

EMPOWER THE MINISTRY

# AROUND the FIRE

NEWS FROM CRYSTAL PEAKS YOUTH RANCH FALL 2011

## The Multiplier Effect

BY KIM MEEDER

*A* thriving life begets life.

When our heart is growing, it multiplies abundant life within the hearts of those around us... the hearts God has called us to reach for Him. One of the four pillars that Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch was founded upon is to "Empower the Ministry," to give what we have to help others share the hope of Christ. To "give what we have" should not be confined to certain areas of our life or held back by our insecurity—genuine giving is based on genuine need—wherever it exists.

A few days ago, I went for a hike with two dear friends named Joan and Amy. Joan is an old biathlon buddy, and Amy is Troy's little sister, who I've claimed as my own. We hiked through a deep green rain forest that loosely followed the chiseled channel of the McKenzie River. Our conversation wandered with the same pleasing pattern as the trail that meandered beneath our feet. We spoke of friendships, family challenges and how the Lord uses every difficult thing we face to lovingly draw us deeper into His presence.

Nearing our destination, our trio came upon an unusual sight. A woman was laying on her back near the trail in the soft green moss. Her elbows were tightly bent with her hands clenched under her chin. On this warm day, she looked... *cold*. Another young woman seemed to be attending her. Curious, I asked, "Is everyone okay?" The upright woman answered, "Yes, we've already sent some friends out for help, we're going to be all right." Although her words sounded confident, her voice did not.

She was afraid. Sensing her fear, I looked directly at the woman on the ground.

She was shaking and I noticed a blue ring framing her lips. As I watched, her face contorted with pain and she made a trembling sound that resembled a hum.

Contrary to her friend's words, she was *not* all right.

Sensing the same thing,

Joan, Amy and I all stopped at once. I began to slip my pack off when—to my

alarm—the recumbent woman's hands began to twist into the rigid, grotesque shapes of someone having a seizure. Her body shook with violent tremors and heavy, anguished moans poured from her mouth.

Immediately, Joan and I knelt around her. Through a barrage of quiet questions we quickly learned that the afflicted woman's name was Emily. She was a teacher from Washington and was adventuring with her husband and a few friends. Her mate was miles down the trail on a mountain bike and unaware of her plight. Two other friends were making their way to the trailhead to signal for help while the lone friend stayed behind to comfort her. We also discovered that Emily had been experiencing flu-like symptoms for three days. With her eyes tightly closed, Emily told us that she thought she was six to eight weeks pregnant and was currently bleeding profusely... she believed she was having a miscarriage.

With intentional calm, I reached into my pack and retrieved my first aid bag. I pulled out a space blanket and Joan and I wrapped it snugly around her. Extra clothing was placed over her to combat her rising state of shock. After administering several

*Continued on page 2*



sips of water, Joan and I laid down on each of Emily's sides and placed our arms and legs over her to warm her with our own bodies.

Like terrible waves from a nightmare-ish storm, Emily endured what appeared to be contraction after bleeding contraction. Her clammy body twisted and shook as she alternately hummed and moaned in agony. With my lips next to her ear, I said, "Emily, you're going to get through this. You're going to be all right. Hold on girl. Everything is going to work out." With my entire body wrapped around hers, I said loud enough for only her to hear, "Jesus, we need You now. Will You come, will You heal, will You pour out Your peace in Emily's heart."

Emily's personal storm escalated until she was barely conscious. Her pulse was high and weak. Fearing she was reaching a physical breaking point, I coached her to relax her muscles and breathe deeply with an even rhythm. Without words, she understood and complied. I was aware of people walking by. A few men were trying to figure out how to construct a makeshift field stretcher. Several folks stopped and looked. Some asked questions, some walked by without a glance. Like a sentry guarding their post, Amy stood at Emily's feet, praying.

Still surrounded by our warmth, with her breathing deep and intentional, Emily's shock slowly began to reverse. I could feel her body gradually unclench. The waves of pain began to loosen their grip. The crush between her eyebrows started to relax. As if traveling through a long dark tunnel, Emily's consciousness was coming back up to us. After a great, heaving exhale, and with her eyes still closed, Emily whispered, "I'm so glad you're here. Thank you for staying with me. You're like three angels from Heaven." Without missing a beat, Joan softly replied, "Not quite, we're just three women who love Jesus Christ."

