

Andy Parent established the [Big Ranch Animal Sanctuary](#) in Kemptville, Ontario in 2002. It was meant to be a hobby farm, initially housing four animals. Over time, some stray dogs and cats joined the gang, finding a new and welcoming home. Then one day, Andy discovered something: sometimes other animals need new homes too.

Cats, dogs, bunnies, hamsters are sent to shelters, but where do horses go? What happens to goats, pigs, or geese? And so, one by one, Andy started taking them in. Some were sent over by owners who called in advance, others were dropped off or abandoned, left to fend for themselves. Some were abused, others misunderstood, and all had no other place to go. Andy realised there was a need for what he was doing.

Eight years later and the Big Ranch Animal Sanctuary has turned into a veritable safe haven; a place, as Andy says, where animals come to “recover from their past lives or professions, as well as restore their trust and faith in humans”. It is also the only non-kill sanctuary of its kind in Eastern Ontario. To date, 1500 animals have called the ranch home: horses, donkeys, turkeys, ducks, rabbits, pot-bellied pigs, llamas, dogs, cats, and lots more... The only concern here is animal welfare and ensuring happy and healthy lives for all the animals through rehabilitation and adoption programs.



A goal at the sanctuary is bringing about the improvement of animal-human relations, achieved by educating us two-legged mammals about animal-related issues. The ranch welcomes school trips, offers a volunteering program for high school kids (and anyone else) and hosts an extremely popular summer day camp for 13-17 year olds. A private, non-profit charitable organisation, they also hold regular fundraising events everyone is invited to. Visitors are encouraged – Come see the animals - Witness their second chance at life – Realise that they too just want to be loved unconditionally.

French author Anatole France said, “Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.” Andy Parent’s soul with probably never sleep again.

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