

# Tennessee CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2025 | CUSTOMER FOCUSED ⚡ COMMUNITY DRIVEN

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Alia Rupp helps her  
parents, Kristina and  
Scott, during a session  
at Home Safe Horses.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF  
SCOTT E. RUPP



# Home Safe Horses

Kristina Rupp leads a child and a horse during a free session at Home Safe Horses.

## A refuge for rescued horses and children

A 60-acre farm in Lauderdale County is a Christ-centered sanctuary for mistreated, rescued horses and children of all ages.

The farm is owned by Kristina and Scott Rupp, who moved to Lauderdale County four years ago with their two children, Alia, 13, and Elliott, 9.

“We felt a calling from God, and we answered it,” said Kristina. The Rups say they see God’s hand in what is happening at their farm.

“The miracles that happen here are incredible,” Kristina said. “It’s hard for some people to understand what horses and God can do together.”

The Rups talk about Molly, a horse who spent 10 years in a 10-by-10-foot dog pen. They describe a child who was locked in her apartment with boxes of cereal for food while her mom partied.

“The lost child and the lost animal found each other, and they’re emerging into something much greater,” Kristina said.

The animals on the farm include two miniature horses, a donkey and several full-sized horses. All but one are rescues.

The Rups work with children 6 to 18 years old who come from different backgrounds. One child found them on the internet and is now flourishing as a



**Above: Kristina, from left, Elliott, Alia and Scott Rupp pose as a family. Right: Their donkey, Billy Bob, had been mistreated with a 2-by-4-inch board. He was a feral animal when he arrived three years ago. Today, he enjoys being active with the children.**

horseback rider. Some parents find out by word of mouth or the farm’s Facebook page or website.

### ‘People feel at peace here’

Whatever their circumstances, Kristina said, “we go out of our way to make everyone who comes here feel incredibly welcome. People feel at peace here. They are free from judgment.”

A primary rule, Scott said, is that the child must want to be at the farm. Some

want to ride a horse. Some just want to be around a horse.

“We’re a ranch where people can put their hands on horses.”

A parent or guardian must be on the property the whole time but isn’t required to participate in what the child is doing.

Each session is free, partners an adult with a child and a horse, and starts with prayer.

“We sprinkle in God and how he’s working in their lives,” Kristina said. “We teach them to lean into God for everything.”

Every child also receives a copy of the New Testament version of the Cowboy Bible.

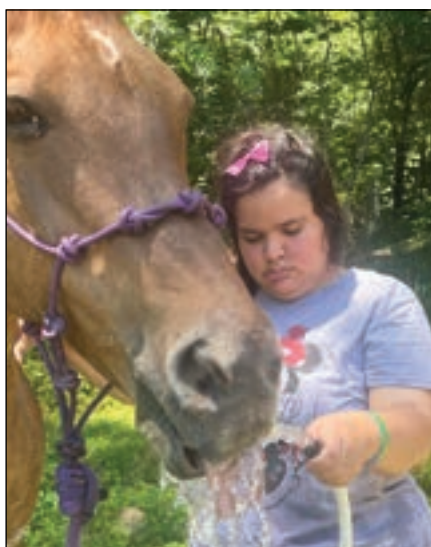
The Rups also lead the horse rotation in the summer camp offered by New Life Union

Mission, a nonprofit that works with children.

The Rups’ journey to having a rescue farm began when they were living in Florida. Kristina volunteered at a nearby horse sanctuary, and

soon everyone in the family was helping.





**‘God called us to look west’**

After first looking for land in North Carolina and East Tennessee, “God called us to look west, and we found the farm in Lauderdale County,” Kristina said.

Scott and Kristina left the corporate world to start their own public relations consulting business. They work from home and can plan activities around their flexible work schedules. Kristina also homeschools their children.

Home Safe Horses, a registered nonprofit, welcomes donations of both time and money. The Rupp just launched a program where folks can sponsor a horse for \$100 a month.

Scott would love to have volunteers lead sessions, work in the barn and help in many other ways. “There are ample opportunities to volunteer,” he said. “We can’t grow without help.”

He appreciates a group of Home Depot workers from Jackson and Covington who helped build the inside of their barn. “God is at work bringing people together to help these children,” Scott said.

The Rupp are excited about the future. They’ve already helped more than 400 children.

“People out there are hurting,” Kristina said. “We want to reach those families. What we’ve seen is remarkable. People heal from this.”

**Open House April 19**

The community is invited to an open house from 1-4 p.m. April 19 at Home Safe Horses, 1944 Woodville Road, Ripley.

For more information on how to be a part of the farm’s therapy, volunteer time or give financially, visit [homesafehorses.com](http://homesafehorses.com). ■

**Top: Kristina prepares to lead a session with a family and some of the horses. Above: From left, a young child waters a horse, Kristina works with a young girl and Scott teaches another child, who uses a walker, how to ride for the first time. Below: A happy child enjoys his time on a horse.**



## RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY



A monument dedicated to the 115 crewmen who were killed in air crashes while stationed at Dyersburg Army Air Base is at the Veterans' Museum. The monument was sponsored by Sterling Forsythe, who used to live in Ripley.



A diorama, above, sponsored by Warren Nunn of Halls, depicts the former air base with buildings, layouts and the three runways. The diorama locates the base in relationship to today's highways. In 1942, the four-lane U.S. 51 did not exist.

## Memorial ceremony to honor those who died training on the B-17 bomber

Scarlet fever saved the life of tail gunner Ed Henning when his entire flight crew died January 24, 1945, in a crash while training at the Dyersburg Army Air Base, just outside of Halls.

