Learning when to give Fireman room

A quieter approach helped Jeff with Fireman's care. Friends at Liberty, helping hands at home and a used Ford filled out a difficult week.

The hard part was knowing when to step back

How do you help an injured donkey who needs care but wants some space? That became Jeff's question after he found a cut on Fireman's side during Wednesday's rounds. He set the livestream conversation aside, brought the donkeys in with feed and sent photos to Mary. Help arrived while they waited for the vet.



Checking on Fireman during Sunday's continuing care, at 56:32.

The family reported 35 stitches and 23 staples. Jeff found fur beside a sharp metal edge behind the cows' feeder, believed Fireman had caught himself there and cut it back that day. He took responsibility for leaving it unfinished. By evening, Fireman was grazing again, wearing the protective coat recommended by the vet. Jeff stayed at the farm overnight. Wednesday's update

The next challenge was getting him settled for follow-up care. Thursday evening brought goats in the way, Elliot coming and going, and a lot of activity around the shed. Eventually everyone stepped away. Watching the camera, Jeff saw Elliot walk inside. Fireman followed. Once he was farther in, Jeff closed the gate and gave him time to eat.

That pause changed the evening. The family photographed the wound, changed the dressing and refitted the coat. On Friday, Jeff said he should have stepped back sooner and apologized for being hard on Mary and Jaden. Later, petting the donkeys in the pasture, he promised Fireman he would learn to handle him better. Jeff's Friday follow-up

By Friday evening, Fireman walked into the shed on his own again. Sunday brought another check, with the camera turned away for his shot and relieved voices afterward. His care is still continuing; these calmer moments are progress along the way. Sunday's farm update

Showing up for Fireman

Saturday's care was a team effort. With the temporary cross ties in place, Fireman ate while Mary and Kaitlyn worked together. The family reported that the incision looked dry and clean, with no visible redness. Friday had brought another helping hand: Jaden started chores without being asked, feeding animals and cleaning the cats' water dish. Mary said she was proud of him. After the harder evenings, those ordinary jobs meant a lot. Saturday's update



Fireman and Jeff back in the pasture after the vet's visit. What If Acres footage in the SFF film, at 24:40.

A table at Liberty

What do friends bring when they cannot take the worry away? Sometimes, a chair at the table. Farm friends gathered at Liberty to try to lift Jeff's spirits after his difficult experience with Fireman. The group photo holds that company; the second picture catches a lighter moment. There was still work waiting at the farm, but there was time to sit together, too.



Farm friends at Liberty, bringing Jeff some company and encouragement after Fireman's difficult experience.



A smile from Jeff during the evening out at Liberty.

The Ford has not retired

A used Ford tractor arrived Saturday, and the family already had jobs for it: hay, shed cleaning and eventually snow. The borrowed Dingo was out of commission, so the cement work had to wait. Apparently a tractor can change addresses without getting a day off.



Jeff at the Ford tractor during Saturday's livestream, at 4:30.

The goats got new name tags, pink for the girls and green for the boys, on collars Jean made. Sunday's garage lesson put Jaden on funnel duty while Jeff changed the oil. Jeff reckoned a little oil on your hands helped you look the part. The garage lesson

A recipe in her mother's handwriting

Mary's sister gave her a wooden board engraved with their mother's handwritten Mary Alice cake recipe. Jaden loves the cake, although both of Mary's parents died before he could meet them. Mary misses her mother's voice and has no recording of it. That little piece of handwriting still has a place in the family's kitchen. Mondays with Mary



Mary shares a recipe board made from family handwriting, at 19:20.

Remembering Maverick

Russ and Jackie of Rusty Jack's Farm said goodbye to Maverick on Thursday. Jeff shared his condolences the following morning. We're thinking of them as they go about their days without him.



Jeff offers condolences during Friday's remembrance of Maverick, at 11:40.



Kaitlyn's Corner

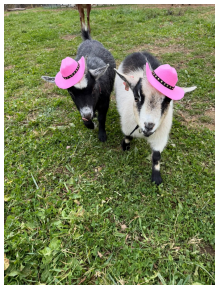
What happens when a goat turns up at the chicken-house window? In Kaitlyn's camera roll, it becomes part of the weekend album. Her November 15 post brought Vivian at the orange hatch, Moe watching the coop clean-out, Elliot and Archie close up, and two little cowgirls in pink hats. The farm supplied the cast; apparently wardrobe had a productive afternoon.

Kaitlyn said she was exhausted and had not edited that weekend's pictures and videos, but wanted everyone to see them. She also had older photographs still waiting to be posted. These are her November 15 memories, kept with their date rather than passed off as a new visit.

Her November 19 post shared the previous evening: Twizzler beneath a starry sky and the girls settled together. The funniest part, she said, was Twizzler being apprehensive about the kittens. A peaceful night, with a very small complication. Her photos and the available videos are collected here.



A goat in Aiden's chicken-house window. Photographed by Kaitlyn, November 15 album.



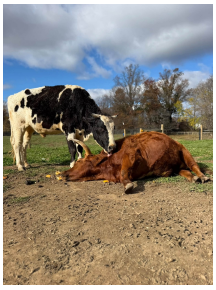
Two little cowgirls, with pink hats to match. November 15 album.



Elliot, captured close up in Kaitlyn's November 15 album.



Moe keeping an eye on Jeff while the coop was cleaned, as Kaitlyn described in her caption.



A quiet rest beneath the clouds.



Twizzler under the night sky. From Kaitlyn's November 19 post about the previous evening.

One additional 19-second clip in the November 19 post is currently unavailable in Facebook's direct viewer. Open the complete night post for its original photo and video collection.

Photographs and videos by Kaitlyn, from her direct posts in What If Acres—The Moo Crew. Read the November 15 post · Read the November 19 post.