

# THE RANCH VOICE

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

Winter 2023



Anna Nieuwsma, a Geologist at Barr Engineering Firm, shared her rock and mineral collection with students at Dakota Memorial School, Bismarck.



[www.DakotaRanch.org](http://www.DakotaRanch.org)  
1-800-344-0957

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# Message from Our President/CEO



Joy Ryan, President/CEO  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

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DakotaRanch.org

Dear Ranch Friends,

It is hard to truly explain the caliber of people who work at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. They are committed to helping children heal from the traumas of the world. Each person knows our mission is “to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.” From our truck drivers to our Psychiatrist/Medical Director, they are united in that cause.

One of our longest-term Ranchers, at 35 years of service, was Jim Vetter, our Vice President of Treatment Services and Government Relations. He came to the Ranch shortly after finishing college and flourished in every role, opportunity, and challenge the Ranch put before him. His mantra was, “It’s always all about the kids.”

Jim passed away this October. I have chosen to share an excerpt of his life story with you as an example of the people you have working on your behalf through your prayers and support.

**James Michael Vetter**, 58, died unexpectedly but peacefully in his sleep at home on October 13, 2023. Known as “Jim” by family, friends, and coworkers, his servant heart touched many throughout his life.

Jim was born in Wishek, ND and spent his formative years on the family farm in Napoleon milking cows, making and hauling square bales, and fixing a lot of fence. He graduated from Napoleon High School in 1983. He attended and graduated from NDSU in 1987 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and Business. In 2001, Jim earned a Master’s Degree in Healthcare Administration and Management from Central Michigan University.

Hardworking and ambitious, Jim worked his way through college helping on the farm and working road construction. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch discovered Jim in 1988 and hired him as a live-in house parent for at-risk youth at their Minot facility. Jim served the Ranch in several different capacities during the last 35 years. He worked his way up to Vice President of Treatment Services and Government Relations, a position he held until his death. In 2022, Jim received the prestigious Walt Odegaard Leadership Award, presented by the North Dakota Association of Nonprofit Organizations (NDANO).

Jim was involved with many community boards and committees including the ND Association of Residential Child Care Facilities, the Board of Directors of Missouri Valley Coalition for Homeless People (MVCHP), the ND Dual-Status Youth Initiative Committee, the Bismarck State College Human Services Advisory Committee, and the ND Association of Nonprofit Organization’s Public Policy Committee. He was also appointed by Governor Doug Burgum to serve on the Governor’s Prevention Advisory Council on Drugs and Alcohol (GPAC). Jim’s family asked that all memorials be made in his name to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

It’s people like Jim who devote their lives to our mission that make our work possible. It’s people like you that make it possible for people like Jim to do that work. Thank you.

We mourn our loss, but know without doubt, that Jim is with His Lord, the Lord he loved and served.

Please keep all the children and staff of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch in your prayers.

In His love,



## A life transformed: Young man grabs the offered hand

Jerome Schneider is a handsome young farmer full of energy and light. He is passionate about farming and ranching and while he doesn't claim to have everything figured out, he is proud of the man he has become.

Jerome's life began on a fourth-generation farm in western North Dakota. When his parents separated and divorced shortly after his birth, Jerome was caught in the middle.

"When I was three or four, my mom took off and ran with me," Jerome said. "She used me as a pawn with my dad and eventually put me in foster care."

Jerome lived in a few different foster homes before moving back to the ranch with his dad and grandma, but he didn't know how to reconnect with his dad and said his behavior was uncontrollable.

"I didn't know how to cope with anything," he said. "So, I just bundled everything up and didn't talk about it. I talked back and wouldn't do anything my dad asked me to do. I had a quick fuse that got me in trouble."

When Jerome got to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at age 13, he was ready for a change.

"It was raining the first day I arrived at the Ranch. I'll never forget that day. Everyone was so friendly, and that was something I wasn't used to," Jerome said. "When you are abused and put down, you

always assume you are going to get judged, but that didn't happen at the Ranch."

"I knew at the end of the day my life was going to change for the better. This was going to be a new adventure, and it was going to be rocky, but I was safe and had a place to officially kind of call home."

One of Jerome's greatest gifts is his ability to accept help when it's offered to him. When he accepted and embraced the help he received at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, he learned an important lesson about not having to deal with everything on his own.

"I grabbed a hand when you guys offered it to me," Jerome said. "I learned to cope with my insides and not bundle everything up. I learned it's okay to move on and not hold onto the past. I learned how to take a breath and stop fighting myself and everyone else. I learned to admit I screwed up and that saying that doesn't make me a small person."

Most importantly, Jerome learned about Jesus. He recalls Miss Martha, a spiritual life specialist when he was at the Ranch, saying, "I see you are scared. But you know, there is one person who loves you more than anything, and that's God. He will always be there for you."



You can't see it behind his sunglasses, but Jerome's eyes sparkle when he talks about farming, his tractor, and the man he has become.

Jerome said, “Miss Martha and all of you guys showed me I don’t have to be afraid of believing in God or praying whenever I want. Who cares if people judge you? It’s okay to pray, and it’s okay to know He is there.”

While at the Ranch, Jerome realized that the things his mother said about his dad not caring weren’t true.

“My dad made the effort. He was up there visiting me every other weekend, sometimes more. Even through harvest and when he was working for someone else, he made time to come and see me,” Jerome said. “The Ranch helped me see the truth about my dad. I still thank him today for making the effort to talk to me and visit me, even when I was mad at him.”

Jerome is certain he’d have dropped out of school and would be in prison or dead if it wasn’t for the people at the Ranch who showed him a different way to approach life.

“I didn’t like reading, but Mr. Miller, the English teacher, made reading fun. I got into it and enjoyed reading adventure books,” Jerome said. “You guys helped me graduate.”

When Jerome completed treatment and it was time to go home, he insisted that he finish school at the Ranch. “I wanted to graduate, and I knew staying here was the only way I wouldn’t drop out. I needed that one-on-one with teachers. I wanted to try to better myself and not deal with peer pressure.”

Jerome’s dream was to farm and ranch eventually, but when he

graduated from Dakota Memorial School, the Ranch’s on-campus school, he had the confidence to explore the world a bit before settling down. He received his Firefighter Type 2 certification and fought wildfires for a couple of years in Montana.

He then worked as a security guard before moving back to the farm, where he now farms with his dad and brothers and works for a neighboring farmer. “We run about 180 Red Angus and farm about 950 acres of cropland,” Jerome said.

Jerome said he is still overcoming a short fuse and that some days it gets the best of him.

“Sometimes I think I know everything and start telling people what to do,” Jerome said. “But, I’m a firm believer in maturity. The older I get the easier it is to manage my temper and to let people tell me what to do. Most days, I can let things go.”

“At the Ranch, I learned it’s okay to have good days and bad days, and how you handle the bad days is what really counts at the end.”

Jerome wants to help kids, at the Ranch and elsewhere, by sharing his experiences.

“Everyone deserves to know the good that can come from being at the Ranch and from letting people help you,” he said. “And thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

We take great care to guard the privacy of our children. The pictures you see of Ranch children are only used with the permission of the children themselves and the written permission of their guardians.

## BNSF Railway Foundation Supports CTE at the Ranch

The BNSF Railway Foundation recently awarded a grant to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to support Career and Technical Education (CTE) at its on-campus school, Dakota Memorial School (DMS).

DMS offers on-campus CTE classes where children like Jerome learn real-world skills like carpentry, finance and accounting, welding, design, small engine repair, and more.

The grant will allow DMS to upgrade the computers and software used in many of its CTE classes.

Many of our students haven’t experienced success in traditional school settings. Todd Fjeldahl, who has taught at the Ranch for 29 years, said, “So many of our kids have low self-esteem. They feel belittled and not worth anything. Much of what we do in CTE classes is build kids’ confidence. Even if they can’t become 100% proficient in an area, we are planting seeds.”

CTE classes make a difference for Ranch kids, both academically and socially.

Wayne, a former student who took many CTE classes, said, “I’m learning how to work with others and how to communicate. I’m not the greatest at explaining things, but I can show you how to do something. That’s one of the great things about shop class. We learn how to fix things, learn how to explain it, and then show others how to do it.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What differentiates Dakota Memorial School from other schools?



**By Tina DeGree,  
Superintendent/  
Director of  
Education  
Dakota  
Memorial School**

Dakota Memorial School (DMS), located on the Ranch's Minot, Bismarck, and Fargo campuses, provides a unique Trauma-sensitive learning culture that gives students an opportunity to experience learning in a new way. In addition to educating students who live in one of our residential facilities, our Day Program educates students from our geographic region, who live at home but need additional support at school.

For most of our students, this is the first time they have had the opportunity to experience school success. They walk into our school burdened with fear: fear of repeating bad grades and/or loss of credits, fear of being unknown or ignored by everyone around them, fear of being sent home due to inappropriate behaviors, and fear of being seen as a failure.

Our teachers work with students to turn these fears into new academic and study skills, new social and emotional skills, new strategies to manage inappropriate behaviors, and new ways to feel and experience school success. At Dakota Memorial School, we turn our students' fears into hope. Here are a few of the questions raised by parents who are

considering day student enrollment for their child.

### **Who do I talk to if I am interested in enrolling my child at Dakota Memorial School?**

Dakota Memorial School is a private school that receives tuition from public schools in North Dakota and, more recently, Minnesota. You must include your child's current school in the conversation about DMS and if it's a good fit. If you are interested in enrolling your child in DMS, start the conversation by talking to your child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) case manager or the school principal.

### **What types of students does DMS typically serve?**

Dakota Memorial School primarily serves students who face academic, behavioral, or social-emotional challenges. This includes students with diverse backgrounds and needs, such as those experiencing learning disabilities, trauma, or disruptions in their education.

### **Will my child's current IEP follow them to DMS?**

Yes, we will work with you and your child's home school to carry out your child's IEP while they attend DMS. As a transition school, we concentrate on building skills so your child can return to their home school.

### **How are families kept informed of how their child is doing in school?**

Family communication is a priority at DMS. A member of the school

staff is assigned to each family to ensure they receive regular updates about their child's progress. You might receive multiple contacts from DMS during the week—where we'll share your child's successes and struggles. We know that celebrating success is an important part of learning and something many of our students have not experienced. We are committed to showing every student at DMS that they are capable of learning—and we love to share their successes with parents.

### **Do you have to be a resident of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to attend Dakota Memorial School?**

No. Our Day Program enrolls students who live at home but need the additional support and the environment we can provide. When necessary, day students can transition to residential treatment, and residents often stay at DMS to ease their transition out of treatment and back to their home school.

