

WolfStone Ranch Newsletter

Issue #4

July - September 2015

Big News in Brief

July... Helped a neighbor rescue **Abby** (*a sweet little dog who ended up going to a no-kill shelter in Illinois*)... began the process of cat-proofing the canine quarantine pen... produced our second Drum Circle at Presbyterian Children's Home ("PCH")... with Ben von Harz facilitating!

August... **Lady** (and **Skylar** and **Sundance**) were all sick with the dog flu... **Maverick** sauntered into the completed quarantine pen (*then got neutered and vaccinated*)... thought I was going to lose **Angel** (*but we've adjusted her Lasix dosage and treated her infection, so she's doing much better now*)... juggled cats like crazy for weeks on end (*desperately seeking a housing arrangement that works for all of them*)... got professional photos taken (*for free*) of all our adoptable dogs and cats... began weekly Drum Circles with the PCH kids... with ME now facilitating!

September... Have had built and installed a custom screen door to separate the living room from the kitchen (*to separate cats who don't like other cats*)... Didn't get a MAC intern this semester, but instead am getting some much needed volunteer help this month from dear friend Yvette Brotherton ... have started a yoga group for the PCH kids (*the group I started in June was for the staff*)... got an amazing Drum-Circle volunteer assistant, Kaye Dusin (*co-owner of Pantheon Steel*) who has also generously donated a whole bunch of beautiful Halos and other hand drums for PCH... and our Drum Circles are much more fun now than they were with the DIY arts 'n' crafts drums the kids made!

Current Head Count

3 adoptable dogs (**Juli, Sundance, Lady**), 3 dogs needing rehab (**Skylar, Denver, Durango**), 5 sanctuary cats (**Joey, Angel, Shayla, Cricket, Loki**), 6 highly adoptable cats

(Jada, Savannah, Shadoe, Felicia, Maverick, Clover), 2 difficult-to-place cats (Paprika, Koala), and 1 sanctuary parakeet (LyLy)

When you get into a tight place, and everything goes against you till it seems as if you couldn't hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that's just the place and time that the tide'll turn.

~ Harriet Beecher Stowe

As you may recall, my December 2014 newsletter had summarized my entire journey with **WolfStone Ranch** from the beginning (*January 2010*) up to that newsletter. It is only in retrospect, however, that I have realized that the engine for that leg of my journey had chugged steadily forward (*during the process, it had felt like a roller-coaster*)... until March of last year when, slowly but surely, my little train ran out of steam (*Papa's money and my physical energy*)... But that's precisely when the Stowe quote (*above*) began to apply...

And thank God for all the surprising miracles that began unfolding in the spring of 2014 (*as I had outlined in that end-of-the-year newsletter*) to guide me through that trial of transition! As Bill Splitter had said, "*Sometimes it looks like things are falling apart... when they're really falling into place.*"

Since then, I've actually experienced another steady stream of progress, albeit along a new track. That is, instead of focusing on founding **WolfStone Ranch** and rescuing animals in crisis, my new emphasis for the last year-plus has been on seeking ways to build my animal-welfare community and developing the skills I will need for the spiritual retreat that I envision **WolfStone Ranch** becoming, all in support of the overarching Mission of reducing the suffering and saving the lives of animals in our neck of the Southeast Missouri woods.

But again, I've been able to make that assessment of steady progress only in hindsight, because from day to day it has felt much more like a herky-jerky series of starts and stops... Brilliant moments bursting with satisfaction, interrupted by days of disappointment, mild or acute... Successes interspersed with crises, large and small. But of course, that's just life for all of us, isn't it? However, there's one thing that everyone who knows me will agree on, I can be maddeningly persistent!

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated

derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan **Press On!** has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

~ Calvin Coolidge

While I had no intention of rescuing more animals this past 15 months, in recognition of my need to concentrate my efforts elsewhere for this leg of my journey, I have nonetheless been compelled to rescue 6 dogs and 5 cats since sending 4 dogs and 10 cats to Best Friends Animal Society in May/June 2014. Most of these animals were thrust upon me, whether stray cats who showed up in my barn or dogs literally thrown over the fence into my locked yard. So be it, God brought them to me, so I've found ways to cope with these rescues... and as always, God has miraculously provided just what has been needed for each of these precious animals.

But even when not dealing with the intense challenges of rescuing when I don't really have the reserves of resources to do so, this year I've also had more than the usual bouts of illness with which to cope. And on top of that, I've never had so many things break down and need repair or replacement in such a short period of time!*

Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding the 20th.

~ Julie Andrews

And all the while I've been dealing with the growing menagerie at **WolfStone Ranch**, I've also been forging a new path at the Presbyterian Children's Home... working with a different species of neglected and/or abused young creatures! What I'm doing there is creating new therapeutic programs, the process of which has been much the same as I've experienced in founding **WolfStone Ranch** ... which is to say, I'm in uncharted waters, with incomplete maps, once again relying on God to guide me on a day-to-day basis. Trying first this and then that (*when "this" hasn't worked*). And yet, I am delighted to report that I'm still watching miracles unfold all around me!

First of all, it was a challenge creating a Drum Circle Program (*getting my bosses on board*)... and now it's another test, learning to lead others (*as a fledgling Drum Circle Facilitator*) to experience the healing magic that is possible in a Drum Circle. Again, just like with **WolfStone Ranch**, there's a lot of trial and error! And I must remind myself often...

A failure is not always a mistake. It may simply be the best one can do under the circumstances. The real mistake is to stop trying.

~ B. F. Skinner

And then there's the Yoga/Meditation Program I've started for PCH. On the one hand, my bosses are very enthusiastic about the benefits of yoga and meditation... and yet, ironically, getting the staff to attend the class they want me to lead for them has been a challenge! On the other hand, most of the kids don't even want to do it at all! So I remind myself often that Joseph of the Coat-of-Many-Colors developed the prodigious skills needed to become Pharaoh's second-in-command through organizing the inmates of the world's largest prison!

Through perseverance many people win success out of what seemed destined to be certain failure.

~ Benjamin Disraeli

Since I felt God's Calling to my Mission of **WolfStone Ranch**, I've had many tell me I'm foolish or crazy to take on such an ambitious project. They say things like, the problem of animal suffering (*because of man*) has always been this way and it'll never change. They ask, why waste my time? The problem is too big and the project too impossible, so why even try to make things better?

I say, God asked me to do this, and I agreed to give my everything to Make A Difference for the vulnerable of God's creatures. Sure, there are many days when I get tired or even discouraged. But then I remind myself that "*with God all things are possible*". And I keep on keepin' on!

And I am eternally grateful to all of **WolfStone Ranch's** generous donors for your continued support, financial and moral. While it may seem that progress is slow, I hope that you agree that it is also steady. And that with persistence and perseverance... based on a Sacred Compassion and Powerful Love for all God's precious creatures... we can... we will... in time... succeed.

Namaste

* In 2013 the washing machine... in 2014 the sump pump battery... but so far in 2015 the list of broken items that have needed either repair or to be replaced includes... central air system, power generator for the Cat Barn, hot-water heater, kitchen faucet, room dehumidifier (*for some cats' chronic upper respiratory problems*),

ceiling fan, 2 vacuum cleaners, toaster oven and truck AC/heater fan. Also, the computer in my range was lightning-fried so no more oven, but thank God the stove-top still works!

P.S. I believe I previously promised to write **Chloe's** amazing and miraculous rescue story... I haven't forgotten... I just haven't yet found the time!

P.P.S. Hope to have some exciting progress to report in our next newsletter regarding producing a Community-Building Experience...