



## THROUGH OUR KIDS EYES – WHAT THEY SEE AND THINK!

Marsha Copeland – Education Chair

Our fourth youth, and in this case it is plural, interview takes us to the northeast part of the state to Hannibal, MO where sisters, Kylie and Cortney, can be found spending a great deal of time with their horses and doing a lot of adventurous riding. My first introduction to this duo was hearing the NEMO River Valley Chapter leader say these sisters were RIDERS. Not only are they good riders, but they are tough as nails when it comes to riding all day and not a whine to be heard or a frown to be seen. In other words, they could probably ride most of us into the ground!

Kylie is 11 years old and attends Hannibal Middle School and very involved in a teen reading group through her church. Her horse, Copenhagen, is a 17 year old paint gelding. When asked about Copenhagen, Kylie said, “I really like that he is fast. It makes me mad that he bucks every time I run him.” When asked what was the best thing about riding a horse and what was the scariest, Kylie’s comment: “The best thing about riding horses is seeing the wildlife and feeling the wind in my face when I run across the South Dakota hills. I don’t think there is anything scary about riding horses.”

Cortney is 9 years old and attends Stowell Elementary School in Hannibal. When Cortney was asked about her horse, her comment was, “My horse’s name is Bucky. He is a 15 year old buckskin gelding. He takes care of me, but I get mad because he spooks at a lot of things.”



Riding is a family affair in the lives of these sisters. Their parents, Linda and Cory Muehring, started the girls riding with Mom at very early ages. Kylie was 3 weeks old on her first ride, and Cortney was 3 months old. Yes, that is correct – confirmed by their mother! Their family ride to Mt. Rushmore this past year was a great experience for the entire family.

We know the girls are hardy riders, but what do they think about SMMBCH? They were very knowledgeable about SMMBCH’s mission and purpose in keeping trails open through service. They said they learned how to cross-tie their horse, how to do an emergency dismount, and how to pick up trash from attending their Chapter’s youth ride. However, both did have a complaint! When asked what they would do to make SMMBCH more interesting for kids, their paraphrased answer was, “It would be more fun if we didn’t have to wear helmets”! Oh, yes, the helmet issue. They are not the first to voice this sentiment. Other kids have voiced this complaint while attending a youth ride. They probably see it as a commentary on their riding abilities which it certainly is not. Some of our kids are better riders than many of us! It is a responsibility thing and not being negligent in making rides as safe as possible for kids while in our care. There are a lot of us adults that should be wearing them!

Kylie and Cortney each wrote down some comments they would like to share about their horses and their riding adventures.

KYLIE - SOUTH DAKOTA FUN. What I liked about camping in South Dakota was everything. I loved how beautiful South Dakota was. I wish I could move there now. My favorite ride was riding to Mt.

Rushmore, it took 12 hours but it didn't seem long. When I told my friends I rode to Mt. Rushmore on horseback they didn't believe it. It was so cool seeing Mt. Rushmore up close and not in a picture. I hope I could have another chance to ride in the black hills of South Dakota.

I like camping at different places because we see different types of wildlife, rock formations, and towns. I have seen buffalo, mule deer, and much more.

CORTNEY – CAMPING. What I like about riding horses is making them run. I also like seeing nature like deer, snakes, buffalo and much more. One of my favorite camping trips was going to South Dakota because we got to see Mt. Rushmore. The two things I don't like is getting stung by ground bees and getting bucked off. There is lots more I like but can't name them. P.S. I don't like when my horse get scared by a deer pooping in the woods.