberly Herman
- NELSON, CHERYL  
Anita Petersen
- NELSON, CLAYTON H.  
Don & Deanne Kirsch
- NELSON, CORRINE  
Clarice Mosolf  
James & Rosalie Ringstrom



NELSON, JONATHAN  
Delbert & Janelle Fortin

NELSON, RICHARD P.  
Anita Petersen

NESHEM, RONALD J.  
George W. Fick

NESS, ALOIS  
Paul & Patricia Bretheim

NEUENFELD, ROBERT  
Rita & Ron St. Croix

NEUMAN, RAY  
Lynda Neuman

NEWKIRK, MERVIN  
Eileen Newkirk

NIEMANN, DONNA  
Clarice Mosolf  
James Puppe

NIEWOEHNER, MAE CAROL  
Richard & Lucille Gust

NOHL, MARIA  
Bill & Della Ann Hefter

NORTON, KEVIN  
Millie Bueligen  
Delores Maier

O'BRIEN, SHIRLEY  
Rosella Debele

ODEGARD, RUSSEL L.  
Merle & Patricia Nylander

OLSON, NATALIE  
Mandie Blikre  
Gretchen Carlson  
Trisha Carlson  
Maria Olson  
Paula Strom

OLSON, NICK  
Geri Olson

OLSON, WADE  
Ann Olson

PARIZEK, RONALD "SNUFFY"  
Doris Skarphol

PATTERSON, ELDON "BUS"  
Anonymous

PAULSON, ARNOLD  
Richard & Myrna Thorsell

PEARSON, FRANK  
Barbara Rude

PENNER, SHIRLEY  
Marlys Haiby

PERHUS, TRACY  
Arlys Torgerson

PETERSON, BENITA  
Dwain Peterson

PETERSON, SIDNEY J.  
Ruby Peterson

PETTERSON, CAROL  
Bob & Jaunell Roever

PIATZ, OTTILIA "TILLIE"  
Chris & Jean Hansen

POPPE, JAYNE  
Linda O. Hansen

RAMER, WILLIAM W.  
Beth Simmons, Theresa  
Simmons & Rebekah Ramer

RATYNSKI, JAMES  
Robert & Grace Ann Swanson

REICHBERG, ADELINE  
Steve & Cynthia Richter

RENZ, GEORGE & FLORENCE  
Harley Schmidt

ROUTLEDGE, DELORES  
Joel Erickson

ROSSOW, REV. E.J.  
John & Irene Berkley

RUDOLPH, AUGUST & MARY  
Robert J. Rudolph

RUFF, CLIFFORD  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

RUUD, JOANN  
David & Sharon Miller

SALZSIEDER, KENRAD  
Ed & Gertrude Anderson

SAMARD, ARLEN  
Caroline Zuhlke & Family

SANDAU, FLOYD E.  
George W. Fick

SAUCK, ROSANN  
Anita Peterson

SCHMID, ROBERT  
Jean Gonzales

SCHMIDT, GLORIA  
Harley Schmidt

SCHMIDT, RODNIE  
Dale & Laurie Dannewitz  
Joy Ryan

SCHOUSEK, NATHANIEL  
Howard & Carole Schmidt

SCHOUSEK, ZACHARY  
Howard & Carole Schmidt

SCHRAM, RON  
Martin & Shirley Hannemann

SCHROEDER, STEVEN  
Nolan & Eileen Bode

SCHRUPP, GILMORE  
Don & Arlene Schumacher

SCHUETTE, ROGER  
Martin & Shirley Hannemann

SCHULTZ, LORETTA  
Jenece & Glenn Mitchell

SCHULTZ, SHIRLEY  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Flechsig

SCHULZ, HARVEY  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

SCHUMANN, PAT  
Judy & Robert Rice

SCHURY, RODNEY E.  
Ruth Schury

SCOTT, EVERETT HARPER  
Clarence & Maryann Frazer  
Diana Frazer

SHARPE, BILL  
Gale Sharpe

SHUEY, MICHAEL & JARED  
Willis & Janene Shuey  
Renee & Steve Stauter

SIETSEMA, ARLENE  
Anita Peterson

SIMONTSCH, MARY  
Margaret Crummy

SIMPSON, KIM  
Bruce & Pam Smith

SIVERTSON, JANET  
Coleen Sivertson

SLATER, HENRIETTA  
Elizabeth Ravenscroft

SOMMERER, CHARLENE  
Jim & Betty Sommerer  
and Children

SPECKLE, JOHN A. "JACK"  
John & Diane Swanson

SPEIDEL, CECIL  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Carow

STEPHANSEN-MARTIN, MICHAEL  
Bill & Kris Heller

STEVENSON, EULA  
Ruth Holtkamp

STIBBE, BILL  
James Puppe

STOCKER, DOLORES  
Diane Heagle

# Memorials/Honorariums

STOERING, DONALD H.  
George W. Fick

STREITZ, DON  
Joy Ryan

STUTESMAN, ROBERT  
Fran Lessard

SUING, CINDY  
Melvin & Betty Wilson

SYMKOWSKI, ELIZABETH  
Elmer & Marilyn Frank

TANBERG, JEFF  
Jo Ashley  
Jeffrey & Linda Brunner  
Adolph & Elaine Jundt  
Tamera Larson

