



Straight from the horse's mouth

Fisher's Story

Brian and I prayed for years to have a child. Fisher was born June 17th, 2009 at 32 weeks gestation, weighing 3lbs and 10 ounces. Although we were not aware before, he was born with Down Syndrome. Fisher also had a hole in his heart and spent 6 weeks in the NICU. From the first moment we saw him, we never looked back; we sought the best doctors, interventions, and therapies. We have worked endlessly and tirelessly to give him every chance to have the best start in life.

Fisher is delayed, but is a very smart and bright child. He has a huge vocabulary. However, being able to articulate his feelings and emotions can be challenging. When he turned 3 years old, he began to grunt in place of words, pull hair, and shut down emotionally. He was diagnosed with hearing loss. Fisher began wearing hearing aids and seemed to improve, yet still became frustrated and would continue to grunt and shut down.

I began to look for extracurricular programs, hoping something would be available. I came across The Red Barn and began to tell them about Fisher. I was met with such warmth, understanding, and flexibility. Shortly after Fisher began lessons his dad

and I could see his behavior improving. As we watched his lessons each week we could see that his horses would not do anything until Fisher learned to communicate. Fisher has been able to communicate more effectively, learning to tell his horse thank you for the ride. Fisher has calmed down. After his weekly ride his demeanor is calmer and more equipped, like a battery recharge. Horses are like medicine to a child with a disability.

When we had Fisher we did not realize the journey we were beginning. Yes some of the journey has been difficult, challenging, and overwhelming, but God has always put angels in our path to help us take care of this special little boy. We thank The Red Barn for all they have done for Fisher and for our family. My hope is that every child with a disability can find a Red Barn in their life, to give them a brighter future and greater hope. As parents we see our children with the setbacks, but at The Red Barn we see the potential and the possibilities and the successes.

Fisher is asking me each week, "Mommy, ride horses?" and I am so grateful to say to him, "Yes baby, you can ride horses."



1680

**SADDLE
UP
LESSONS**

IN 2014

ITEM OF THE MONTH

Each month of 2015 we'll be spotlighting an item from our Wish List. These essential items are not included in our budget, so having these donated by our supporters is a huge help to the barn. Please consider making a gift or holding a supply drive!

JANUARY OFFICE SUPPLIES

Copy paper
Paper clips
Pens
File folders
Staples
Post-it notes

FEBRUARY ART SUPPLIES

Markers
Crayons
Construction paper

MARCH BOTTLED WATER

APRIL PRINTER INK

Canon MF8280Cw
HP 950/951
HP 61
Brother TN-420

MAY WASHABLE TEMPERA PAINT

So we can paint the horses!

JUNE FOREVER STAMPS

JULY CLEANING SUPPLIES

Dishwasher detergent
Laundry detergent
Windex
Clorox wipes

AUGUST BOTTLED WATER

SEPTEMBER BATTERIES

9V
AAA
AA

OCTOBER HAND LOTION/HAND SOAP

NOVEMBER HOT CHOCOLATE

DECEMBER BABY WIPES

Contact us at Info@TheRedBarn.org for more information.

Volunteer Perspectives

Elizabeth Moore

Right before my senior year of high school, I was presented with an unique opportunity - to become an intern at The Red Barn, a place I had fallen in love with. I became part of the staff; I was able to go to the staff meetings, learn about the behind the scenes work, help with information packets and paperwork, and even become CHA certified for a year. The internship during high school was the opportunity of a lifetime; I was able to really dedicate myself to my internship and be focused on it, especially since I was homeschooling.

Some of my favorite memories from senior year revolve around the barn: the staff meetings (they're pretty fun), being around those special horses and kids, and the fantastic staff. The barn became an escape from the craziness of senior year and preparing for college. Being a volunteer at the barn, and a high school intern, prepared me for college by giving me some "real life" experiences, like being able to read a budget and always being prepared for anything to happen. Horses have a great way of knowing when you are starting to forget that they are animals with their own minds, and they remind you of it, just like working with other people and dealing with circumstances outside of your control.

I have so many stories about different students and lessons, but I'll share this one. This student would come and usually be high strung, so he would be put on his horse quickly to help calm him. This day we went for a trail ride and ended up down by the river. He was riding backwards, one of his favorites, and just stared at the water rushing through the river for several minutes while all those with him, including his horse, stood in silence. Being still with him in that moment and watching him focus on something so intently was a great moment. A parallel to remember to stop and focus on God when we get high strung and stressed out so we can be calm and ready to face what's coming our way.



11,726

VOLUNTEER HOURS

WORKED IN 2014

\$234,520

MONETARY VALUE

VOLUNTEER HOURS WORKED IN 2014



We love sharing!

Dear Red Barn,

Just wanted to say a big thank you for all you do to help non-profit organizations. Everyone has been so kind to HOPE (Horses Offering People Encouragement) in the past two years of the program shifting from development and planning to a start-up program in Cullman.