### **Will Dakota Memorial School support my child if they use Dakota Family Services providers for therapy?**

Yes, many of our Day Students receive outpatient mental health services from Dakota Family Services clinics located on our campuses in Minot and Fargo. DMS and DFS work together so students can attend appointments during the school day, and we make families aware of the services available.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Who do I contact if I would like a tour of the school?**

Go to <https://www.dakotaranch.org/education-facility/> to find contact information for our Minot, Bismarck, and Fargo campuses. Our Coordinator of Student Services will set up a time that works for your family.

## **Do classes at Dakota Memorial School count towards high school graduation?**

Yes. DMS is a nationally accredited school and meets all requirements set by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. Although DMS is a transition school with most students transitioning back to their home school, some students graduate from DMS each year.

## **Can DMS help my child graduate if they are behind in their credits?**

High school students enrolling at DMS typically are about a semester behind their peers. DMS supports credit recovery options online, after school, one-to-one teacher support, or community-based opportunities. We are proud of the work we do to help students with credit recovery so they can graduate with their class.

## **Do you have a waiting list?**

We sometimes have a waiting list for Day Program enrollment. If there is a waiting list, the school principal will stay in close contact so you know how long it might be before your child can enroll at DMS.

## **What grade levels does Dakota Memorial School educate?**

Each of our schools is unique depending on the size of the school building and the number and

qualifications of licensed teachers. In Bismarck, we educate students in grades 7–12; in Fargo, grades 6–12; and in Minot, grades 2–12. We also have a virtual school option for students who need personalized learning and support.

## **What makes Dakota Memorial School different than other schools my child has attended?**

At DMS, we focus on building resilience and coping skills. Through occupational therapy, school-wide CONNECT classes that focus on social-emotional learning, and smaller class sizes, we are able to offer the individual attention some children need to navigate challenges and setbacks effectively.

## **How does being a trauma-sensitive school make you different?**

DMS welcomes and accepts students so they can feel safe as they address their trauma and its impact on relationships and learning. Teachers and staff are specially trained to respond to students in ways that provide emotional security for anxious students and encourage the use of coping skills. The trauma-sensitive culture, training, and environment lead to increased participation in classroom and school settings.

## **Do students have opportunities to receive individualized attention and support?**

Absolutely. We tailor

our approach to meet the unique needs of each student. This includes personalized learning plans, small group sessions, and access to additional resources as needed.

## **I see the Ranch is Christ-centered. How does that affect my child's education?**

At DMS, we try to model the caring, hope, and love shown to others by Christ. Although we are not considered a religious school and do not offer religion classes, we do have moments of silence for prayer, the opportunity to pray before meals, and the willingness to talk and pray with youth who find faith an essential part of their healing. Our teachers start each staff meeting with prayer, participate in regular devotions, and believe that we can best serve the needs of our students by modeling the care we provide after Christ.

The Dakota Memorial School System is accredited by Cognia, the largest community of education professionals in the world. The rigorous accreditation standards align with Trauma-Sensitive Learning Strategies to ensure our students receive the highest level of education.



Dakota Memorial School, Minot

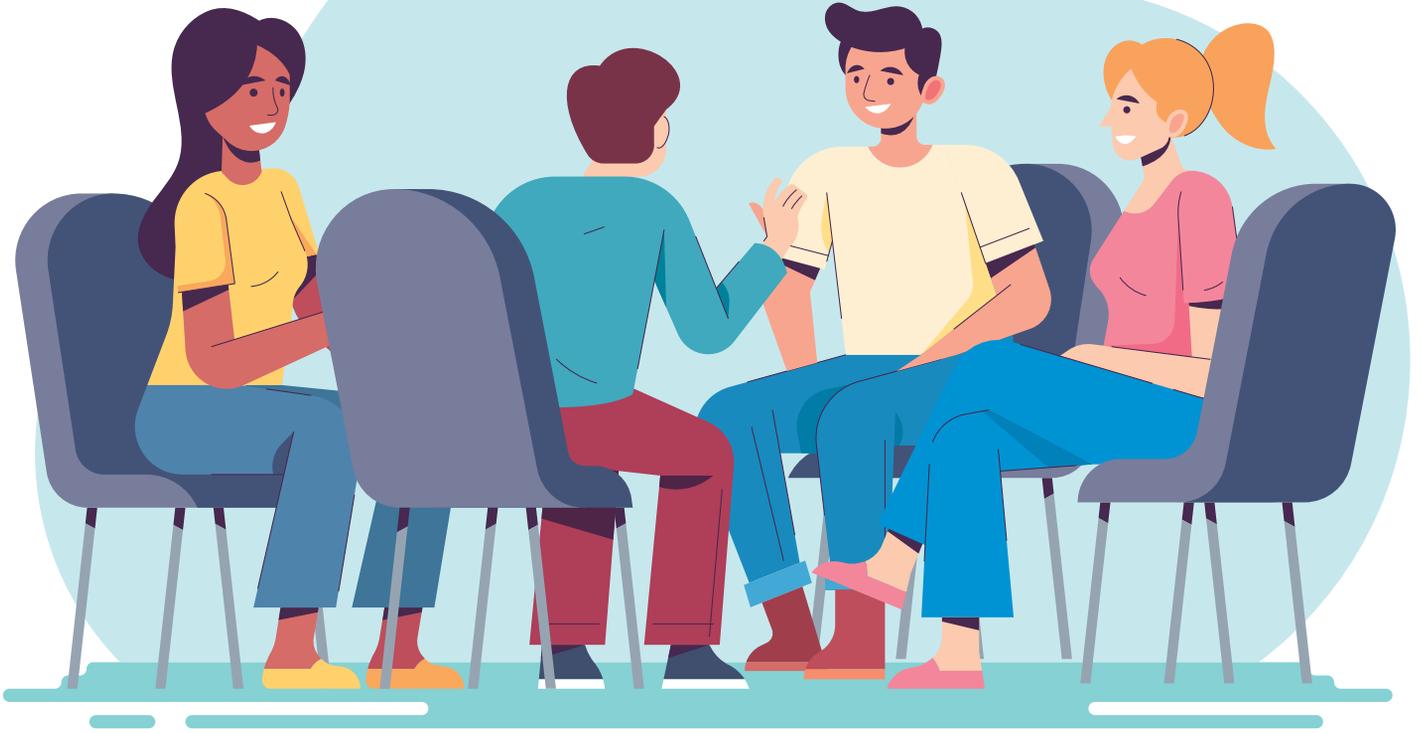


# Merry Christmas

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR  
FROM ALL OF US AT  
DAKOTA BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH

# Group Therapy:

*Fostering Connection and Healing*



**By Dr. Hannah Baczynski, Clinical Psychologist, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch**

By the time kids get to treatment at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, they have likely been to many therapists, psychiatrists, and psychologists. They are fluent in everything related to therapy. They've learned about cognitive behavior modification, how to identify and challenge their thoughts, and many different coping skills — and none of it has been particularly helpful. In treatment, they receive more in-depth learning and have people around them 24 hours a day to coach them on how to use the things they've learned.

They also attend a variety of groups—with differing purposes, priorities, and formats. The beauty of group work, regardless of the type, is that the kids receive the same information at the same time. It allows them to build a connection, learn from each other, and keep each other accountable.

I love it when a child talks about something that happened that week, and other kids say, “Did you try this?” Or, “Yeah, that happened to me too, and it really helped when I ...”

Group therapy is particularly valuable for teenagers, as it gives them the opportunity to open up about their struggles and successes and realize they are not alone in their journey.

If you are sitting with me in

individual therapy, I can tell you that everyone with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder feels the same way, but you're like, “Whatever!” If you're in a group with five of your peers who feel like you, it makes you not weird. You aren't unique or have special problems that can't be solved. If you share this bond, then maybe, just maybe, you can heal because other people have these same feelings, and they've been able to heal.

Sharing experiences in a group setting helps validate our kids' feelings and provides them with new perspectives and coping strategies. Group therapy fosters empathy and allows them to learn from each other's insights and mistakes.

At the Ranch, we hold groups four days a week, after school and after dinner. In addition to up to three

different therapy groups per week, residents participate in Nursing group, Case Management group, Occupational Therapy group, Rec and Wellness group, and Spiritual Life/Moral Development group. While the format and purpose of each group are different, they are all about creating connections and shared experiences.

Cognitive Processing group, one of our therapy groups, specifically focuses on trauma treatment. The kids don't share their trauma narrative or go into detail about their trauma but talk about the thoughts and beliefs shared by others who have experienced trauma. Like, *"It's my fault."*

*"I deserved what happened to me."*

*"If I had done X, Y wouldn't have happened."*

In this group, we talk about how trauma has impacted their thoughts and how to challenge those thoughts. We also discuss themes like safety, control, self-esteem, and trust and how kids can rebuild those things in their lives.

Another group we hold consistently is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) group for depression. In addition to focusing on social skills and doing pleasant events even when you don't feel like it, CBT is about challenging negative or irrational thoughts. For instance, if a child answers a question wrong in class or thinks someone gave them a mean look, their thoughts might quickly escalate.

*"I am stupid."*

*"I am worthless."*

*"I will end up alone."*

*"People can't be trusted."*



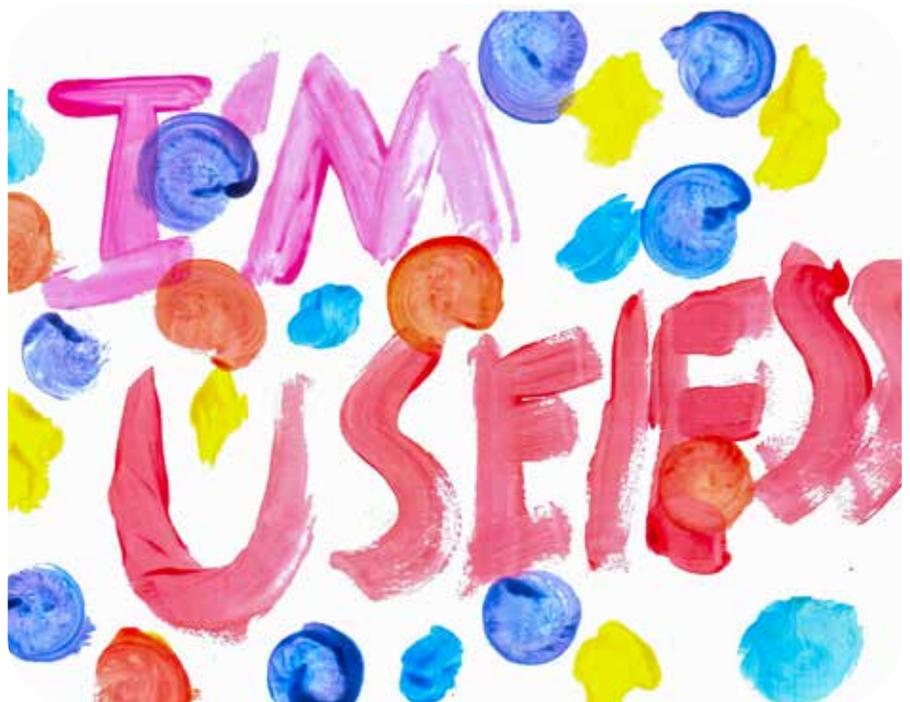
**Kayla Brown, RN, Nursing Coordinator,** said the nursing group uses a 17-week curriculum that incorporates education with hands-on activities to reinforce what they've learned.

