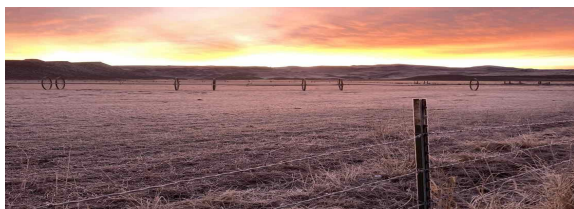


Herzog Herd Newsletter

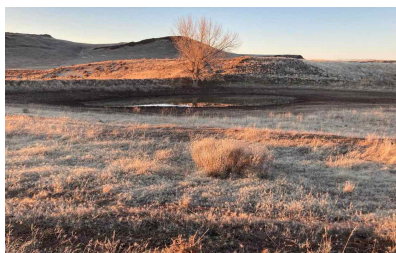
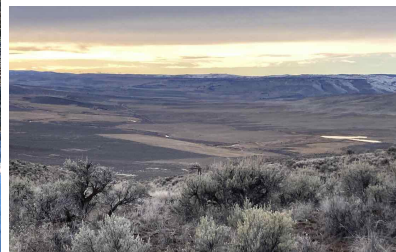
February 2024

Greetings in the name of the Lord!



Beauty

Moving from southeast Texas where things are lush and green and beautiful most of the time, to the high desert has been easier than I anticipated. There is such a different beauty here that I don't think I ever saw before. I think I only had one definition of beautiful and I've learned beauty comes in all different shapes and colors and temperatures. Everything is so still and peaceful. There is essentially no road noise, light pollution, air traffic or people. Out here it is so tranquil and just beautiful.



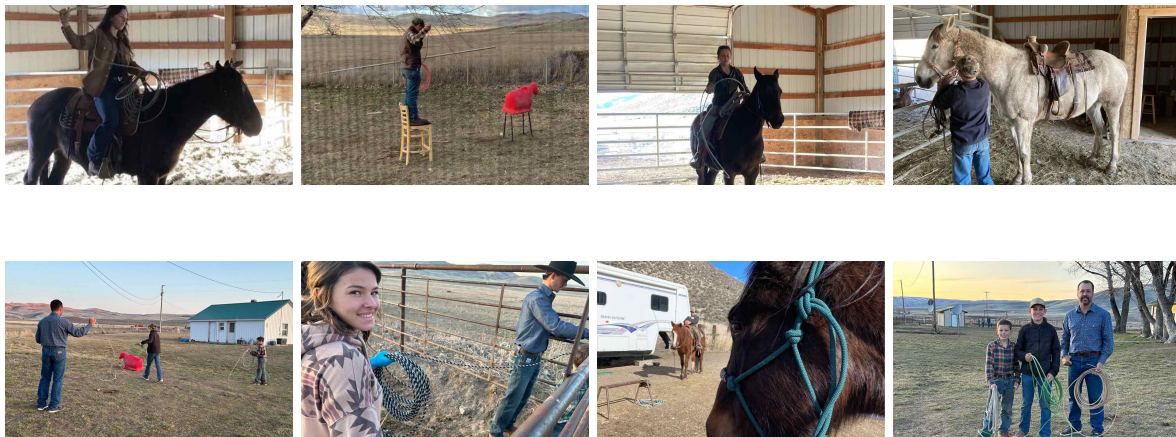
Ski and snowboarding adventures

Stephen and the oldest 8 children had the opportunity to spend the day skiing and snowboarding on the 8th of February! They had an absolute blast and came back with so many stories!! They headed 4 hours north to the Baker City area and went to the Anthony Lakes Ski Resort. They spent the day hitting the slopes and wore themselves out! It made for quite a long day, but they filled it with memories and were so grateful to get to go!



Horse and roping update

The girls and James continue to spend as much time as they can after school up at the horse barn. They learn so much and really enjoy their time when Stephen is able to go up with them and give them some pointers. Elaina has a baby expected any day from her horse and we can't wait to see a new foal!! James is in heaven as he is dreaming about the upcoming branding season in a month or 2 and he is doing everything he can to ready himself. They all spend time roping the dummy they received for Christmas from a family here on the ranch. It is so fun to watch them develop and grow and learn and enjoy new things.



Fence work crews/ranch chores

The kids still rotate going with Stephen as he gets ranch chores done. After feeding hay, he has lately been working on fixing fence. That is something usually done every spring as they prepare to turn cows out to the leased/forest/ and private allotments. I'll pack them a few snacks and they go for about 4 hours and cover several miles of fence. The weather has been just beautiful with highs in the 40's and makes for a perfect temperature for physical labor. They usually drive a side by side and 4 wheelers and bring fencing supplies to get the patching done. They all enjoy getting to spend time with papa. Stephen really enjoys the fence work. He loves learning the land and always thinks about how to make things better. He has such a big heart and big vision. He loves working with the kids and enjoys seeing a job well done!



