

Divide Camp update

BY JULIE WHEELER

The vision to turn the old family hunting camp into a refuge for men and women wounded and scarred by their time in battle, came in an instant picture.

The work began 16 months ago. Trenches were dug, water and power lines installed, logs on old cabins renewed with a power buffer, and chinking placed between the logs. The spring was developed and solar panels installed to power the pump.

We formed a corporation in August 2012. In November we submitted to the IRS the application and fee to obtain nonprofit status. We expected the IRS to follow their guidelines and process within 90 days—that was 12 months ago! We recently engaged the help of an Oregon congressman to move the process forward. We have no funding stream, only private savings and donations from people and organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars who understand the need and have a desire to help.

Last winter contributors donated building materials and supplies, enough to fill a horse trailer and a flatbed trailer. The convoy made it to Divide Camp in late May, and the work began again. Volunteers worked throughout the summer. Eventually four cabins were habitable. Two are fully furnished and decorated. Many handcrafted items have been donated including curtains, wooden signs, stepping-stones and gorgeous quilts.

On September 11, 2013, I received an email from a young man who had served in



Tyler Andreatta, USMC retired, with Gracie at Divide Camp.

Afghanistan. He had found our website and read it “from top to bottom a few times.” He said it kept calling him back. Though he had learned to manage the results of his physical injuries, the mental part was taking over his life in a negative way. The counseling and medications he was getting from the Veterans Administration were no longer useful.

My first reaction to Tyler’s email was to let him know we were not quite ready for guests, that we still didn’t have power and water to the cabins. Immediately I sensed a small voice say, “Really?” I re-read his note and realized he needed to be here and it wasn’t going to matter how ready we were. He would be our first guest.

Meet Tyler, a US Marine with nearly six years of service who was shot inside a helicopter in an attempt to rescue two wounded soldiers. His injuries were significant. The first bullet grazed his nose, a second entered his chest on the side and exited his back on the opposite side,

taking out part of a lung and destroying much of his shoulder function. He was awarded a Purple Heart. Then he was told he would not be able to continue to serve in the Marine Corps, a devastating emotional blow to a young man planning to make a career of serving his country. After undergoing many months of physical therapy and counseling and being put on 12 different medications, Tyler knew he needed to stop taking the drugs and find a different kind of treatment. He searched the Internet for an option and found Divide Camp. After reading and re-reading the website, he knew this was it.

Tyler came to camp near the end of September. Though he was only able to stay for several days, his experience was “just what he needed.” He got his first good night’s sleep in two years. He found he was able to write again, something he enjoyed doing before going to war but hadn’t been able to do since. He left us this poem (see box), which says it all!

We know there are thousands of “Tylers” trying to create a “new normal” after being wounded in war. We know nature is an effective healing force. We want to help as many as we can. We’ve chosen to keep moving forward without the IRS, believing there are truly generous individuals and businesses who will contribute because they believe and not because they can use a tax deduction. If you’d like to help this effort, please visit our website at dividecamp.org or call us at 541-531-9939. There is no donation too large or too small!

Julie Wheeler
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Divide Camp

By Sgt. Tyler Andreatta
USMC retired

There is a Heavenly place
Where healing is done.
Hospitality is off the charts,
on a scale from ten to one.

A place with no doctors
or forms to do.
No white coat & pills,
or waiting rooms.

A place where wind whistles,
and birds sing,
And your breath is taken
by the beautiful scenes.

A place where wildlife flourish
and memories are made,
I can’t think of better medication
made to this date!

A place that clears your mind
and refreshes the heart.
A place to let go,
and let your soul restart.

A place where angels
wait with open arms.
You don’t have to die to go
and it’s not too far.

Just up a dirt road
and through a wooden gate.
Sits this amazing
and wonderful place.

Look for the flag
flying high with pride.
That is how you’ll know...
you’ve found the camp on the Divide.

A journey of love for the Navajo Nation

BY BRENDA MIEDEMA

In November 2012 Williams residents Brian Hannagan, Michelle Bienick and their son Jaia were part of the annual Thanksgiving Food and Supply Run to benefit the Navajo Nation of Arizona. This event started years ago because of the Clan Dyken band. Many of you may be familiar with them and their music, with which they are trying to improve the world one song at a time.

