

Horses help troubled youth with problems

By Ron Wilson
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 Huck Boyd National Institute
 for Rural Development
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 Hooves and heaven. How would those go together? Today, in the conclusion of this two-part series for Kansas Profile, we'll learn more about an enterprise in rural Kansas named Hooves of Heaven which is using horses to help troubled young people.

Last week we learned that Hooves of Heaven was founded by Chuck Matke in northwest Kansas. Hooves of Heaven is an equine assisted learning organization for troubled youth.

"I've always loved horses," Chuck said. Through the years, he

saw how interaction with a horse could help a young person work out his or her troubles. He wanted a way to help even more children.

Chuck's farm has been in his family for more than 100 years. "My wife calls this place her little piece of heaven," Chuck said. "Using the word heaven and the hooves of his horses, he called the organization Hooves of Heaven. In 2005, Hooves of Heaven was organized as a foundation with the vision of bringing people and horses together.

"We have never charged for riding lessons," Chuck said. "We take only donations." Kids come to Hooves of Heaven as foster children, juvenile justice clients, or from local families for riding and other human-horse interaction.

"We had one kid who would not quit riding," Chuck said. "He just kept wanting to ride, and afterwards he helped us clean up. That young man became our first foster child."

One year Chuck got a call from Youthville, the Wichita facility operated by the Methodist church for youth who suffer from abuse, neglect, or abandonment. "They said they had 25 kids with no place to go for Christmas," Chuck said. He organized an effort to serve those kids. He and members of his board hauled horses and wagons to Wichita, got food donated and prepared the kids a meal, and gave each child a \$50 gift certificate as a present.

Hooves of Heaven organizes large trail rides in scenic areas of

western Kansas as fund raisers to support the work of the organization. Chuck especially appreciates how these horses can make a difference in a child's life.

"Miraculous things can happen when we get kids and horses together," Chuck said. One girl who was on suicide watch in a juvenile facility came to Hooves of Heaven. She was put in a pen with a group of horses. She observed their behavior and gave names to each horse in a way which ultimately helped a therapist to understand what was happening with her family relationships. Six weeks later, that girl was able to go home.

"It's equine assisted learning," Chuck said. "You can't tell these kids what to do, you have them tell

you what's going on in their lives. Then you use what they're telling you to help them. You become a tool of God's grace."

The horses are remarkable tools of grace in this process as well. "Our horses can read the mood of these kids," Chuck said. "It's something I'll never be able to explain."

For example, a troubled young man came to Hooves of Heaven and was placed in a pen of horses as Chuck and the therapist watched. The horses surrounded the young man, but when he lashed out, the horses ran away. Yet when he talked softly, the horses came to him. "At the end of the session, he was a changed kid," Chuck said. "He came out understanding that if he was nice to his friends, rather than

violent toward them, he'd get better results. The therapist said to me, 'How'd you get those horses to do that?' I told him, 'You know what? You've just seen God at work.'"

These remarkable things happen at Hooves of Heaven, which is located in a rural setting on the Matke family farm east of WaKeeney near the community of Ogallah, which has a population of perhaps 25 people. Now, that's rural.

For more information, go to www.hoovesofheaven.com.

Hooves and heaven. We commend Chuck Matke and all those involved with Hooves of Heaven for making a difference with equine-assisted learning. I think the results are heavenly.

Scam artists prey on public

In light of the devastating storm system that hit the East Coast last week, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt warns Kansans to be aware of possible scam artists seeking to profit from the generosity of others.



Derek Schmidt
 • attorney general

Schmidt warns the public to make sure they are donating to a reputable charity and to specify that a charity uses donations for intended purposes.

"When natural disaster strike, it is human nature to offer help," Schmidt said. "But please donate wisely to established, legitimate disaster-relief charities."

Here are a few simple tips for donating, to avoid being scammed:

- Make donations to established organizations with a strong track record of organizing and providing disaster relief.
- Initiate the donation yourself, rather than repsonding to online or

phone solicitations.

- Avoid door-to-door solicitors or offers from charities to stop by a consumer's home to pick up a check. These too could be fraudulent.

• Do not fall prey to high-pressure pitches from solicitors. Legitimate charities allow you time to think about how much - and when - you choose to donate.

- Be wary of charities that ask for alternate forms of payment. Legitimate charities rarely if ever ask you to give by wire transfer.

The Kansas Attorney General's Office is dedicated to consumer protection. More information on avoiding charity scams is available on the Attorney General's website at www.ag.ks.gov.