The kids have also gotten to go up to Shumway and help Mr. Joe with fence and feeding up there. He is so kind and really enjoys the help and the company. They enjoy spending time with him too. We have had 2 different groups of kids get to go help and both enjoy it.



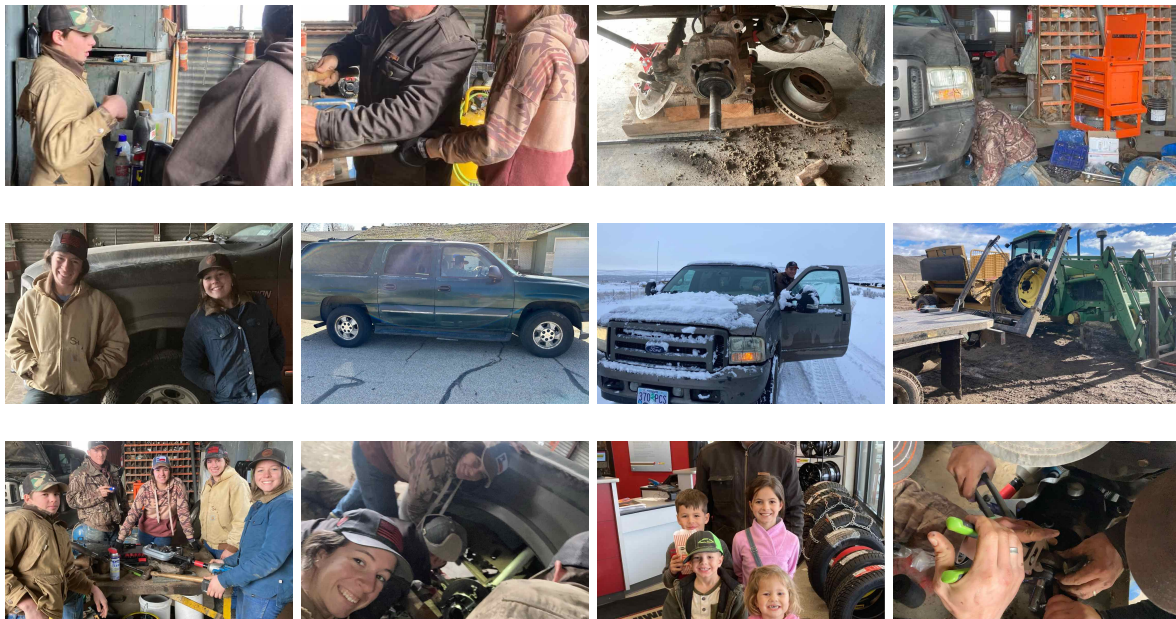
Another fence project the big kids got to do was along the main Oregon highway. Last year there was a devastating mud slide that knocked out a good bit of fence. They really enjoyed the job and got it built in just a few days. They stayed at Danny and Anna's during that time and so enjoyed the fellowship.



Mechanic work on vehicles

We have had quite the month for breakdowns! On our own personal vehicles as well as ranch equipment. Each day is met with an open mind and we just take things as they come. Stephen and the oldest 5 have replaced the ball joints and drive line on the excursion. Stephen and the older kids spent quite some time watching YouTube videos on how to do all the work and they did an amazing job! I'm so proud of them for not giving up but pushing through and seeing the job through to completion! The suburban is still undiagnosed. And the ranch truck has been out of commission for a week, but thankfully not before we got the tractor back from the shop after having been there for about 2 months. So Stephen can still get feeding hay done, it's just never quite certain how that will actually happen and with what apparatus.

As the month progressed, for our personal vehicle situation, it became evident we needed to replace the suburban. Martin expressed a desire to tinker with it and try and fix it and that has been quite a job! He is enjoying learning and taking the engine apart and trying to fix it. We spent several days praying about what to do about investing in another vehicle and the Lord directed us to the perfect fit for our family! It is a 2002 suburban with 9 seats!! It comes from 1 owner and is visibly very well loved but still sound. It was much less than we were anticipating spending, and are so grateful to the Lord for directing us to the "green bean".



Another job I don't have any pictures of is James and Gus as they have been working on an old abandoned jeep out at the shop here at the Visser house. They have spent hours out there learning and attempting to get it running. They had a bet going with Danny and the short of it is that Danny ended up getting each of them a bucket of ice cream because they got the engine to turn over!! So thankful for those 2 boys!

