

When you think of the Nimitz name, the first thing that comes to mind is probably not an Animal Rescue Ranch. Unless, that is, you happen to know Craig and Regena Johns.

The Johns family live in a 1944 house formerly owned by the Nimitz family. They share the 70-acre property with 13 dogs, two cats, four horses, 19 goats, and a llama to protect the goats. All are rescued animals, abused or neglected. Many deer and other wildlife and fowl also share the forage as this is strictly a no-kill property.

The Johns call their property the "Ranch of Last Resort" as a nod of respect to Don Henley and The Eagles, as it is the last resort for the animals. Also, they like the song because its anti development. Craig and Regena have no plans to develop the property they have now lived on for five years. The only construction they've undergone is the 16 by 20 foot four-seasons "Doggie condo." Over the door is a carved wooden sign that states "God Will Make A Way."

Each animal has a unique, interesting tale, and the following are just a few.

It all began with Normen, found on the mean and unforgiving streets of Chicago at the intersection of North and Damen. Craig was working as a U.S. Special Agent when he finally was able to rescue Normen, who started the animal rescue "dream." Then there is Terry, found on a cold, wet Autumn day in a cemetery south of San Antonio while Craig and Regena were picking up an abused horse that had been seized by a Texas County Sheriff's Office.

There's Bingo and Harvey, both pet therapy dogs, for nursing homes and children, respectively. Harvey, despite having recovered from back surgery, visits children at places such as Head Start and Ingram Elementary School, and whatever nursing homes want us to visit.

And these dogs don't just minister to humans. Oliver, rescued from Kauai, was "making his rounds" and discovered one of the goats had rejected one of her kids, born during the early morning. Oliver barked until Craig showed up.

The 19 goats are not all rescues. A billy jumped the fence, and before we knew it there were ten babies! There's a double fence around the billies'

fence these days.

Craig and Regena also foster and adopt abused horses for the Lone Star Rescue and other organizations.

It might seem that they adopted all their rescues themselves, but Craig and Regena are now at the point they take them in, get them healthy, and adopt them out. They don't charge anything for this, but ask that folks make a donation to places where they have accounts. Specifically, Town and Country Animal Hospital and Double L Feed Store.

They are as attached to their land as to their animals, and have spent time exploring the property. So far, they've discovered arrowheads, TX. license plates from the 1940's, and what appears to have been the site of a long ago moon shine operation. Many Prohibition era bottles have been found intact.

Craig and Regena have purchased and planted more than 60 trees on the property, including several species of oak, peach and willow trees. Thanks to abundant sunshine from God; Genesis 1:16, rain, and God making the animals; Genesis 1:25, the Johns family believes it is their life's mission and work to serve the Lord by helping the animals, environment, and the community's people.

Excerpts copied from The Kerrville Daily Times, 19 September 2006, written by Louise Leahy.