

Have you ever wondered what your name means or why your parents named you what they did? Sometimes names can tell you about the person's (or animal's) history. My name is Sven. The people who named me looked at the names of my parents (my mother's name is Lena) and grandparents and decided I needed a Scandinavian name because Fjord horses originally came from the country of Norway. Fjord horses like me have a quiet and calm temperament and are very strong which means we can pull heavy loads if there's work to do, but we also make good riding horses for children or therapeutic riding programs. We'll fit in well at Joy Ranch!



As you know, I live at Joy Ranch, a camp near Watertown. The camp is named for Joy Nelson, the woman who owned the ranch. Before Joy gave her ranch to Lutherans Outdoors in 2002 she moved two old buildings onto the property. The first is a one room school house built in 1885, almost 125 years ago. Can you imagine all the students from Kindergarten through 8th grade going to school in the same room? This school sits down the hill by the lake. The other building is the 110 year old Clara Lutheran Church which moved here from Erwin, SD about an hour south of where I live. The church sits on a hill at the end of a long driveway. Every year the church is filled with quilts on display for the LO quilt auction. In the warm weather we sometimes have weddings in the church, too.

If I look from my pasture towards the church, I can see workers building the new camp buildings. Joy Ranch will have a main street with the camp buildings on both sides. Right now the east side of Main Street (the side closest to my pasture) is almost all enclosed. This side will house the Welcome Center, the Youth Bunkhouse and the Thirsty Boot Café. On the outside the buildings will look like they did over 100 years ago, in 1888. Inside, however, the rooms will be very nice and comfortable. I know kids and adults will enjoy staying at Joy Ranch.

Perhaps you could visit with your parents or an older person you know this month. Ask them if they know what your name means or why they chose to give you that name. Then ask them to tell you what life was like when they were your age. Maybe they know some of the history about the area where you live. It's fun to hear stories from the past.

Thanks for joining the Sven Playground Club.

Your friend,

Sven

