



Jeremiah's Crossing Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 4

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I gaze upon the herd with heart so full of grace and ease.

They block the wind and hold the warmth that binds them close.

A few that stand less tall stroll just a bit but not too far away.

This team of wondrous hoofed friends, they know how best to brace the cold.

No wind or chill can break their sure resolve to shield against the chilling wind.

Shared warmth is just the best there is to guard against all fears.

Somehow the chill that struck upon my soul now drifts away.

My hoofed friends again have taught me well how I can change my view.

I'll seek more friends and huddle close to melt whatever needs to flow away.

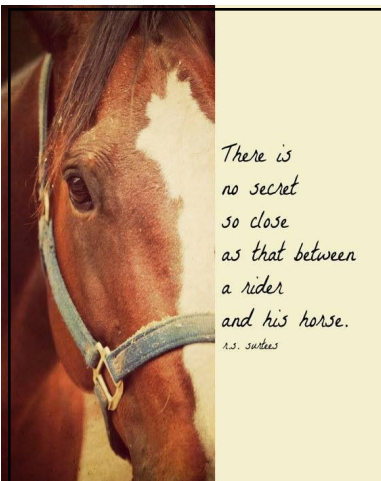
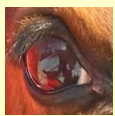


The nice thing about snow is that it keeps my hoofs clean and tidy.



Did you know?

Horses have the largest eyes of any land mammal.



*There is
no secret
so close
as that between
a rider
and his horse.
—S. Sures*

*Climb every mountain
Ford every stream
Follow every rainbow
Till you find your dream*

From the horses mouth— an interview with Journey

Journey is a really nice pony with a comforting personality. His breed is Pony of the Americas (POA). This breed was developed in the state of Iowa and is characterized as very youth-oriented. Their coloration and specific height is perfectly suited for smaller riders, and that translates to just right for our younger students here at the ranch.

So Journey, how do you describe your role here at the ranch?

Journey: “The truth is that I have a very special role here. My smaller stature makes it easy for me reach out to participants who need a horse friend in a smaller body.”

How so? Why is that helpful?

Journey: Look at it this way. I can acquaint my riders with all of the activities involved in our lessons— starting, stopping, turning, and just getting friendly with a horse. They get to know me as a partner, and, for many, that is a new experience. In time they can move up and feel comfortable with a full-sized horse. That makes me feel pretty good.

What are your likes and dislikes about the ranch?

Journey: Well, *I love the herd.* Because of my, shall we say, perfect stature, I feel a bit special because I’m on call a lot for younger students with smaller size.



Hey, what’s not to like? I get to pal around with super nice young kids! We just hit it off together so nicely. My world is chuck full of grateful parents and happy smiling kids!

It doesn’t get any better than this. I’m in this job for the long haul. That’s for sure!

Editor’s comment

Dreary as it is while we all hunker down during the cold months of winter, we endure the shivers and formidable piles of snow mindful that a bright new day will soon arrive. We know that every spring brings us a new fresh start— green grasses arrive, leaves appear, and warm breezes gladden our hearts. It is always seen as a new beginning. We make lists of what we plan to tackle, what improvements we will make, what different directions we will seek. Some call it a renewal, others see it as a chance for some changes, and then there are those who want to follow a more distant star for a truly marvelous, even wondrous, life-changing new beginning!

Here at the ranch we are excited to welcome our new year of lessons. It’s no secret that our road has been a bit rocky as we all coped with the repercussions of the Covid experience and other hardships, but a new day is dawning. Our improved superstructures are now propelling us into maximum proficiency, and we’re ready to roll!

Sometimes unanticipated difficulties help us grasp just how well we are equipped to overcome odds. These are times when we are forced to acquiesce with what we had not anticipated. I sort of figure that newly found strength can be a benefit of overcoming adversity. What’s the difference between coping and mastering? If you’ve got to do one, why not do the other? Here at the ranch, we specialize in helping our students taste success as the best avenue for continued progress toward achievable goals. Little can be achieved if at first you don’t try. One step forward leads to another, and then another, and so on. I’m not sure how this relates, but I always liked Robert Frost’s poem, *The Road Less Taken*. Even if it’s an uncertain trail, why not give it a try? Good things can happen when you seek another route, a different way, a new approach,

Here at Jeremiah’s Crossing, we took an uncertain trail, with faith being our guide, and it has turned out as well as ever could have been imagined. Thanks to all of our supporters, we have the joy of experiencing a truly wondrous and heartwarming result. God bless you all.

