

## The Power of Language



I used to tell people, "I'm a worrier." It took me a while to realize by saying those words I was claiming that identity over myself. A worrier. Anxious. I gave myself permission to have anxiety. I decided that day, I was not going to call myself a worrier anymore. Do you know what happened? I stopped worrying. Now, there are definitely still anxious moments, but my needless worries over trivial things have dissipated. It has been replaced by this crazy notion that God will take care of us, and he has.

Reprogramming your thoughts by altering your language is not a new concept, so I created the "I can't" jar here at Hope Lives. Every time a student says the words "I can't" without at least trying, they owe me 10 cents. (The money gets added to our horse treat fund.) The first time an "I can't" rears its head, we talk about the power of our words with the student. I tell them it is always good to ask for help or say that something is hard, but it is not okay to give up before you try.

I had a little girl in the program the last few years who was a frequent patron of the "I can't" jar her first year, but I have not had to charge her a penny since. She comes out to the ranch and tries everything I ask at least once. She says "this is hard!" and "can you help?" and she is a lot braver than before.

I taught a little boy this summer who just needed an explanation of what the "I can't" jar is, and immediately he corrected his language. It was amazing. He looked at me and said, "I c- I need some help." I could not have been more proud of him. The more we can empower their words, the more we can empower our students. They are passionate, powerful people. I love watching them discover it.

## The First Annual Open House

Our first public open house was a smashing success! The weather looked questionable as the day approached, and when Sunday morning finally arrived, the chance of rain had not gone down. We had everyone praying, and by the time 1:00 p.m. rolled around, we had blue skies and puffy white clouds. Thank you, Jesus!

It was wonderful to see so many new faces and share about our mentoring program. There was a butterfly hunt, bag toss, face painting, snacks, and donkeys to snuggle. I could not have put on such a successful event without a dedicated team of volunteers who were willing to make it all happen. Thank you!

If you are interested in catching the highlight reel, you can find it on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/0LtDORs5LQM>





## Traveling Donkeys

Once a month, we have been taking the donkeys to a park in Monticello to meet the families in our community. Our mother donkey, Mabel, has proved herself to be a true advocate of the Hope Lives program, while Black Jack, her son, is mostly excited that there are snacks. Nonetheless, they seem to enjoy the visits almost as much as I do and are always eager for a scratch or hug from big and little hands alike. I have started to get phone calls asking for "The Donkey Lady," which I find hilarious. I will gladly be the Donkey Lady. We, unfortunately, had to miss the July Donkey Day

at the park due to trailer issues, but they will be back at Burke Park in Monticello on August 21 and September 18 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Mabel and Jack also recently visited the Piatt County Mental Health Center in Monticello to meet all the wonderful people there. I was so proud of them as they didn't bat an eye at the wheelchairs and walkers. All our work at home with various equipment has paid off! They got to interact with counselors and clients alike, smiles blooming wherever they went. The donkeys are not yet ready to do indoor visits, but if you are interested in having the donkeys visit your facility and have a patch of grass outside, please contact us!

## Save the Date!

On October 16 we will hold a unique event at Allerton Park in Monticello. **Fairy Tale Pony Rides!** We will be set up in the meadow across from the mansion and all the horses and walkers will be in costume! Unicorns, dragons, and knight's chargers, oh my! We will have face painting available while you wait for your ride, and all proceeds go to keeping our horses healthy so they can continue to impact our students.



Faith is excited to take part in the Pony Rides! Come join her!

## How to Contact Us:

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Also Find Us on Facebook and  
Instagram!

[www.facebook.com/hopolivesrr/](http://www.facebook.com/hopolivesrr/)  
[www.instagram.com/hopolivesrr/](http://www.instagram.com/hopolivesrr/)

## How We Are Funded

Every session at Hope Lives Youth Ranch is free of charge. However, we request a donation from students to cover babysitting charges incurred by our director, Emily Reichmann. We are a registered 501(c)3 and are funded solely through solicited donations and the generosity of our community. 100% of the funds donated to Hope Lives Youth Ranch are used to care for the horses and to create a safe environment for the children we serve. If you would like to donate to our program, go to [www.hopolivesrescuerranch.org/funding](http://www.hopolivesrescuerranch.org/funding) or mail your contribution to: 976 E 2250 North Road, Monticello, IL 61856.

**Notice! We have a new web address.**

We renewed our website address to better reflect our name. You can now find us at [www.hopolivesyouthranch.org](http://www.hopolivesyouthranch.org)