"When we went over viruses and bacterial infections, we had healthy glow hand gel so the kids could see how well they were washing their hands," Kayla said. "When we talked about medication, we put beads in medication

bottles so they could read the labels and practice putting their medications in a pill organizer. We are always looking for ways to help them be successful when they leave the Ranch."

"Most of our kids haven't learned about healthy habits before they come to us. Healthy nutrition, how to get good sleep, and personal hygiene habits like brushing their teeth are all things we teach them. We take these things for granted and assume every child learns basic healthy habits at home, but that isn't the case for most of our kids."

*The images throughout this article were created by kids at the Ranch for a group art project. They were invited to change their relationship to negative and unhelpful thoughts by painting them in bright fun colors, singing them to a silly tune, and chanting them over and over. While the words might be disturbing, this exercise helped the kids face their most unhelpful thoughts, disconnect the words from the trauma, and take away their power.*



*"I'm useless."*

In CBT group, we ask the kids to give examples of negative thoughts they've had during the week. The therapist then asks questions that challenge their negative thoughts or self-talk.

*"What is the evidence that this is true?"*

*"Are you confusing a thought with a fact?"*

*"What would you tell a friend who was having that thought?"*

*"What is the worst that could happen?"*

The goal is to have enough practice

and reinforcement from their peers and staff outside of the group so they can catch themselves having a negative thought and challenge it on their own.

In Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group, kids learn all kinds of skills from your "basic coping skills" (or crisis survival skills like distraction) to mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, and



"I can't control this nightmare."



"Not sick enough."



**Kenny Hodem, LADC, Therapist,** leads several therapy groups. He believes group therapy is a great way to learn what works best for each child.

"Each group comes at trauma treatment and behavior from a different angle. Our goal is to expose kids to many tools for creating behavior and emotional change," Kenny said. "Once we see a child responding well to a type of therapy in a group, we can start incorporating it into their individual therapy."

"Group therapy is also a way to get buy-in from the kids who don't want to engage in treatment. Hearing examples from other kids, rather than the adult who 'doesn't understand' draws them in."

emotion regulation. Someone once told me that DBT distress tolerance skills (or the “basic” coping skills) are like an EpiPen. When you have an allergic reaction, you give yourself a shot with the EpiPen to prevent the initial reaction from getting worse. But you still must go to the hospital. The crisis survival skills get you through the initial reaction, but then you must use the more complicated skills (like emotion regulation) to heal at the next level. Our DBT and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) groups, focus on the more complicated skills that take it one step further to acceptance.

Acceptance is the foundation of change. We cannot change something we don't accept. If the walls in my office are painted a horrible puke green color, and I come in every day pretending they are yellow and saying how much I love the color, I'm never going to change it.

In the same way, kids come to the Ranch saying they don't need to be there. Fighting the reality of their circumstances prevents them from moving forward. They might spend all of their time being angry, refusing to go to school, refusing groups, refusing therapy, and fighting with staff. They do everything they can to prove they don't belong here.

It's almost irrelevant if they should be here or not. The reality is that they are here. The more they deny the reality of their experiences or circumstances, the harder it is for them to heal.

I tell the kids, “If you want to move forward and get discharged from a residential treatment facility, you must first accept that you are in one.”



**Tim Gienger, LCSW, Director of Clinical Care**, said group therapy gets a group of kids together to develop a common language and work on a common set of skills. “There is a real dynamic component to it where the kids can help each other and keep each other accountable,” he said.

“The thing I love about groups when they are going well,” Tim said, “is that the group leader doesn't get caught in what I call the ‘expert trap,’ where everything is filtered through them. If one of the kids asks a question, the leader can say, ‘Well, Eli, you dealt with something like that a couple of weeks ago. Why don't you go ahead and answer that one?’”

While it's helpful for kids to learn from peers who have similar life experiences, it's just as beneficial for the child answering the question. Helping others empowers kids, recognizing and building upon their individual strengths and experiences. It increases feelings of well-being, reduces isolation, and gives kids a sense of belonging.



**Jordan Mooney, Occupational Therapist**, said weekly OT groups engage the kids in a wide variety of activities such as games, team activities, arts and crafts, mindfulness, daily living skills, and more. She said groups are the perfect vehicle for the type of work Occupational Therapists do.

“The hands-on experience of managing emotions, practicing social skills, engaging cognitive abilities, and physical activity through real-life experiences is powerful in building skills,” Jordan said. “We strategically use activities that facilitate skill-building in a social environment.”

“OTs consider the physical demands, social demands, emotional demands, and cognitive demands of a given activity, and then modify it to decrease or increase the demands to foster the specific goals and abilities of the group. For instance, if we are working on executive functioning/cognitive skills, we might reduce the social demands of the activity so the kids can focus on the skill they are trying to build.”



In a recent Spiritual Life group, **Deaconess Stephanie Wilde** taught a lesson about Love Languages.

“They all took the Love Language quiz, and we talked about their love language and how it impacts them. One of our kids, who struggles with physical boundaries, discovered that her love language is personal touch. This led to a discussion about appropriate physical touch and the need to ask for consent before giving someone a hug.”

“In addition to helping our kids know how to ask for what they need, and how best to support their peers, learning everyone’s love language helps direct care staff personalize each child’s care. For instance, if a child’s love language is quality time, staff can invite the child to play a game, go for a walk, or ask about their day and give them their full attention, even for just five minutes.”

“We read 1 John 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 13, and talked about how we each show and receive love. We also teach the kids about God’s perfect love and that He is always with them.”

## Group attendance and participation

It’s not uncommon for kids to refuse to attend group because it’s hard work.

All teenagers have times when they are afraid of feeling inadequate or of being judged. It’s easy for them to fall into the comparison and competition trap that can arise in a group setting. It’s no wonder that teenagers with trust and trauma issues might have a difficult time engaging and participating in group therapy.

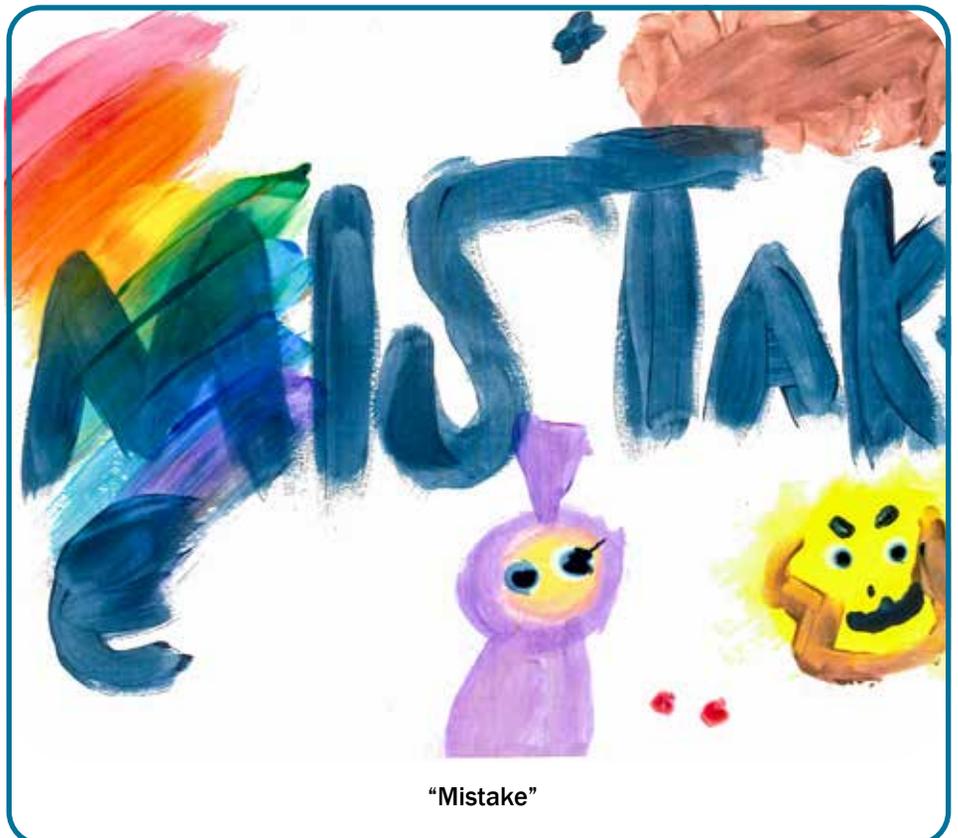
At the Ranch, we reinforce the value of simply showing up at group and then shape it from there. Every

week, each child gets a punch card. If they come to a group, they get a punch, even if they just sit and stare at the floor. If they participate in the group, they get another punch. If the group has homework and they come to the group having completed last week’s homework, they get additional punches.

They collect these punches throughout the week, and at the end of the week, they can trade them in at “The Coping Store” for things that help them work through their

		NAME _____				
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4pm	Attendance					
	Participation					
6pm	Attendance					
	Participation					
7pm	Attendance					
	Participation					
HOMEWORK						

Earning punches for coping store “purchases” motivates the kids to attend and participate in group.



emotions (journals, fidgets, and Squishmallows, egg-shaped cuddly toys that help some kids feel calmer and less anxious). Some items they can purchase with one week's worth of punches, and others they need to save up for. Earning punches for the coping store is a great motivator for kids to attend and participate in groups.

We also name a weekly "Group All Star." The group leaders get together to name the child who did the best in groups throughout the week. The Group Star gets to choose between an extra punch card with 20 punches and a one-on-one outing with the group leader of their choice.

Finally, we incorporate fun activities into groups to reinforce what the kids are learning. The images you see throughout this article come from a group art project. We asked the kids to take some of the thoughts they struggle with and change their relationship to those thoughts by painting them in bright fun colors. We tried other strategies to change our relationships to the thoughts as well, such as saying the words really fast or really slow, saying them in a funny voice, or singing them to various tunes.

By the end of the group, the kids were laughing and having fun with these heavy thoughts instead of being weighed down by them.

### **Groups promote healing**

Integrating groups into residential treatment promotes a sense of community, encourages personal growth, and provides support and connection among the residents. Harnessing the power of shared experiences and building community through groups can be incredibly helpful in promoting healing.



