

Mike Peterson
3635 Homestead St.
Rapid City, SD 57703-1234

October 1, 2015

Dear Mike,

Norman Rockwell's famous painting of a family sharing Thanksgiving Dinner captures two powerful freedoms many receive living in our country: freedom from want and freedom from loneliness. Family is at the core of both.

I was blessed to grow up in a simple, but adequate home, surrounded by a loving family. I remember crowding around the dinner table, especially during holidays - laughing, sharing and feeling confident that I was loved.

Not experiencing a sit-down family meal can leave a big void in a child's life. This was something Kristen Kroonenberg craved.

"I didn't have a lot of family time. We didn't have family dinners together," Kristen said. "My mom would cook meals because she worked nights, so she would have them in the fridge and then my sister and I would just reheat them."

The young teen then started to skip school, which led her to fail all of her classes. She was also using drugs and drinking, and her parents knew it was time to find her some help.

Kristen spent time at three other facilities before being admitted to Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch 10 years ago at the age of 16.

"I responded very well to Yellowstone," Kristen said. "The facilities that I had been at before, they were large rooms basically with a bunch of bunk beds . . . So when I arrived here, I had my own bed. And the lodge was a lot smaller, which was really nice; more cozy. It felt so much more like a home. I actually felt like a human being here and that mattered. It just felt more personal here."

Now 26, Kristen said her favorite aspect of her year-long stay at YBGR was the family atmosphere she experienced in Jessie Grant Lodge.

"It was nice to have that family feel that I didn't really feel at home," she said. "One of



Kristen visits Jessie Grant this year

my best memories I would say is the girls in my lodge sitting around the dinner table together and goofing around. We were all really close, so it was really nice to have that family dinner.”

Kristen confirmed what Ranch staff already know. Where children eat, sleep, play, and study impacts their learning and how they progress through treatment. Ranch staff care for the children holistically, including providing them with a warm and safe home.



Peeling paint and damaged walls



Damaged flooring

That’s why Yellowstone Foundation helps ensure that the Ranch’s home-style lodges are clean, warm, and in good repair. With up to 20 children living in each lodge, and the fact that they have serious emotional issues, you can imagine keeping up with the wear and tear requires a lot more effort than the average family home!

With the holidays and a long winter coming, we would like to help create a warm and “homey” environment for the girls of Jessie Grant Lodge and other troubled children. Jessie Grant has not been significantly updated for 14 years – when the current worn out and water damaged carpet was laid! Some of the specific projects considered in the remodel include:

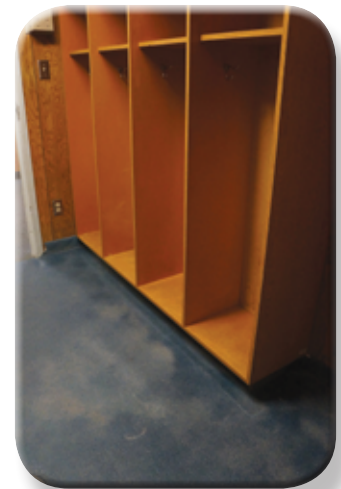
- Removing the carpeting in the children’s rooms and replacing it with flooring, which will be more “homey”, more durable, and easier to maintain
- Freshly painting the interior with a warm, calming color
- Freshly painting the outside of the lodge to protect against the Montana Winter
- Adding storage space to allow the girls to bring some personal mementos from home

The estimated cost of these projects is \$28,000.

Please prayerfully consider making as generous of a gift as possible. For many children at the Ranch and other residential facilities, their lodge becomes their home. We want them to feel that when it comes to their lodge, they are family.

For the children,

Kurt Alme, President



Shelves in need of repair and carpet needing replacement

P.S. - 100% of your contribution will be used to improve the living space of the children!

The Mission of Yellowstone Foundation is to support charitable, religious, and education organizations and programs whose services primarily benefit youth and adults with special needs. Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch is the favored grantee. All contributions to Yellowstone Foundation will be used to support the Ranch or other organizations or programs within the Foundation’s Mission.