While on this trip and experiencing the Navajo way of life, Brian and Michelle began to form another plan to help improve the tribal way of living: they decided to bring baby goats to increase the size of their goat herds. They wanted to introduce new milk and meat-producing livestock to improve the genetics of the animals the Navajos already have.

Navajos raise sheep and goats for food

and fiber. They have dogs for protection. The mothers, matriarchs of the tribe, earn their money with beadwork and weaving. Unemployment is very high and many of the younger generation seek an easier lifestyle. There are no casinos in Arizona to provide financial assistance to the Navajos and the lifestyle is a hard one.

The Navajo Indian Reservation is the largest in the United States. Navajo peoples generally do not live in villages, but band together in small groups. This lifestyle was born out of necessity due to the limited amount of grazing land and access to water. They live in circular huts made from wood or stone. The openings face east so they can “be blessed by the morning sun.”

The winters are cold; wood and forage scarce. The purpose of the Thanksgiving Food and Supply Run is to bring families

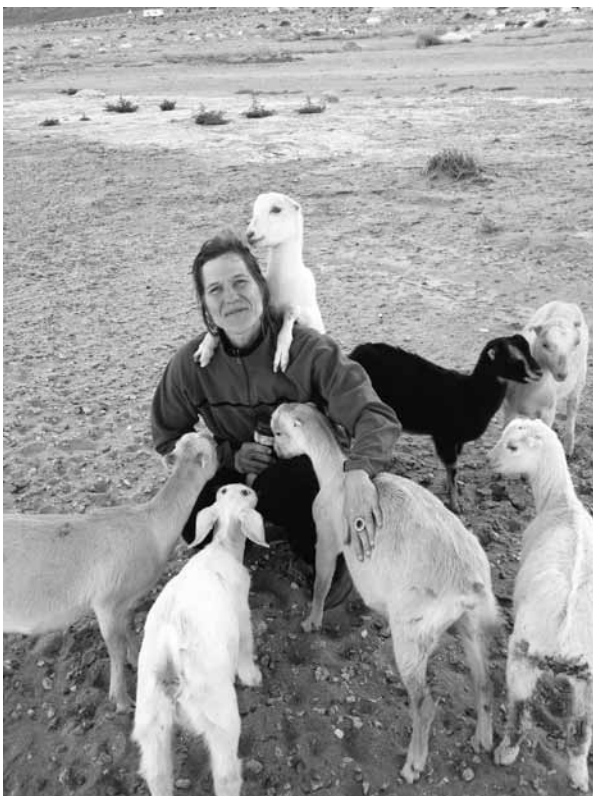
warm coats and boots, and food such as winter squash, apples, onions, potatoes and dry goods, which can be stored without refrigeration. Cash donations are collected for wood, hay and dog food.

With their plan in place, Brian, Michelle and Jaia made a second trip in May 2013. On a beautiful sunny morning they headed to the Arizona reservation hauling a trailer with 12 baby goats, a buck and a doe for six different families. The baby goats, three months old and weaned, were raised and donated by Peaceful Mountain Dairy in Applegate. Brian and Michelle wanted to get them to Arizona while grazing conditions are best to help them adjust to their new homes. The goats were given as gifts to the Navajo grandmothers and mothers.

Gifting these 12 baby goats is just the start of what is hoped will become an annual community effort to raise a few goats to send to the Navajos each year. Peaceful Mountain Dairy will donate more baby goats in 2014.

If you would like to help raise these baby goats from birth to three months, the dairy will give you extra goats if you want to keep some for your family. They are amazing animals. They are very cute, easy to care for and love. They can eat your poison oak and blackberries with little effort. They can be a source of milk or meat.

You can also help with a donation of food, clothing or money to purchase



Baby goats on their way from Oregon as a gift to the Navajos in Arizona, thanks in part to Michelle Bienick (above) and Brian Hannagan.



supplies. Maybe you raise sheep and would like to donate a lamb or two. Whatever you do, your participation is welcomed. (Thanks to Dr. Dan Cochran for donating his services for obtaining health certificates for the baby goats that were sent in May.) If you would like to help by raising baby goats, contact Kayleigh McKey at peacefulmtn@apbb.net or call 541-846-6455. (Kayleigh’s involvement will also help her with the community service part of her senior project at South Medford High School, focused on becoming a dairy goat farmer.)

If you would like to help in any other way, please contact Brian Hannagan at 541-846-0656 or bhere@inorbit.com.

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