### **Christian Kjelland, Wellness Coordinator,**

leads Rec and Wellness groups every week with the purpose of helping residents learn to work together.

"It's tough for kids to get along when they are put in situations they aren't familiar with and asked to work together," Christian said. "Some activities we do during group include

Bingo, sports, and bowling. If a child isn't gifted in the activity or has never tried it, I encourage them to communicate that with me so we can problem-solve together. I also encourage them to try things they've never done before, and to be kind if someone else isn't good at something."

"We also incorporate service projects. I throw some ideas out and the kids help plan how and where to serve. The most important part of all of these activities is for the kids to interact, build relationships, and figure out how to resolve minor disagreements."



# Celebrations

## Christmas at the Ranch

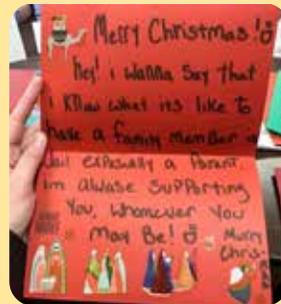
A look back at Christmas 2022.



Minot residents decorated gingerbread houses. Projects like this give kids the chance to build social-emotional skills and practice perseverance. One Residential Treatment Specialist said, "My favorite part of this activity was watching our residents return to the activity time after time when they would get frustrated with the difficulty. They never give up!"



Airmen from the 91st Missile Wing at the Minot Air Force Base organized an Angel Tree and gathered gifts to brighten Christmas for kids at the Ranch.



Ranch kids made Christmas Cards for Angel Tree recipients who have a parent or parents in prison. Deaconess Kelly Bristow said, "Our kids took great pride and care in putting together some very thoughtful cards!"



Santa's Workshop festivities included a hot cocoa bar, cookie and ornament decorating, and more! The Grinch even made a special guest appearance.

## Celebrating Support from Friends Across the Country



LWML Rally and Honey Sunday in Spokane, WA, attended by Senior Development Officer Paul Krueger and Development Officer Janie Wunderlich.



Senior Development Officer Tim Unsinn visited an LWML Rally in Cassopolis, MI. As part of the event, they collected Walmart gift cards and an offering for kids at the Ranch!



The Women of the ELCA at First Lutheran Church in Tioga, ND, did a quilt presentation for the Ranch, attended by Laurie Dannewitz, Senior Development Officer.



Honey Sunday at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Spearfish, SD. Pictured above is Christine Garness, Youth Director at the church.



Paul Krueger, Senior Development Officer, told members of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Olathe, KS, about the Ranch. In attendance were Kim Burdett, the Kansas District LWML President, and Eden Keefe, the National LWML President.

# Celebrations

## Remember to “Bee Kind!”

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. At the Ranch, we’re committed to creating an environment of kindness and encouragement to create a better world for our kids. Everyone has a story, and everyone deserves to be treated with kindness! Each year, we spend the month of October talking about how we can prevent bullying, what bullying looks like, how it affects the people involved, and how we can be kind to others. Here’s a look at our celebrations for 2023.



Mr. Kuebler, Social Studies Teacher at Dakota Memorial School, Fargo, talked with students about bullying and the importance of being kind, and then invited them to sign a “Bullying Prevention Contract.”



Employees at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Thrift Stores across the state showed their support of Bullying Prevention Month by wearing “Bee Kind” shirts!





Staff and students across our three campuses wore their Bee Kind shirts proudly on National Stop Bullying Day, October 11th.



Mr. Jacobson and Mrs. Magrum served up delicious root beer floats at the Bullying Prevention event on our Fargo campus.



Traveling bee costumes served as great visual reminders for kids and staff to "Bee Kind!"



# Celebrations

## Back-to-school book event held at Dakota Memorial School!

At a “Kick Off to Reading” open house event, students at Dakota Memorial School chose books to add to their own personal libraries.



Hindi's Libraries, a non-profit that collects and donates new and gently used children's books across the globe, selected Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch to receive a shipment of books.

## Connecting to our communities



Della No Heart spoke to students and teachers at Dakota Memorial School, Bismarck, about several different types of flowers and how they can be used as food, ointments, and other things that can better our lives.

## Taking a trip into history!

Mrs. Keeney, Social Studies Teacher at Dakota Memorial School, Minot, took students on an adventure to learn about Ancient Egypt. They visited King Tut's tomb without ever leaving the school! Once inside the tomb (located in Mrs. Keeney's classroom), students learned about his life and legacy. They also learned about daily life in Egypt and how to translate hieroglyphics.



Teachers at Dakota Memorial School give kids hands-on experiences, which helps learning come alive!

## Ranch kids visit Y-Camp!

Kids and staff on our Minot campus went to Triangle Y Camp where they got to go horseback riding, climb the tower, and take a spin around the lake in kayaks.



Wellness Coordinator, Becca, said, “A couple of our kids successfully climbed the tower multiple times. I also climbed the tower...and I'm impressed with the ones who even gave it a try. It was a spooky experience!”

## Farmers for the day

Students at Dakota Memorial School, Fargo, went to Farm in the Dell, a local non-profit organization with a mission to “transform disabilities into abilities through purposeful work and life experiences in a community farm setting.” DMS students helped pick seeds from various dead flowers including Zinnias, Marigolds, Sunflowers, and Snap Dragons, which will be planted in the spring.



Students weren't afraid to get their hands dirty!



Careful attention to detail meant students were able to save every little seed for planting next spring.

## Planning for the future

Many kids come to the Ranch and Dakota Memorial School with no goals for the future, so we help kids plan for life after high school by giving them opportunities to explore different school or career options.



Students at Dakota Memorial School, Fargo, toured the animal sciences building at North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND. One student loved it so much that they've already applied!



Rick Heit spoke with students at Dakota Memorial School, Minot. Rick is a Social Media Specialist at Minot State University, and owns his own photography business, specializing in digital photography.

## Students as Teachers

At Dakota Memorial School, Bismarck, sometimes the students become the teachers. Mrs. Halvorson, DMS Principal, shared, “There is nothing cooler than when our students are able to not only mentor and assist one another, but also teach the teachers... One of our high school students assisted a middle school student AND Mrs. Vanderlaan with programming robotics.”



# Celebrations

## Exploring Early North Dakota

Students at Dakota Memorial School, Minot, visited the Pioneer Village Museum in Burlington, ND, where they learned about life in North Dakota during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Students were intrigued by the items they saw in the museum and even got to try out a few!



Sitting on farm equipment from the late 1800s/early 1900s was a favorite activity.



Students learned about North Dakota history in an early 1900s-inspired classroom.



Students inspect a record player (since when did record players become history?).

## Creating collaborative art

Students at Dakota Memorial School, Fargo, created some incredible collaborative chalk art. They worked together to ensure each block blended seamlessly with the work of their peers, and they did a super job! Working together, students completed four Pokémon characters on the west side of the school.



Starting with a blank grid, students filled in the boxes one by one to create a full picture.



Three of the completed works of art.



## Grasshoppers, frogs, and crickets...Oh my!

Students at Dakota Memorial School, Bismarck, have been studying frogs, toads, grasshoppers, crickets, and more! Throughout their studies, students have also been learning about “The Food Chain” and have been researching Monarch caterpillars, as well as searching for some in the garden beds on campus.

Mrs. Vanderlaan, Science Teacher, said, “The students collected a few [monarch caterpillars] and took care of them by replacing the milkweed and looking after them. We have had four butterflies emerge and released so far. The kids have been so excited to come to class and check on their ‘babies. If you ask them about these creatures, they will amaze you with their knowledge!”



Researching Monarchs has helped students understand their life cycle, discover what they eat, and learn how to care for them.



Students are making observations of a variety of frogs and toads to identify their species.

## Kids in Wildlife Club love fishing!

The Wildlife Club went on a fishing adventure at Rice Lake. Fishing is a favorite activity of many kids at the Ranch, whether they've never gone fishing before or if they're fishing experts. The trip was complete with good fishing, a delicious dinner, s'mores, and a bonfire on the beach.



Being in nature helps many of our kids calm their minds and bodies.

# Celebrations

## Summer Olympics 2024

Our Minot campus held its annual Summer Olympics, and kids and staff had a blast! Each cottage created a team flag and shirts to wear to the opening ceremony. The Olympic events included basketball and volleyball tournaments, bike races, soccer games, and more!



Wellness Coordinator, Becca, said, "The kids in Cornelsen showed great team spirit as they encouraged each other throughout their games. And the boys in Seegers showed great sportsmanship!"



The last day featured a closing ceremony and a "Fun Day," complete with inflatables and a dunk tank!

## Ringin' in the season!



Members of the Minot Student Council helped Thrift Store staff by getting their front windows ready for fall and Halloween!

## Giving back through volunteering

Two groups of students from the Physical Therapy Program at the University Of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND, volunteered their time at our Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Thrift Store in Grand Forks. In a follow-up email to David, the store manager, the girls said, "Thank you so much for letting us volunteer! Both groups had a lot of fun completing their tasks and it felt great to give [back] in our community."



We're so grateful for this hardworking crew from UND!

Interested in volunteering at one of our Thrift Stores? Scan the QR code to get started!



## Sharing their servant's hearts

Our Ranch campuses in Minot and Fargo recently hosted Servant Teams from churches in Lakeville, MN, and Carrington, ND. Servant Teams give high school students the opportunity to serve the Church and the world.



Confirmation Students from Trinity Lutheran Church in Carrington, ND, spent a day working at our Minot Thrift Store and Warehouse.



The students sorted donations and prepared the store for the upcoming holiday season.



The Servant Team from Messiah Lutheran Church in Lakeville, MN, stopped by our Fargo campus where they worked with the Facilities Team to complete a few landscaping projects.



## Volunteers refinish chairs destined for new chapel

A large group of volunteers from Marsh McLennan Agency spent an afternoon at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch refinishing chairs that will be used in the new chapel under construction on our Bismarck campus. The chairs were donated to the Ranch by Prairie St. John's upon the closure of their old facility.



Many hands make light work! We're grateful for the hardworking crew from Marsh McLennan Agency!

Under the direction of the Ranch Facilities Team, volunteers worked hard to cover any imperfections and ensure the chairs were ready for use in their new space.



## Giving back to their community

Volunteers from Doosan Bobcat helped complete a large landscaping project on the Ranch's Fargo campus. The work involved lining one side of the retention pond and bringing in large rocks to help prevent further erosion of the Ranch's prayer garden located on the southeast side of the building.

*"As an organization, we aim to create positive social impact to enhance the communities where we live and work. Organizations like Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch are an integral part of our community. We were thankful for the opportunity to support them with their grounds maintenance, so they can focus on the important work they are doing with children by creating a safe and compassionate place to live, learn, and heal."* – Laura Ness Owens, Doosan Bobcat Vice President of Global Brand and North American Marketing



Volunteers from Doosan Bobcat and staff from Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.



