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'WE PUT OUR FULL TRUST IN GOD'

James and Lynne Adams have faced a lot of adversity, including losing their daughter in a vehicle accident and James nearly losing his own life during a medical emergency. Through it all, however, they've never lost faith in the Lord, and James says that's the key for him now, too, as he answers God's call to serve as a pastor in Scottsbluff.

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environment for the baby they named Zaedyn. Their efforts paid off, but just as things began to settle, life was about to change once again.

In August 2020, the Shropshires received a call from the State of Washington, which had identified them through a kinship search as potential family for Ken's first cousin's grandson, Bryan, an eight-year-old in need of a permanent, stable home after living in two foster homes. After many meetings, phone calls, and heartfelt conversations with family members who knew Bryan, they decided to move forward and began Zoom visits with him two to three times a week to build a connection. Ken and Sarah once again opened their hearts and home, offering the stability and family support Bryan needed.

"Bryan's case was complicated, too," Sarah said. "By the time he was approved to move to Colorado, he had been in four placements and the state did not have another option for him. They searched for a permanent placement and gave his biological mom every chance possible. When we received the call in August of 2020, the case worker reached back out and stated we were his last resort."

In June 2021, Bryan was able to move to the state of Colorado. Then after a long list of events and even longer weeks and months of helping provide a safe and nurturing environment for the two boys, the family was given approval from the state of Colorado and Washington to move from Denver, Colorado, to Kimball in order to give the boys a new start at life in December 2021.

Sarah said they decided to move to Kimball since she missed the small town and rural community since she grew up in the Hastings area and wanted to leave the crazy pace of the Denver metro

area. She also wanted to be close to her mother since she moved to Kimball in 2018.

In the first year after moving to Kimball, the family traveled 35,000 miles to attend speech therapy, physical therapy doctor appointments and equine therapy sessions. Eventually, both boys would be diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Sarah was hesitant to drive another 35,000 in a year, so she and Ken thought about taking matters into her own hands.

They envisioned a local, welcoming space where families could connect with each other, build close relationships, and extend support to those seeking activities that foster growth, learning, and positive development for individuals with similar sensory needs.

"Our original purpose for purchasing the property was for a home for our family to raise the boys in a small town rural community," Sarah said. "At the time of our move in December 2021, the boys were nine-years-old and 18-months-old. We did not know at that time yet what their needs were going to require."

In 2022, the Shropshire's focused on settling into the Kimball community and looking for resources for the boys. In the fall, the providers that worked with the boys gave Ken and Sarah letters stating both boys needed sensory and behavior regulation. Sarah said they had exhausted all local resources and recognized that driving to Scottsbluff, Sidney, Cheyenne or Denver was not the life they needed for their family and it wouldn't be fair to the boys.

While exploring alternatives to support their boys, Sarah received a recommendation in the summer of 2022

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from Michelle Weimer at Soar Therapy in Sidney. Michelle suggested that the Shropshires' property in Kimball would be ideal for creating a space to meet the boys' sensory needs. Weimer made a few visits to Kimball and helped give Sarah some ideas that made her a pivotal key toward the inception of WeeShire Mains.

"Both boys regulated better outside," Sarah said. "Since Zaedyn was two-months-old, to help him be calm we would take him outside in the stroller or he would just sit in the yard. As Zaedyn grew, the quickest way to help him regulate was to step outside. Bryan needed the outside to run as fast as he

could and push or pull something heavy to calm, otherwise, Bryan would jump on the trampoline in the house for 30 minutes straight or more."

In 2016, Ken and Sarah jokingly discussed the idea of getting fainting goats. After moving to Kimball, they chose miniature goats as their livestock to maintain the grandfathered rights to keep livestock on their property, which had been rezoned. Sarah said they also had a vague idea about starting their wee-farm starting in 2023. Sarah added that the goats were their pets and a great start for the boys to experience caring for animals.

"Working with one of Bryan's

Ken shares a special moment with Waffles as she breaks the barrier in permissible human contact. Waffles was a wild donkey and it took the Shropshires two weeks to train her to do nose touches.



providers, we got a call offering the miniature donkeys," Sarah said. "We had only toyed with the idea at that time, but thought the donkeys would be good for the boys. We knew that donkeys would take patience and help with social skills for both of the boys."

Sarah had even received support of the idea to create WeeShire Mains within the Kimball community. In January 2024, Sarah shared the idea while chatting with the Director of the Kimball Library, Amber Sweetland. Sarah said Sweetland supported the idea of WeeShire Mains since it was desperately needed in the community, and offered to help in the creation of the non-profit.