Through the combined efforts of several men and Amy's assistance with some accessory cord and two dog leashes, the field stretcher was completed. Once Emily's pain had subsided enough to sit her up, Joan and I dressed her in the survival clothing Amy pulled from the bottom of my pack. With great care, a chorus of hands moved Emily onto the stretcher. Two men took position at her head, another man and I took her hips and Joan took place at her ankles. Spoken with a voice of gentle authority, I counted, "Three, two, one, lift." Like a well-trained team, our small ragtag

group lifted up a desperate stranger on a stretcher made of walking poles, shirts and dog leashes and set off toward the trailhead.

Once Emily was delivered into the care of her friends, Joan, Amy and I retraced our steps back up the trail and finished our hike. During our trek, we had ample time to ponder why the Lord had allowed us to happen upon a woman in such a critical situation. What did He wish for us to give, to learn from this experience?

I couldn't help but marvel at how much this whole situation was similar to the parable of the Good

Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). We were clearly not the most experienced or the most educated in wilderness survival techniques (one of our carry out team was a Forest Service employee and another was an ER nurse), but of the dozens of people who passed by, we were three of only five who stopped to help. Later that same day, we met a man who'd walked by our plight. We discovered he was a Pediatric doctor who was equipped with a thermal mat and a radio—yet he chose not to stop and help. He had everything needed to save her life, but he didn't offer it.

Friends, each of us has something we can give to those in need around us. We don't need to be the smartest, fastest or most experienced... we simply need to stop and give what we have to those who are suffering in our midst.

Will we? Or—like many who passed us on the trail—are we just walking by those who're suffering, even dying, in need of our help?

It's not enough to know the right thing to do... unless we DO the right thing.

On our hike, I'm convinced that a blond, bright, beautiful young woman—without intervention—was well on her way to dying on the damp green moss that she'd collapsed upon. We were clearly not the most qualified, educated or prepared, but for one distressed woman what made the difference is that we simply stopped and gave what we had. And because we serve the King of "loaves and fishes," on that day, HE made our gift enough.

Years ago, He made an old cinder pit enough. Daily, He makes rescued horses enough, and open arms of love enough. Placed within God's hands, we've seen the multiplier effect at work as these simple things have combined to become enough to help over two hundred other ranches like Crystal Peaks grow into existence.

Like the boy who gave Jesus his sack lunch (John 6:1-13),





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what we have might not seem like much in our hands. But, when we place our meager gifts into the hands of our God, HE is the One who can turn our willingness to help others into something amazing, something incredible, something more than enough.

God will use whatever you give. It's not up to us to understand how; it's up to us to be willing to give something. Yet, if we give nothing, that's exactly what will happen within our own hearts and those hearts around us that Jesus is calling us to reach. But, if we give Him something—even a little thing—we open the door wide for God to do amazing things through us.



Our gifts can be as simple as a card, a letter, a phone call, an email, a handful of flowers, a hug, a smile, even a prayer as simple as "Jesus, we need You now."

God will use and multiply any gift we give Him. He is the great multiplier. And it's His desire to multiply something beautiful within your heart today.

A vibrant life begets life. A stagnant life saps life. Because of the hope of Christ... every day we each get to choose to be vibrant or stagnant. *On this day... which will you choose?*

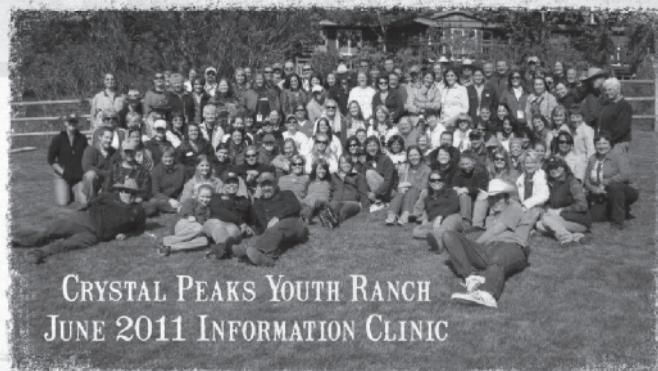


## ☆☆☆ Similar Ministry Update ☆☆☆

BY JULIE MILLER AND KATHERINE TEAGUE

The Lord has chosen our property, an old cinder pit of only 8.9 acres. Because of His restoration, it has become a beautiful safe haven for thousands. Although our acreage is small, what the Lord continues to do through this place is not. He has extended the reach of Crystal Peaks far beyond our small borders. Below is a sampling of God's hand stretching through CPYR's Similar Ministries Out Reach Program.

