

About the founders



BEN AND CARYL have ventured hand in hand for over a quarter of a century as husband and wife, dad and mom, and followers of Christ. In the winter of 2011, and with the passion and hope that is found only in their faith, they began the outrageous adventure of developing Stable Days Youth Ranch. Starting with no land, no horses, and no experience, it's amazing that six short years later they have 70 acres, 15 horses, and more than a few lessons learned. It is their humble privilege to serve as the founders and directors of SDYR and SDE.

We can't do it without your help

From our humble beginnings to our current programs, hands that freely give are the life of this place.

There are many ways to be involved with SDYR. We need s'more makers, mentors, greeters, artists, scrapbookers, goofballs, photographers, crafters, mavericks, green thumbers, equestrian caregivers, planners, fence builders, manure movers and more...

Training is available! If you're interested in applying for a volunteer position, fill out an application and give us a call or send us an email:



info@stabledays.org



701.330.9952

Every dollar you donate until January 31st, 2017 will be matched up to \$25,000!

A generous friend of the Ranch has given us a **\$25,000 Match Gift** and we invite you to partner with us today to make the most of it! We are so honored to be a part of a community full of people like you, willing to give a much-needed hand up to a neighbor.

*Please consider giving today:
Your donation will have double the impact!*

Healing at a gentle gait When The World Seems Dark

Kathryn saw the worst.

Depression seemed the norm, and she wasn't able to shake the feelings of worthlessness, anger, and despair. Her options seemed limited, and every shred of hope seemed to vanish like a whisper. In a word, her life was dark.

Although feelings of guilt washed over her, she thought to herself, "no one will miss me if I'm not here. I'm invisible, and I don't want to live anymore." Suicide seemed like the only door that led anywhere, and anywhere else would certainly be better than where she was, or so she thought. Fortunately, her attempt to end her life didn't work.

Following her release from the hospital, Kathryn started youth mentoring sessions at Stable Days Youth Ranch. Working side by side with her mentor every week, she began learning new skills and talking about life and faith. Kathryn began riding and caring for horses, who, in addition to becoming close friends, are valuable mentors as well.



Kathryn's horse, Dakota, is always calm and happy to see her. Riding slowly, feeling his unconditional acceptance and simply absorbing the peaceful silence – just being there – has become a lesson in itself.

In her sessions, Kathryn is connecting with her horse, learning from her mentor and talking together in a safe place. The social worker catches glimpses of life in her eyes again, in shared looks and smiles.

Kathryn continues to make strides toward a better understanding of herself and how valuable she is in the eyes of her Creator, Jesus Christ, giving her strength to move forward in a challenging, confusing, and often dark world.

Founders' letter

Expanding our community

This summer, we welcomed clients of the North Dakota School for the Blind, The L.I.S.T.E.N. Center, Development Homes, Ruth Meiers Youth Treatment Center, Tri-County Juvenile Corrections Center and several other local organizations that support needful kids and adults.

We've been blessed to be able to host more of the community. After all, everyone deserves the awesome experience of being closer to nature and its beautiful creatures.

You've had a hand in this, and we thank you for your generous support. We feel it every day. In addition to financial support, there are plenty of ways to expand the good that happens at Stable Days Youth Ranch, like volunteering or sharing with others the stories of healing we share with you. We are truly grateful for anything and everything you're able to do.

God bless.



Ben and Caryl

We aren't all kids, but **everyone** deserves a chance to feel like a kid at heart, at least for a little while. Welcome to Stable Days Youth Ranch!



Teaching a youth ranch new tricks

Kids aren't the only ones who get to have fun with horses at the Ranch.

A core pillar of the vision for Stable Days Youth Ranch is to share the Love of Jesus Christ, His healing power, and the joy of walking with Him. We do this in an authentic ranch environment with kiddos encountering a horse (and other critters, too). Today, we're able to host folks of **all ages and walks of life**, give them a chance to make new friends (both two- and four-legged), experience things they wouldn't get anywhere else and to have a little time under God's great, vast canopy.

- We welcomed George, in his 40s, a client of a local organization working with disabled folks. Although his body is bound to a wheelchair, his spirit soars and his toothy grin widens when he sees Oswald, the bunny, emerge from his hiding place into the open pen. It's almost as if they're playing a secret game of hide-and-seek.

- There was Adeline, a middle-aged professional who has captured an evasive sense of peace through volunteering in an environment without the office noises, pressures of schedules, and expectations that always seem too high to achieve. Here, she is not judged as she reaches to scratch the nose of Journey, our white Appaloosa. She takes solace in the fact that he will never lie to her, but simply drinks in Adeline's attention as he chows on the bucket of oats she's holding. "Simple," she thinks, and simple is good.

- Eric struggles with feelings of anxiety and nervousness, especially around other people. But, he explains, he doesn't feel at all nervous or anxious when he is around the horses. His brow furrows as he takes in the thought that until now he had never experienced working with animals at all, let alone 1,200 pound ground-shakers. And yet here he is, halter in hand, feeling confident as he leads Hero into the front arena to spend some time doing ground work.