"She (Sweetland) became our first board member and by April 2024 we started the non-profit with the help of another close friend, Rachael," Sarah said. "Rachael's son is autistic and was really struggling due to the lack of local resources, so she also volunteered to be a founding board member."

This wee-farm also has a wide variety of animals for both children and adults to enjoy. They include fainting goats, chickens, Indian running ducks, African geese, miniature donkeys, a miniature highland steer and a miniature hereford low-line angus cow.

The miniature highland steer was graciously donated by The Little Lucky Cattle Company in Rapid City, South Dakota, and Kimball residents Sid and Teresa Pederson donated Purcie, the miniature hereford low-line angus cow. Sarah mentioned that they may add more animals in the future, noting that the advantage of miniature animals is their smaller space requirements, which makes it possible to accommodate more of them.

"We must manage land usage and feed for the animals to make sure what the property can handle," Sarah said.

Located at 1209 East 3rd Street with a brand new main entrance at 2nd and Jefferson, WeeShire Mains is still in its infancy phase. This non-profit not

only helps those who visit, but it has also helped Zaedyn and Bryan create a routine, which is very important while organizing their thoughts and emotions. Sarah said they have a bounce board that Bryan will spend 20-30 minutes two or three times a day just jumping for that sensory input. Zaedyn needs jumping, climbing and swings. Carrying a bucket of water gives the input on the joints that are needed, and brushing the animals and carrying feed helps the thousands of sensory inputs.

"Routines for both boys are critical and changes require forecasting and support to manage those changes. The daily chores and routine have actually helped Bryan more in the last six months than we could have imagined," Sarah said. "It provides social skills, interacting with the animals and being aware of how their voice, movements and actions affect the animals have helped us work on other social skills. The heavy work (physical therapy) provides the sensory input that both of the boys require."

WeeShire Mains not only specializes in small animals, but also with the fruit of nature with their U-Pick shrubbery area where visitors can experience the hands-on benefits of harvesting blueberries. In July 2023, Sarah visited her cousin in Arkansas that has a very successful U-Pick blueberry farm that has grown over the past ten years.

At the time, Sarah was also looking for more options to help Zaedyn with his focus, manual dexterity and occupational therapy. Sarah said to

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engage Zaedyn for more than three minutes on any activity, even a preferred activity, was a feat.

“While we were visiting the blueberry farm, Zaedyn would wake up and the first thing he wanted to do was to go pick blueberries,” Sarah said. “He did this activity for more than 30 minutes at a time and kept wanting to go back. Between using their swing in a big tree and running back to get more blueberries, I called Ken and said, ‘There is something to this. This would be amazing. What if we use the parcel that is empty for blueberries?’”

After tossing the idea of a U-Pick blueberries concept around, Sarah and

Ken decided in March 2024 that it would be a great idea to make it possible for visitors to also enjoy a U-Pick blueberry shrubbery patch. Sarah said they had a friend visit about that same time and he said he would help and the U-Pick began. They pushed for the first planting of blueberries in May 2024.

WeeShire Mains is based in Kimball and currently offers Animal Sensory Visits in the local area. These two-hour experiences provide gentle, calming interactions with animals in a peaceful environment. While additional programs are planned for the future, the sensory visits are the first offering available as they continue to grow and expand their

services. Donations are accepted per person to help with essential costs and future improvements. A pre-signup and completion of a release of liability form is strongly encouraged before any visit.

“We encourage visits by appointment so we can limit the amount of people at one time,” Sarah said. “This serves to provide a sensory balance for those that may need more individualized attention and help us not overwhelm the animals either. This is our home, so being able to manage traffic is important.”

WeeShire has already welcomed families, receiving enthusiastic and positive responses from the children who participated. The animals have also been on two “ventures” with one at the Classic Cars on Main in Torrington, Wyo., and at the Farmer’s Day event in Kimball this past September. Sarah said both ventures were amazing and came with a lot of stories and were enjoyed by everyone young and old. Over the next few months, Sarah plans to do some research and hopes to conduct some preview visits.

“WeeShire Mains is a safe, fun, and healing space where people, especially kids with sensory challenges, can

connect with nature and animals,” Sarah said. “From U-Pick blueberries, which are great for sensory and motor skills, to spending time with our adorable miniature animals, there’s something for everyone. It’s a wonderful place for the whole family to enjoy and thrive together.”

For more information or to schedule an animal sensory visit, contact Sarah Shropshire at 308-235-5585 or visit their website at weeshiremains.org or email hello@weeshiremains.org.



WeeShire Mains Founders’ Ken and Sarah Shropshire are embarking on a new adventure. Their new non-profit organization helps create a unique space for families and animals to connect in a peaceful environment through nature.

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