- ★ Since 2005, we've held 12 Information Clinics
- ★ 1,177 Individuals have attended from: Australia, Bulgaria, England, Spain, Canada (AB, BC, MB, NS, ON) and all 50 States, including Washington, DC
- ★ Similar ministries are currently located in: Australia, Canada, England, Honduras, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Romania, Slovak Republic and in 37 U.S. States



- ★ All similar ministries (that we're aware of) are listed on our website, or can be found using the following link, <http://www.crystalpeaksyouthranch.org/OurProgram/Similar+Ministries/default.asp>.

We encourage you to seek out those ranches located near you and consider how you might support them or volunteer in some way.

Over the course of the year, many Similar Ministries have written to us of what the Lord has been doing on the ranches they've started. We've selected two of these stories to share with you. We continue to watch in awe, witnessing the Lord extend His healing and hope to kids and families—not just on our own property—but all over the world.





## *Dear Crystal Peaks,*

I want to update you on the progress of Little Oaks Ranch. Ross and I came to your Information Clinic in 2008. We've marched along watching God put His ministry together at Little Oaks Ranch. This year we received our insurance and 501c3 status. God has done amazing things, affirming our desire to serve the "least of these." He supplied finances for things we needed to start up and amazing people who love the Lord and kids to come along side and help us. Since I'm extremely "right brained," many of the people who've joined the ministry of the ranch are extremely "left brained," God knows what we truly need.

Recently, I realized I was guilty of putting all the kids on my two old mares just to be in control of safety (ha, as if I could be). Then a new little ten-year-old boy started coming to the ranch. Family life was really tough for Isaac. He had developed anger issues, terrorized smaller children and had run away from home. His mother heard about the ranch through a garage sale and started bringing him every week. He is a bold little boy and quickly became bored with Duchess and Rosie. One day he looked me in the eye and said he wanted to ride the big black horse.

The "big black horse" is my Tennessee Walking horse. I'd only allowed a few teen girls to ride him in the round pen. When I said, "Let's go get him," Isaac's face lit up. I watched the bold little boy ride my bold large horse. All I could think of was how I'd learned at your clinic to let the kids and the horses choose each other. It was interesting that Isaac had chosen Cajun.

The next week when Isaac came I decided to do something different and I told Isaac he was going to learn to talk to Cajun in horse language. I've never seen a kid at the ranch so enthused about anything. As we brushed Cajun I told Isaac about the gelding's background of being rescued ten years ago from a barn in Tennessee by some friends going to buy show horses. They saw Cajun in a chicken coop and decided they were not leaving without him. He wasn't built to show and was a "throw away" horse. The owner's son was allowed to beat him if he didn't go fast enough. So, he only had two speeds, fast and faster. The owner didn't want to sell him, but decided to do so when my friends offered him more than the horse was worth.

They loaded him up with the other horses they'd bought and brought him to Indiana. For three months they worked to get him to stand still when mounted. With a rider on his back he became extremely anxious, wanting to bolt. It took a great deal of building trust and kindness to get him ready to become safe for me to ride. As I related this story to Isaac, I realized how similar their backgrounds were and I also realized how it was no accident that this little boy had chosen this horse.

We went to the round pen and I started teaching Isaac how to speak to Cajun with his body. He wanted to learn so badly that he tried very hard and he caught on quickly. I had Isaac sit on the mounting block and watch as I took off Cajun's halter and began to free-lounge him, explaining how to make him turn towards me and away from me based solely on my body language. Isaac insisted on trying and imitated my instruction well. I encouraged Isaac to tell my gelding to stop and come to him. Cajun came up and put his head down for Isaac to hug.

My friend who'd come to take pictures was sobbing her eyes out. I told Isaac I wanted to try something and asked him to walk away from Cajun. When he stopped, he was surprised to find Cajun still at his shoulder. As Isaac turned right and left, Cajun mirrored him, walking at his shoulder. When the 80 pound boy began laughing and running, the 1,000 pound horse stayed right with him, his neck arched watching, careful not to step on him.

Tears were streaming down my face. One of my volunteers came over to watch, sensing something very special. Cajun's shiny black coat and Isaac's boyish laughter came together in the gold evening light to become a memory that we will never forget.

This made me think of everyone at Crystal Peaks. It's easy to believe what we've learned from you there—but to *experience* it—made our spirits soar. Thanks again for all your encouragement.