THIEL, SAM  
Glenn & Cathi Heuchert

THORSEN, LILY  
Rachel Dancy

TOEPKE, SCOTT  
Millie Bueligen

TOLLEFSON, KELLY  
LaMae Pettit

TUMA, ROBERT F.  
Elizabeth J. Tuma

URBACH, REV. DONALD  
Timothy Alsin

VANDERHOEF, AIDEN  
Mitzie Nay

VANDERLINDE, RICH  
Steve & Paulette Erhard

VASEK, GERALD & GERTRUDE  
Gary Vasek

VENBURG, BENA FAYE  
Greg Venburg & Family

VIESTENZ, RUTH  
Carol Grieger

VINJE, RALPH  
Mary Glatt

WALKER, EVELYN  
Karl & Kathleen Newman

WALKER, KENT  
Les & Sue Roberts

WEBER, DAVID  
William & Janice Taylor

WEBER, RUSSEL  
William & Janice Taylor

WEISE, GEORGE J.  
Olga L. Weise

WERNER, JULENE  
Muriel Juers  
Leeun Werner & Family

WIEDRICH, AGNES  
Richard & Lucille Gust

WILKE, WENDY  
Dottie & Jackie Nelson

WILLERT, MAVIS  
Jim & Sherry Heyer  
Joy Ryan  
Steven & Karen Schmit

WIXO, TONY  
Richard & Myrna Thorsell

WOELTGE, KRIS  
Rev. & Mrs. John  
Schildwachter

WOLDT, DON  
Bud & Sheila Gerry

WOLKENHAUER, ALFRED  
Clarice Bernsdorf

WOODS, ALLEN  
James & Sharon Kunka

WYMAN, JEANNE  
Richard & Lucille Gust

ZARNDT, GEORGE  
Don & Arlene Schumacher

ZIEGELMAN, RAYMOND  
Shirley Hoefs

ZUEHLKE, JOSHUA  
Carol Urbach

ZUEHLKE, MELVIN  
Alan Zuehlke  
Drew Zuehlke

## Honorariums

October 1, 2018 - March 13, 2019

ALL THOSE WHO WORK WITH  
TROUBLED YOUTH  
Fr. Neil Pfeifer

ALL OUR KIDS AND STAFF  
Harley & Cheryl Haug

ALL OUR KIDS  
Minko Construction

THE AWESOME KIDS I WORK  
WITH  
Katie Mittelstadt

KIDS EVERYWHERE  
Rev. Patrick Loree

OUR GRANDCHILDREN  
Sandra & Roger Malm

RANCH STAFF  
Richard & Rose Shorma

CHET & MANDY ANDERSON  
Tootie & John Larson

JOSIAH & BROCK ANDERSON  
Carol Anderson

MICHELLE ANDERSON  
Cain Kaiser

AMY AMBUEHL  
Alex Ohman

MARCIA BARTOK  
William A. Fariss

BETTY BROWN  
Alex Ohman

CHRISTOPHER CLAYPOOLE  
Thomas Claypoole

MICHAEL CLAYPOOLE  
Thomas Claypoole

PETER & CAROLYN CLAYPOOLE  
Thomas Claypoole

ANNE COMPERE  
Douglas Frazer

WADE & JAMIE COTA  
Tootie & John Larson

DARIN  
Sandra Braaten

AMY, HOLLY & KATY DURHAM  
Thomas Claypoole

LAKES FAMILY EYECARE  
Rochelle Becker

PASTOR DOUG FLEISCHFRESSER  
Ramona Warman

ELIZABETH FLEGEL  
Devin Murphy

SONYA & WARREN FRIED  
Thomas & Donna Linnertz

WOODROW GARNER  
LuAnn Martin

DANIEL GEHLE'S 80TH  
BIRTHDAY  
Harold & Janet Gehle

JUDY GIBBONS LONG  
Alex Ohman

STEVEN GLATT  
Devin Murphy

CALEB & HANNAH GOODNIGHT  
Tootie & John Larson



FATHER BRIAN GROSS  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Kolberg  
CHARLOTTE HAUG  
Harley Haug  
THE HAUGEBOG FAMILY  
Heathyr Haugeberg  
NORMA HENNING  
Steven M. Chapman  
BUD & BETTY HESTERMANN  
Rick, Tom, & Dino  
Hestermann  
CARL & DONNA HOLL  
Michael Holl  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Miluka  
DONNA HOLL  
Mark Holl  
SHEILA JEZIORSKI  
Thomas Claypoole  