Phil George, Editor

Quick thoughts— riding health positives

In a nutshell there are many possible and positive outcomes that can evolve from a good experience riding “high in the saddle” upon a cooperative horse. This goes beyond the specific goals of Jeremiah’s Crossing, but it is worthy of notice for anyone who may wish to climb into a saddle upon a horse. Possible expectations: **Gain a sense of well-being:** Horseback riding can provide a boost to a rider’s self-confidence. Successfully riding a horse can be exhilarating.

Improve blood circulation: it is a perfect avenue for cardiovascular exercise.

Increases range of motion: riding involves stretching both on and off the horse, and that provides an increased range of motion and relaxation to muscles and tendons throughout the body.

Stabilizes equilibrium: riding requires immense amounts of balance, and that can be quite exhausting, but over time the rider gains a better sense of how to hold it in check.

Improves coordination: the rider learns to work on their motor planning and reflexes including eye-hand coordination.

Strengthens muscles: Riding can be a great way to develop and strengthen muscles throughout the body, a great way to introduce exercise to an otherwise hesitant individual.

Benefits of horseback riding therapy

Let’s take a moment to underscore the essence of why we have taken on this responsibility to offer therapeutic horseback riding for students at our ranch. Often there are questions from the general public regarding the benefits of this type of equine-assisted therapy. In short, why do we offer this service? We offer this service to benefit students like Josh.

Josh has been a student at Jeremiah’s Crossing for several years. He is challenged by tight leg muscles that make riding a challenge. Over the years, Josh has partnered with several horses at Jeremiah’s Crossing, beginning with Lil Guy. Instructors chose Lil Guy because he has a very narrow body and would be best for Josh, so as not to over tax his muscles. Over time, instructors chose different horses for Josh and Josh loved each one in turn. Each horse helped Josh develop his riding skills to a bit of a higher level. Each was a bit wider.

In 2023, after chatting with Josh and his caregiver, Josh revealed his goal of getting more stretched out to make walking easier. Looking at the herd, instructors decided to partner Josh with Jedd, truly one of the widest horses on the team. An unusual choice under normal circumstances, but a bold choice given Josh’s stated goal. The pairing worked! To be ready to ride Jedd, Josh committed to stretching out regularly by sitting on the saddle he has at home. During lessons, Jedd continued to help stretch Josh just a bit more. As a result, walking was easier this summer and fall.

For Josh, it’s not just physical well-being that matters. It’s companionship and caring. It’s love on a horse.

Jeremiah’s Crossing Drill Team Thoughts:

Jeremiah’s Crossing, gorgeous land.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, God’s working hands.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, we will help.

Jeremiah’s Crossing, nothing without you.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, where the skies are always blue.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, we will help.

Jeremiah’s Crossing, absolutely incredible.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, the beauty is perceptible.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, we will help.

Jeremiah’s Crossing, I love to volunteer.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, makes me smile when I see you appear.
Jeremiah’s Crossing, we will help.

Mrs. Kathleen and Roger, at Jeremiah’s Crossing, are some of my favorite people. Not only do they put their horses before them, they put their students before them as well. They are always so careful to ensure that their students have the safest environment possible while having the best time possible. It means the world to me to be part of Jeremiah’s Crossing. The 2023 Drill Team has a few words to describe Jeremiah’s Crossing; Joyful, Enthusiastic, Refreshing, Effective, Miracle, Illuminating, Auspicious, Hardworking, Safe, Calming, Reliable, Obedient, Sensible, Sincere, Intelligent, Nifty, Gifted.

There are so many things we could say about Jeremiah’s Crossing. But my favorite two words to say to these amazing people are Thank you!

Movin' along— what a thrill



"I love it when we meet eye to eye. That means we're real friends."

Timothy Tips

From my perspective on the post,

I know that you must:

Stand tall to see far

Believe or you won't do

Let hope be your guide

Accept challenges

Enjoy the adventure



In just a few months this is what we'll see all over the ranch. Spring will come soon!

Horses become our partners in healing by allowing us to experience the serenity of the present moment and providing for us mirrors of our own emotions, ways of communication, and challenges in relationships.

