



ZEPHANIAH'S PROMISE RANCH

## BACK AT THE RANCH...

October 2013

No. 9, Volume 2



The morning of September 19th was the first morning I really noticed that there was a distinct coolness and smell in the air that reminded me that fall was only a few days away from officially starting--at least as far as the calendar was concerned. I headed out to the pastures to give Hope her new supplemental pre-hay meal of beat pulp and soy meal and gave a friendly head-and-neck pat to Gracie as I scanned the fields for Jasmine who was becoming an avid early-morning hunter. Mulan had already headed inside for breakfast and Zac was off making his rounds while Mr. Baggins waited patiently on the porch for my return

which signaled breakfast was imminent. As I headed back to the house I happened to look down and see a rock that looked almost like a heart. I had probably walked over and driven by that rock a hundred times, but this morning I saw it and felt compelled to pick it up. It fit perfectly in my hand and had a nice weight to it. I wondered why today of all days I found this rock. Little did I know that by the afternoon, when Zac located Jazzie's little body over 100 yards east of the barn, I would need to be reminded of God's love for us even in moments of sorrow and pain. We buried her the next day on the island and life on the ranch moved on in a somewhat more somber and quiet way. That night was the Harvest Moon--a beautiful, round, golden moon that rose up into the evening sky. I dubbed it Jazzie's Moon and that is what the September full moon will always be in the years ahead.



The evenings here are decidedly cooler and the breeze has a bit of a bite to it. T-shirts are no longer an option and though resistance is still strong, the call of the turtle neck and a fire in the wood burning stove is definitely calling! One evening we went out and lay on one of the picnic tables and stared up at the endless sky filled with millions of stars. The Milkyway stretches right across the center of the sky over the ranch, and we are once again reminded of how finite we are. To the south of us are the red blinking lights of the wind turbines that dot the hills along the gorge and warn low-flying pilots to gain some altitude. Sometimes we can hear the yipping of coyotes in the distance, and always the chirping of crickets is playing in the background. The ranch seems to sigh and slow down and the horses blow and finish the last of their evening meal before they are enveloped in the darkness that comes earlier and earlier each day. Zac settles in for the night in one of two or three favorite spots around the house and one by one the lights in the house are turned off and we prepare for another day at the ranch. The front porch light remains on all night--a subtle reminder that the ranch is a welcoming place.



The LORD your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing." Zephaniah 3:17



**ZAC TAILS:** Hi, Mr. Baggins here. I've hijacked Zac Tails to let you know who really runs this place. For months now you keep hearing from Zac about this and that. But I was here first. In fact I was here before anyone. One day I'm minding my own business and in comes this red truck with people and a dog. A dog! The people are nice. I let them feed me but I really I didn't need them to. I was catching mice and birds and eating just fine

before they came. Still, the food they give me is pretty tasty and I don't have to worry about bones and feathers so I'll let them keep it up. But a dog? Come on! He tells you about all his adventures, and about flying off balconies, and escorting cars along the property. Escorting cars? That's his way of saying he is chasing cars. He just runs after them. In fact he runs all over the place. OK, he runs pretty fast, faster than me, but he's wearing a groove around the house and barn. Don't believe me, go to Google Maps and look at the satellite view of our property. You can actually see his running path from space! A little variation would be a good thing Zac! Think about it. His latest thing is herding horses. Every day when it is feeding time he goes out and herds the horses to the gate. Sometimes Hope tries to kick him but he's pretty quick. I like Hope, she's black and white just like me. Zac's ok I guess. We do play a lot together and there are still plenty of mice and birds to catch. I'll stick around. Someone has to keep this ranch together. You might think it's Zac, but everyone knows that cats rule and dogs drool.

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Until God opens the next door for you, Praise Him in the hallway!

~author unknown

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Lift up your eyes on high and see Who has created these stars. The One who leads forth their host by number, he calls them all by name.

~ Isaiah 40:26

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**Our mission/vision:** To provide free equine experiences for youth in a safe, loving, and encouraging environment that is fun for both children and horses.

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**OTHER NOTEWORTHY NEWS:** For all the good and happy things that happen here at ZPR, there is the inevitable trauma, sadness, and hardship. We try never to take things for granted here, but sometimes it's easy to forget how fragile life is. Just a few days after we lost Jasmine, we noticed that suddenly the filly was having a hard time walking--first one leg, then two, then all four seemed strangely weak within a matter of hours. And she wouldn't let us get close enough to take a look at her hoofs, let alone even touch her. The vet was summoned and at first she thought maybe there was a neck injury...then she noticed her chest was all puffed out--a telltale sign of pigeon fever. We would have to let it run its course until an abscess came to the surface where it could be lanced or perhaps burst on its own. Less than a week later our miserable little pony finally got some relief and once again she was trotting and ready to be rubbed and loved on. She is on antibiotics and we are on high alert for signs of infection.

On the upside, the trench to the pasture has been dug and we now have a water line and spigot to attach a hose to for filling water troughs. Steve hand-filled the trench one shovel full at a time--all 150 feet of it! That's a LOT

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of shoveling! We also now have running water in the barn which is a huge plus! Next we are looking into heaters that will prevent the water in the troughs from freezing in the winter months ahead. We were also able to finish purchasing the panels to create our 50-foot round pen and Mac has already spent some time out there to continue his training and also give him a change of scenery which he definitely seems to enjoy!

Our current projects includes building a run-in shed in the pasture for the horses to retreat in inclement weather. We are also expecting the vet bills to start coming in for the treatment of Gracie's illness and also the vaccinations given to both Gracie and Hope a few weeks earlier. If you would like to help, please send donations to ZP Ranch, 11 Stirrup Lane, Goldendale, WA 98620. ZP Ranch is a 501c3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.



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Email us at: [robin@zephaniahspromise.org](mailto:robin@zephaniahspromise.org) or [steve@zephaniahspromise.org](mailto:steve@zephaniahspromise.org)

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