*Peace and Blessings to your Ranch,*

*Cherri*





## Dear Crystal Peaks Family,

Today we had a thirteen-year-old boy named Zac come to Mountain River. He had an amazing day and God's Hand was unmistakable from before he even arrived. He is one of your boys!

His mom found us from the link on Crystal Peaks' website. They moved here to Washington from Central Oregon recently and he misses Oregon terribly. He loves ranches and had been coming to Crystal Peaks while they lived in Oregon. His family found work up here so they moved and they now live in a duplex near our ranch.

When I first talked to his mom she was wishing for a ranch similar to Crystal Peaks because her son loved it so much. He was trying to adjust to moving, new friends, new schools, living in the city and lots of people. She hoped if they could find a place similar to Crystal Peaks it might bring a little happiness in his life, like he had in Oregon.

She was so right. Zac came and helped whitewash a stall, and spoke with excitement about his stories from Crystal Peaks. Later, as he groomed Angel, his horse, he mentioned moving an owl's nest that had babies in it at Crystal Peaks. It was clear by his expression how he loved that story. He talked about Little Bear and the scar on his hips from a bear attack. He talked about riding, brushing and having water poured over his head when it was so hot. I knew there were many, many more stories. I think he had been coming for three seasons to CPYR. He had countless memories that were full of love, acceptance, confidence and importance.

Megan, one of our volunteers, was from Bend and had been at Crystal Peaks as a 12 year old with a 4-H group. She moved up here six months ago and is a nurse in Seattle now. She found us through the Crystal Peaks website.

Megan and Zac were teamed up today (God knew) and the angels were just dancing for joy as those two swapped stories. They knew the same people. Megan's mom is a teacher at his old school in Oregon and her class and Zac's class did projects together. Zac's mom had even met Megan's mom. That was a miracle all by itself. Laughing and talking, they shared story after story. It was amazing. God was moving.

The session was so special, so full of the love and the miracles only Jesus can arrange. As Zac was leaving with his mom and grandma, he said, "I love it here. It's just like Crystal Peaks!"

So, a big "thank you" to everyone at CPYR. I know Julie watches over the similar ministries and I hope this story encourages everyone to keep up the great work, as you support children no matter where they go. Just think, here's a young man you nurtured and loved at Crystal Peaks, and then because of your links, he found us and is continuing to be loved by our great God.

I just had to pass this story on.

Love and hugs, *Sherrie Davis*  
Mountain River Youth Ranch



KIM, EMILY, JOAN AND AMY

## — UPDATE FROM EMILY —

Kim,

Thanks and Blessings again for literally saving my life on the McKenzie River Trail/ I made it out to the trailhead walking slowly, where EMTs examined me and declared me fit to be released to myself. My husband and I went directly to the hospital in Eugene, where I was given medication to ease my pain and nausea, but no conclusions as to what caused the distress, except that I was NOT pregnant, and therefore not miscarrying. I am hoping for some answers and solutions soon, but am rejoicing in feeling healthy now. Take care, and thank you again/

Emily



# FOOTPRINT

BY TROY MEEDER

**K**im and I love our time spent in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest. No matter the season or geographic location, each mountaintop and alpine ridge presents its own distinct challenge for both of us. Whether it be walking through deep forest canyons, crossing high mountain streams, soaking in the sun from a table top alpine glade to reaching windswept summit peaks, each moment spent living within creation nourishes the very core of our existence.

The wilderness palette reflects the passionate, powerful, even wild heart of our Creator. He truly is the God of wonders.

While each experience is unique, Kim and I have learned over the years that we both have specific desires longing to be filled within the trek. I enjoy the raw beauty of creation. Rock formations, weather, high mountain valleys and rushing water draw me. Kim of course enjoys much the same. Yet, she has a passion for one thing that I do not.

Footprints.

She loves tracks left by wildlife who have passed before our arrival. Whether it be the delicate, almost invisible impressions left by a tiny mouse, bird or squirrel to the unmistakable depressions created by the massive grizzly bear or wolf, Kim is an expert in the recognition of them all. No matter who passed by, my wife can recognize, name and track each one.

Wherever our boots take us, she will always seek out in the soft muddy edge of a lake, dusty trail or patch of snow, the evidence of the wild forest resident who has recently passed by.

Footprints. Left behind, footprints are the evidence that someone has passed by and has been where we are now.

Webster's Dictionary describes footprints as, "The outline of the foot, area of surface, area where something is effective."