Jeremiah's Crossing offers an incredible experience for their special student riders, all of whom have some sort of developmental, physical, visual, cognitive or emotional challenges. Trained horse handlers and side walkers work with these enthusiastic children to help them mount, maintain control and balance, and to understand how to handle themselves in the saddle. All of the ranch's lovely horses have been carefully and painstakingly trained to help the rider learn to follow directions from instructors and volunteers through commands and muscle movements. The horse's legs do the walking, and the students enjoy the thrill of motion at their command. The benefits of this activity for the student riders often include more interaction with peers and family. There is typically a strengthening of the upper torso and improved posture, balance, and coordination. Students learn how to center their attention and do what they are told. We've more detail on these benefits on page 7.

Quote worth retelling:

Endeavor to live so that when you die, even the undertaker will be sorry. Mark Twain

Fencepost viewpoint by T. T. Toolittle

I've been asked to comment on our new accommodations here at the ranch.

Why ask me? As far as I can see, no one made me a new home or a place to stash my nuts and keep dry. Sure, the horses get new digs, and I'm supposed to be happy hiding in the corner of the new arena. Last I checked, there's no heat going on there in the winter!

OK. I get it. I'm "just a chipmunk." I ought to be able to fend for myself. I can chew on any spilled leftovers after all the horses have gobbled their hay like slobs. Actually, that's not fair— they nibble their hay and feed rather neatly— never leaving much for their furry

little "friends", and I am a friend, after all, aren't I— really!

So life moves on as we all brave the cold. Actually, I've little to complain about. I have several places to go to get out of the snow now. My new tunnels underground work pretty well, but I don't have to use them much during the winter season. I just snuggle in wrapped in a pile of shredded hay. It's not bad, really. Felicity Fieldmouse snuggles with me when the temperature goes below zero, and we just tough it out.

As far as I can see the horses are braving things pretty well now that they can always get in out of the

snow and cold weather. They actually seem to be much happier now that they can always find shelter. Of course, they do love to roll in the snow when it piles up. Then they just shake it off and head inside to warm up by huddling together.

I'm just passing this on to you so that you won't worry about any of us. We're doing just fine. All the ranch improvements have turned out pretty well.

All we're really missing are our student friends, but they'll be back in the spring. Hooray!

Timothy



PATH International

Jeremiah's Crossing is a member of Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.), a federally-registered 501 (c3) nonprofit that was formed in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association to promote equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. PATH International is the credentialing organization for accrediting centers and certifying instructors and equine specialists.

Laborers in the field— making things happen. You can help as well....

We have a commitment here to nourish our mission ministry to meet the needs of all who enter our gates for assistance without any charge for our services. We support our effort through the generosity in labor, time, and financial assistance brought forth by our generous community. Many of these friends live locally and consider themselves as extended members of our ministry. Others come from a range of communities that stretch to the borders of our state and well beyond. Families and friends of our students help us in ways that probably stretch beyond their comfortable means. We understand that this giving comes from the heart, and it comforts us to have this blanket of community support. We thus carry on, rejoicing and encouraged to excel in all we do with training and steadiness of intent to serve those in need of our service.

We welcome all support that helps us and all who join our team, rejoicing as we forge ahead with heartfelt intent to serve every need that comes across our threshold. Team or no team, anyone can help us carry our mission forward, to help us care for our horses and support our student's needs. Our mission supplies our services at no cost to our students or their families, and we continue through the generosity of our friends and a few wonderful grants that have been made available to us through several wonderful community organizations. If you are able to make a direct contribution to Jeremiah's Crossing, simply visit our website home page at: <http://jeremiahscrossing.org> or contact the ranch directly using the address or phone number on the back page of this publication.

Through the generosity of our supportive public, we have succeeded in the completion of several major infrastructure needs, our amazing arena, our bunkhouse, and our new stall barn. We are ready to roll big time. There are always ways for us to improve and expand our services as incoming needs demand, but we are confident we will meet the needs of every new and continuing student that comes to our ranch for help in the weeks and years to come.

If you are receiving this newsletter, you have a connection with us, through services, special interests, giving, or just an interest in making needed life changes for some wonderful folks who need our services.

Thank you for your support.

Revisiting an old book to fall in love with life

Wintertime is sometimes best tolerated by seeking out an old "great read" from your bookshelf, something you just couldn't pass on or toss out because it was so pleasant to read. I reported on this book a few years back, and I'd like to bring it up again. It seems perfect for this imperfect time. Maybe you are familiar with Arthur Gordon's *A Touch of Wonder*, first published in 1974.