The work done by Doosan Bobcat volunteers will secure the pond against further erosion.



Doosan Bobcat CEO, Scott Park, attended the event and even got in on the action.

## Celebrating fall

Every year, we hold a Fall Festival on our Minot campus. In the week leading up to the festival, kids and staff work together to decorate their cottage based on an annual theme. This year's theme was "Games." Butt Cottage won with their cottage decorations representing "Among Us," a popular online multi-player game.

Rebecca Grondahl, Wellness Coordinator, said, "The decorations were wonderful, the tour was great, and they created an interactive mystery for the judges to partake in!"

At the Fall Festival, each department hosted a different game and the kids had so much fun learning new games, playing old favorites, and getting neat prizes! In addition to adding fun to our kids lives, Fall Festival gives them opportunities to learn teamwork, social skills, and taking turns. The celebration ended with a pie-eating contest!



Kids played "Plinko" to earn fun prizes.



"Battleship" against Mr. Meier was a big hit.



Participants "fished" for great prizes.



Fall Festival gives the kids a chance to participate in some friendly competition with their peers.

## Show me the honey!

We couldn't do what we do without the amazing support of Ranch donors, and we love being able to thank you with a simple gift of delicious honey! If you gave to the Ranch in the past year, watch the mail in the next few months for your bottle of honey! When you receive your bottle, send a photo with a special landmark where you

live to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch at [info@dakotaranch.org](mailto:info@dakotaranch.org).



Facilities staff at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch have been busy bottling honey for Ranch donors.



We can't wait to see where our honey ends up!



## SHOP DAKOTA RANCH

### Each Purchase Provides Hope and Healing

Shop our elevated second-hand online boutique consisting of fashion-forward, hand-selected modern and vintage goods.

Shop  
**DAKOTA  
RANCH**  
Modern & Vintage Goods



Scan to start  
shopping now!

## The link between trauma, mental health, and substance use



By Amber Nelson,  
LMAC, LPCC,  
Therapist

The children and adolescents who come to the Ranch all have mental health diagnoses—Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Autism, Major Depression, Schizophrenia, etc. Some also have chemical dependency concerns, meaning their treatment plan must address their substance use in addition to their primary mental health diagnosis.

Most Ranch kids have experienced at least one traumatic event and/or stressor in their young lives, which may result in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and adversely affect many areas of their brain and development, including their ability to regulate their emotions, make decisions, or solve problems.

Mental health disorders and experiences of trauma are strong predictors of substance use in adolescents, with the use of substances often originating from the child's trauma. When children don't get the help they need to work through their trauma, they have an increased risk of developing unhealthy coping strategies to manage the intrusive symptoms that can come along with PTSD.

Experimenting with substances is a common unhealthy coping strategy children use to “self-medicate” their pain. For example, a child might use

substances to numb their intrusive thoughts and emotions or to alleviate the effects of anxiety.

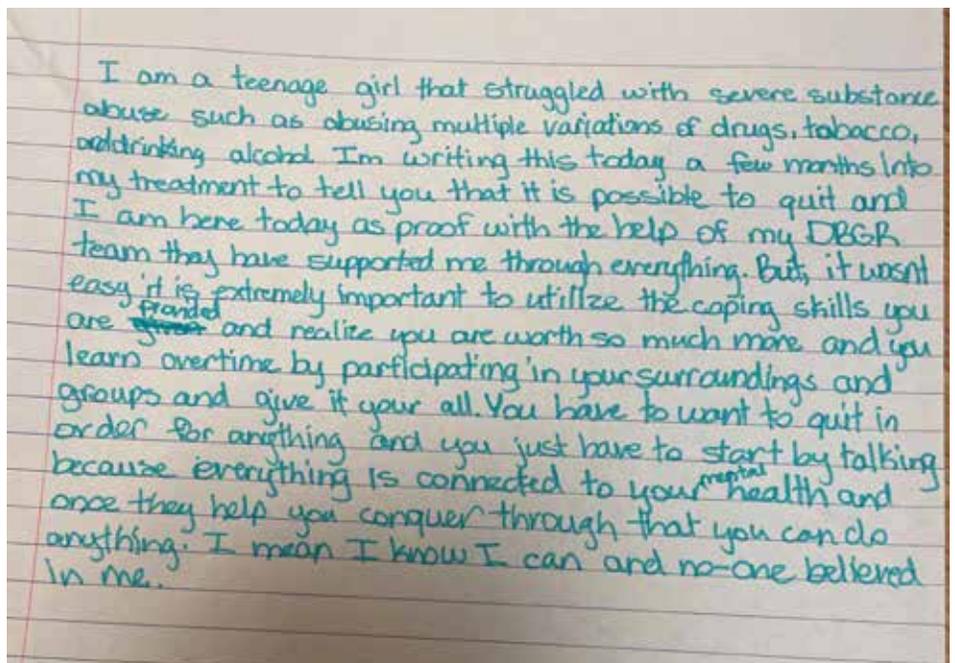
Treating co-occurring disorders (mental health disorders and addiction) is complicated, especially when you take trauma into consideration. To heal, children need to address the trauma behind their behaviors. However, addressing the trauma can create trauma reminders and triggers that often increase cravings and the potential for relapse.

While experts have debated how to treat co-occurring disorders for years—some recommending treatment of the mental health disorder first, then the addiction, and vice versa, therapists at the Ranch use an integrated approach. Recognizing that an increase in mental health symptoms impacts substance use and vice versa, we see better results when treating mental health and

substance use disorders concurrently.

At the Ranch, therapists use evidence-based therapies like Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR), Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to treat the child's mental health challenges and help them recover from their trauma. At the same time, we provide individualized person-centered treatment in individual therapy, groups, family therapy, medication management, equine therapy, and wellness. We also incorporate activities like yoga, meditation, mindfulness, and art, and help children identify positive activities they can engage in as alternatives to substance use.

**Children struggling with substance abuse find hope at the Ranch.**



# Working at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is more than a job.

*It's a mission!*

Because you are reading Ranch Voice, we know you care about kids and value the impact and mission of the work we do at the Ranch.

We are looking for good people to provide Christ-centered care and compassion to children on one of our three North Dakota campuses.

The Ranch has a breadth of services and a need for varied expertise, and people from many career paths find their calling here. We look for the right people to join us through opportunities in healthcare, mental health, education, direct care, and many others.

Is this the opportunity you or someone you know have been waiting for?

**Learn more or apply today**

1-800-593-3098 | [DakotaRanch.org/careers](http://DakotaRanch.org/careers)



## Ranch Culture of Purpose, Caring, and Learning

By working at the Ranch, you will not only change kids' lives but also experience a workplace like no other—a workplace defined by a Culture of Purpose, Caring, and Learning.

Our **Culture of Purpose** is exemplified by idealism and altruism.

Our **Culture of Caring** is built on relationships and mutual trust.

Our **Culture of Learning** is exemplified by exploration, expansiveness, and creativity.



The mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

1-800-593-3098 | [DakotaRanch.org/careers](http://DakotaRanch.org/careers)

# Ways to Give

**Thanks to gifts from our generous donors, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch helps the most troubled, complicated, and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care. If you would like to provide hope and healing for a child at the Ranch, you can give in several different ways.**

## Give Now

You can give now to meet the needs of our precious children in one of two ways. Give online at



DakotaRanch.org/donate or mail a check to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, PO Box 5007, Minot, ND 58702.

## Prayers

So many of our children come to us exhausted from just fighting to survive. Often, they've lost all hope. Please pray for strength—strength for our children to face and overcome the circumstances that led them to us. Pray for them to find rest, safety, and the promise of God's abiding love.

And pray for our staff. Working with our children is difficult, and Ranch staff also need your prayers for them to be accepting, respectful, kind, and strong as they work with these precious children who sometimes lash out because they are in so much pain.

## Memorials and Honorariums

When you donate in memory or in honor of a loved one, they will live on through programs that provide much-needed care for the hurting children who come to the Ranch. You can make your donation online at [DakotaRanch.org](http://DakotaRanch.org) or by calling 1-800-344-0957.

## Planned and Estate Gifts

Naming Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch as a beneficiary in your will is one way to leave a legacy that serves God's Kingdom. But it's not the only way. Other legacy-giving options include Charitable Gift Annuities, naming the Ranch as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets or a life insurance policy, leaving real estate to the Ranch, and more.

To learn more, contact us at 1-800-344-0957 or visit our website at [DakotaRanch.org/legacy](http://DakotaRanch.org/legacy).

## Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars® to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

If you are a Thrivent Financial member, you may have Thrivent Choice Dollars® available to direct to your favorite enrolled charity. Directing Choice Dollars® to

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch helps us teach Christian values to the amazing children of the Ranch—values that aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them be successful in their treatment.

## Tree of Life

Honor or remember a loved one by purchasing a leaf, acorn, or rock on one of our Trees of Life. For a Tree of Life order form, scan the QR code, or call 1-800-344-0957—we can send you an order form or take your information over the phone.



## Donate Cryptocurrency

Donating Crypto is safe, easy, and fast. Go to [dakotaranch.org/giving-to-dbgr/donate-crypto](http://dakotaranch.org/giving-to-dbgr/donate-crypto) or scan the QR code on the right, select your preferred crypto, type in your email and basic information, and make your gift. Upon making a donation, you will receive an automatically generated tax receipt sent to the email address you provide. We accept donations in Bitcoin, Ethereum, and over 100 leading cryptocurrencies.



# Bismarck Chapel Update

## Bismarck Chapel Campaign Reaches Fundraising Goal

Thanks to 144 individual, corporate, church, and foundation donors, we completed the fundraising campaign in 13 months. Because we committed to incurring no debt for this project and would only accept pledges that would be paid in full by the end of the three-year campaign, all but \$201,000 is in the bank. This commitment ensures that ongoing support from Ranch donors will underwrite services for kids rather than being used to pay down debt.

Thank you to these amazing donors who contributed to the Bismarck Chapel Campaign.

