

Re-Connect

By Eydie McDaniel

Sherry's mom brought her to my second grade class and our teacher sat her behind me in the back. We soon learned that we both had a horse, a big brother who beat on us, and lived on different edges of the same apricot orchard. We connected enough that Miss Leary moved me to the front that same day.

At last, another girl lived nearby. Even better she was a cowboy type girl too. I had a fascinating ally with enough physical prowess to keep my brother at bay. The five minute dead run through the apricot orchard oft stirred dust under our busy little feet. We shared clear affinity then and a good bit of that affinity remains today.

Sherry and her husband enjoyed the farm surrounding their trailer home until Sherry asked for a house. He said they couldn't afford a house. She replied, "What if I build it?" So she built it.

She cures most of her own animal's ailments. She started a book titled "How to Save an Un-savable Fowl". With a non nursing colt, the vets professed would certainly parish, Sherry ran to the rescue. She read the label of their so called fowl's formula and knew at once it would cause fatal diarrhea. The baby horse lived in the house where she fed a half a cup of fresh heated goat's milk every hour around the clock. She squirted it in and stoked the throat. She carried the scrawny baby outside to go potty. "Sugar" went along on every errand. Folks in western Colorado were quick to see it was not a dog, but a horse in that Cherokee. Soon "Sugar" whinnied for her feedings. The day Sugar passed the Cherokee at a full run Sherry simply said: "I guess you'll live". Just her voice and an occasional hand full of mane always guided the horse just fine.

Now, in lush Kentucky, Sherry happily stays busy building a buggy out of cherry wood, raising Black Angus cattle, and pulling with their Haflinger draft horses. Her eight grandchildren call her "Honey". One of these tikes needed Honey's help. The other adults were often stuck in power struggles with the toddler, but Honey took the high road. "I'll handle this" she asserted. "Ok, sweetie you don't have to eat at Country Buffet. I parked the car under this tree so you won't get too hot" The daughter protested. Sherry just kept on. She sweetly kissed the little girl on the cheek and said "We'll be back in just a little bit". The family walked away in silence which was broken only by the sound of a car door opening and shutting. Two little hands took a hand of Gramma and Mother and the meal was enjoyed by all.

Somehow, Sherry just knows what to do. She never lets anyone's higher education trump her homespun reliable wisdom. The recent phone call lasted 55 minutes, the legacy of friendship, 55 years.