My wife and I both loved the author's gentle persuasion to recognize the pure joy we can have if we just open our eyes to the excitement of living everyday life. The book opens with the author's "Prayer of a Writer", and it successfully guided his pen as he authored this lovely work.

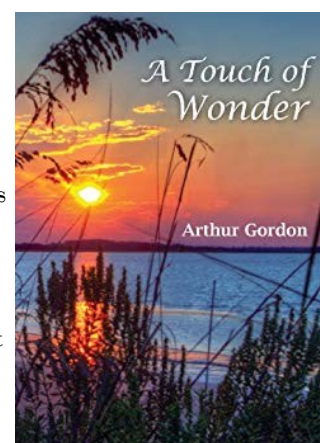
*Lord of all things, whose wondrous gifts to man
Include the shining symbols known as words,
Grant that I may use their mighty power
Only for good. Help me to pass on
Small fragments of Your wisdom, truth, and love.
Teach me to touch the unseen, lonely heart
With laughter, or the quick release of tears,
Let me portray the courage that endures
Defiant in the face of pain or death;
The kindness and the gentleness of those
Who fight against the anger of the world;
The beauty hidden in the smallest things;
The mystery, the wonder of it all . . .
Open my ears, my eyes, unlock my heart,
Speak through me, Lord, if it be your will. Amen*

This lovely prayer seems perfectly aligned with our needs today as it was back in the 1970's. All of us blossom when we believe in overcoming, seeking the goodness that surrounds us, allowing laughter to surface, recognizing beauty in all its splendid forms, and soaking in the love that encompasses us.

We must seek to focus our hearts and minds on all the hidden beauties around us, wherever it resides. The writer sought God's help, and he was granted wider vision to uncover glorious tales of gifts all around— of caring, shared wisdom, self-discovery, faith, bright encounters, awareness, adaptability, and life itself. Each chapter told a tale of love in a different way, and the reader cannot help being moved and anxious to move on to the next tale.

If you can find the book, expect some tears of joy as you read. It is touching. But the lesson of the book is clearly revealed in the prayer he offered that was presented here. Seek and ye shall find is one of the clearest admonitions of scripture. Be intentional about discovering goodness, and you will gain a perspective that will help balance all adversities. Accept that thought as an invitation to fall in love with life. That is the author's personal invitation to you.

I loaned my copy out to someone and didn't get it back. It's so great I have reordered another copy on Amazon. It's worth a re-read, and I'm already looking foreword to it!





I know I saw that pesky little chipmunk run under here. Just grab him by the tail and dunk him in the water trough!

What is the most important part of a horse?

The mane part!



Let me think about that !

Happiness is more than sunshine

Sunshine is always thought of as uplifting, and who doesn't love to see it when it is bright and cheery? That great song, "You are the sunshine of my life" kind of ranks sun as a way to both absorb warmth and accept a heavenly cheering through the love of a special person. When it's cold and dreary outside, we can also enjoy the beauty of a lovely snowfall (until we have to shovel it out of the way).

Henry Ward Beecher shined a light on this quite pointedly when he offered this observation— "The art of being happy lies in the power of extracting happiness from common things."

At the ranch, we enjoy the companionship of our horses as well as our students and volunteer supporters when our sessions open again. We witness the happiness that abounds from our students sitting "tall in the saddle", and that's the best of all.

Great quotes about horses

There is nothing new about our understanding of the special relationship that exists between people and their horses. It is always wise to keep in mind that these great animals are special brothers and sisters given to us as loyal partners for survival and well being. These famous quotes belong on a chalkboard for daily perusal. Leave room to add your own special appreciations.

"When I bestride him, I soar, I am a hawk; he trots the air; the earth sings when he touches it; the basest horn of his hoof is more musical than the pipe of Hermes." - William Shakespeare

"A great horse will change your life. The truly special ones define it..." - Author Unknown

"A man on a horse is spiritually as well as physically bigger than a man on foot." - John Steinbeck

"Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened." - Anatole France

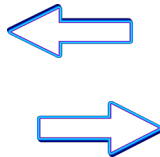
"No hour of life is ever wasted that is spent in the saddle." - Winston Churchill

"The horse is God's gift to mankind." - Arabian proverb

"If your horse says no, you either asked the wrong question, or asked the question wrong." - Pat Parelli

"Feeling down? Saddle up." —Author unknown

Can you spot the 12 differences? (Suggestion-- draw in what's missing or changed with a colored pen)



Differences revealed at bottom of page 8

You like quilts? Come see what we've got!

