

## JULIE

Well, I was born in 1956 in Maryville, Missouri. We lived in a little town of 220, about 20 miles northwest of Burlington Junction. I had great parents, brother and sister, six and eight years older and they didn't like me tagging along much. I finished grade school, high school, and graduated from college at 32. I graduated from Park College at that time. It's a university now in Parkville, Missouri, in equine studies, horses. Got a job with a children's home in Independence. They had 30 boys and 20 girls on another campus and ten horses and I did therapy with them. We did horse shows and I had a six step program for them. It wasn't like Westerns where you just flop the saddle on.

The kids had to learn how to brush them properly, how to go around them so they wouldn't get kicked and just all the small stuff and worked their way up to riding. We did 4-H horse shows and we put on a little annual horse show at the complex. I went on to California and got my certificate in teaching the disabled. That was my love, but that was just part time.

Well I worked for MODOT and I just got tired of politics and I quit thinking I could get another good job. And I lost the house I had since 95 and this was about 2002. I was able to get an apartment and I lived in my car for a little while, then I was able to get an apartment. I volunteered at the VFW, cooking Sunday breakfast and then, I don't know, everything was fine until the last apartment I moved into. I bailed blackwater out of my kitchen sink for over ten months. And the reason I haven't been out of any, but it's been a mid this mid-March was a year. I haven't been able to get an apartment because they charged me \$3,000 for the repairs. I have legal paperwork saying it's all taken care of, but he's done something else, so it won't go off my record. And I know it takes a while to go off anyway, but this place has helped me, they'll help me get into a place, since I have that letter saying that everything was taken care of, they can help get me into an apartment.

I moved out of there in March of 2002 and had been living in hotels, motels. And one day I had to go to the emergency room for my breathing problems. And that was from that blackwater. And it was early in the morning and I thought, where am I going to go? What am I gonna do? I don't have any place to stay. And I thought, Oh, it's not 8:00 yet. I'll go to Sunday mass. And I met two wonderful ladies there and they helped me out and they found a firefighter paramedic in Raytown. He started when COVID started. He started helping people find places to live. And he got me into here, into reStart.

And I was here until my fourth chemo treatment put me in the hospital for eight days in this place so they couldn't take care of me. And I said, I understand. So I went back to hotels and motels and then I got to go to this one place and watched the Kansas City

Chiefs and it was a bar. I had a Cherry Coke because I was going through all this and one day I was asked, I said, can I sit down here with all of you guys? And that night my throat started messing up and my voice started going away. And the hospital told me, Go in for a COVID test and it was positive. And they knew I'd stayed here and they called restart and they put me in a hotel for a week and my doctor gave me the new medicine that's a Plavix or something like that. And I took that and the next time I was tested it was gone and then reStart brought me back here.

I was having a really hard time breathing and stuff. And I think that was from that black water. And I'd see spots and stuff. And one time I was out standing outside of a QuikTrip and I was waiting on a cab and all of a sudden I just sat down. A couple of guys came out and helped me get back up. And then I got my Medicare and everything and I got a primary doctor, which I love, and I haven't seen her for quite a while because I've been doing all this other stuff. And it was mainly my breathing. My oxygen was good and everything, but my hemoglobin was way too low. I had to come in and have two transfusions and they kept me in the hospital and start doing all this other testing on me and tried to do a colonoscopy on me and they couldn't even penetrate. And that's when they found that. I had already found out about the breast cancer. And I'm lucky it was only one to two centimeters. I hadn't had a mammogram for 15 years, so I'm lucky that's all the bigger it was.

The hardest thing about being homeless is just not being able to have my own place. I lost two cats. I sort of inherited them, but I had to give them up. One was the cutest little tuxedo, little white whiskers. She had a little bowtie on her top lip, you know, hourglass on her belly and four white socks. And then the male was an albino. So hopefully I get in somewhere and get a cat again. I've had horses, dogs, and cats. But I'd love to have a dog again, but I don't want the responsibility of going out twice and walking them. I'll get my strength back one of these days.

This place has been great. But people don't feel sorry for you and I've had a few say you need to sue him. And I plan on doing that because I lost some stuff there's no replacement for and just everything he put me through.

Just keep on truckin' and trying to do the best you can. Try and find some place so you don't have to be outside. I had a roommate that had frostbite on her feet three times and I couldn't live in a tent. There's no way I did have my car when I lost my house. That car finally gave out on me. These days, the price of them and just the insurance I couldn't pay. Social Security and a little pension doesn't go that far. But just keep on truckin' and telling yourself you'll find something.

My dream is getting my own place and getting back in physical shape. I used to be a real strong person. I worked in a cabinet place and picked up real heavy panels of raw wood and I was always really strong. And now I'm not. Sometimes I can't even open a pop bottle. But I'm hanging in there.

I grew up in a wonderful home. Like I said, I'm on my own and just want to have a home and get my stuff out of storage and enjoy it and get at least one cat again, maybe two.

Just keep on truckin'. It'll all work out.