American Lutheran Church, Stanley, ND  
Dr. and Mrs. Brent A. Askvig  
Sylvia L. Baer  
Pastor Douglas Bergelin  
Sharon Bieber  
Estate of Earl and Helen Bohlen  
Doug and Janie Carlson  
Mike Chouteau  
Christ the King Lutheran Church,  
Newcastle, WY  
Denise L. Christensen  
John and Susan Christopherson  
Clara Christine Group  
Mr. James E. Coomber  
Darren Damrow  
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald R. Danuser  
Rev. Bart and Julie Day  
Marcie Dempsey  
Jack and Mary DeVille  
Mr. Kenton Dietrich  
Mr. Robert Dietrich  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Drees

Mrs. Elaine Eggold  
Tracy and Lindberg Ekola  
Ms. Mary Ann Fibiger  
Paul and Julie Folkerts  
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Shirley A. Gangelhoff  
Elsie M. and O. Leland Gilbertson  
Estate of Lois Glade  
Mrs. Marlene Glasnapp  
Mrs. Linda Gradin  
Ronald and Chelie Greenmyer  
Mr. Harvey Haas  
Mr. Gerhard A. Haigis  
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Hankel  
Cherie and Robert Harms  
Hillard "Doc" Harms  
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Hauff  
Mr. Eugene E. Heckendorf  
Estate of Merle E. Henke  
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Messiah Lutheran Church, Missoula, MT  
Bill and Linda Mobley  
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Carl and Valerie Narsasian  
National Lutheran Women's  
Missionary League  
Connie Olhausen  
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Mr. Kenneth Ost  
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Our Saviour Lutheran Church,  
Kansas City, KS  
Ed and Greta Page  
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Roger and Sandy Ploeger  
Mr. Martin Poch  
Mr. and Mrs. Duane Pollard  
Stevan Power  
Prairie St. John's  
Colleen Dorgan Preszler  
Redeemer Lutheran Church,  
Dickinson, ND  
In Memory of Edward and Ileene  
Kerbs by Pastor Otto and  
Rosalie Kerbs Reinbacher  
Ronald and Dawn Robson  
Mr. Vern J. Rockstad  
Rupert Dunklau Foundation, Inc.  
Lois A. Salzman

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Iva Lou Wellmann  
Wilma (Elsing) Wendt  
In Memory of Rev. Leroy Westphal  
by Carol Westphal  
Rodney and Verna Wolf  
Zion Lutheran Church,  
Bismarck, ND

**Bismarck Chapel  
Architectural Rendering**



# Bismarck Chapel Update

## Breaking Ground for the Bismarck Chapel

When Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Bismarck campus was built in 2003, it was not designed for the children we currently serve. The children were likely to participate in faith communities outside of our campus. On-campus spiritual life programming was held in a multi-purpose conference room or an available classroom. At the time, the staff and board of directors committed to considering a chapel in the future—if or when the needs of the children changed.

Twenty years later, after completing a three-year fundraising campaign in just 15 months, we are breaking ground!

At the groundbreaking ceremony held on August 24, 2023, Chaplain Rick Jones said, "We break this ground in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, that the chapel which will be built here may serve as a place where God will have His name dwell and where He will come to His people with blessings and grace.

When it is completed in the Summer of 2024, the new chapel will give Ranch kids a dedicated space where they can meet God and invite Him into their lives, enabling them to love and be loved, accept and be accepted, give and receive respect, thrive, and help others thrive.

### From Vision to Reality

*Pastor Douglas Bergelin was instrumental in starting the chapel fund when he served at Zion Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND. He wasn't able to travel from Wisconsin for the event, so he sent these words to be read during the Rite of Groundbreaking.*

*"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain." —Psalm 127:1*

Today, we celebrate the groundbreaking of a dedicated space of a chapel while understanding that the Lord is not limited to space. We have held Spiritual Life Groups and Chapel services in gyms, conference rooms, classrooms, and lunchrooms since the Bismarck campus was built. In each of these places, there have been professions of faith,

baptisms, music, Bible readings, Bible Stories and chapel messages, joyful celebrations, and tears. Jesus is living and active at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

Today, we are breaking ground for a space where at-risk youth will struggle and ask God hard questions. We are breaking ground for a space where at-risk youth will be real and raw with God. There will be tears shed in this chapel. There will be laughter and celebrations in this chapel. There will be worship in this chapel. It is a place where youth and adults will lay their burdens, tears, joys, cares, and sins at the foot of the cross. And when that happens, they will look up and see the cross of Jesus. They will see the altar and baptismal font. They will hear God's Word spoken to them from the Bible. And Jesus will be there as He has always been. Jesus carries the

load, Jesus cries with us. Jesus has compassion and mercy on us.

*"Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved." — Psalm 55:22*

It is wonderful to see the Ranch's mission statement of "helping at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ" lived out at the center of everything Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch does. We have a Savior in Jesus who continues to show His love to the children and staff as He died on the cross and rose from the dead to give us forgiveness and eternal life.

No longer will we have to move a desk or a table to get ready for Spiritual Life groups or chapel. The dedicated chapel space will enhance the work we are already doing.

Thank you to the Mission Advancement Team for the work they have done to tell the story of what God is doing at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch and to get people to support the chapel. Thank you to Zion Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND, for their continued love of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. They started the chapel fund after having a vision of seeing a chapel space built on this campus.

Thank you to the many donors who gave toward the building of this chapel. Thank you for your commitment to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch and for creating a space on campus dedicated to more Spiritual Life Groups, Chapel services, professions of faith, baptisms, music, Bible readings, and Bible Stories shared.

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD!’” — Psalm 122:1



*Rev. Douglas Bergelin is the pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran Church and Lebanon Lutheran School & Daycare, Lebanon,*

*WI. He is also a member of the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Program and Dakota Family Services boards of directors. From 2007-2015, he was an associate pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND, and Chaplain at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Bismarck, ND.*



**Chaplain Rick Jones throws the first ceremonial shovel of dirt.**



Many of the people who are making this dream possible joined in the groundbreaking ceremony. From left: Jim Vetter, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch; Mike Wagner, Sea Foam Sales Company; Corrina Pfaff, Sea Foam Sales Company; Linda Medhus, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch; Paul Krueger, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch; Rick Keller, Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC; Mike Fink, Bismarck Mandan Chamber EDC; Sheila Miller, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch; Dennis Aune, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch; Elsie Gilbertson; and Stacy Askvig, stained glass designer and artist making the stained glass window for the chapel.

# Bismarck Chapel Update

## Chapel construction progress

Northwest Contracting moved in their equipment and started the groundwork on August 28, 2023. They are confident they can meet the September 2024 completion date.



Day 1



Day 9



Day 26



Day 46

## A cry for help

It wasn't until Aerowyn was six years old and had friends who told her about their family lives that she realized not all kids grew up like she did.

"I have been in foster care my entire life. I thought it was normal and that everyone had a person they called a caretaker who would give them away to another person they didn't know," Aerowyn said. "I was six years old when I started getting to know that my life was not normal, and it was kind of hard to accept. It's basically saying your parents didn't want you."

Aerowyn, a tall 13-year-old with a pixie cut and glasses, said her dad is in prison, and she doesn't know where her mother lives. She thinks she was born in Minnesota or Wisconsin and has been in numerous foster homes across several states. Most of her foster families were caring, but not all.

She said the time she and her biological brother spent at one foster home were the most traumatizing years of her life.

"One day, my brother and I were playing outside, and when we got cold and wanted to go back into the house, the door was locked," Aerowyn said. "We couldn't figure out why they would lock the door. I was scared. It started to get really cold, and the sun was going down. After about an hour and a half, one of the adults came out and said they were sorry they forgot about us."

Before Aerowyn came to the Ranch, she was struggling with severe depression and self-harm. She

says the self-harm was her way of asking for help.

"I was hiding, but not really hiding the fact that I was self-harming," Aerowyn said. "Like I'd wear a sweatshirt to cover up the cuts on my arms, but then push the sleeves up a little, hoping someone would notice."

At the Ranch, Aerowyn learned to ask for help in other, more healthy ways.

"I'm proud of myself for accepting help at the Ranch. I was able to finish my [psychological] testing and work on myself. I met a lot of new people and learned a bunch of different coping skills," Aerowyn said.

While she has been drawing and painting most of her life, Aerowyn learned how to use her creativity as a coping skill. She also got a lot of feedback at the Ranch about her artistic talent and is starting to believe she is good at it!

Karen Engelter, Executive Assistant to the Ranch President, who often does art journaling with the residents, saw big changes in Aerowyn while at the Ranch.

"When I first met Aerowyn, she was a little edgy and anxious. She has moved so many times in her life, and this was just another place she had to figure out. She had a hard time fitting in," Karen said. "In the six months she was at the Ranch, she became much softer. She is very sweet and thoughtful and caring and is always the one at the table making

sure everyone is included."

Aerowyn isn't sure what she believes about God but became close to Deaconess Stephanie Wilde and started attending weekly chapel.

"I have a bigger understanding of faith," she said. "I know there is someone or something bigger than me out there because I honestly don't know how I would have survived without someone up there looking out for me."



**Connecting with Deaconess Stephanie helped Aerowyn see religion and faith in a different, more positive, way.**

Before Aerowyn came to the Ranch, she wanted to end her life.

"I'm not sure I would have had the courage, but I believe something or someone would have made me end all of this," she said. "Now I dream about going to college and living abroad. I want to do something that makes a lasting impact."

"I'm glad someone listened to my cries for help and brought me to the Ranch," Aerowyn said. "I asked for help in my own way, and I got it. I'm proud of the work I did here."

## Passing the torch



Their tour showed Susan and Danny Wallace, and their grandchildren Colby and Campbell, new and specific ways to pray for children at the Ranch.

### Danny and Susan Wallace

it was the perfect opportunity to tour the Ranch's Minot, ND, campus for the first time themselves and to share it with their grandchildren.

"I thought it was important for the grandkids to see what giving to a good cause can do for people who need help," Danny said.

Danny and Susan were impressed and surprised by the scope of the Ranch programs.

Susan said, "I was thrilled that the Ranch was all, and more, than I had hoped."

Danny agreed. "I started supporting the Ranch because of the horse program. I know that riding horses is good therapy because it sure was for me. During our visit, I saw that the horses were a small part of the work the Ranch does for these kids. I also saw the dedication and professionalism

Danny Wallace recalls asking his stepfather about the bottle of honey that was always on his kitchen table. His stepfather told him about Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch and why he chose to support this ministry.

Danny and his wife, Susan, picked up the torch and now hope to pass this tradition of giving to their grandchildren, Colby and Campbell. When they started planning a two-week road trip with their grandchildren to Banff, Calgary, and Glacier National Park, they decided

of the people who work there. I could tell that this was not just a job but a ministry."

When Danny introduced Colby and Campbell to Senior Engagement Officer Linda Medhus at the beginning of the tour, he said, "We are introducing you to your next generation of donors."

According to their grandparents, Colby and Campbell are strong in their Christian faith and have caring and compassionate natures. They each have goats they care for and show during the school year, and love to travel.

At 14, Colby is highly focused on his education, has a part-time job, and has started investing in the stock market. Campbell, 11 years old and in 7th grade, loves animals, woodworking, hunting, fishing, and golfing.

Susan said, "We were excited for them to join us on this vacation that would include a tour of the Ranch. They asked many questions and were surprised by the many opportunities the residents have for being nurtured and supported emotionally. I hope the experience will be a lasting memory for Colby and Campbell and that it will be a reminder of the importance of giving beyond tithing and the importance of Christian ministries."