Jeremiah's Crossing has been in the quilting business for fundraising support for some time now, and we hope our area quilters will all be on deck for our event this year. Set aside April 29 & 30 to see and share the many handmade quilts on display at the Nekoosa High School Field House.

Our quilt show has become an annual event that is very well attended. It is an excellent opportunity to display your quilting project among fellow quilters and to develop even more enthusiasm for this special craft endeavor. The annual Mane Quilt Show has become a popular outlet for quilters throughout the area to gather and appreciate each others' handiwork. Our show will be open from 10 AM until mid-afternoon each day.

This is a judged quilt show offering youth categories, vendors, classes, demos, trunk shows, basket raffle, quilt raffle, and door prizes for attendees. The Mane Quilt Show benefits Jeremiah's Crossing, our therapeutic horseback-riding ranch, located in Babcock, WI, that provides horseback-riding lessons to students with special needs at no cost to students or their families. Admission is a free-will donation. Contact Kathleen Harris for more information at 715-884-2551. Help us support our students with your participation in this event as a quilter or ranch supporter.

Join us in 2023!!



We are already planning the
2023 Mane Quilt Show
and we hope you will join us!

Dates: April 29 & 30
Location: Nekoosa High School Field House

NEW for '23
A Featured BLOCK Category



The Quatrefoil

Time to start your projects for 2023 entry into our
show to support Jeremiah's Crossing!

The special connection our students have with horses

There is a remarkable bonding that occurs between Jeremiah's Crossing horses and their student riders. It is individually and carefully developed. We strive to provide as much time as possible to help both the horse and the student to warm up to each other. We love witnessing how patient our horses are in assessing the student's particular needs to build their special companionship together.

Horses are sensitive to moods and have moods of their own. In effect, they communicate non-verbally and in their own honest way. Horses have the ability to mirror the moods of people. A student may feel that the horse is stubborn (for example, it may not want to move forward in a particular moment). In reality, this is most likely because the student is acting in a stubborn and resistant way, and the horse is simply responding in a similar fashion, as if to say "See, I can do that too."

Horses reflect their feelings through their movements or stillness. What a great way to help students develop necessary non-verbal communication skills. The student learns, by example of the horse, to get outside of their perceived self to respond to the horse. The result is that the horse will then respond to the student in a similar fashion showing willing-

ness to do as asked.

This special **bonding** that develops between horse and student involves qualities that promote the development of a cooperative and relational spirit for the student:

- Affection
- Assertiveness
- Communication skills
- Confidence
- Empathy
- Mutual trust
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Self-control
- Unconditional acceptance

These are all components of interactional student healing that we see at Jeremiah's Crossing all the time. But it is even more than that. Our students develop rewarding friendships with their horses. They know them by name, and they can pick them out from the herd. When away, they long to see them again. That's what comradeship is all about. Sounds like a pretty good life lesson for lasting friendships!

It is the horse's gift to connect us with Heaven and our own footsteps.

Ronnie Sweet

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Changing lives

Jeremiah's Crossing is a nonprofit mission ministry. This ministry serves as a therapeutic horseback-riding ranch and is located in Babcock, Wisconsin. The ranch is dedicated to helping horses help children and adults with diagnosed physical, cognitive, emotional, and academic special needs at no cost to the students or their families.

Jeremiah's Crossing is God's ranch. He has provided for many people to be involved, using their gifts and talents to help others. We want to share our experiences with all who have interest—both those wishing to join our team as well as those wishing to be our prayerful friends.

Now in our second decade of service, we serve a large territory that draws people with special needs from throughout the area—Marathon, Wood, Portage, Waupaca, Juneau, and Adams counties.

For more information, check out our website at <http://jeremiahscrossing.org> or view our Facebook page.

Jeremiah's Crossing Board of Directors

Elizabeth Hipke, President
Paula Weber, Vice President
Wendy Franklin, Treasurer
Kathleen Harris, Secretary

Roger & Kathleen Harris, Executive Directors

Page 6: spot differences: Bird in front of tree, lily pad below ducks, clothesline, scroll décor on house, flowers below tree, weeds below house replaces small exposed bank along pond, flower basket, crane reversed, little ducky reversed, fish added in pond, grass added at picture bottom, turtle reversed

Be our friend, inspired by our efforts. Keep us in your prayers, and enjoy our successes, beside us if you can, supportive if you're able.