His family, however, didn't know he was still alive; his mother had received a telegram about the crash and his probable death. It wasn't until the next day that the base command realized Henning had been sent to the hospital the day of the crash. It then sent his mother another telegram with the good news.

### Upcoming events ...

- Annual Spring Luncheon, noon, Wednesday, April 16
- Memorial Day Ceremony, 2 p.m. Thursday, May 22
- Four Person Golf Tournament, 1 p.m. Friday, June 6. Noon registration
- Flag Day Celebration, 2 p.m. Saturday, June 14

Henning's 10 crewmates were among the 115 airmen who died in training mishaps at the air base as they learned how to fly the B-17—the Army's heavily used bomber during World War II.

Those crewmen and other fallen veterans will be honored at a ceremony May 22 at the Veterans' Museum for Memorial Day. "By laying a wreath in front of the monument, we express our profound appreciation for all who have given their lives for our country," said Hillary Wheeler, the museum's administrative assistant.

Built in 1942 and dismantled in 1945,

the Dyersburg Army Air Base was the largest combat air training school in World War II and the last training stop before the airmen headed to Europe. The B-17 dropped more bombs than any other aircraft in WWII.

The base was busy, with 100 training takeoffs and landings per day. It created jobs for the entire region. The base had a 188-bed hospital, a movie theater that seated 600 and an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

The Veterans' Museum, situated at the former base, highlights the base's history and gives tribute to other veterans. It is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday and 2-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Museum tickets are \$5 for adults and \$2 for veterans and children under 12. For more information, visit [dyaab.us](http://dyaab.us). ■



Ed Henning, left, trained as a tail gunner on the B-17 in 1944 and 1945 at the Dyersburg Army Air Base. He was sent to the hospital to be treated for scarlet fever the day the rest of his crew died in a training crash. The base command didn't realize it, though, until after it sent the telegram, at right, about the crash to his mother in Pennsylvania.





David Deloach, left, and Bill Newman work together to trim back trees and other vegetation away from power lines.

## Longtime employees Newman, Deloach retire

Longtime employees Bill Newman and David Deloach are retiring from Ripley Power and Light Company.

Newman was hired 31 years ago in September 1994; he will retire this spring.

"I am thankful that Mike (Allmand) took a chance on me all those years ago," Newman said. "The Lord put me here, and he has led me to do everything he has asked of me."

Deloach began his career at Ripley Power and Light in November 1985. He left to work for another company for a while but returned to the electric utility in 2005. After working a total of 35 years for the utility, he retired in January.

"It's always hard to say 'goodbye' to employees who have worked hard for our customers," said Allmand, President and CEO of Ripley Power and Light. "We wish them the best."

Deloach was hired to run the chipper as workers cleared the rights-of-way. He became a lineman in 1995. In 2012, he was put in charge of vegetation control.

Newman began at the utility as a groundman and also became a lineman. He joined Deloach in vegetation control in 2012.

"One of the best decisions Ripley Power and Light ever made was putting David Deloach in charge of tree trimming with Bill Newman as his senior team member," Allmand said.

"In my 49 years with RPL, I can't think of any proactive maintenance decisions we have ever made that produced as much benefit as what David, Bill and their team brought to RPL and its customers in reduced outages."

"These two men are masters at what they do. We refer to them as tree surgeons!"

Deloach's philosophy about doing a good job comes down to this sentiment: "If you don't do it right the first time, how will you have the time to come back and do it again?"

Both men, who have many good memories about working for Ripley Power and Light, say they will miss the



Deloach, left, and Newman

fellowship with their coworkers.

"We are like family," Deloach said. ■



## RIPLEY POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY

[www.ripleypower.com](http://www.ripleypower.com)

**Ripley Office**  
731-635-2323

150 S. Main St. • Ripley

**Halls Office**  
731-836-7595

409 S. Church St. • Halls

### Office Hours

We are open 47 hours each week to serve you better!

7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Monday-Thursday

7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday

### You can pay your bill ...

- At [www.ripleypower.com](http://www.ripleypower.com)
- Through our new mobile app
  - Through bank draft
- At our Ripley & Halls offices
- In office night deposit boxes
- At the kiosks at our offices

If you have not been receiving your bills, call our office immediately so we can verify your mailing address.

### Ripley Power and Light offices will be closed ...

April 18  
for Good Friday

May 26  
for Memorial Day



# Giving Back To Our Communities

Each year, Ripley Power and Light Company makes in-lieu-of-tax payments to Lauderdale County and the local municipalities it serves.

A formula determines the amounts, which are audited by Tennessee Valley Authority and Ripley Power and Light. The funds come directly from operating revenues, which are received from the sale of electricity to customers.

The amounts are based on the net plant value—lines, poles, transformers and other equipment—in each community.

"As a public utility, we're exempt from paying taxes," said Mike Allmand, President and CEO of Ripley Power and Light. "Instead, we pay in lieu of taxes. We're not required to do so, but we want to help our communities grow and succeed."

The annual in-lieu-of-tax

payments made at the end of each fiscal year are among the many investments the electric utility makes in its communities.

Other investments include working with TVA, and state and regional groups to foster economic growth; giving scholarships to students at Dyersburg State Community College and the University of Tennessee at Martin—Ripley Center; maintaining street and traffic lights; and helping with outdoor lighting in public areas. ■

### 2024 In-Lieu-of-Tax Payments

City of Ripley:	\$340,819.20
Town of Halls:	\$16,556.04
Town of Gates:	\$2,527.04
Town of Henning:	\$5,343.41
Lauderdale County:	\$106,039.07
<b>Total Funds Distributed:</b>	<b>\$471,284.76</b>

