Be a part of her legacy...

Sheila Varian reached out to California Rangeland Trust with her dream: a well-planned vision to form a land conservation agreement that would not only protect the ranch for the people, the horses, and the wildlife in the near future, but would also ensure that her land, and eventually other working ranches, would be preserved forever.

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Sheila finalized her estate plan in an agreement with the Rangeland Trust to protect the ranch with a conservation easement and to ultimately make a planned gift of the preserved ranch and a large portion of the remaining assets of her estate. Varian Arabians Ranch is appraised at fair market value to determine the property's development rights. Removing development options by placing a conservation easement on the ranch devalues the ranch for an appraised value of $2.6 million. While Varian Arabians has been a self-sustaining horse breeding operation during its 60 years in business, the purchase of the development rights would ensure Varian Arabians Ranch will continue to grow and thrive, once Sheila was gone. The Rangeland Trust begins its fundraising campaign to raise $2.5 million to be paid to Sheila’s estate as a key sustainability fund — one that provides stability and the assurance a plan will be in place to responsibly handle the inevitable ups and downs of running a successful ranch. Also, further investments by the estate’s trustees will sustain the business at hand, as well as maintain and enhance the overall fund’s value.

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The final step in Sheila’s planned gift was a conservation easement on Varian Arabians Ranch as soon as the sustainability funds for Sheila’s estate are raised — so it will never be developed — no matter what. All the time Angela retires, the estate trustees will then donate the estate’s remaining assets including the entire conserved ranch to the Rangeland Trust as directed by the terms of Sheila’s planned gift.

As a visionary, Sheila outlined plans for her estate’s trustees and the California Rangeland Trust to ideally sell the ranch to an Arabian horse enthusiast and conservationist who will continue the Varian legacy. Regardless, rest assured that the conservation easement runs with the title of the land guaranteeing this historic ranch remains entirely intact forever, no matter what.
Support “Sheila’s Dream”

Sheila Varian has inspired so many horse enthusiasts to follow their own passion to include these beautiful animals in their lives. She was not only a great teacher, storyteller and role model as a real working cowgirl, she lived her life filled with joy as every day was spent doing what she loved the most. Sheila began living her dream as a young “horse-crazy” girl in California and went on to share this love of Arabian horses with the entire world. Her impact on people’s admiration for horses will forever have a place in history.

Now, you can have a role in perpetuating “Sheila’s Dream” by making a donation to Preserve Varian Arabians Ranch. With your help, we can build a sustainability fund which will support the ongoing operations of Varian Arabians and allow the California Rangeland Trust to purchase the development rights to this historic property and conserve the ranch forever. Our campaign goal is reach $2.5 million to turn Sheila’s dream into a reality. Your contribution will make a significant difference to continue her legacy on the ranch and share her inspiring story with others well into the future.

Sheila was not a wealthy woman and always ran her breeding business as a self-sustaining ranching operation. This is why we need your support. Your gift would mean so much to fulfilling her dream to keep her land and horses safe. She was a visionary and very passionate about preserving working ranches. Your contribution will not only protect Varian Arabians Ranch, but it will insure that rangeland on other ranches will also be preserved.

Our mission is to conserve California’s working ranches that provide stewardship, open space and natural habitat for future generations.

The California Rangeland Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization Federal Tax Identification #31-1631453.

1225 H Street | Sacramento, CA 95814 | www.rangelandtrust.org | 916-444-2096