Campbell kept a journal of the trip and, after touring the Ranch, wrote, "In the main office, we met people who each do amazing things. I thought people in Texas were nice, but they were really nice. Then we went to the shop area and learned how people work with the kids and teach them

how to fish and do woodworking and mechanical things because these kids don't have somebody in their life to teach them those things. It made me realize how lucky I am."

Colby said the visit impacted his view on mental health in kids his age.

"When our fantastic guides spoke about the mental health crisis in America, I realized that many kids my age are falling through the cracks and not getting the treatment they need," he said. "Through the amazing work of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, they are combatting this crisis through their [outpatient] clinic, schools, and [treatment] programs, and getting great results."

Danny and Susan have learned to understand the issues Ranch children face from different perspectives.

"My childhood was not the best," Danny said. "And I have a nephew with some real issues who sure could have benefited from the Ranch."

Susan said teaching elementary school and their experience as a foster family when their daughter was young made her aware that not all children have stable home environments.

"My parents were hard workers and provided a loving and fun home," she

time, talents, and treasures and are instilling those values in their grandchildren.

"My philosophy of giving is to find what speaks to the heart and is most meaningful," Susan said.

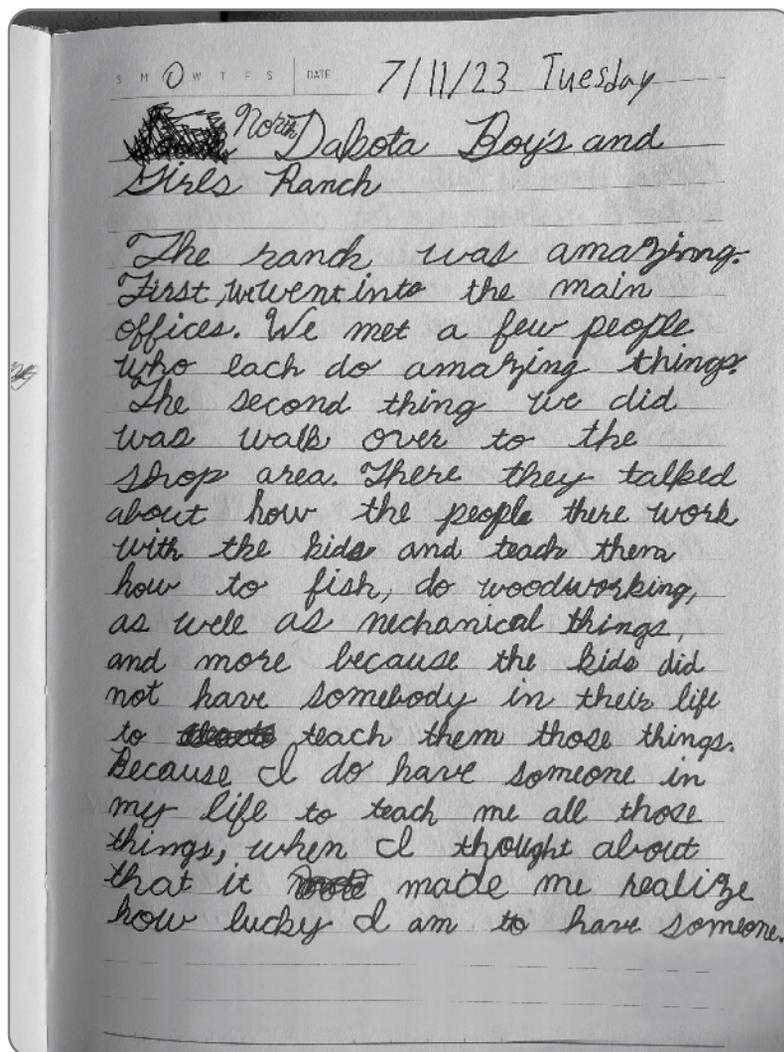
The Ranch has benefited from their faithful support and prayers for 19 years, and after their tour, Susan and Danny are more confident than ever that their contributions are used wisely.

"There are so many charities soliciting donations these days. I know that some of them are good, but many do not use the money wisely. I know Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch does (old Lutherans do not waste money!) and am glad to help in a small way," Danny said.

"Our monthly support is certainly more meaningful after touring

the Ranch," Susan said. "It seems every detail is taken into consideration to make life at the Ranch meaningful and productive, and is a safe environment for healing body and mind. The children learn how their choices make a difference."

"The Ranch is a place to see the hands and feet of Christ at work," she said.



11-year-old Campbell reflected on the day they spent at the Ranch.

said. "The guidance of my parents and grandparents instilled the value and importance of faith and a personal relationship with Jesus. I saw my parents and grandparents volunteering, sharing, and giving at church and in the community. It has always seemed a natural thing to do."

Susan and Danny, who recently celebrated their 42nd anniversary, strive to be good stewards of their

## Julia's Legacy



Julia  
Burke

### The Campaign

Through its *“Healing Spaces: Building a Place of Care”* campaign, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is raising funds to build Zurcher Cottage, a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) on its Minot campus. The building will integrate everything we have learned about brain development, treatment, and trauma-informed care into a safe and comfortable healing and living space for up to 16 children.

With a substantial lead gift from Carol Townsend, Houston, TX, and a \$1 million grant from the Julia Burke Foundation, the Ranch is confident it can raise the necessary funds by Dec. 31, 2025, the end of the four-year campaign.

### Julia

In 1998, Julia Burke died in a tragic car accident. Julia was a young woman of substance and filled her life with activities. She was a debater, coxswain for a championship men's crew team, competitive figure skater, soccer player, and competitive swimmer. She was also in Girl Scouts, played the flute, and was an altar server at her church. At the time of the accident, Julia was a junior at the College Preparatory School in Oakland, California, where she was on the debate team, took photos for the yearbook, and had many friends.

This quote by George Bernard Shaw was in Julia's book of favorite quotations. “Life is no ‘brief candle’ to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a

moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”

While only on earth for a short time, Julia's light burned bright.

At her memorial service, Ryan Mills, Julia's debate coach, said, “It suddenly became so obvious to me that she was the one who had it right all along. The importance of people, not things; your integrity, not your successes; your contribution, not your awards.”

### Gerald and Marilyn

Recognizing the tremendous impact Julia had made on the people around her, her parents, Gerald and Marilyn Burke, who had been very successful in business, created the Julia Burke Foundation. The foundation supports causes that perpetuate her memory and influence.

The foundation has given millions of dollars to projects in the areas of debate, crew, organ donation, medical education, music education, academic scholarships, international landmine projects, and parenting and early childhood education.

The foundation accepts grant proposals by invitation only, which is where Dr. Don Burke, Minot, ND, got involved.

### Uncle Don

Julie's uncle, Don, a member of the Julia Burke Foundation board of directors, was born and raised in California before earning a Ph.D. in Psychology and then taking a job at Minot State University.

# Zurcher Cottage: A new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility

“I thought I’d be here about five and a half minutes,” Don said. “I met my wife and have been in Minot for 40 years,” Don said.

As a Psychology professor, Don became familiar with the Ranch and spent eight years on its board of directors.

When the Ranch started the building campaign in January 2022, Don reached out to Dr. Wayne Martinsen, Psychiatrist/Medical Director at the Ranch, to learn more about the project and to discuss how he might submit a proposal to the Julia Burke Foundation on the Ranch’s behalf.

After visiting with Dr. Martinsen and Ranch President/CEO, Joy Ryan, Don submitted and recommended a \$1 million grant to the “Healing Spaces: Building a Place of Care” campaign.

Don takes very little credit for the gift, saying he was just a conduit connecting the Ranch and the foundation.

“While I don’t make the decisions, I recommended the Ranch to the board, telling them it’s a good place to invest their money,” Don said. “The Ranch’s well-thought-out mission to help kids was the primary reason the foundation funded the campaign.”

## Legacy

One wing of Zurcher Cottage will be named in Julia’s honor, ensuring that Julia’s legacy will live on through the Ranch’s ministry to help children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.

After a successful career in real estate, Carol Townsend, Houston, TX, chose to honor her parents by relieving the suffering of children in her home state of North Dakota. When the fundraising campaign is complete, the Ranch will begin construction of Zurcher Cottage, named in memory of Carol’s parents, Elmer and Connie Zurcher, and her brother, Earl. Elmer was on the board and executive committee of the Ranch Board of Directors for decades.

Zurcher Cottage will have four wings in which the children will live while in care. One wing will be the Julia Burke Wing, the second will be the Dr. Charles E. and Lottie (Hartsoch) Stewart Wing, and the third will be the Polycarp and Norma Moulsoff Wing. The fourth wing is yet unnamed as we pray for another friend of the children of the Ranch to step forward. The campaign ends in December of 2025.



Above: Architectural rendering of the safe and secure cottage planned for the Minot campus. Below: Proposed floor plan for the new building.



## God's perfect plan



**By Jane Wunderlich**  
Development Officer

When I completed my bachelor's degree in Broadcasting and Professional Communication in December 2022 at Minot State University, Minot, ND, I looked to God for guidance on my next steps. My first adventure was to lead a mission team throughout South Africa and Lesotho for four months.

I returned home planning to walk at the spring commencement ceremony and spend the summer in Perham, MN, with my family. My mind was somewhat set on returning to Africa in August, but I was conflicted because of some major life events in the fall. You only become a first-time aunt once!

I prayed ceaselessly and asked the Lord to guide me and open the next door if His immediate plan for me wasn't to go back overseas. Within 48 hours of the commencement ceremony, God opened that door by putting a great opportunity right in my lap. A parent of one of my classmates saw me at graduation and thought, *"I think Janie might be a good fit for a Development Officer position at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch."* She called to tell me about it, I interviewed for the position, and here I am—at the Ranch where God wanted me to be.

During my first days at the Ranch, I participated in the Ranch Olympics, an annual event held on the Minot campus. As I watched the kids compete in kickball, relay races, basketball,

volleyball, throwing, and many other activities, I saw them experience moments of accomplishment filled with joy, but also moments of failure filled with frustration and anger. During those moments, I was blessed to witness firsthand Ranch staff being caring and purposeful with each child. They got down to their level, spoke to them calmly, encouraged them to keep going, showed them how to do things, and were present with them. Those small, simple things can make all the difference in a hurting child's life.

My dad passed away when I was 12 years old, and I am so grateful for the help my family received. Loss comes with grief, anger, and confusion, and if we hadn't dealt with it, I'm sure we

would not be as close as we are today. Even though I didn't fully understand why we had to talk to counselors and tell them our personal business, I see now how things could be completely different if we didn't have access to those services. Working at the Ranch has opened my eyes even more to the importance of children getting the help they need to be their best selves.