Silas turns 5!!!/Family time

As the older kids have picked up a few odd jobs over the month, it has prevented us from continuing as regularly on our reading time. But it's ok. We just do it as we can and continue to enjoy the Chuck Black books.

We also celebrated Silas' 5th birthday! I can't believe Silas is already 5! He is such a joy and is such a dynamic addition to our family. He loves playing independently with his trucks, tractors and cowboy and Indians. He loves "space" and if I can incorporate that into his school, he is all on board! He has the cutest nose and smile and melts my heart as he flashes them to me all throughout the day. He asks questions almost non stop and has so much energy. Such a blessing!



We continue to work on school as we are inside a good bit from the dreary weather. I've not been unable to keep up my same pace as before and have been grateful for so many educational videos on line! The kids have loved it and I'm amazed how quickly they memorize jingles and tunes with important information.

Social events/friends

The older kids have managed to go from time to time to watch some baske ball games and even play a little themselves with friends. Everything is so far away from here, but they make the time and pull together to go socializing. They always have fun and wish to do more. We had a supper night with some ranch family/friends in Juntura to celebrate valentines. We always enjoy getting to see everyone and catch up and play. The girls enjoy singing with the song leader in church a few Sundays a month, and we enjoy the times we get to stop and catch up with friends from in the community. Some of the older kids have had the opportunity to help some friends move and that went well! Elaina seems to be finding a good rhythm in babysitting as well. She loves the kids she gets to be with and enjoys spending time with a different sister each time as they rotate being her helper.



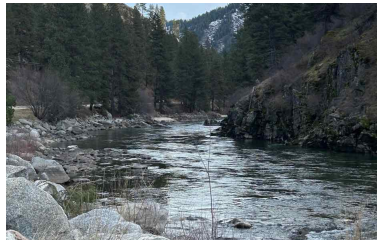
Big announcement!!

Millie has entered into a courtship relationship with a young man named Ben Johnson! I can't believe I'm even typing that! It seems like yesterday she was just b-bopping around the house following Martin around, helping papa with farm chores, and being my right hand man in helping take care of all her younger brothers and sisters in her own sweet 3 year old way. But Stephen and I couldn't be more happy for her as she has grown into such a fine young lady and truly made Jesus the Lord of her life. Watching her live that out and becoming a young adult has been a joy and a privilege. Stephen and I courted before we were married, so the concept is not foreign to us, but coming at it from a parents perspective is completely different than being the young adult walking through it. But we have had such a peace and joy that is unexplainable and we are blessed to watch as Millie and Ben move forward. Ben is such a fine young man and works at a ranch about an hour and a half away from here. We get to spend time with him on Sundays at church and then afterwards we have him over for supper and playing. He has been a joy to get to know and we are thankful for God bringing him into our life. We recently had some of his family over and that was so great getting to know them a little bit.



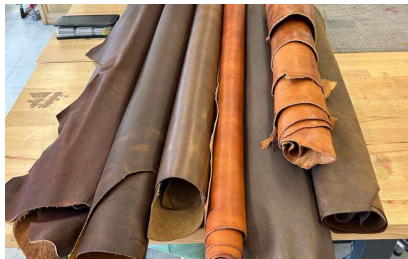
20th anniversary celebration!!

Stephen and I got to take 3 days towards the end of February and celebrate our 20 years of marriage! We went to Garden Valley, Idaho and stayed at a little air B&B cabin in the mountains. It was just beautiful and so refreshing!! We stopped at some different coffee shops, went to a little market and got our groceries for a few meals, walked in some old stores in a nearby town, had a fire in the wood stove, talked and rested. It was such a wonderful time! I'm so thankful for the Lord's faithfulness to us as we have grown and learned so much over these past 20 years. Watching Ben and Millie as they begin their relationship all fresh and new just inspires me to find that young love and just keep living with an eternal perspective and trying to "out love" each other.





On our way home we stopped at a leather store and picked up several hides for the kids as they will be making chaps and chinks with Danny coming up soon. We also found the suburban and went and bought that. And then went and did a grocery haul for the next month. We sure packed a lot into a short amount of time! And as always, the time away is so wonderful, but coming home to our children is always so amazing! They are such a blessing to us and we love them all so much!



February 29...leap year day!!

We wanted to do something memorable on the 29th, so we had a special supper, fried bread for dessert, read Proverbs 29 and took account for what things are going on currently in our life as well as in the world today. Then Bella traced and colored hand prints of the little kids. We would like to compare all this information and memorabilia in the next 4 years and see how things have changed. We are thankful for the changing seasons and having things to look forward to, yet so thankful to the Lord for His steady love for us and continuing to hold us in His hand as we live life. May the Lord bless each of you as you journey through life. Love to all, Christina for the rest of the Herzog Herd