BLAINE CHARLES JOHNER  
Sue Miller  
ELIZABETH JUNKER  
Beverly Janowski  
DAN & KATY KELLER  
Thomas Claypoole  
MELISSA KLEIN & FAMILY  
Sue Miller  
GLORIA & MARV KNOLL  
Marilyn Twete  
TOM KOPP  
Peg Gilbertson  
TOM & KELLY KOPP  
Nan Carlisle  
VERNON & ELIZABETH KUENE  
Laura Montgomery  
TYLER & ERIKA LANNOYE  
WEDDING  
Donna Lannoye  
ALAN & GIL LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
BILL & COLLEEN LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
HALEY LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
ISABEL LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
JEFF & KRISTI LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
JOHN & TOOTIE LARSON  
Alan Larson

JOHNY LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
MATT & KRISTA LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
PAUL & BECKY LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
TODD & JUDY LARSON  
Tootie & John Larson  
SHAYLA LEINEN  
Alex Ohman  
WALT & PAT LEMKE'S 60TH  
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
Steve & Tammy Lemke  
DUSTIN LIEN  
Crystal Bjone  
RHONDA LIVEDALEN & FAMILY  
Sue Miller  
DR. WAYNE MARTINSEN  
Kevin Kaiser Family  
LINDA MEDHUS  
Alex Ohman  
JOHN & BESS MANESIS  
Mary Manesis  
BECKI & JOSEPH NEFCY &  
FAMILY  
Thomas Claypoole  
NICOLE NORDSTROM  
Alex Ohman  
TAMMY NOTEBOOM  
Lisa Moir  
Alex Ohman  
FRED OTTEN  
John & Denise Batcher  
JALLISON PAUL  
Amy Paul  
TED & ROSE PAUR  
Josh Paur  
KENRAD & MARY PEDERSON  
Beth Baumstark  
BRIAN PETERS & FAMILY  
Sue Miller  
THE QUEEN OF HEARTS  
Jodi Iglesias  
JOY RYAN  
Alex Ohman  
Quin Seiler  
William Simmons  
Sandra Thiel

KRIS RYAN  
Colleen Abrams  
Taisa Haluszka  
Alex Ohman  
Mary Waller  
MARK & JESSICA SCHALLHORN  
& FAMILY  
Thomas Claypoole  
TIM SCHALLHORN & FAMILY  
Thomas Claypoole  
HELEN SCHATZ  
Cherie Sanstead  
HILARY SORENSON  
Alex Ohman  
RON & BARB STENSGARD  
Tootie & John Larson  
WES & GLADYS STORM  
JoAnn Grilley  
CRAIG SWENSON  
Heidi Swenson  
AMANDA THOMAS  
Cynthia J. Eggl  
Jill Eggl Lighting Design  
Studio LLC  
ROXY & FRED THOMPSON  
Marilyn Twete  
BRASSY BIT TRACK  
Cadie Craddock  
THE GREG VASEK FAMILY  
Gary Vasek  
DAN & VIVIAN VETTER  
Nancy Green  
GARY VETTER  
Mike Vetter  
CHRISTY WILKIE  
Alex Ohman  
GAIL & TOM WISDOM  
Marilyn Twete  
LOGAN WITTY  
Michelle Witty  
DALE W. YOUNG  
Mary, Dale & Jim Hansen  
MARCELLA ZABEL  
Mark & Connie Zabel  
JANET ZINKE  
Alex Ohman



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

Change Service Requested

Art and math come together in the celebration of Pi Day by the Minot DMS elementary students.



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](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)

Main Switchboard: 1-800-593-3098

Foundation: 1-800-344-0957