You and your staff have been so helpful in explaining different aspects, activities, and programs of what your center offers to your clients. Thank you for taking the time out of your day to meet with us many times at your center and guide us in the right direction via numerous emails. Your knowledge of operational budgeting has been most helpful for HOPE to plan for next year. From maintaining data software programs to insurance policies, you have taken HOPE under your wings and helped in every way possible. Since June, HOPE served 21 participants with equine assisted therapeutic activities. Over 500 volunteer hours logged. The Red Barn touches the lives of all involved through your mentoring and sincere desire to make a positive change in the world. Your passion and dedication to this industry, clients, and non-profits really does matter and it does change lives for the positive.

Thank you again for being a blessing,
Rhonda Riley, HOPE

13

**AGENCIES
ATTENDED**

**RED BARN CLINICS
IN 2014**

5,000

**CHILDREN
BENEFITTED**

**FROM RED BARN
CLINICS IN 2014**

In the past year we've held numerous clinics and certification opportunities which allowed us to improve our own programs, as well as improve programs at similar agencies literally across the United States. Individuals from 13 other agencies attended these clinics, alongside our own staff. We asked each of these other 13 agencies to estimate the number of children they will serve using the knowledge gained from their attendance and discovered that an amazing 5,000 children will benefit!

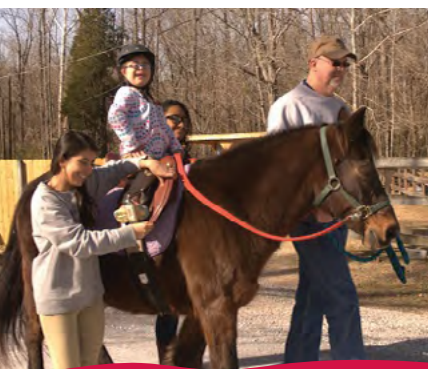
To make an appointment to visit The Red Barn, call (205) 699-8204

Helping the Family

The Nichols family first heard about The Red Barn when Susan Nichols met a woman whose son had recently started riding at the barn; he had been internationally adopted and also had cerebral palsy and hearing loss. Susan and her husband Victor had also adopted internationally. Susan knew that one of her adopted children, Tori, was in need of a “thing”. At the time (spring of 2013), Tori was about to turn 9 and hadn’t quite found an activity or hobby that she really loved yet. Tori’s parents had tried some of the usual sports, but Tori seemed to struggle to fit in and connect with her peers. So they decided to try horses.



Tori began working with one of our instructors that summer, initially doing a lot of groundwork with the horses before moving on to riding. Susan and Victor liked how the barn didn’t promote competition and provided a safe space for Tori to learn a new skill. Tori had been adopted by Susan and Victor at a very young age and had been born with cognitive delays that, although not always obvious, were profound. The Nichols saw that horseback riding gave Tori something to be proud of, something to excel at; riding horses isn’t something that every little girl gets the chance to do, especially those with challenges like Tori.



After Tori had been riding for a while, her adopted sister Cami was invited to join her. Unlike Tori, who could seem shy and reserved around strangers, Cami was outgoing and made friends easily. But once Cami began attending weekly lessons at the barn, her family saw how impactful it was for her. Though you might not notice it at first, Cami also had significant delays that resulted from trauma during early childhood. At the barn Cami could speak up, ask questions, and say “I don’t understand” without feeling embarrassed. Susan saw that as soon as their car turned off 119 onto Bailey Road, Cami relaxed.

Both girls have ridden in the Saddle Up program at The Red Barn now for over 6 months. They’ve also participated in The Red Barn’s Horse Play program. Horse Play includes day camps, horse related academic enrichment classes, and 4H style programs. Last spring, Tori did our “Horse Sense” class, a 6-week social skills program designed for children who struggle with self-confidence and peer interactions. Some of her favorite memories from the class include an having Easter egg hunt and painting Abby Halloween colors - even though it wasn’t Halloween!

Cami has participated in two different Horse Play programs: Science of the Horse and 4H Club. Both included fairly rigorous, curriculum based learning about horse anatomy, behavior, nutrition, and more. Since Cami is homeschooled, Susan was able to count participation in these programs for school credit. She feels that because the barn is such a low-stress environment, Cami is able to learn better. It has boosted her self-confidence and has kept her engaged with her coursework even when she isn’t at the barn. Cami has also begun volunteering at the barn during the hour before her lesson. She assists with barn chores and sidewalks beside other students to ensure they can ride safely. The act of being able to give back to others by using the skills she has learned riding is yet another way that being at the barn helps Cami find her place in the community. Sometimes, she even gets to help out with her youngest adopted sister, Gracey, who started riding with us last winter.

