

Life STORIES



The Reality of the Mental Health Crisis

We have just returned from a week up at Jan Lake and it was a refreshing break enjoying the beauty of God's creation. It was especially nice to get away because this has been a fairly tough season in both my personal and my work life. We have endured a lot of sickness, and Lance had a back injury that he is slowly healing from. **There are a number of people, both in my personal and professional life struggling with significant mental health issues. I am learning a lot as I walk with them. Oftentimes, they are completely without hope. I have learned that those walking with them have to lean into Jesus and be that hope for them. They are unable to see it, but it doesn't mean that the hope of Jesus is not there.** He has promised to always be with us. In our love, care, and many prayers for them we can let them know they are not alone.

I have learned a lot about the medical side of this too. The combination of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects is really important to helping these people heal, and all are extremely important. This winter, I have been going through a textbook on using equine therapy to heal trauma. I find this fascinating and realize God has wired me for this kind of thing. Increasing the scientific understanding has helped me to be more compassionate and a better listener to the youth I get to work with. **I am looking into furthering my education on this and other mental health and Counselling related training. If this is something that you would like to help with financially, please consider donating to my support account.**

As I said, though God is equipping me to do this work, it still does take a toll on me emotionally. **I carry some pretty heavy burdens that I need to keep confidential. I absolutely need your prayers for my own mental health, as well as the youth who come to Stable Haven.**

Romans 8:38-39

For I am convinced that neither death nor life ...nor anything else is all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



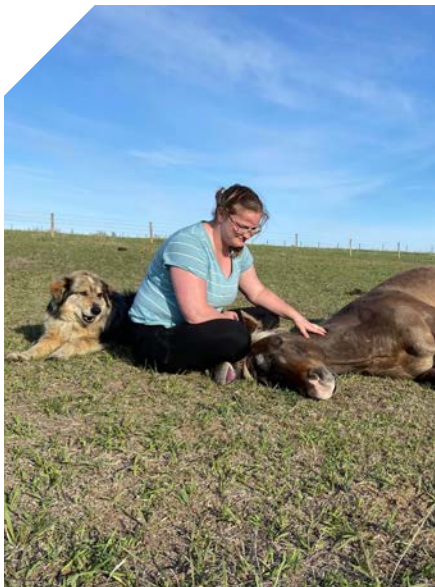
Exciting Redberry Partnership

Over the past months our partnership with Redberry began in earnest. There is a group of girls that I have been mentoring who are all planning to work in the Horse Program at Camp. We've had time at Camp with Willow, their Equine Director (who also happens to be my daughter) and at Stable Haven. We have been going over all the things they need to know to serve at Camp.

We are also doing a five-week lesson set right now with Cheralyne Gibson, which will help them in their roles at Camp. I figured this would mainly be for skill and confidence building, but Jesus provided a really beautiful teachable moment. One of the girls did not seem to be getting along with her horse, so Cheralyne asked her what was going on. After asking a few questions, it became clear that this girl's thoughts were racing and she couldn't focus on a single task. She was frustrating and confusing the horse and he was visibly showing this! **Once Cheralyne got her to focus her thoughts and only think of one thing at a time, the horse calmed down and stood still with a relaxed stance.** Later I was able to talk to her about it and we realized that this was how so much of her life and relationships were. She's been applying this lesson to relationships with people, including her relationship with Jesus and things are slowly improving for her. **We wouldn't have realized this if not for the way the horse responded to her!**

I will be going every Wednesday to help out, and give mid-week encouragement to all the Barn Staff. I really look forward to seeing how the girls will grow in their faith and God will work in the Horse Program at Redberry this summer.

Unexpected Ministry Opportunities Keep Coming!



Lazy days on the ranch!

When I began this ministry adventure, I thought I would mainly be having people from the city coming here, but as it turns out, God is directing me to the valley area. **God has been showing me there are plenty of hurting people right here, and I am better able to connect them to other avenues of local help as needed.** From the start, I promised God that I would help whomever he brought to me.

I have some new volunteers this year and we have been spending Thursday evenings together, training for EAL and One on One sessions, which are one youth, one horse, and one leader. Most often, these teens crave this kind of attention. We help them interact with the horse and are a listening ear. It is through these interactions that we can demonstrate the love and HOPE of Jesus. We pray for opportunities to talk about Jesus with the youth. **If you know of someone between the ages of 13 and 20 that is going through a hard time, please feel free to**

pass on my info to them or get in touch with me at maxine.harder@yfc.ca or 306-945-7451.

I am always blessed by the support, prayers, and encouragement I receive. These things keep me going on some of the really hard days. Thank you for being a part of my team in this way!

I need your support

My Stable Haven account is doing well financially, but **my personal support account is currently in the negative and I need your support now more than ever.** The reality is that I need to be fully funded in order to be released into all of these amazing ministry opportunities. I would love to talk to you more about how you can BRING HOPE to hurting kids by supporting my ministry at YFC.

Blessings to you all!

Maxine Harder



PARTNER WITH ME!

You can donate easily and safely through our website. www.yfcsask.com THANK YOU for your support!