I'm excited to meet you (our wonderful Ranch donors) so I can share stories about the kids and tell you what the Ranch is doing to help children who are broken and hurting.

*"Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it."* — Proverbs 22:6

Your prayers for our kids are a source of healing and hope. If you have any questions about the Ranch, contact Janie Wunderlich, or any member of our team, at 1-800-344-0957 or [info@dakotaranch.org](mailto:info@dakotaranch.org). We would love to visit with you about the many ways you can support our mission of helping at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ.



**Lisa Cole**  
Mission Advancement Officer



**Anne Compere**  
Director of Mission Advancement



**Paul Krueger**  
Senior Development Officer



**Tim Unsinn**  
Senior Development Officer



**Linda Medhus**  
Senior Engagement Officer



**Laurie Dannewitz**  
Senior Development Officer



**Dennis Aune**  
Senior Development Officer



**Angela Kargbo**  
Development Officer

## Foundation and Corporate Donations

**The Mercy Box; School supplies and t-shirts;**  
(Bismarck)

**BisMan Community Foundation; Transition Backpacks; \$5,000**  
(Bismarck)

**Otter Tail Corporation Foundation; Maglocks/Fob readers; \$3,200**  
(Fargo)

**Elmer & Kaya Berg Foundation; DMS Caring Closet; \$1,000** (Fargo)

**Kiwanis Club of Fargo; Noise Canceling Headphones; \$1,500**  
(Fargo)

**Hope Lutheran Church; Fargo Chapel Repairs; \$2,250** (Fargo)

**North Dakota Community Foundation; DMS Elementary Remodel; \$5,000** (Minot)

**School Sisters of Notre Dame; DMS Caring Closet; \$1,000**

**BNSF Railway Foundation; Career and Technical Education Equipment Updates; \$6,000** (Minot)

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### Ranch Voice Editor

Tammy Noteboom,  
Vice President, Communications

# Memorials/Honorariums

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

## Memorials

July 1, 2023 - October 31, 2023

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Brock & Vikki Surerus

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Darleen Klemp

### EINARSON, JUDY

Sharon Grondahl

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Gary Enget

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Irene Heid

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Judith Faber

David Rowe

FATLAND, SYLVIA & JAN

Dean Fatland

FORD, HAROLD

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Bruce & Pam Smith

HANSON, YVONNE

Clayton & Zona Pearson

HANSVICK, LAJOY

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Clarice Mosolf

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Mrs. Richard Carow

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HILL, ROSEMARY

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Jill Murphey

HOGER, NANCY

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Irene Heid

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Evelyn Schwagler

HOLSING, BONITA

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HOVERSON, JEAN

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KAY

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HUNT, JR. DAVID

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JAEGER, TINA M.

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Violet Podenski

JOHNSTON, MADONNA

Sharon Grondahl

JONES, BRENDA

Eugene Heckendorf

JUNKERMAN, CHARLES

Eugene Heckendorf

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KLEMETSON, WILLIAM "BILLY"

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Kimberly Becker

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KOLDING, JANICE "JAN"

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KOMROSKY, CONNIE

Violet Podenski

*"In Him was life, and the life was  
the light of men. And the light  
shines in the darkness, and the  
darkness did not comprehend it."*

—John 1:4-5

KRUEGER, ALBERT & BEVERLY

Sherry Neebe

KUBASCH, CAROL

Carol Urbach

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KUEHNE, DENNIS

Kenneth & Lois Biel

KUSLER, JAMES O.

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Chris & Verella Hansen

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MATEHS, KENNETH "KEN"

David & Margaret Hall

MCCOLLUM, PAUL

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MCGREGOR, MYRNA

Ruby Peterson

MEYER, DOUGLAS & ELLA

Wilhelm Meyer

MIRANOWSKI, GENEVA MARIE

Diane Heagle

MOLTZEN, LYLE

Evelyn Schwagler

MOM

Elizabeth Swanson

NEEBE, FRED C.

Sherry Neebe

NELSON, INEZ

Don & Evonne Andersen

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Arlys Torgerson

ONSTOTT, EDD

Sue Hylland

OLSON, JOYCE

Ron & Janis Bakke

OTTMAR, PERCY

Kathryn Bertsch

PAGEL, EUGENE

Eugene Heckendorf

PAWLIKOWSKI, LUCINDA  
"CINDY"

Eugene Heckendorf

PEDERSEN, JEAN

Liz Ravenscroft

PIERCE, ELYZABETH

Marisa Knudson

RAVNAAS, CAROL

Orvin & Delores Ravnaas

REEMS, BARBARA

Jim & Judy Mittelstadt

REHBEIN, WILMER

Lucile Wattermann

REICHMUTH, RICHARD

Liz Ravenscroft

REINHILLER, JOSEPHINE

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RETTSCHLAG, CARLEEN

Barbara Pingel

ROHLFING, CAROL ANNE

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SCHMIDT, HOWARD

Carole Schmidt

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HOWARD

Carole Schmidt

Victoria Schousek

SCHOUSEK, ZACHARY JAMES

Carole Schmidt

Victoria Schousek

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Tupperware Alumni Association

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Clarice Mosolf

Doug & Kathy Rath

Arlene Schuder

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Wilbur & Mavis Pfennig

SHAW, JOANN

Evelyn Schwagler

SHERECK, DARREL

Cynthia Shereck

SIMCOX, MARK

Ethel Beuch

SIMON, BRUCE

Kenton & Zona Schmidt

SITZER, BRENT

Lou & Myrna Mitchell

SMIDT, DONALD

Barbara Pingel

SMITH, DOROTHY H.

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Aarsvold Family

Dale Kuball

Annette Niemeier

Ellen Rydell

Alan & Jennie Smith & Friends

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SOLBERG, MARK

Robert Anderson

SPENCER, WAYNE & ELFRIEDA

Robert & Cathy Jones

STROH, KENNETH

Bruce & Pam Smith

SVAC, BEVERLY  
 Marybeth Blair  
 Sharon Pazlar  
 Michael Allen  
 SWIFT, TREVOR  
 Al & Johnne Bierdeman  
 SZEWCZAK, CASEY T.  
 Patricia Szewczak  
 THENE, BARBARA  
 Wanda Mau  
 THIEL, MELVIN  
 Richard Gust  
 TRAPP, JAMES "JIM"  
 Judith Baumann  
 TREDER, SUE  
 Darleen Klemp  
 TREUDE, ESTRELLA  
 Joyce Kaelberer Henke  
 VANDERHOEF, AIDAN  
 Dennis & Mitzie Nay  
 Shane & Anna Oas  
 VAN WINKLE, DEAN  
 Ilene Bussler  
 VETTER, JAMES "JIM"  
 Josh & Crystal Askvig  
 Dennis Aune  
 Alan Bergman  
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 VOORHEES, WEBB & JOYCE  
 Rev. Jack & Joneen Richards  
 WAGNER, WELDON  
 Rosella Debele  
 WALSH, GERALD "JERRY"  
 John & Pat Sebastian  
 WANGSNESS,  
 DOUG  
 Carolyn Feldman  
 WEIGAND,  
 DANNY  
 Derek Weigand  
 WEISS, JAMES  
 Norma Van  
 Osterheldt  
 WERCHAU, RUTH  
 ANN  
 Millie Bueligen  
 Irene Heid  
 Evelyn Schwagler  
 WESSELS, LARRY  
 Anita Petersen  
 WOLLER, LAVINE  
 Eugene Heckendorf  
 ZIMNEY, BERNICE  
 Tim & JoAnne Rehborg

**Honorariums**  
**July 1, 2023 - October 31, 2023**

ARNIE & MARLANE  
 MIDDLESTEAD'S  
 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY  
 Violet Podenski  
 CASIMER "CASEY" T. SZEWCZAK,  
 III  
 Patricia Szewczak

CECILIA PODCZERWINSKI  
 Janet Podczerwinski  
 DOROTHY ROMEO  
 Bob James  
 DR. CARL & MRS. DONNA HOLL  
 Anonymous Donor  
 IN HONOR OF HER CHILDREN  
 MATTHEW, ANDREW, LAURAH &  
 THEIR FAMILIES  
 Deborah Courtney  
 IN HONOR OF THEIR CHILDREN  
 AND GRANDCHILDREN  
 Jim & Ruth Lehfeldt

*"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."*  
 —Galatians 4:4-5

JESUS CHRIST, OUR REDEEMER,  
 SAVIOR & LORD  
 Gloria Trim  
 JOY RYAN  
 Kole & Quin Seiler  
 THE HECKENDORF FAMILY  
 Eugene Heckendorf  
 THOMAS R. DECKER  
 ShaRell Nelson  
 REV. DR. PAUL A. KRUEGER  
 Paul League  
 REV. DR. RONALD JONES  
 King of Glory Lutheran Church  
 REV. WILLIAM OTTE  
 Barbara Pingel  
 RICHARD PRESTON  
 Bradley Preston

The Satisfaction  
of Finding the  
Perfect Blend  
of Giving

# Gift and Bequest

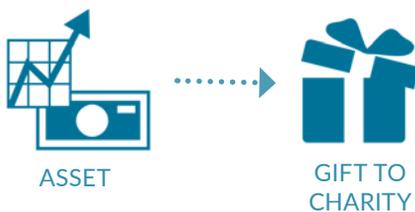
Have you ever heard the phrase “blended gift” and wondered what that meant?

A blended gift is a combination of a current gift and a planned gift. It is a way to support the causes that you care about and make your giving go further.

A giving strategy that may appeal to you is a blended gift that consists of a current gift and a charitable bequest made in your will or trust. A “gift and bequest” can help you achieve your goals. You can provide for your family, establish a financial plan, and support the causes that matter most to you.

## How A Gift and Bequest Works

### 1 Make a Gift Today



### 2 Plan for Tomorrow



### A Blended Gift Can Maximize the Impact of Your Giving

When you supplement your current charitable giving with a planned gift, you create a legacy for your family and cherished causes, while also saving significant taxes for you and your family.

To learn more, contact  
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch  
at 1-800-344-0957



## A Prayer for Healing

Lord Jesus, heal me.  
Heal in me, whatever  
You see needs healing.  
Heal me in whatever might  
Separate me from You.  
Heal my memory, heal my  
Heart, heal my emotions,  
Heal my spirit, heal my  
Body, heal my soul.  
Lay Your hands gently  
Upon me and heal me  
Through your love for me.  
Amen.

We keep all donors, kids, and Ranch staff in our prayers. 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).

Artwork by Ranch resident.



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

I AM UNIQUE

Therefore, if anyone  
is in Christ, the new  
creation has come: the  
old is gone the new  
is here!



"I Am Unique," created  
by Ranch resident.

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