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Worship warms the heart

<p>Calvary Gospel Church <i>Lead Pastors: Randy and Mary Payne</i> <i>Assistant Pastors: Jacob and Ramie Soyez</i> Fourth & College • 890-3605 Sunday: Kid's Church: 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Morning Service: 8:30 and 10:30 am Youth @ the Rock House, Sixth & Caldwell: 6:30 p.m. Prayer and Praise: 5:00 p.m. except last Sunday of the month Wednesday: Kids 4 Christ 6:30 p.m. during school year Life Groups - See website website: www.calvarygospel.net email: info@calvarygospel.net or see us on Facebook</p>	<p>Our Lady of Perpetual Help <i>Celebrant: Father Norbert Dlabal</i> 307 W. 13th • 890-7205 Sacrament of Reconciliation: 5-5:45 p.m. Saturday or by appointment Mass Schedule: Saturday: 6 pm, Sunday: 10:30 am Spanish Mass: Sunday: 12:30 pm</p>	<p>Promiseland Baptist Church <i>Pastor: Rick Holmes • 890-7082</i> 225 W. 16th (785) 890-7944 Sunday: Sunday School: 10:30 a.m. Morning Service: 11:30 a.m. Evening Service: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday: Bible Study Service 6:30 p.m.</p>
<p>Goodland United Methodist Church 1116 Sherman 899-3631 Pastors: Dustin and Shelly Petz Saturday: Worship: 5:30 p.m. Sunday: Adult Classes: 9:15 a.m. Worship: 10:30 a.m. Wednesday: Wednesday Nite Live 5:45 - 6:45 p.m. Simple Supper "Free will Offering 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Classes for all ages</p>	<p>Pleasant Home Church <i>Serving the rural community</i> Celebrating 125 years of God's gracious blessings! Rt. 1, Box 180 • 3190 Road 70 (785) 694-2807 Pastor: Perry Baird Sunday: Worship Service: 9 a.m. Sunday School: 10 a.m.</p>	<p>Iglesia Del Dios Vivo La Luz Del Mundo Spanish Speaking Church - translation available Minister: Jose S. Lopez 1601 Texas • 899-5275 Daily Prayer: Sunday thru Saturday: 5a.m. & 6 p.m. Sunday: Sunday School: 9 a.m.</p>
<p>Bible Baptist Church <i>Pastor: Clifford Middlebrooks</i> Fifth & Broadway 890-7368 Sunday: Sunday School: 9 a.m. Morning Service: 10 a.m. Evening Service: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday: Evening Bible Study: 7 p.m.</p>	<p>Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO (719) 346-7984 Sacrament Meeting: 10 a.m. Sunday School: 11:15 a.m. Priesthood/Relief Society: 12 a.m.</p>	<p>Kanorado United Methodist Church <i>Pastor: Leonard Cox</i> 399-2468 Sunday: Sunday School: 9 a.m. Worship Service: 10:15 a.m.</p>
<p>United Methodist Church Brewster: Pastor: Mike Baughn Worship Service: 10:45 a.m. CST Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. CST Winona: Minister: Sheryl Johnson Worship Service: 9 a.m. CST Sunday School: 10:15 am CST</p>	<p>First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Pastor: Rev. Carol Edling Jolly Eighth & Arcade • 890-5233 Sunday: Church School - All ages 9 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Youth Group: 1st and 3rd Sundays 5-7 p.m. Thursday: Prayer Class - Noon Pastor Carol's Class 5:30 p.m. www.goodlandfccdoc.org</p>	<p>Goodland Bible Church 109 Willow Road • 899-6400 Pastor: Chad DeJong Sunday: Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship: 10:45 a.m. 6 p.m. AWANA during school Evening Worship: 7:30 p.m. Wednesday: 6:30 youth group Growth groups call for information www.goodlandbible.org</p>
<p>Church of the Nazarene Pastor: Bob Willis Third & Caldwell 899-2080 or 899-3797 Sunday: Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. Worship Service: 10:50 a.m. Evening Service: 6 p.m. Wednesday: Evening Service: 7 p.m.</p>	<p>St. Paul's Episcopal Church Celebrant: Father Don Martin 13th & Center Church 890-2115 or 890-7245 Services: 5 p.m. Saturday evening Bible Study: 4 p.m. the first and third Saturday of the month</p>	<p>Harvest Evangelical Free Church 521 E. Hwy. 24 • 890-6423 Pastor: Brian Fugleberg Sunday: Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday school: 9:30 a.m. Wednesday: Senior High: 6:30 p.m. at the church Junior High: 6:30 p.m. at the church www.goodlandefree.com</p>
<p>First Baptist Church Pastor: Travis Blake 1121 Main 890-3450 Sunday: Coffee fellowship: 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship: 10 a.m. Sunday School: 11:15 a.m.</p>	<p>H2O Church.TV Pastor: Craig Groeschel 109 E. 17th (785) 728-0123 Experience Time Sunday: 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Church of Christ 401 Caldwell 890-6185 Sunday: Bible Study: 9:45 a.m. Worship Service: 10:45 a.m. Wednesday: Bible Study: 7 p.m.</p>
<p>Seventh Day Adventist Church 1160 Cattletrail Pastor: Jim McCurdy Saturday: Sabbath School: 9:30 a.m. Worship Service: 11 a.m.</p>	<p>Emmanuel Lutheran Church 13th & Sherman • 890-6161 Pastor: Darian Hybl Sunday: Christian education/fellowship: 10:15 a.m. Worship Service: 9 a.m.</p>	<p>The following sponsors urge YOU to attend your chosen House of Worship this Sabbath:</p>
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