1101

**HORSE
PLAY
SESSIONS**

IN 2014

486

**SPIRIT
OF HOPE
SESSIONS**

IN 2014

SPOTLIGHT PARTNER



Lifeline Children's Services exists to equip the Body of Christ to manifest the Gospel to vulnerable children. We do this by discipling, engaging and equipping the Body of Christ towards adoption, foster care, orphan care and support.

Lifeline has partnered with The Red Barn to bring Continuing Education Unit opportunities to our foster families. In November of this year, Red Barn hosted "A Day at the Barn" for our families, which included three workshops facilitated by staff and volunteers which let our families experience working with horses, artistic expression, and drum circles.

- Ways horses can help children physically, cognitively, and emotionally.

- Ways art can help children express themselves creatively. When there aren't words, there's art!

- Music with Rejoicing Rhythms to learn about how steady drumming has been shown in some research studies to have the same effect as Ritalin on children with ADHD.

Also in November, foster families were invited to attend the debut of The Red Barn's documentary film, "The Red Barn: A Legacy of Love", at the Alabama Theater. Foster parents who attended were awarded CEUs for their participation.

Individual foster families have benefitted from The Red Barn's programs, which allows children going through transitions such as foster care to experience nurturing through working with horses. Students learn how to groom and care for horses and get to do some riding as well. This is a ministry of Red Barn and has been free to our foster families.

How The Red Barn helped Patricia

A few weeks after I returned home from a retreat in Virginia, I decided to see if there was some kind of equine therapy program for veterans in the Birmingham area. The facility in Virginia is part of PATH International, and through their website, I found The Red Barn.

During my first visit to The Red Barn, Executive Director Joy O'Neal told me about the facility and programs as we walked around. Two students were in the barn and Joy asked them to show me around. Their enthusiasm to share what they knew was inspiring. The girl and boy showed me where to find information about each horse, and I asked them questions about how they liked being there.

Joy asked me if I wanted to have some contact with one of the horses. We went into Dakota's stall. Although not as much as before, I am still nervous around the horses. Dakota was smaller and very quiet. At one point, I was invited to place my head on the horse and feel him breathe. Although I was anxious, it was another one of those experiences that is hard to explain. My breath and Dakota's breath was in sync.

When it was time to leave Dakota, Joy asked me if I wanted to pray, which I really appreciated. During our visit, I told her some about my spiritual journey. A couple of people who were nearby joined us.

As a result of that visit, I have been volunteering with some camps, helping to clean up the property, working in the office and, most importantly, spending time with the horses.



54

**SESSIONS HELPING
OUR VETERANS**

IN 2014

Take
the Reins

TOURS

2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m.
 3rd Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m.
 4th Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m.



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The Red Barn is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all donations are tax-deductible.



Donate online:
www.TheRedBarn.org

Mail donations to:
 The Red Barn
 2700 Bailey Road
 Leeds, Alabama 35094



2700 BAILEY ROAD
 LEEDS, AL 35094

*** ENDORSEMENT ***

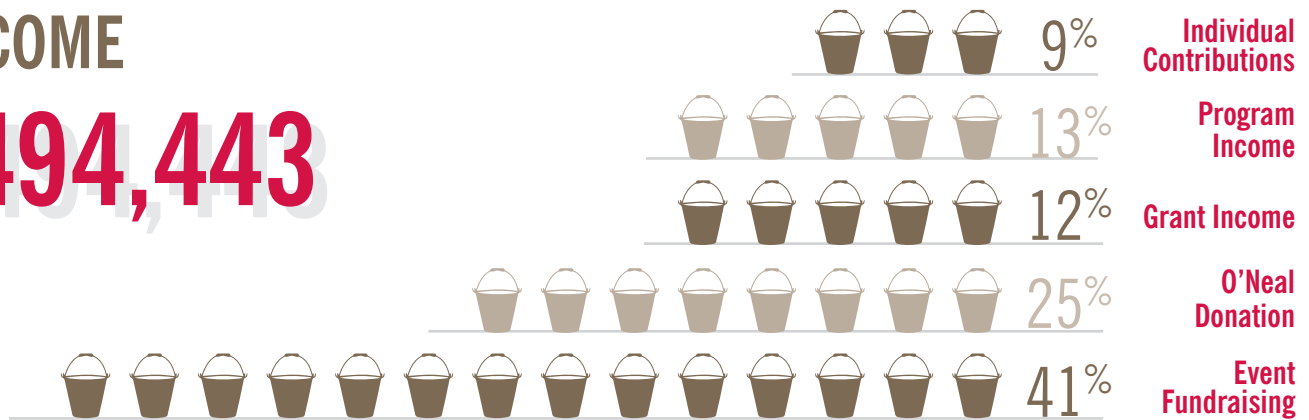
John Q. Public 1
 123 Main Street 2
 Anytown, US 12345 3



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

INCOME

\$494,443



EXPENSES

\$468,115

