

Rancho Milagro: A ranch full of miracles



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On Saturday, July 13, 2019 at the Pinewood Farmers' Market (PFM), which is every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Munds Ranch Road, will be conducting a fundraiser for Rancho Milagro or otherwise known as "*Ranch of Miracles*."

The PFM will be donating \$1,000 to the non-profit, faith-based ministry, which has been organized to bring the miracle of equine coaching and healing to survivors of severe trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Inspired by the dreams and vision of founder and Chief Executive Officer, Vanessa Kohnen, which she herself is a survivor of abuse, experienced firsthand the trauma of abuse. "As a child of abuse, I found my only refuge was with my animals and I've had a healing vision ever since to bring this gift to others. By using my trauma recovery as a guide, God has given me a passion to help others who have suffered from severe abuse. Horses saved my life and now I am thankful and ready to help others start their journey to their own personal recovery," shared Kohnen.

When the Rancho Milagro Foundation, a northern Scottsdale-based nonprofit, faith-based ministry was founded in 2014, their first client was a young woman named Julie. Julie was trafficked in Phoenix from the ages of 10-to-18-years-old. Julie said "I just literally packed what I could carry on my hands and I just ran." Julie further added "It was really hard finding counselors who are trauma-informed, but over the years we've gotten a lot better at trauma therapy." When Julie visited Rancho Milagro she was immediately drawn to Mickey, nicknamed Mic, which is one of the many therapy horses at the ranch. "Mic was really the first living thing that I was able to connect with," she said. "He symbolized freedom for me, and he walked through a lot with me," Julie explained. Mic, according to the Kohnen, was a performance horse that was severely abused, as exhibited by the burn marks all over his body, before coming to Rancho Milagro.

According to Julie, when she set eyes on Mic, she knew he understood the pain she was feeling. "Mic overcame his abuse and taught me how to be brave and face my fear," Julie stated. With Mic by her side, Julie spent five years learning the skills to bring trust and healing back into her life.

Rancho Milagro passion is to help survivors of extreme trauma. Most of their clients are victims of domestic or sexual abuse, but they also serve veterans who are struggling with PTSD. Many of their clients who experience anxiety, depression and hopelessness find immediate comfort. Rancho Milagro also has served first responders: men and women working as police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics.

In essence, Rancho Milagro brings trauma survivors and horses together into the arena of life so clients can gain the skills needed to cope with their triggers in everyday life situations that are made more difficult by their symptoms. Rancho Milagro also offers a unique variety of services,

providing a place of refuge, rest, and rejuvenation for individuals in need. Services include, but are not limited to the following: daily opportunities to work with horses, pastoral counseling, life coaching, horsemanship, gardening, nutrition counseling, freedom, safety, and sense of belongingness, and peace of mind.

Horses are uniquely sensitive creatures, which they have found many of their trauma clients can relate to. In learning to work with an inherently flighty creature to build trust, Rancho Milagro clients' find they are learning skills to bring trust and healing into their own lives. A horse's keen sense teaches life skills that are valuable coping tools.

Many of Ranch Milagro clients have not benefited from traditional therapies--yet they often report almost immediate benefits when working with horses. They usually leave Rancho Milagro feeling revived and relieved instead of exhausted and empty.

Every person has a story, but not every story has found a happily ever after. At Rancho Milagro, the horses innately understand feelings of pain, sorrow, anger, remorse, stress, and devastation. "Unfortunately, today's world is a harsh reality so to soften this reality Rancho Milagro strives to support each unique individual with open arms and a loving embrace. Everyone deserves a refuge from the feelings that are too overwhelming to bear alone," Kohnen adamantly stated.

A new movie entitled *Amber and Grace* is premiering this summer in theaters, which is about Rancho Milagro and based on one young woman's journey of healing, faith, and renewal after surviving the sex trafficking slave industry. To view the film's trailer please go to:

[https://vimeo.com/330920677?fbclid=IwAR114-](https://vimeo.com/330920677?fbclid=IwAR114-oJvkARSAlJ73CVGqAdqAEi_0Z3en38LpRNFI6WQcbAFazhfKcFIXk)

[oJvkARSAlJ73CVGqAdqAEi_0Z3en38LpRNFI6WQcbAFazhfKcFIXk](https://vimeo.com/330920677?fbclid=IwAR114-oJvkARSAlJ73CVGqAdqAEi_0Z3en38LpRNFI6WQcbAFazhfKcFIXk) This is a very powerful movie and a must see since more than millions of adults and children trafficked around the world for the sole purpose of the sex slave industry, which grosses over \$100 billion dollars a year and in comparison more money than Starbucks, Google, Nike, Intel, and Microsoft combined gross revenues. In the United States alone, there are over 200,000 plus individuals trafficked. The average age of entry into the sex trade is 14-years-old.

For more information on this organization, please contact Founder and President Vanessa Kohnen at 480-529-2633 or go to: <http://www.ranchomilagroaz.com>. Rancho Milagro and volunteers will be at the Pinewood Farmers' Market on Saturday, July 13, 2019 from 9 am to 2 pm. Please come see them. Thank you for your support!

The Pinewood Farmers' Market in Munds Park encourages you to support this organization wholeheartedly. "Anything that helps individuals and embraces them unconditionally where they are at deserves our support," said the PFM Manager.