For the past sixteen years, through the power of our Lord Jesus, Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch has left an indelible footprint on the hearts of thousands living within the community of Central Oregon. Our prayer is for the marks left by this ministry to be tracks of faith, hope and support to everyone, child and equine alike, who call this place home.

For three years, Kim and I have aggressively sought the Lord for what He may have in store for Crystal Peaks. Long have been the hours we have talked over the options for the future of this ministry. While the possibilities are numerous, our biggest question has been in considering the physical size and limitations of our current location. Should we seek to expand our "footprint" here in Central Oregon or increase our influence globally?

In our efforts to honor the counsel of God's word (Proverbs 12:15), we have sought the advice of a number of very mature, respected and faithful friends.

Each has brought wonderful and insightful perspectives on the question of growth.

The real issue came to light in a conversation I had with an old friend over a cup of coffee not too long ago. His observation was simple and brilliant, "Troy, you have two options here; grow the footprint of your ranch locally or grow it globally. What is the Lord telling you?"

The answer was simple. This ranch, the one born from an abandoned rock quarry, reflects the redemptive heart of our Savior Jesus Christ. By leaving this place we would walk away from the physical representation of the message of hope we share every day.

We must stay here.

Because there is nothing our God cannot redeem, He has refit what was once a shattered property into an incredible song of renewal that rings out from this hillside to many throughout the world. Now, in response to that very song, thousands have come to our informational clinics. Each has left with a piece of this place and started a beautiful melody for the Lord in their own hometown. By God's grace, across this great nation, Canada and eight other countries, over two hundred more ranches are sharing the message of the hope of Jesus Christ.

While the physical footprint of Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch will—for now—stay the same; the global footprint of redemption that began here is growing every day.

I once heard a wise woman, the woman I married, say, "The mission field isn't where you go, it's where you are."

Who will share with the boy whose family is being crushed by divorce? Who will reach out to the widow down the street? Who will teach your kids the truth of God's word? Who will leave footprints that lead others to the hope of Jesus?

Will you? Will I? Will we together work to change the world around us? When we look back on our lives, will we see footprints left behind of peace, joy and blessing?

Each and every day, we leave behind footprints. Are yours leading others toward or away from hope? Are you choosing to take the message of Christ to the very corners of the life God has given you?

*"Beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news  
of the gospel of Jesus Christ."*

— ROMANS 10:14-15

*Yes! I would like to shoulder with  
Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch to support  
children, horses and families in need.*

**Please use my donation for:**

- ☐ Where it is needed most
- ☐ Rescue the Equine
- ☐ Mentor the Child
- ☐ Hope for the Family
- ☐ Empower the Ministry
- ☐ Potential Property Expansion
- ☐ Endowment Fund

**Payment Method:**

A check payable to Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch or CPYR for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send donations to: Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch,  
19344 Innes Market Road, Bend OR 97701.

You can also make your donation at  
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## QUOTES FROM VOLUNTEERS

I like to volunteer at Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch because...

*"It allows me to use my God-given skills and talents to serve in what I see as a very practical ministry. And because this is the only place I know of that encourages horse poop fights."* — Jeff, age 25

*"I get to see the mountains and get wet when I help mommy clean the trough."*

— Payton, age 4

*"I love the unity we all have every day. The staff and volunteers have become like the family I always wanted growing up. And because of Stan's wife's cookies (Stan is another CPYR volunteer and his wife sends a fresh batch of cookies each week)."*

— Stephanie, age 19

*"I initially came because of the ministry and I've stayed because of the wonderful staff, volunteers and children."*

— Chris, age undisclosed

*"Halo! That horse will follow me everywhere—he's a stalker."*

— Mitchell, age 10

*"I love to watch the horses and kids connect with one another. Every day is new and exciting!"* — Xandra, age 20

*"I love working together with people and having water fights with kids."*

— Ashley, age 20

*"I love working side by side with others. You may have not known each other or thought that you had much in common, but once you start working together there's instant friendship."* — Katie, age 17

*"I believe in what God is doing in and through this ministry, and the ranch is a family. Of course, I love the horses too."*

— Julia, age 21



*"I love the sense of community— working together to build something. There are not many places that you can do practical work together, and that's one of the things I find incredible about this place."* — Nora, age 60

*"I get to see all the horses and hang out with my great friends."* — Ashley, age 11

*"It's a really friendly environment and I've loved getting to know the horses and I feel inspired here."* — Cameron, age 21