

Local youth spreads love of animals by donating to Big Sky Ranch Animal Sanctuary

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BY ASHLEY KULP

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EMC News - Sara Wiman has a deep love for animals so it's no surprise that when it came her turn to have her class' 'Nobody' doll, she decided to do something to help her furry friends.

Wiman, a Grade 5 student at North Gower Marlborough Public School made a donation of \$123.14 to Big Sky Ranch Animal Sanctuary in North Grenville on April 28 during a tour of the ranch and a visit with its animals. She was inspired to raise funds for the ranch, which cares for abused and unwanted animals, as part of the 'Nobody' doll project her class is currently undertaking.

Each week a different student takes the doll, which is just a stuffed rag doll, and must do a good deed so that the doll will "become a somebody," at the end of the project, Wiman said. At the end of the week, they affix a three-dimensional pin, badge or attachment to the doll. After receiving a Big Sky t-shirt and baseball cap as a thank you for her donation, Wiman noted that she will be leaving her hat with the 'Nobody' doll.

"I love animals," she explained, adding that she and her friends often feed grass to the horses on the farm next to her school during recess and lunch hour. Her soft spot for animals also regularly sees her care for neighbourhood pets when their owners are away. She's also concerned about the City of Ottawa allowing construction companies to build new subdivisions and ruin natural habitats. "Foxes have homes (in those areas) and if they came in with big tractors and destroyed it, I would be really sad," Wiman added.

After creating flyers indicating her intentions, Wiman went door-to-door in her neighbourhood asking for small change to donate to the animal sanctuary. Three weeks later, she presented the ranch with the fruits of her efforts, which was made up mostly of pennies, small change and small bills.

"One lady gave me a whole container of pennies!" she remarked. "Pennies add up, even if they're so small. Just because they're small doesn't mean they can't make up a lot of money."

While at the ranch, Wiman had the opportunity to meet several pot-bellied pigs, ducks, deer, and a special Shetland Pony named Pumpkin. Raising the funds has made her realize that "small things can make a difference" and she noted that she would love to visit the location again.

"I'm going to tell my friends all about it because it's awesome!" she concluded.

For more about Big Sky Ranch Animal Sanctuary, visit www.bigskyranch.ca.

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Ashley Kulp, Kemptville EMC

Grade 5 North Gower Marlborough Public School student Sara Wiman, above left, gets some help from Big Sky Ranch Animal Sanctuary's Shetland Pony Pumpkin when handing over a donation of \$123.14 to volunteer Trevor Egeberg on April 28. Wiman collected donations as part of her school's 'Nobody' doll project.

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Ashley Kulp, Kemptville EMC
Bottom right, Wiman with the doll.

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