



Photo By Jamie Cooley

By Jamie Cooley  
OFN Contributor

## MacQueen ranch offers rejuvenation for man -- and beast

**A**lthough they aren't Ozarks natives, Craig and Heidi MacQueen have found their place in Ozarks agriculture. While Craig is away as an aircraft instructor in Europe, Heidi is busy at their Laclede County farm running her horse motel -- Meadow View Ranch.

Craig and Heidi MacQueen moved to Lebanon six years ago from Riverside, Calif. They built a small cabin on their 200-acre ranch to serve as a guesthouse for friends or family. After a while, her friends convinced her to rent the cabin to people who also needed a place to board their horses at night.

Now she has a website, boards travelers and their horses, and has guests that just come out to ride or stay the night.

Meadow View Ranch also serves as a local shelter for stray, sick or injured animals. Though they have come about in strange ways, animals mostly come from abusive or unloving owners.

The local sheriff brought her a donkey that had been drug for a mile and a half behind a jeep until it had no back hooves and no flesh left on its hindquarters. Today, that donkey is alive and well and still at the MacQueen's ranch.

A group of horses was poisoned at a local arena. All the horses came to her place to be cared for, and all left -- except "Shabby" a miniature horse. "Somehow he got stuck here," Heidi says.

Heidi gets a little attached to her animals. She won't sell any of the them on her farm because she says once

they establish their new home, friends and family they shouldn't have to leave again. "Whatever sets its foot or hoof on this place stays on this place," she states.

The animals have accumulated to a total of 12 horses, one donkey, eight cats, three dogs and 40 calves.

Last year she began raising Holstein calves to resell. She purchases 15 babies at a time from a farmer in Mountain Grove and then raises the females until they are about 26-months-old and will sell them back to a dairy. The males will be sold at auction.

These baby calves are treated with more love and attention than most. Heidi says others think she's not serious about raising the calves because she plays with them and treats them like pets. "I think it'll make them better cows," she says. "The more they're used to being touched the better cows they will be."

"Another good thing about taming the animals is when we need to work on them they can be handled," Heidi explains. When an older calf was found sick out in the pasture, Heidi and Craig were thankful for its gentleness when the time came to move the calf, which had a broken leg, up to the barn to be cared for.

When guests stay at the ranch, they enjoy joining in on the chores. "Guests like to help feed. Even the adults who have never been on a farm just love it," Heidi notes.

Heidi offers more than a place to stay and keep your horse.

## Care and Comfort

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She has three friends that are therapists in Lebanon that come out to help with the day spa, which is also conveniently located in the barn.


Craig and Heidi formed trails through the woods for guests who enjoy hiking or riding. No guests are turned away from Meadow View. She allows pets in the cabin, and kids are free to run around all day. "Kids are never in the way," she says.

There have been some unique guests to the ranch. Goliath, which is owned by Priefert Ranch Equipment and is the largest draft horse in the world, visits the ranch every year.

Heidi says that a man from Baywatch has visited a couple of times, and everywhere he went he wore flip-flops.

A reporter from the Saint Louis Post Dispatch visited and enjoyed his stay so much that he wrote a feature about the ranch in the "Ozark Oddities" section of the paper.

Heidi enjoys her days out on the ranch. Although it's always a benefit for a farm to generate income, Heidi says that she doesn't do this for the money. It's a hobby.

"It's fun. It's not a money maker," she says. 



**Heidi MacQueen**

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